

EPHESIANS - INTRODUCTION

I. PAUL'S MISSIONARY JOURNEYS IN EPHESUS:

- A. Paul came to Ephesus at the end of his second preaching tour - stayed for only a short time (Acts 19:19-21)
 - 1. Left Aquilla and Priscilla here.
 - 2. Reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue.
- B. Paul came to Ephesus on his third preaching tour and preached here and the surrounding areas of Asia for 3 years (Acts 19:1-20:1; 20:31).
 - 1. Teaching the baptism in the name of the Lord to 12 disciples of John (19:1-7).
 - 2. Spoke boldly concerning the kingdom of God for 3 months in the synagogue (19:8)
 - 3. Taught disciples in school of Tyrannus for 2 years - All Asia (Jews and Greeks) heard the word of the Lord (19: 9 -10).
 - 4. Through miracles the name of the Lord was magnified - Magical books willingly burned amounting to the price of 50,000 pieces of silver over presumptuous spirit of seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest (19:11-20).
 - 5. Uproar over goddess Diana and the preaching of Paul (19: 22-41).
 - a) Diana - the Ephesians' mother goddess of the earth.
 - b) Temple of Diana was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
 - (1) Built on marshy ground - pains taken to build good foundation.
 - (2) feet by 425 feet with 107 pillars, each 60 feet high.
 - (3) A place of safe keeping of people's money.
 - (4) Annual feasts were celebrated with people all over the world taking home shrines of Diana as souvenirs (Acts 19:24).
 - (5) Her rituals involved sacrifices and ceremonial prostitution (cf. Eph. 4:17-20).

II. AUTHOR

- A. Paul - twice refers to himself by name (1:1, 3:1)
 - 1. "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God..." (1:1).
 - 2. "I Paul" (3:1).

III. DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

- A. Probable date - A.D. 61-62

1. Companion letters of PHILEMON and COLOSSIANS were probably sent at the same time by the same messengers: Tychicus and his companion, Onesimus. (Eph. 6:21; Col.4:7-9; Philemon 10,12).

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B. Place: Prison in Rome (cf. Acts 28:16-31).

1. Paul refers to himself as a prisoner (4:1; 6:20; cf. Col. 4:18; Philemon 1,9,23)

IV. THEME AND PURPOSE OF THE BOOK

A. Theme: The Glorious Church

1. Glorious as conceived in eternity by God.
2. Glorious as it functions in time.

B. Purpose: To set forth God's purpose in summing up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and things upon the earth (1:9-10).

V. FEATURES OF THE BOOK

A. No personal salutations - leads to the belief the epistle was to be a circular letter read to other area churches, not just the one in Ephesus.

B. The church:

1. The church is revealed in its "universal" sense (1:22-23; 4:4, 16).
2. Its divine and eternal character:
 - a) Conception: Planned by God in eternity (1:4; 3:11)
 - b) Construction: Grace of God through faith (1:19 - 2:10).
 - c) Consummation: fullness of God (1:10, 23).
3. Three metaphors emphasizing relationship:
 - a) The BODY of Christ - Christ the authoritative HEAD (1:22-23; 4:4, 16).
 - b) The BUILDING of God - Christ is the chief CORNERSTONE (2:19-22).
 - c) The BRIDE of Christ - Christ the sacrificial HUSBAND (5:25-27, 32).

C. Key words and phrases:

1. "in" occurs some ninety times denoting relationship - "in Christ"
 - a) Where all spiritual blessings are found (1:3, 11; 2:6, 7, 13).
 - b) Where God's chosen, unblemished, and holy people dwell in love (1:4).
 - c) Where Redemption from sin is found (1:7)
 - d) The focal point for the summation of all things in the heavens and upon the earth (1:10).
 - e) The theme of the gospel message (1:13).
2. "Grace" occurs thirteen times denoting the numerated favor of God expressed in salvation for man through Christ (1:6, 7; 2:5, 8).
3. "Heavenlies" occurs 5 times; the realm of the Christian's walk and warfare (1:3; 2:6; 6:12; etc.)
4. "Mysteries" occurs 6 times; Not something you cannot understand, but the truth held in secret until revealed by God at the proper time (3:3-6, 9; 6:19).

5. "Walk" occurs 8 times denoting the character of living (2:2, 10; 4:1, 17; 5:2, 8, 11 15-16 ; etc.).
- D. Our relationship with the Lord controls our personal relationships (5:21-6:9).
1. Wife - Husband
 2. Children - Parents
 3. Servants - Masters

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VI. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK (Adapted from Baxter in EXPLORE THE BOOK)

- A. OUR WEALTH IN CHRIST (Chapters 1-3).
 1. Praise for spiritual possession (1:3-14).
 2. Prayer for spiritual perception (1: 15-23).
 3. Our new condition in Christ (2:1-10).
 4. Our new relation in Christ (2:11-22).
 5. Revealing of the Divine mystery (3:1-12).
 6. Receiving of the Divine fullness (3:13-21).
- B. OUR WALK IN CHRIST (Chapters 4-6)
 1. Regarding the church corporately (4:1-16).
 2. Regarding believers individually (4:17-5:2)
 3. Regarding sensual living and living before outsiders (5:3-21).
 4. Regarding special relationships at home (5:22-6:9).
 5. Regarding resisting Satan's spirit -powers (6:10-20).
- C. CONCLUSION (6:21-24).