

2/27/22

Intro. To Ephesians

We begin our verse by verse study of Ephesians with an introduction to the letter to better understand the relationship between the man Paul, the Ephesians and the content of the letter.

* As we examine the various parts we will be better able to see their relationship to the whole of the epistle and the progression in thought of the letter.

Ephesians has been called:

1. "The Queen of the epistles".
2. "The divinest composition of man".
3. "God's highest and best".
4. C. H. Dodd called it "The crown of Paulinism".

The church of Ephesus had the high privilege of having some incredible men as their Pastors, starting with Paul, then Timothy and last John the beloved, yet by the time John wrote the book of Revelation, Jesus commended them for many things, but had one thing against Ephesus, she had left her first love! Rev. 2:4

* "Nevertheless I have *this* against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent."

Let's begin our study by looking at the city itself!

I. The City of Ephesus.

- A. The city had a prominent influence.
 1. The city of Perganum was the capital of proconsular Asia, but Ephesus was recognized due to its location and influence.
 2. The city was located about 300 miles west east of Corinth.
 3. The importance of the city was due to its location in the western coast of Asia Minor, in a plain at the mouth of the River Cayster, now Asiatic Turkey.
 4. The city was situated between a mountain range and the sea, serving as an export center for caravans and landing port for Rome.
 5. The city had a road from its harbor to the city 70 feet wide lined with columns and rated commercially with Antioch and Alexandria, as a trade centers of the eastern Mediterranean.
 6. The harbor had a problem with silting, in Paul's days the city was about three miles from the sea.
 - * I visited the city in 1985 and the harbor is no longer negotiable.
 7. The city was one of luxury and the latest of the day, having theaters, baths, libraries, agora, marble paved streets, even running water in some of the wealthy homes.

8. Recognized as the capital by virtue of its location, the people were permitted to administer its own affairs through courts, senate and popular assembly.
 9. Two officials are mentioned in the riot at Ephesus.
 - a. The chief official responsible for maintaining religious order. Acts 19:31
 - b. The town clerk, civil official responsible for illegal assemblies are believed to be president of Senate. Acts 19:35
- B.** The city had a religious temple.
1. The temple of the Famous goddess Diana, located about a mile and a half north-east of the city?
 2. The original settlement and worship was of Anatolian, the fertility goddess, then it took a Greek name Artemis or Diana.
 3. The figure maintained its characteristics of a many breasted statue that the people claimed to have fallen from Zeus Jupiter. Acts 19:35
 4. The worship of the goddess Diana included a treasure house, museum and a refuge city for all, while within, consequently a village sprung up about the temple of criminals.
* Sanctuary cities as democratic cities today!
 6. The worship of Diana made the artisans prospered by the manufacture of idols.
 7. On January 1, 1870, after 6 years and \$80,000, almost by accident Mr. J. T. Wood

from the British Museum, found the Temple foundation.

* The find revealed a flight of ten steps, 425 feet long by 220 feet wide and 127 pillars which supported the roof of colonnade of 60 feet high.

8. In 56 B. C. the temple was burned one of seven times, the same night Alexander the Great was born, he offered to rebuild it at his expense, if he could inscribe his name upon its portals.
9. They refused saying that it was not fitting for one god to build a temple to another god.
11. They built it themselves, taking 220 years for its final completion and remained till 260-2 A. D., when it was destroyed by the Goths. (Paul saw it)
12. North of the temple was the stadium, seating about 15,000, where beast would fight, also men and beast. 1Cor. 15:32
 - a. Paul said, "If, in the manner of men, I have fought with beast at Ephesus", using it figuratively in his spiritual battle to those opposing the gospel.
 - b. But Paul was not speaking literally, he was a free Roman citizen and would never be thrown in to fight beast.

C. The city had a Church.

1. The church had its origin in the mind and will of God, as He guided Paul in his Second missionary journey.
 - a. Paul went to Lystra and took Timothy as his disciple after circumcising, due to his mother being Jewish. Acts 16:1-3
 - b. Paul, Silas and Timothy went through the cities giving the decrees from Jerusalem of salvation by grace not law. Acts 16:4
 - b. The churches were strengthened and increased in number daily. Acts 16:5
 - c. Paul was forbidden by Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia Minor. Acts 16:6
 - d. Then at Troas he received a vision from a man of Macedonia, saying to come over and help them, so he went. Acts 16:7-9
2. Paul concluded it was the Lord calling them, so they sailed from Troas to Philippi taking the gospel to Europe. continued through many cities till he came to Ephesus.
 - a. Then he and Silas went to Philippi where they were imprisoned for casting out a demon from a girl and the jailer and his family were saved. Acts 16:13-40
 - b. Leaving Philippi they came to Thessalonica where Jews from the synagogue raise up evil men to persecute them. Acts 17:1-9
 - c. The brethren then sent Paul and Silas by night to Berean, only to be persecuted again, so they escorted Paul to Athens,

- while Timothy and Silas remained at Berea. Acts 17:10-14
- d. Paul having sent for Silas and Timothy mean-while preach in the synagogue, the marketplace and to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers only to be mocked, but few believed. Acts 17:15-32
 - e. Paul then left and came to Corinth and met Priscilla and Aquila having been expelled from Rome by Claudius for being Jews, he reasoned in the synagogue persuading Jews and Gentiles. Acts 18:1-4
 - f. Silas and Timothy met Paul at Corinth, he was opposed by the Jews again and the Lord appeared to Paul and told him not to fear of any hurt for He had many people in the city, he remained for 18 months. Acts 18:5-11
 - g. Returning to Jerusalem Paul stopped at Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila and was asked to stay longer, but refused wanting to be at Jerusalem for the feast, telling them if God willed it he would return, but Priscilla and Aquila remained. Acts 18:17-21
3. Paul returning landed in Caesarea, kept the feast at Jerusalem and then went up to the church at Antioch, then after a while returned to strengthen the brethren in the

region of Galatia and Phrygia, this was his third missionary journey. Acts 18:22-23

- a. Meanwhile Aquila and Priscilla confronted Apollos at Ephesus about the baptism of John he was preaching and pointed him to Christ explaining to him the way of God more accurate. Acts 18:24-28
- b. Paul arrived at Ephesus and taught for three months in the synagogue, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the Kingdom of God. Acts 19:8
- c. As some spoke evil of the way he removed himself and taught two years in the school of Tyrannus and all in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jew and Gentile. Acts 19:9-10
* A total 3 years. Acts 20:31
- d. The city had many who were engaged in the magical arts and the occult. Acts 19:13-14, 19
- e. Paul's ministry had affected the religious and commercial status of Ephesus and a riot broke out that nearly cost him his life, at which time he departed to Macedonia. Acts 19:21-20:1
* Paul was at Ephesus when he received a letter from Corinth and called Ephesus an effectual door with many adversaries. 1Cor. 16:8-9

- f. Paul's last meeting was with the Ephesian elders, as he laid out to the principles of ministry and the witness of his own integrity while with them. Acts 20:17-38
4. Many churches sprung forth from Paul's ministry at Ephesus, Colosse, Hierapolis Laodicea and others, in fact the seven churches of Revelation are believed to be directly or indirectly related to him.
 - a. After Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment he left Timothy as the Pastor of Ephesus exhorting him to continue and to charge some to teach no other, apart from Christ. 1Tim. 1:3
 - b. The church of Ephesus, despite of the great Pastors, Paul, Timothy and John the beloved, was castigated for leaving it's first love by Jesus. Rev. 2:1, 4
* This is the first step that leads a person to stray from God, "You've left your first love".

This was the City of Ephesus!

II. The authenticity of the epistle of Ephesians.

- A. The traditional view is that Paul is the author of the letter.
 1. The internal evidence supports this view.

- a. Paul mentions his name two times. Eph. 1:1a; 3:1b
- b. Paul alludes to his conversion and imparting of the gospel, the mystery of Christ. Eph. 3:2-6
- c. Paul called himself a minister of the gospel according to the grace given. Eph. 3:7
- d. Paul called himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ in tribulation for the church, at Rome. Eph. 3:1; 4:1
- e. Paul called himself an ambassador in chains. Eph. 6:20
- f. Paul used the first person singular.
- 2. The external evidence supports this view.
 - a. Clement of Rome reflected it's language when he wrote to Corinth in 95 A. D.
 - b. Ignatius of Antioch gave witness to it in 115 A. D. as Polycarp of Smyrna in 130 A. D.
 - c. Marcion the heretic acknowledged it in his list of ten Pauline epistles yet he placed the name of "Laodicea", due to Colossians. 140 A. D. Col. 4:16
 - e. Tertullian of Carthage took Marcion to task for such corruption of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. 193-216 A. D.
 - f. Moratorium Canon lists it 180 A. D.
 - g. Eusebius of Caesarea, the doyen of church historians claims to have investigated all the sources available to

him to discover what Christian writers in each period had said about the canonical and acknowledged books. He reports that the fourteen epistles of Paul, he had classified them as "divine writings" and unquestionable. H.E.3.3.4-7

* This has been the consistent verdict of orthodoxy for eighteen centuries!

- B. The modern day consensus by some scholars is that Paul did not write the letter.
 - 1. The attacks first came in the 19th century by the Germans based on the lack of personal greetings in view of having spent three years there, having only one seeming personal phrase, yet they are equally lacking in some of his other epistles. 2Cor. ; Gal. ; 1-2Thess.
 - 2. Based on the fact that some 75 of 155 verses of Ephesians are found in Colossians and one third of the word repeated, but the way they are used differs.
 - * Yet out of 618 short phrases which Ephesians may be divided up, no less than 550 could be matched in the undisputed Epistles.
 - 3. Based on the fact that many new words and the style is different, there being 100 words not found elsewhere in Paul, yet they are cited in other New Testament books and apostolic fathers.

* The style is said to be complex and cumbersome from his other letters and they point to the lengthy sentences. Eph. 1:3-14, 15-23; 4:11-16

4. Based on allusions to Gnostic ideas.
5. Based on the absence of a strong Pauline central doctrine of “justification by faith”. Eph. 2:8
6. Based on that the opening verse does not have the name “in Ephesus”. Eph. 1:1
 - a. They say the name is not found in what they believe to be the oldest manuscripts, which are three.
 - 1) A Second Century Papyrus, the Chester Beatty, date about 200 A. D.
 - 2) The other two are 4th Century Codices, Sinaticus and the Vaticanus and in fact may be due to the corrupt text of Marcion, Linskie declares.
 - b. Origin in 3rd Century and Jerome in 4th also said “Ephesians” was missing.
 - c. But the phrase “in Ephesus” is found in commentaries from the time of John Chrysostom, A. D. 347-407, onward.
 - d. The truth is all but the three have the name “Ephesus” from mid-century on.

C. The letter is believed by others to be a circular letter to the churches.

1. There is no indication of such a practice, only the mention of reading the epistle from

Laodicea and the reverse, but that does not mean they were circular letters. Col. 4:16

2. If so, the epistle would then be an epistle to the general church as is First Peter.

This is the facts of the authenticity of Ephesians!

III. The epistle to the Ephesians.

A. The bearer of the epistle.

1. He is named, Tychicus. Eph. 6:21
2. He was the bearer of the epistle to the Colossians also. Col. 4:7
3. He is mentioned as one of Paul’s traveling partners as he left Ephesus, “And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia--also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia”. Acts 20:4
4. He was sent to Timothy by Paul, “And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 2Tim. 4:12
5. He was going to be sent to Titus by Paul, “When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Tit. 3:12

B. The occasion for the epistle.

1. There is no evidence of doctrinal problems as with the epistle to the Colossians.

- a. Epaphras believed to have been the Pastor of Colosse came to Paul in Rome during his imprisonment to tell him of the heresy regarding the sufficiency of Christ for salvation, at which time he also wrote Ephesus. Col. 1:7
- b. Onesimus the run away slave had also been saved by Paul and he was sending him back to his master Philemon with a letter by the hand of Tychicus. Col. 4:7-9
 - 1) Paul's imprisonment allowed him to receive visitors and he wrote four prison epistles, called "prison epistles". Acts 28:30-31
 - 2) Paul at this time also wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.
 - 3) The epistle of Ephesians was written in the summer of 62-63 A. D.
- c. The similarities are many in that seventy five of the versus of Ephesians are found in Colossians, Christ is the focus in both epistles, but the focus is different.
- f. In Ephesians the focus is on the church the body, whose head is Christ, while in Colossians focuses on Christ the head of the church. Col. 1:10, 22-23
- g. Ephesians shows us our position in Christ, while Colossians shows us our completeness in Christ.
- h. Ephesians and Colossians focus on the household and family.

- 2. The theme of Ephesians is the unity of the church and oneness in Christ, this is Paul's usual theology of Salvation history at its finest.
 - a. The believers are seen as blessed with all spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:5; 3:10; 6:12
 - b. The church is comprised of Jew and Gentile united one in Christ. Eph. 2:11-16; 3:6; 4:1-3
 - * Gentiles included Scythian, Barbarian, male, female, without any distinction or inferiority!
 - c. Jesus is the head and His church, the body, temple, family in heaven, the bride of Christ. Eph. 1:22; 2:21; 3:15; 5:23
 - d. The epistle is believed to be the result of Paul's many years of understanding the vastness and privilege of the believer and church in Christ.
- 3. The theological themes are consistent with Paul.
 - a. The sovereign grace of God to bless the believer. Eph. 1:3, 9, 11, 12; 2:4-7
 - b. Christ's work of the cross. Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9; 13-18; 5:2, 25
 - c. Salvation history by the full revelation of the gospel. Eph. 1:10; 3:2-7
 - d. The end of the age. Eph. 1:14; 2:7; 4:30; 5:5; 6:8, 13

- e. The resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Eph. 1:20-23; 4:10,
- f. The place of prayer. Eph. 1:15-23; 3:14-21; 6:18
- g. The position of the believer with Christ. Eph. 1:22; 2:6; 5:27
- h. The conduct and life of the believer. Eph. 1:4; 4:1; 5: 8; 11, 15, 17-19, 32
- i. The person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Eph. 1:13-14; 2:18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:1-4, 30; 5:18; 6:18
- j. The oneness of Jew and Gentile. Eph. 1:4; 2:11-15, 19-22
- k. The purpose of the church to perfect the saints by Christ's exaltation through resurrection. Eph. 4:9-16
- l. The importance of the unity of the family to a lost world in the love and grace of Jesus. 5:21-6:9
- m. The church is seen in various metaphors.
 - 1) The family of God. Eph. 2:19
 - 2) The building and temple. Eph. 2:21
 - 3) The fullness of Christ. Eph. 1:23; 4:13
 - 4) The bride of Christ. Eph. 5:23, 28
 - 5) The army of God. Eph. 6:10-18
 - 6) The church of God and Christ, nine times. Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 29, 32
 - 7) The body of Christ, nine times. Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16, 5:23, 30
- n. The spiritual warfare of the believer. 6:12

* Though these may be treated different in his other letters they should not be used to deny the authenticity of the letter of Ephesus!

C. The division of the epistle.

- 1. The book falls into two equal parts.
 - a. The first three chapters are doctrinal.
 - b. The last three chapters are practical.
- 2. The doctrinal section gives us the wealth of the believer. Eph. 1-3
 - a. In chapter one we see.
 - 1) The personal introduction: Salutation and greeting. Eph. 1:1-2
 - 2) The praise to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for all spiritual possession. Eph. 1:3-14
 - 3) The prayer to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for spiritual perception. Eph. 1:15-23
 - b. In chapter two we see.
 - 1) Our new position in Christ, alive in the heavenly. Eph. 2:1-10
 - 2) Our new relation in Christ, a new man. Eph. 2:11-22
 - c. In chapter three we see.
 - 1) The proclamation of the divine mystery. Eph. 3:1-12
 - 2) The appropriation of the divine fullness. Eph. 3:13-21

3. The practical section gives us the walk of the believer. Eph. 4-6
 - a. In chapter four, we see.
 - 1) Our walk is to be in the unity of the one body. Eph. 4:1-6
 - 2) Our walk is to be according to the gift of grace. Eph. 4:7-11
 - 3) Our walk is to be in view of growth, development and maturity of the body, in love. Eph. 4:12-16
 - 4) Our walk is to be as a New man. Eph. 4:17-24
 - 5) Our walk is not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:25-32
 - b. In chapter five and six, we see.
 - 1) Our walk in love in contrast to the lost. Eph. 5:1-7
 - 2) Our walk in light in contrast to our past darkness. Eph. 5:8-14
 - 3) Our walk in wisdom by being filled with the Holy Spirit not the worldly stimuli. Eph. 5:15-21
 - 4) Our walk in marriage in relation to Christ. Eph. 5:22-33
 - 5) Our walk in parental, children and slaves in relation to Christ. Eph. 6:1-9
 - 6) Our spiritual warfare being in Christ. Eph. 6:10-20

D. The key verses, phrases and words of the epistle.

1. The key verses.
 - a. The key verse for the doctrinal section is verse three. Eph. 1:3
 * “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ.”
 - b. The key verse for the practical section is in verse one. Eph. 4:1
 * “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”
 - c. The key versus of each chapter.
 - 1) Eph. 1:3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 23
 - 2) Eph. 2:4, 7, 19
 - 3) Eph. 3:4, 20
 - 4) Eph. 4:1, 7, 20, 32
 - 5) Eph. 5:1, 8, 18, 25-27
 - 6) Eph. 6:10, 12, 18
2. The key phrases.
 - a. In the heavenly. Eph.1:3, 20; 2:6, 3:10; 6:12
 - b. In Christ 11 times, in Him 5 times, by Christ or Jesus 6 times.
 - c. The riches of Christ. Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7, 3:8, 16; 5:19
3. The key words.
 - a. Grace. Eph. 1:2; 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:2, 7, 8; 4:7, 29; 6:24
 - b. Household. Eph. 2:19
 - b. Temple. Eph. 2:21

- c. Fullness. Eph. 1:23; 4:13
- d. Wife. Eph. 5:23, 28
- e. The army of God. Eph. 6:10-18
- f. Church. Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 29, 32
- g. Body. Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30
- h. Spirit. Eph. 1:13, 17; 2:18, 22:3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 23, 30; 5:9, 18, 6:17, 18
- i. Head. Eph. 1:10, 22; 4:15; 5:23

E. The outline of the epistle.

- I.** The wealth of the believer **by** the love of God. Eph. 1-3
* Eph. 1:6, 15; 2:4, 3:17
- II.** The walk of the believer **in** the love of God. Eph. 4-6:9
* Eph. 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2, 5:2, 25, 28, 33
- III.** The warfare of the believer **through** the love of God. Eph. 6:10-24
* Eph. 6:23, 24
 - 1. The key theme that makes it all possible is the love of God mentioned some twenty times.
 - 2. Ten times in “agapao” Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 25, 28, 33; 6:24
 - 3. Ten times in “apapee” Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; 6:23

Conclusion

I hope the introduction has provided for you a good historical background and overview of the letter to the Ephesians by our study of these three things:

- I.** The City of Ephesus!
- II.** The authenticity of the Epesians!
- III.** The epistle to the Ephesians!

This is the epistle to the Ephesians!