Journeys of Paul

AEGEAN SEA CRUISE

PREPARING TO FOLLOW

INTRODUCTORY READING MATERIAL

Dallas Theological Seminary

June 8–18, 2017 • Turkey & Greece

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Docked at the island of Patmos

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THE MOODY ATLAS OF BIBLE LANDS

By Barry J. Beitzel

Moody Press, Chicago 1985

THE JOURNEYS OF PAUL

To suggest that the story of the early church as told in the book of Acts owes much of its shape to a pagan Macedonian monarch, Seleucus I (Nicator), sounds initially rather far-fetched. Closer inspection of certain details, however, discloses that at the human level this very well may be the case. Seleucus was one of Alexander the Great's foremost generals, who gradually came to rule most of the Asiatic provinces that had been part of Alexander's vast domain. At his inauguration of the Seleucid era, Seleucus founded a number of metropolitan areas, including the city of Antioch. He gave the Jews large tracts of land in the vicinity of Antioch because a large Jewish contingency had assisted him in his victory at the Battle of Ipsus, which opened Asia to his command. More important, however, Seleucus offered citizenship to Jewish individuals, and he granted them privileges equal to those afforded Macedonians and Greeks. Later, as economic and political interests brought Rome to Asia, Antioch became the capital city and military headquarters for the entire Asian province. When other Antiochian citizens implored the Romans to revoke citizenship for Jews, their pleadings went unheeded, strangely enough, and Jews retained their favored status in Antioch.

Therefore, a situation obtained in which Rome was vigorously engaged in crushing Jewish insurrection in Judea and Jerusalem while simultaneously proclaiming free citizenship for Jews residing at Antioch. Not astonishingly, there developed a large and well-established Jewish population in Antioch by the middle of the first Christian century, and the city contained many Greek-speaking synagogues (cf. Acts 6:5). At the same time, because it was the Roman administrative center, Antioch enjoyed a sizeable non-Jewish population with a cosmopolitan and eclectic interest in philosophical and religious inquiry, as well as a high level of public order and police protection. All of those factors combined to create a pervasive atmosphere in Antioch in which the Christian message could be spontaneously received and safely propagated.

Faced with recurring persecution after Stephen's death, early Christians scattered to other regions, including Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, where they found safe refuge. When some of those early unnamed missionaries proclaimed the Christian gospel in Antioch, great numbers believed and turned to the Lord. As rumors of widespread conversions reached the church in Jerusalem, the elders sent Barnabas to Antioch to report on affairs there.

Seeing that the work flourished, Barnabas journeyed to Tarsus, where he located Paul and brought him to the Syrian metropolis to assist in instructing new converts. So strong and effective did that emerging movement become that disciples of Jesus were first called "Christians" at Antioch. Later, when famine spread across parts of western Asia, it was the fellowship at Antioch that sent assistance to the believers in Jerusalem (Acts 11:19–24). Consequently, it comes as no surprise that it was this prominent Christian base that commissioned all three missionary journeys of Paul.

The initial mission saw Paul and Barnabas, supported by John Mark, sail from Seleucia Pieria, the Mediterranean port of Antioch, to Cyprus, where the apostle established a personal ministerial pattern: he preached on the Sabbath in a synagogue, in this case at Salamis (Acts 13:4–5). Having traversed the island as far as Paphos with their message, they were summoned by the Roman proconsul who desired to hear the Word of God. At this point the narrative records the first opposition to the apostle and the first conversion to his message. It seems that a magician named Bar-Jesus, who was a false prophet, sought to confound Paul's message and dissuade the proconsul. But God's messenger withstood him to the face, and Bar-Jesus was smitten with blindness. Seeing what had occurred and being enamored of the gospel, the Roman official became a disciple of Christ.

Paul and his entourage left Cyprus and landed on the mainland of Asia Minor at the inlet of Perga. It was there that John Mark decided to abandon the mission and return to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). Exactly what motivated Mark to that decision is purely speculative. Perhaps he had growing personal misgivings about working among Gentiles, perhaps he became ill, or perhaps he shrank back from the personal danger that necessarily would have attended travel in the environs of the Taurus Mountains. Whatever the case, Paul and Barnabas proceeded alone to Antioch in Pisidia. That segment of the journey would have taken them to the northern side of the Taurus Mountains. Therefore, they doubtlessly proceeded up the Cestrus (Aksu) River as far as the inland lake district. The dense forestation of the Taurus range coupled with its high altitude made passage any other way almost impossible.

Again on the Sabbath, Paul preached in the synagogue at Antioch. This time his message so stirred the imagination of his audience that he was invited to speak again on the following Sabbath. On that occasion, however, the apostle was reviled by Jewish leaders, and so he redirected his efforts towards the Gentiles in the region. Many believed Paul's message, a fact that inflamed Jewish hostilities. So the orthodox Jewish leaders insidiously created a disaffection within Antioch, and the two missionaries were driven from the territory (Acts 13:15–50).

Paul and Barnabas then entered the district of Lycaonia where their ministry began at Iconium. In that city, many were captivated by their message, but a plot was contrived to stone them, so they fled to the nearby city of Lystra, an important center of commerce in the eastern Roman world. While they remained there, Paul healed a crippled man; but Jewish zealots from Antioch and Iconium traced the missionaries to Lystra and there persuaded some individuals to help stone Paul. The apostle was dragged out of the city and left for dead (Acts 14:1–19). The final city on the first journey was Derbe, where many disciples were made (Acts 14:20–22). Paul and Barnabas then retraced their steps past Perga to the port city of Attalia, where they boarded a boat and sailed back to Antioch.

After spending some time in Antioch, Paul suggested to Barnabas that they visit their Christian brethren in the cities of the first journey. A sharp disagreement developed between them, however, when Barnabas urged that John Mark accompany them on this second enterprise; Paul, for his part, wanted nothing to do with the idea of taking with them one who earlier had withdrawn from their mission. Therefore, they went their separate ways. Barnabas took Mark and sailed toward Cyprus, his homeland (Acts 4:36), while Paul, relieved of the Cyprian ministry, took Silas and proceeded northward toward Cilicia and Galatia (Acts 15:36–41), passing Issus before coming to his hometown of Tarsus.

A road extended north from Tarsus, and passed the Cilician Gates, a spectacular gorge cut through the Taurus range. Having negotiated that obstacle, Paul and Silas came to Derbe and passed on to Lystra, strengthening believers along the way. In the latter place, they met a young man named Timothy. Timothy's mother and grandmother may have been among Paul's earlier converts at Lystra (2 Tim. 1:5); Timothy himself, in fact, may have become a disciple under Paul's ministry (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:2). Whatever the case, his reputation among the brethren of the Lycaonian region and his Jewish heritage (his mother was a Jewess) made Timothy a desirable, and eventually an effective, missionary companion of the apostle. So it was that Paul's party, now including Timothy, set out on the Roman road westward, apparently intending to follow the main route toward Ephesus. But when they were "forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia," they veered north in the direction of Bithynia, passed through the region of Mysia, and came to Troas, a port on the Aegean coast near fabled Troy. It was possibly at Troas that Paul was joined by a Greek physician, Luke, who became his traveling companion and missionary chronicler, and who was also responsible for writing one of the New Testament gospels. It was also at Troas that Paul received a "Macedonian call," an obedient response to which brought the Christian gospel to Europe (Acts 16:1–10).

The missionary sailed from Troas directly to the Macedonian region, spending a night along the way on the island of Samothrace. He passed through the port of Neapolis, a city on the Egnatian Way, en route to Philippi. The Egnatian Way was a transportation artery, the Macedonian extension of the Appian Way, that joined the eastern provinces with Italy. Philippi, the site of Paul's next lengthy stop, was a main center of the Macedonian district. Not more than ten years before the arrival of Paul, the strategic city had been the site of a pivotal battle in the Roman civil war. At Philippi, the forces of Cassius and Marcus Brutus had been decisively defeated by those of Antony and Octavian, which altered the course of the war as a whole and, more important for the expansion of Christianity, led to the creation of an eastern and western sphere within the Roman Empire.

Paul sought opportunity to preach on the Sabbath after his arrival at Philippi. His efforts were rewarded when Lydia, a seller of purple goods from the Asian city of Thyatira, believed and was baptized. But when the apostle exorcised the spirit of a slave girl, her owners, who had profited from her strange gift, seized Paul and Silas and had them publicly beaten and imprisoned. But about midnight, as Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns in the prison, there was a great earthquake, and the missionaries were miraculously

delivered from the hands of their enemies. The jailer, supposing that his prisoners had escaped and that he would have to pay the price of their lives with his own, prepared to commit suicide. But Paul called out to him from within the prison, assuring him that not one prisoner had escaped. When the terrified jailer entered Paul's prison cell, he was captivated by the missionary's message and was converted. Whereupon, he took his former prisoners to his home, cared for their physical needs, and was baptized, with all his family. When in the morning the magistrates discovered that they had beaten Roman citizens, they came to Paul and offered their apologies, but requested that he leave Philippi, possibly fearing reprisal if news of the beating were noised abroad (Acts 16).

Paul and his company journeyed along the Egnatian Way as far as the city of Thessalonica, where they found lodging with one Jason. They also found in Thessalonica a synagogue, and there for three successive Sabbaths, Paul mightily expounded the Scriptures concerning Christ. As a result, many believers were added and a church was established. But such a response again aroused the ire of local Jewish leaders, who accused the missionaries of treason and incited a mob to storm the house of Jason. When they were unable to find Paul or Silas inside, the Jews beat Jason himself for harboring the "seditionists." Because of that violent incident and threat of further harm, Paul and his companions left Thessalonica under cover of night and journeyed the short distance to Berea. Their ministry in the synagogue there met with a receptive audience, and it appears that many individuals believed and a sizable church was founded. When news of the Berean ministry reached the ears of some Jews in Thessalonica, however, they came to Berea and sought to harm Paul. Although Silas and Timothy remained behind, presumably to nurture the churches in Macedonia (cf. 1 Thess. 3:1–2), Paul was quickly ushered out of Berea and brought down to the Aegean Sea, where he sailed toward Achaia and Athens (Acts 17:1–15).

As his ship sailed adjacent to the shoreline, Paul might have viewed Mt. Olympus, the mythic home of Zeus, who was the chief god of the Greek pantheon. But it was the myriad of idols composing the entire pantheon that confronted the apostle when he arrived in Athens. Distraught at the bewildering array of deities worshiped in this city, Paul lost no time in debating both in the synagogue and in the Agora (marketplace). On one occasion, he was taken to the Hill of Areopagus, otherwise known as Mars Hill, to deliver a message to some Athenian philosophers. That raised area, located between the Acropolis and the Agora, had been used in bygone days as a seat for the high council of Athens, but by Paul's time it was used only as a forum for philosophical debate. In his eloquent address, which included citations from two Greek poets, Paul sought to argue from a philosophical standpoint that would make his message more attractive to the Greeks. But his ideas concerning resurrection drew sharp criticism, even mocking, from the philosophers, and so Paul left the city of Athens with a few converts but without having founded a church there. The apostle, however, was neither threatened nor dissuaded by the tinge of failure. Rather, he viewed failure as the crucible of progress and triumphantly passed on to the city of Corinth (Acts 17:14–18:1).

Corinth was a sprawling seaport located on the isthmus of Corinth, a narrow neck of land (three-and-a-half miles wide) that offered direct passage between the Aegean and Adriatic seas to merchants and travelers; they could thereby avoid navigating the treacherous Peloponnesus. Nero attempted to build a canal across the Corinthian isthmus, but that did not become a reality until the end of the nineteenth century. As a cosmopolitan center of commerce and trade, Corinth enjoyed lavish prosperity and attracted many unsavory individuals. Such an atmosphere meant that Corinth became a notoriously immoral city (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:15; 7:1–2). Strabo mentions that more than 1,000 sacred prostitutes were attached to the temple of Aphrodite alone.

When Paul arrived, he met Aquila and Priscilla, who themselves had only recently moved to Corinth from Rome after the emperor Claudius issued an edict requiring all Jews to leave the capital city. They too were tentmakers, or leatherworkers, and Paul quite naturally became their good friend. Perhaps for as many as eighteen months (cf. Acts 18:11), he was their house guest and fellow-worker. During that time, Aquila and Priscilla embraced Christianity. The couple is said to have eventually risked death for Paul (Rom. 16:3–4). But many others also were convinced by Paul's weekly preaching at the synagogue; included among that company were Titius Justus, whose house was next door to the synagogue, and Crispus, an important leader of the synagogue at Corinth. And so, when the message of Christ was reproached by Jewish leaders, the apostle simply moved his base of ministry next door to Titius's house. Incensed, the Jewish authorities fabricated charges against Paul and had him brought before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, whose name is also attested on an inscription recovered at Delphi. Convinced that the matter was strictly a Jewish problem, however, Gallio refused to adjudicate it. Thus Paul was able to continue his mission in Corinth (Acts 18:1–17).

Nevertheless, after a time, Paul decided to return to Antioch. Accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla, he journeyed across the isthmus to Cenchreae, where he boarded a boat that was headed for Ephesus. When Paul's party arrived in that strategic city, it went to the synagogue where Paul preached. Even though he left Aquila and Priscilla there, Paul himself declined the Ephesians' request to stay on. Instead, he set sail for Caesarea, from which he went up

and greeted the church at Jerusalem before undertaking the final leg in the second journey – the trip to Antioch (Acts 18:18–22).

Paul's third missionary journey took him through the regions of Galatia and Phrygia, before he finally arrived at Ephesus. From this it follows that the apostle more or less retraced his earlier steps through the Cilician Gates, past Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch in Pisidia, rather than taking the coastal road through Pamphylia and Lycia. Beyond the general statement that Paul was "strengthening all the disciples," we are in the dark about that segment of his trip. At Ephesus, however, he was awaited by his friends Aquila and Priscilla who, since being left there on the second journey, had been engrossed in the ministry. Among other things, they had met a disciple named Apollos whom they had nurtured in Christian doctrine before sending him on to Corinth. But also waiting for Paul at Ephesus was the culture of the city itself. Ephesus was a major metropolis of the eastern Empire, ranked with Alexandria and Antioch. Ephesus was also the home of the goddess Artemis (Roman "Diana"), long venerated as the fertility goddess of all Asia Minor. Her temple at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Paul's success in proclaiming the gospel during his two-to-three year stay in Ephesus (Acts 19:8, 10; 20:31) was felt both in the city and throughout the province. Numerous believers were baptized and many miracles were wrought. His ministry also spanned the Aegean during that same period, when he became aware of problems in the Corinthian church (1 Cor. 1:10–11; 16:8–11). Having dispatched his first epistle to that church, Paul also commissioned Timothy to go to Macedonia and doubtless also to Corinth, to report on what progress the church had made there. A mark of Paul's success at Ephesus may be seen in the reaction of a certain Demetrius, who was an Ephesian silversmith. Believing that Paul's message threatened the livelihood of the city's artisans, if not the fabric of the Artemis cult itself, Demetrius summoned other craftsmen in Ephesus and incited them to become riotous in the city. In the ensuing fray, two of Paul's traveling companions, Gaius and Aristarchus, were seized and dragged into the Ephesian theater, a semi-circular stone edifice capable of holding about 24,000 spectators. Although Paul himself was unharmed in that incident, it helped solidify his decision to move on to Macedonia and Greece (Acts 18:23).

Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to infer that Paul revisited the Macedonian brethren in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea before coming to Corinth, probably bypassing Athens. It was during his three-month stay in Greece that the apostle penned the Roman epistle (Rom. 15:22–29), in which he expressed the fond hope that he might someday visit Spain (Rom. 15:24, 28). However, he told the Roman believers, he presently had to travel to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25). It appears that just as Paul was about to set sail for Jerusalem (possibly for Passover, Acts 20:6–16), his life was somehow threatened. Consequently, he traveled overland to Philippi, where he celebrated the Jewish holy days and then caught a freighter and crossed over to Troas in five days. From there, Paul made his way to Assos, where he caught a ship bound for Syria.

Along the way, they stopped at Mitylene, Chios, Samos, and Miletus, Paul having decided to bypass Ephesus. Nevertheless, he could not refrain from calling the Ephesian elders to Miletus where he admonished them, prayed with them, and wept that he would see them no more. His ship then passed on to Cos and Rhodes. In the latter city, Paul might have seen the colossus of Rhodes, a huge bronze statue of the sun god Helios, another one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. From Rhodes, they proceeded to Patara, past Cyprus, and came to Tyre. Taking advantage of the seven-day layover during which the boat was being emptied of its cargo, Paul sought out disciples in that city. Then they passed on and came to Ptolemais and Caesarea, in the latter of which he lodged in the home of Philip the Evangelist (Acts 20:1–21:8).

The Judean prophet Agabus (cf. Acts 11:28) intercepted Paul at Caesarea and implored him not to visit Jerusalem. But Paul had set his face to go to the holy city. Upon his arrival there, he reported to the elders concerning the wondrous ministry that had been begun among the Gentiles. On the following day, when in observance of Jewish custom Paul went to the Temple for rites of purification, men from Asia, presumably from Ephesus, recognized him and accused him of desecrating the Temple by bringing a Gentile into the sacred precinct; the missionary statesman was then seized and beaten by the Jews. When the Roman tribune learned of that scuffle, he had Paul arrested and taken to the Antonia where he remained until the commandant was informed of a conspiracy against Paul's life. So, under cover of darkness and with heavy security, Paul was transferred to the provincial prison at Caesarea where he remained incarcerated for two years before appealing as a Roman citizen to the Caesar (Acts 21:15–26:32). The governor of Caesarea, Porcius Festus, could do no other than comply with the apostle's request.

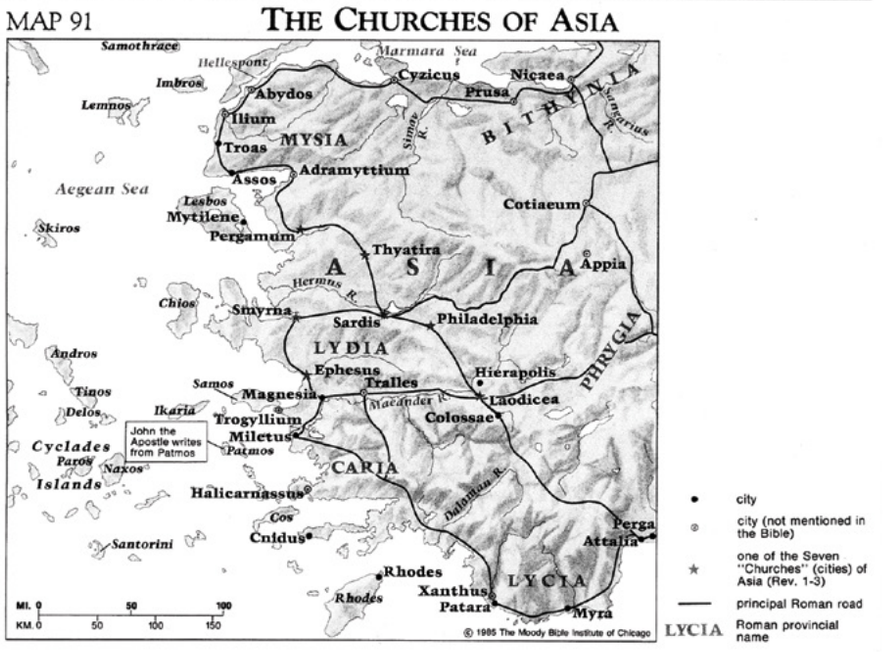
Together with other prisoners, Paul was put aboard a boat from Adramyttium that was setting sail for the Asian coasts (Acts 27:1–2); he was accompanied by Aristarchus from Thessalonica (cf. Acts 19:29; 20:4) and also by Luke. The initial leg of their journey took them past the coast of Cilicia, via Sidon, to Myra in Lycia (Acts 27:3– 5), where it became necessary to disembark and board a second vessel, a large cargo ship from Alexandria (Egypt) headed for Italy.

But it was late summer, and the prevailing winds were buffeting westward traffic. Consequently, it was with great difficulty and with some delay that Paul's vessel finally arrived at an island off Cnidus. Sailing from there under the lee of Crete, they were barely able to make shore at Fair Havens. Paul warned not to proceed farther, but the captain sailed on with the intention of wintering at Phoenix (Acts 27:7–12).

Before they could make anchor, however, a fierce northeasterly gale struck and violently drove them towards the open sea. Unable to make Cauda, the sailors feared destruction in the shallows of Syrtis Major. Some fourteen days later, Paul's ship ran aground off the coast of Malta and had to be abandoned (Acts 27:13–44).

Aboard a third vessel, Paul's final leg to Rome was uneventful. After brief stopovers at Syracuse and Rhegium, the Egyptian ship made port at Puteoli, where Paul went ashore. Traveling via the Appian Way en route to Rome, Paul's party passed the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns, where in both places they were met by Christian brethren. Taking courage from them, Paul passed on and came finally to Rome (Acts 28:11–16).

Western Asia Minor is a geographical designation for that peninsula of land bounded on the north by the Marmara Sea and the straits of the Hellespont (Dardanelles), on the south by the Mediterranean, on the west by the Aegean



Sea, and on the east by the mountainous plateau of eastern Phrygia. The land mass is tilted down toward the northwest, and extending west from the Phrygian mountains are some outlying crests that naturally segment the terrain and create lateral valleys through which, in New Testament times, the Romans built roadways. Prominent among those was the thoroughfare that entered Phrygia from a point just west of Antioch in Pisidia, ran past Laodicea and then more or less followed the Maeander river valley past Tralles and Magnesia to the western ports of Ephesus and Miletus. An important branch of that route extended north from Laodicea past Philadelphia and Sardis, where one road veered west to Smyrna and another went in the direction of Thyatira, Pergamum, Adramyttium, and Troas.

Together with the opening or enlarging of roads there commenced a rebuilding program of Western Asian cities that were either along or had access to the road system. Sardis, Miletus, Cyzicus, and Pergamum were vastly refurbished in this period; Ephesus was beautified and transformed into the official seat of Roman authority; Smyrna was adorned with paved streets, and Laodicea prospered with its textile industries.

The book of the Revelation is addressed by the apostle John to "the seven churches of Asia" (Rev. 1:4, 11). That these seven churches were particularly selected by the apostle and that the message to them was arranged in a certain sequence may be owing precisely to geographical considerations. The seven churches without exception were situated on principal Roman roads that carried, among others, postal carriers. Arriving at Ephesus from the island of Patmos, a carrier could go north to Smryna and Pergamum (the northern leg on a secondary road); from thence he could turn east and proceed directly along the Roman artery past Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea.

ADDITIONAL READING MATERIALS

LOCATION DESCRIPTIONS
A BRIEF GUIDE TO ANCIENT HISTORY
THE AGORA MARKET AREA
THE GODS OF GREECE AND ROME
THE GREEK THEATER

By Charles Dyer

ISTANBUL

HISTORY

Istanbul spreads out on both sides of the beautiful Bosporus strait. The city has been the capital for three empires and is known for its historical treasure and for the beauty of the surrounding landscape.

In 660 B.C., the Megarians, led by Byzas, built a settlement where the Topkapi Palace stands today. They named the city Byzantium after their commander. Less than a century later Byzantium was occupied by Persians. Alexander the Great captured the region when he defeated the Persians at the Granicus River in 333 B.C.

Byzantium came under Roman control after the Romans defeated the Macedonians in 146 B.C. The Roman Emperor Septimus Severus destroyed Byzantium when it supported his rival, the Roman General Niger. However, Septimus Severus could not ignore the area's strategic location, so he rebuilt the city and renamed it Antoneinia.

After defeating his rival and securing his throne in A.D. 324, Emperor Constantine began developing the city as the eastern capital of his empire. The restored city was named Nea Rome and declared to be his capital on May 11, 330, with a tremendous ceremony. To promote his newly adopted Christianity, Constantine built the magnificent St. Sophia Church.

Following the death of Constantine, the name of the city was changed to Constantinopolis. Because of the different nationalities that have controlled the city since then, the name has been pronounced as Constantinople, Stinpolis, Stinpol, Estanbul, and eventually Istanbul. The rivalry between Constantinopolis and Rome continued until Emperor Theodosius I divided the Roman Empire into two parts in A.D. 395.

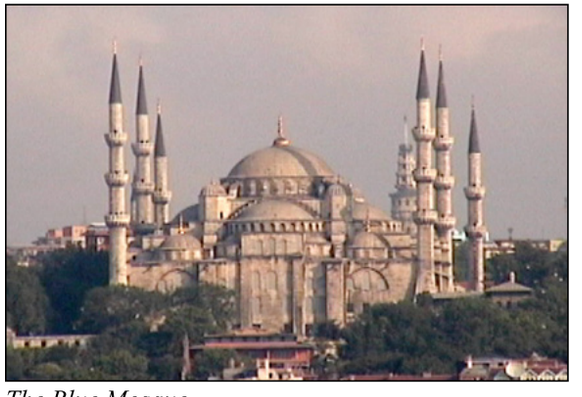
Constantinopolis continued to gain importance because it was a main stop on the "silkroad" to China and India. The state became more widely known as "Byzance" instead of the "Eastern Roman Empire." However, it had to bear Arab, Bulgarian, and Russian attacks throughout the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries. In the tenth century the empire struggled internally with conflicts between the aristocracy and the peasants. At the same time the state was being threatened by the Seljuks (ancestors of the modern-day Turks) from the east, the Normans from the west, and by several other foes from the north.

Because of the Turkish threat from the east, the kingdom of Byzance supported the arrival of the crusades from Western Europe. In 1096, the first crusaders arrived in Constantinopolis, but they were defeated by Seljuks in Asia Minor. In the later Crusades the western (Latin) Christians fought against the eastern (Byzantine) Christians. The Latins were victorious and Constantinopolis was destroyed. The kingdom of Byzance was parceled out among several western countries. The infighting among Christians, and the subsequent division of the kingdom of Byzance, weakened the region and made it ripe for conquest.

In 1453, the young Ottoman Sultan, Mehmet II the Conqueror, captured the kingdom of Byzance and occupied Constantinopolis. His conquest began the period of Turkish control that extends until today.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND ARCHITECTURE

The Hagia Sophia (*Ayasofya* in Turkish) was the earliest of Istanbul's churches and was constructed during the reign of the Emperor Constantine. From the fifth century on it became known as the Church of Divine Wisdom (*hagia sophia*). Mehmet II the Conqueror converted the church into a mosque in 1453. The four minarets, one on each corner of the building, were added at various times during the Ottoman period. In 1935 Hagia Sophia was converted into a museum, and it is now one of Turkey's two most popular museums.



The Blue Mosque

Ahmed I, who ascended the throne at the age of 14, was an extremely religious-minded sultan, who displayed his religious fervor in his decision to

construct a mosque to compete with *Ayasofya*. The mosque is known as the **Blue Mosque** (or the Sultanahmet Mosque). The mosque itself is surrounded on three sides by a broad courtyard, and is entered on each side by a total of eight portals. The most original feature of the mosque is the 260 windows that bathe the interior in light.

Hagia Sophia

PHILIPPI

PHILIPPIANS—*Paul wrote the letter from prison, probably in Rome. It contains no OT quotations. It is a thank you letter. The word "joy" occurs 16 times.*

ACTS 16:11–13—*"From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day on to Neapolis. From there we traveled to Philippi, a Roman colony and the leading city of that district of Macedonia. And we stayed there several days. On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there."*

The Apostle Paul first preached in Europe at Philippi. He came there from Troy by way of Neapolis on the second missionary journey. He went to a place of prayer beside the river on the Sabbath where he sat down with a group of women, among them, Lydia, a seller of purple dye from Thyatira. On the way there he was admonished by a slave girl with a spirit of divination, who annoyed him for some time thereafter. Finally, he exorcized the demon to the displeasure of her owners. They dragged Paul and Silas before the magistrates of the city and accused them of disturbing the peace by advocating customs that the Romans did not accept. The crowd joined in and the magistrates gave orders for Paul and Silas to be scourged. They were then put in stocks in the inner prison. At midnight an earthquake shook the prison to its foundation. Fearful that his prisoners had escaped, the jailer contemplated suicide. Paul indicated to him that he and Silas were still there. As a result of Paul's witness, the man believed, and he and his family were baptized. The next day the authorities learned that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, apologized to them and asked them to leave the city. They then visited Lydia and other believers before they departed for Thessalonica (Acts 16:12–40).

At this point in the narrative of Acts the pronoun of the first person is dropped until Paul returned to Macedonia on the third missionary journey (Acts 20:5). Many conjecture that Luke, a native of Philippi or, at least, a medical student there at one time, was left behind to work among the churches of Macedonia.

Paul expressed a deep affection for the church at Philippi in a letter written to it while he was in prison either at Rome or Ephesus. The letter was written to thank the church for the gifts of funds and clothing that Epaphroditus had brought to him. After his imprisonment, Paul may again have visited Philippi (1 Tim. 1:3).

EPHESUS

ACTS 18:19–28—*Paul stopped briefly in Ephesus on his return to Jerusalem at the end of his second missionary journey. Priscilla and Aquila stayed in Ephesus while Paul returned to Jerusalem. Later, Priscilla and Aquila discipled Apollos in Ephesus before Apollos went on to Achaia (and Corinth).*

ACTS 19:1–20:1—*Paul went to Ephesus on his third missionary journey and stayed in Ephesus for approximately two years. He spoke in the Jewish synagogue for three months and then had daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Paul's time in Ephesus ended following a riot incited by the silversmiths.*

ACTS 20:17–38—*On his return to Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey Paul decided against stopping in Ephesus. But while in Miletus he called for the elders of the church at Ephesus and warned them against false teachers who would try to slip in among them.*

EPHESIANS—*While imprisoned for the first time in Rome, Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians. The date of this letter is approximately A.D. 60. The letter was probably intended both for the church at Ephesus and for the churches in the surrounding area.*

1 TIMOTHY 1:3—*After Paul's release from his first Roman imprisonment, he evidently returned to Ephesus about A.D. 65–66 as part of his further travels. Paul's earlier warning to the elders concerning false teachers must have come true, and Paul left Timothy in Ephesus to "command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer" (1 Tim. 1:3). Shortly after leaving Ephesus and heading to Nicopolis Paul was arrested, taken to Rome, tried, and beheaded.*

REVELATION 2:1–7—*Tradition says the Apostle John settled in Ephesus and had a profound impact on the city. During the reign of Domitian, John was exiled from Ephesus to the island of Patmos. It was there that he wrote the Book of Revelation about A.D. 95. The first of the seven letters to the churches written in the Book of Revelation was addressed to the church at Ephesus.*

HISTORY

Ephesus is the most significant archaeological site in Turkey. The Greek geographer Strabo recorded the popular belief that Ephesus was initially founded by Amazons (a legendary race of women warriors). However, the city was most likely founded early in the second millennium B.C. Because of the lack of unity between the Western Anatolian cities, Ephesus was colonized by the Ionians in the tenth century B.C.

Ephesus was captured by the Kimmers in the seventh century B.C., by the Lydians in 560 B.C., and by the Persians in 546 B.C. The city gained her freedom when Alexander the Great defeated the Persians and drove them from Asia Minor. Lysimachus, a commander of Alexander the Great, moved the city from its earlier location by the Temple of Artemis to the valley between Mount Pion and Mount Croesus. He also built a wall around the city for protection.

In 190 B.C. Ephesus came under the control of Pergamum. When the king of Pergamum died in 133 B.C., he bequeathed his kingdom to the Romans because he lacked an heir to his throne. Thus Ephesus passed over to the control of Rome.

Because of its excellent harbor and access to the interior of Asia Minor, Ephesus flourished during the Roman period. The city was also located at the intersection of two major overland routes—the coastal road that ran north through Smyrna and Pergamum to Troas, and the road that ran west to Colossae, Laodicea, and the interior of Asia Minor. It became the capital of 16 Roman provinces in Asia Minor, and it was one of the largest and most prosperous cities in the eastern Mediterranean. During the time of the New Testament the city likely had a population in excess of 250,000.

From the time of Croesus and the Lydians (in the sixth century B.C.), the city's religious life was controlled by the worship of the goddess of fertility. She was known as Artemis in Greece, and as Diana in Rome. They built a temple for Artemis/Diana that was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Inside the temple was a statue of Artemis/Diana that was at least partially fashioned from a meteorite. This explains the statement of the city clerk of Ephesus in Acts 19:35: "Men of Ephesus, doesn't all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven?" Part of the "worship" of Artemis/Diana involved sacred prostitution.

ARCHAEOLOGY

The ruins of the **temple of Artemis,** one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, are located along the highway on the way to the site of Roman Ephesus. The temple had 127 columns and was 180 feet wide and 375 feet long.

Inside Roman Ephesus one of the major landmarks is the great **theater** on the slopes of Mount Pion. This theater had a seating capacity of 24,000. To the north of the theater one can see a decorated arch and the entrance to the stadium. A wide street called the **Arcadian Way** stretched from the base of the theater toward the harbor. This street was lined with statues, porticos, and public buildings. Just north of the Arcadian Way is the **Church of the Virgin Mary,** commemorating Mary's final days in Ephesus.

Entrance to the library of Celsus

Another street stretched from the theater south to the **library of Celsus**. To the west of the library are stairs, a colonnaded street, and the exquisite decorations of the **temple of Serapis**.

BIBLICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Paul stopped briefly in Ephesus on his return to Jerusalem at the end of his second missionary journey. Priscilla and Aquila stayed in Ephesus while Paul returned to Jerusalem. Later, Priscilla and Aquila discipled Apollos in Ephesus before Apollos went on to Achaia (and Corinth) (Acts 18:19–28).

Paul went to Ephesus on his third missionary journey and stayed in Ephesus for approximately two years. He spoke in the Jewish synagogue for three months and then had daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. Paul's time in Ephesus ended following a riot incited by the silversmiths (Acts 19:1–20:1).

Theater at Ephesus with seating capacity of 24,000

On his return to Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey Paul decided against stopping in Ephesus. But while in Miletus he called for the elders of the church at Ephesus and warned them against false teachers who would try to slip in among them (Acts 20:17–38).

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According to tradition, the apostle John became the head of the church in Ephesus. Because Jesus had entrusted John with the care of Mary at His crucifixion, early church tradition also held that John took Mary with him to Ephesus. After John's death he was buried in Ephesus, and a chapel was built on the site of his grave.

Ephesus was one of the seven churches in Asia Minor to which John wrote in the Book of Revelation.

> *To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: "I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot endure evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God" (Rev. 2:1–7, NASB).*

Statue of Mercury at Ephesus

PATMOS

REV 1:9–11— *"I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet, saying, 'Write in a book what you see, and send it to the seven churches.'"*

HISTORY

Patmos is an island located at the northwestern end of a group of islands known as the Dodecanese. Patmos is of volcanic origin with a rugged coastline. It is 10 miles long from north to south and about six miles wide at its widest point along the northern coast. An isthmus only a few hundred yards wide, on which the island's harbor lies, separates the northern end of the island from the southern half.

Patmos was one of the many places to which Rome banished exiles. According to Irenaeus and Eusebius the apostle John was banished from Ephesus to Patmos in the 14th year of the reign of Domitian (A.D. 95). He remained there for a year until after Domitian's death in A.D. 96 when he is said to have returned to Ephesus.

ARCHAEOLOGY

According to tradition, the apostle John lived in a cave on the island when he wrote the Book of Revelation. From early on in church history the island became a place of pilgrimage, and in 1088 a monastery was built near the cave. The majestic fortress-like **monastery of Saint John** still crowns the hill above the port, surrounded by small, white houses.

BIBLICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Book of Revelation was written by the apostle John while he was in exile on Patmos because of his faith.

The harbor of Patmos

CORINTH

ACTS 18:1–18—*On his second missionary journey Paul came to Corinth after leaving Athens. Paul teamed up for the first time with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth (18:2–3), and he remained in the city for 18 months planting the church (18:11). The Jews opposed Paul and brought him before the judgment seat (bema) of Gallio who was proconsul of Achaia (18:12).*

1 CORINTHIANS—*Paul wrote the letter of 1 Corinthians from Ephesus while on his third missionary journey. Paul wrote to correct a number of problems that had arisen in the Corinthian church after his departure. The letter was written in advance of a planned trip to Corinth by Paul (1 Cor. 16:5–9).*

UNRECORDED VISIT—*Paul made a second, unrecorded, visit to Corinth, possibly while he was still at Ephesus (2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1–2). The exact nature of the visit is uncertain, but it was not anticipated by Paul when he wrote 1 Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor. 16:5–7). These veiled references imply it was an emergency trip made in haste, possibly to correct some severe problems that had arisen in Corinth.*

2 CORINTHIANS—*Paul wrote the letter of 2 Corinthians from Macedonia (possibly Philippi) when he received good news from Titus about the repentance in the church at Corinth. Paul was coming to Corinth to complete the collection being made for the saints in Jerusalem (2 Cor. 9:1–5). This was to be his third trip to Corinth (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1–2).*

ACTS 20:2–3—*Paul went to Greece to complete the collection for the saints and spent three months in Greece (some of which, no doubt, was spent in Corinth).*

The city was one of the most strategically located in the ancient world. Corinth lay in ruins for one hundred years, until Julius Caesar decreed in 46 B.C. that it should be rebuilt. A Roman colony was founded on the site, which later became the capital of the province of Achaia. Its population was made up of local Greeks, a large number of Jews, freedmen from Italy, and Roman government officials and businessmen. The city became a favorite spot of the Roman emperors. In Roman times the city was notorious as a place of wealth and indulgence. "To live as a Corinthian" meant to live in luxury and immorality. As a seaport it was a meeting place of all nationalities and it offered all of the attendant vices. The temple of Aphrodite on Acrocorinth was unique in Greece. Its priestesses were more than a thousand hierodouloi "sacred slaves," who engaged in prostitution. Its wealth was derived from its commercial traffic by sea and by land, its pottery and brass industries, and its political importance as the capital of Achaia. At its height it probably had a population of 200,000 free men and 500,000 slaves.

There are three items of archeological interest which relate to the account in Acts of Paul's visit to Corinth. The Roman tribunal to which he was dragged (Acts 18:12) by the mob to appear before Gallio has been uncovered in the center of the agora. It was a high platform supported by two steps. It was faced with blue and white marble. On either side were enclosures with benches and beyond these passageways which led from the lower to the upper portion of the agora. It fits perfectly the Roman conception of a rostrum, a public speaking platform.

The Apostle Paul first visited Corinth on his second missionary journey (Acts 18). He had just arrived from Athens where he had been poorly received. He says he began his work at Corinth with weakness, fear and trembling. He had intended to remain only a short time before returning to Thessalonica, but the Lord spoke to him in a night vision (Acts 18:9–10; 1 Thess. 2:17–18). He preached in the city for a year and a half. For a time he resided in the home of Aquila and Priscilla, Jews who had recently been expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius. They, like Paul, were tentmakers and he worked with them during his stay so that his motives as a preacher would not be impugned. Soon after he arrived Silas and Timothy joined him from Macedonia.

He preached in the synagogue on each Sabbath until strong opposition arose among the Jews. He then turned to the Gentiles and stayed at the house of Titus Justus, a Gentile adherent to Judaism, who lived next door to the synagogue. He made a number of converts during his stay, among them Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue.

At one point a Jewish mob dragged Paul before the Roman proconsul of Achaia, L. Junius Gallio. His term of office was for the year 51–52 or 52–53 according to an inscription found at Delphi in 1908. Gallio heard the charges at the tribunal, but refused to judge in a matter regarding Jewish law. Even when the mob released Paul and began to beat Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, he refused to get involved (Acts 18:12–17). This opinion by a highly respected Roman officer that Paul's preaching was not contrary to

Roman law, no doubt gave him an insight into the protection that Rome would give to him as he preached the Gospel. The account of Paul's first visit to Corinth closes with the notation that he left some time after this incident for Jerusalem and Antioch by way of Ephesus.

Paul wrote the Thessalonian epistles during this stay at Corinth. Soon after he arrived in the city, Silas and Timothy joined him. The news which Timothy brought from Macedonia prompted Paul to write the First Epistle to the Thessalonians. The Second Epistle was written probably soon after the first one was received.

The Book of Acts tells little more about the early history of the church at Corinth, but some few additional details can be derived from the Corinthian epistles. Apollos, a convert of Aquila and Priscilla while they were at Ephesus, was sent with a letter of recommendation and he played a large, if sometimes unintentionally divisive, role in the church (Acts 18:27–19:11; 1 Cor. 1:12). Evidence indicates that Paul intended to visit the church again on the third missionary journey (2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1). While he was at Ephesus, he wrote a letter to Corinth which has not been preserved (1 Cor. 5:9). The reply of the church, which asked advice on problems it faced, and an oral report, which indicated that the church was faring badly, prompted him to write the First Epistle to the Corinthians. This was probably brought to Corinth by Titus (2 Cor. 7:13) or by Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17) who both visited the church at about this time. Following Paul's hasty departure from Ephesus, he went to Troy in hope of meeting Titus with news from Corinth. He was disappointed in the expectation, but did meet him later in Macedonia. When he received a report of revival in the church, Paul wrote the Second Epistle from Macedonia. Paul then spent three months in Achaia, much of it no doubt at Corinth (Acts 20: 2, 3). While there he collected an offering for the poor saints at Jerusalem, to which the church at Corinth probably contributed and where he probably wrote the Epistle to the Romans (Rom. 16:23).

The church at Corinth reemerges into literary history at the close of the 1st century A.D. In about the year 97, Clement of Rome wrote a letter, which survives, to the church. It reveals that the church was still vexed by many of the same problems about which Paul wrote to them.

ATHENS

ACTS 17:15–34—*Paul came to Athens on his second missionary journey and preached to the philosophers at the Areopagus (Mars Hill).*

1 THESSALONIANS 3:1–6—*While in Athens, Paul sent Timothy back to Thessalonica to see how the new church there was doing since he had been forced to leave early. Before Timothy could return with news from Thessalonica, Paul left Athens for Corinth.*

The city is located about five miles from the Aegean Sea. The export of olive oil and wine was one of the chief sources of the prosperity of classical Athens. In addition, there were excellent clay beds nearby for pottery making, and silver and lead were mined at Laurium at the southern tip of Attica. Mount Pentelicus provided beautiful marble for local use and for export.

The years of Pericles' great influence (443–429) were the most glorious in Athenian history. Athens became a complete democracy and by its encouragement of the arts nurtured one of the greatest periods in the history of mankind. The city was adorned with magnificent public buildings. The dramatists and historians recited its greatness. Athens attracted intellectuals from all over Greece and encouraged the study of philosophy, rhetoric and science. The short-sighted foreign policies of its leaders led to the decline of Athens and to the Peloponnesian War.

Ancient monuments are numerous enough in Athens to give the visitor an insight into the glories of the past. As one enters from any direction, the Acropolis dominates the city. The Agora was the forum and marketplace of the ancient city. When the Apostle Paul visited Athens the city still retained its reputation as a center of learning, although it was no longer prosperous. He noticed the magnificent public buildings and shrines which were still intact (Acts 17:23). He came there because of the Jewish protests against his preaching in Thessalonica and Berea. He witnessed in the agora and was

called before the Areopagus Court to which he gave an intellectual defense of the Gospel. He mentioned an altar to the unknown god. The synagogue (17:17) is unknown, but Jewish burials have been found. A few converts were made as a result of his preaching before he left for Corinth (Acts 17:15–18:1).

THE PERSIAN PERIOD

By capturing the city of Sardis in 547 B.C. and defeating the Lydians in 546 B.C., the Persians gained effective control of all Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey). They dominated this region for nearly 200 years, reaching the zenith of their power under the reign of Darius I. Darius launched an attack against the Greek mainland, but the Greeks defeated his army at the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C.

In 480 B.C. Darius's son, Xerxes, led the Persian army westward in another attempt to conquer Greece. After a delay at Thermopylae, the Persian army captured and sacked Athens. However, the Persian fleet was destroyed by the Greeks at the battle of Salamis. Xerxes was forced to abandon his conquest of Greece. But for the next century Persia maintained its control over Asia Minor.

THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

The Hellenistic period began with Alexander the Great who was born in 356 B.C. Alexander's father, Philip II of Macedonia, had united all the Greek city states except Sparta and had conquered all coastal Thrace. He prepared Greece to drive the Persians from Asia Minor.

Alexander became king at 20 years of age. Over the next 13 years he expanded the frontiers of his empire as far as Iran and India in the east, and as far as Egypt and North Africa, Mesopotamia, and Syria in the south.

Alexander began his conquests in the spring of 333 B.C. when he and his army of 35,000 crossed the Hellespont in Asia Minor. He met the Persians at the Granicus River, and his smaller army routed the larger Persian force.

That fall Darius III of Persia mustered an army of 500,000 to attack Alexander. However, Alexander rapidly moved his army across Asia Minor and through the Cilician gates near the city of Tarsus (the hometown of the apostle Paul). Alexander's forces fought with Darius's army on the narrow Plain of Issus. The Greeks killed 110,000 Persian soldiers and captured Darius's wife and family.

During the next year Alexander moved his forces south, capturing Damascus, Tyre, Gaza, and Egypt. In 331 B.C. Alexander moved his army into Mesopotamia for his third, and final, battle with the Persians. This battle took place at Gaugamela, just east of the Tigris River near the ancient city of Nineveh. Darius fled, and Alexander took over most of the remaining Persian Empire.

Alexander returned from his Asian conquest, and settled temporarily at Babylon. He died there in 323 B.C. at the age of 33. Over the next 50 years his empire was divided among four generals. Seleucus controlled Persia, Babylonia, and eastern Asia Minor. Ptolemy gained control of Egypt and most of Palestine. Cassander ruled over Macedonia and most of Greece, and Lysimachus controlled Thrace and the western edge of Asia Minor.

THE ROMAN PERIOD

Rome extended its influence eastward when, in 169 B.C., a Roman naval fleet under the command of Popillius Laenas thwarted Antiochus IV's attack on Egypt. This event, predicted in Daniel 11:29–30, expanded Rome's control. When King Attalus III of Pergamum willed his territory to the Romans in 133 B.C., Rome also gained control over much of western Asia Minor.

The Romans attached great importance to the region of Asia Minor. As the cities of Asia Minor would inform Rome of their loyalty and friendship, the Roman emperors would visit them. In some areas of Asia Minor the Roman emperors were better known than they were back in Rome.

Roman architecture, with its many adaptations from earlier Greek architecture, began to dominate in these cities. Many theaters were also built in the Roman fashion. The two-storied *skene* (wall at the back of the theater stage) was characteristic of Roman architecture. In the Hellenic Period, the orchestra pit was shaped like a horseshoe, but under Roman influence it was transformed into a semicircle.

After 80 B.C. the Romans discovered how to heat a room by passing hot air under the floor and through holes in the brick walls. They constructed large thermal facilities that developed into magnificent Roman baths with *frigidarium* (cold baths), *tepidarium* (warm baths), and *cauldarium* (steam rooms). Such baths were eventually constructed in all of the ancient cities.

The Romans also built aqueducts to supply these ever-expanding cities with a sufficient supply of clean water. Another typical Roman structure was the magnificently constructed city entrance gates, which were quite common throughout Asia Minor. In the Roman Age, the facades of libraries, the walls of stage entrances, and monumental fountains were ornately carved and decorated with statues. The Romans also constructed roads with colonnaded walkways to protect people from the sun and rain.

Theater of Aphrodisias

Road from theater to harbor at Ephesus

THE AGORA
ANCIENT MARKETPLACE

The center of commerce in most ancient cities was the *agora*, or market area. While the *agora* likely began as a simple, open area where people gathered to buy and sell goods, it quickly became one of the central focal points in the community. As commerce expanded, communities erected special structures to house shops and storerooms, even bringing in water and erecting public fountains. In some cities like Ephesus and Corinth—which were situated on key international trade routes—the *agora* became a vital part of the region's economy.

The *agora* was a paved area with colonnaded walkways, monuments, sculptures, and other public buildings with both civil and religious significance. Often a bema, or speaker's platform, would be erected in the *agora*. The local magistrate would use this location to sit and judge administrative matters. Most of the other buildings in the *agora* were offices or shops, with the public latrines usually nearby.

The *agora* of Corinth played a strategic role in Paul's ministry there. In Acts 18:12–17 the Jews "made a united attack on Paul and brought him into court" (lit. "up to the bema"). Their accusation was rejected, and the synagogue ruler was beaten in front of the bema. When writing to the Corinthians about their worldly actions, Paul reminded the church that "we must all appear before the judgment seat [bema] of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10).

THE GODS OF
GREECE & ROME

POSITION	GREEK NAME	ROMAN NAME
King of the gods	Zeus	Jupiter
God of the sun and youth	Apollo	Apollo
God of war	Ares	Mars
God of the sea	Poseidon	Neptune
Messenger of the gods	Hermes	Mercury
Blacksmith for the gods	Hephaestus	Vulcan
God of wine and the arts	Dionysius	Bacchus
God of love	Eros	Cupid
God of the underworld	Pluto	Pluto
God of time	Kronos	Saturn
Queen of the gods	Hera	Juno
Goddess of agriculture	Demeter	Ceres
Goddess of the moon, hunting, and fertility	Artemis	Diana
Goddess of wisdom	Athena	Minerva
Goddess of love and beauty	Aphrodite	Venus
Goddess of the home	Hestia	Vesta
God of health and healing	Asclepius	Asclepius
Half god/half man mythical "hero"	Heracles	Hercules

GREEK GODS IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

ACTS 14:11–12—*"When the crowd saw [the miracle] Paul had done, they shouted in the Lycaonian language, 'The gods have come down to us in human form!' Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes because he was the chief speaker."*

ACTS 17:16, 22–23 —*"While Paul was waiting for [Silas and Timothy] in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. . . . Paul then stood up in the*

meeting of the Areopagus and said: 'Men of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: to an unknown god.'"

ACTS 19:24–28 *—"A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: 'Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis [in Ephesus] will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.' When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: 'Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!'"*

THE GREEK THEATER

According to tradition, Greek theater began in Athens in the late sixth century B.C. when a man named Thespis added actors to performances of choral song and dance. (Hence the description of actors and actresses as thespians.) Masked actors performed at festivals honoring Dionysius, the god of the arts. The performances included both tragedies and comedies. The plays that developed in Athens and that flourished in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. influenced subsequent Western drama.

The price of a ticket to the theater was as much as a common laborer earned in a day. As a result, in Athens Pericles also introduced the theoric fund to subsidize the cost of theater tickets for the poor.

THE PLAYERS

Because Greek tragedy and comedy originated with the chorus, the most important part of the performance space was the "orchestra," or stage, which literally was "a place for dancing" (*orchesis*). A tragic chorus consisted of 12 or 15 *choreuts* (dancers), who were young men just about to enter military service after some years of training. The physical effort of dancing and singing through three tragedies and a satyr play (a typical venue) was compared to the effort required to compete in the Olympic Games.

In contrast to the chorus of 12 or 15, there were only three actors in the typical fifth-century tragedy. The original word for "actor" was *hypokrites,* meaning "answerer," for the actor answered the chorus. As the Greek language developed, the word later took on the meaning of "one who plays a part" from its early use in the theater. The first actor was called the *protagonistes* (literally "first competitor"). Ordinarily each actor would play several different roles throughout the play.

THE STAGE

The early Greek theaters used the contour of a hill and may not have required much excavation. However, it was still necessary to shore up the "orchestra," or stage, with retaining walls and to move considerable quantities of earth to make an appropriately level place for the choruses to dance.

The earliest drama, which uses the *skene,* or structure behind the stage, dates to approximately 460 B.C. Previous to the invention of the *skene,* entrances

could only be made through two entrance ramps that led to the stage. The fifth century B.C. *skene* was not a permanent building, but a temporary construction of wood, placed across the rear of the orchestral circle for dramatic performances at yearly festivals. Nevertheless its invention brought about a massive change in theatrical practice. As a rule, actors stepped out of the *skene* to join the chorus in the orchestra, but the chorus never entered the *skene*.

Originally the *skene* was a simple building with one door that could take on the identity of a palace, a temple, a hut, or even a cave if necessary. It is probable that some form of perspective painting was used on the front of the building (or on removable flats placed before it) to suggest the type of building required for a particular play.

MACHINERY

Divinities could appear suddenly on the roof of the *skene* via a trap door. Characters could be made to fly into the air above the stage space by means of a simple crane, called the *mechane or geranos*. The earliest known use of the *mechane* was in the year 431 B.C.

MASKS

The large size of the theaters (some seated 20,000 or more people) and the distance between the spectators and the performers required a nonnaturalistic approach to acting. All gestures had to be large and definite so those seated in the back could "read" them. Facial expression would have been invisible to all but the closest members of the audience, so the actors wore exaggerated masks, made of wood or leather, to convey emotions. The masks had open mouths to allow clear speech. The masks used in tragedies were more lifelike, while the masks used in comedies were distorted caricatures. They were meant to be ugly and silly.

ODEON

In the fifth century, the Greeks also began constructing smaller theaters for more intimate performances. Such a recital hall, called an odeon (from the Greek word for "song"), was used for musical performances and dramatic recitals.

ROMAN THEATER

The Romans imported and adapted Greek literature, making it their own. With their love of spectacle, the Romans renovated and rebuilt Greek theaters to make them more suitable for their own performances. They fused the *skene* (*scaena* in Latin) with the *theatron* (*cavea* in Latin) and reshaped the orchestra into a semicircle. In some cases they built trapdoors, underground passages, and facilities for flooding the orchestra in order to stage aquatic games and sea battles.

During later imperial times the Romans built many enormous stone theaters all over Europe, North Africa, and the Near East. Very little drama was performed in these theaters. Instead the venue usually featured mimes and pantomimes. Mimes were acrobatic and bawdy, and women acted in them. Pantomime was an art much like ballet, and pantomime dancers became the rock stars of the ancient world.

ROMAN COMEDY

Roman comedy made use of stock masks (characters) and slapstick gags. These slapstick characters and pratfalls were welded onto the tradition of Greek comedy. Roman comedy is the ancestor of our television sitcoms, with plots focusing on domestic issues. The Greek versions were fairly genteel, but Roman comic playwrights added lively action, ferocious puns (in Latin and Greek), rude jokes, and a great deal of physical comedy.

The actors in Roman comedy were all men, and about five individuals would perform all the different roles in the play. The costumes were fairly simple, consisting of a tunic and a *pallium* (square cloak) that was worn long to represent female characters and short to represent male characters. The actors also wore masks, which were wildly distorted stereotypes.

ROMAN TRAGEDY

The Romans also produced tragedies, and these were more straightforward translations and adaptations of the Greek plays of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. Although tragedy was very popular in Rome, few examples have survived, except for the works of Seneca. Seneca violated the Greek tradition of having violence take place offstage.

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

Name	Characteristic	Description of Christ	Promise
Ephesus	Loveless (Dead Orthodoxy)	He is present He is controlling	Eternal life
Smyrna	Persecuted	He has risen from the dead	No second death
Pergamum	Compromising —Morally —Doctrinally	He has a word of judgment	Christ will be sufficient for their needs
Thyatira	Tolerant of sin	He can see all that happens	Authority to rule the world
Sardis	Dead spiritually	He has the life-giving Holy Spirit	Assurance of eternal life
Philadelphia	Faithful	He has the Authority	Honored position with God
Laodicea	Lukewarm	He is a truthful ruler	Fellowship and rulership with Christ

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READING LIST

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