

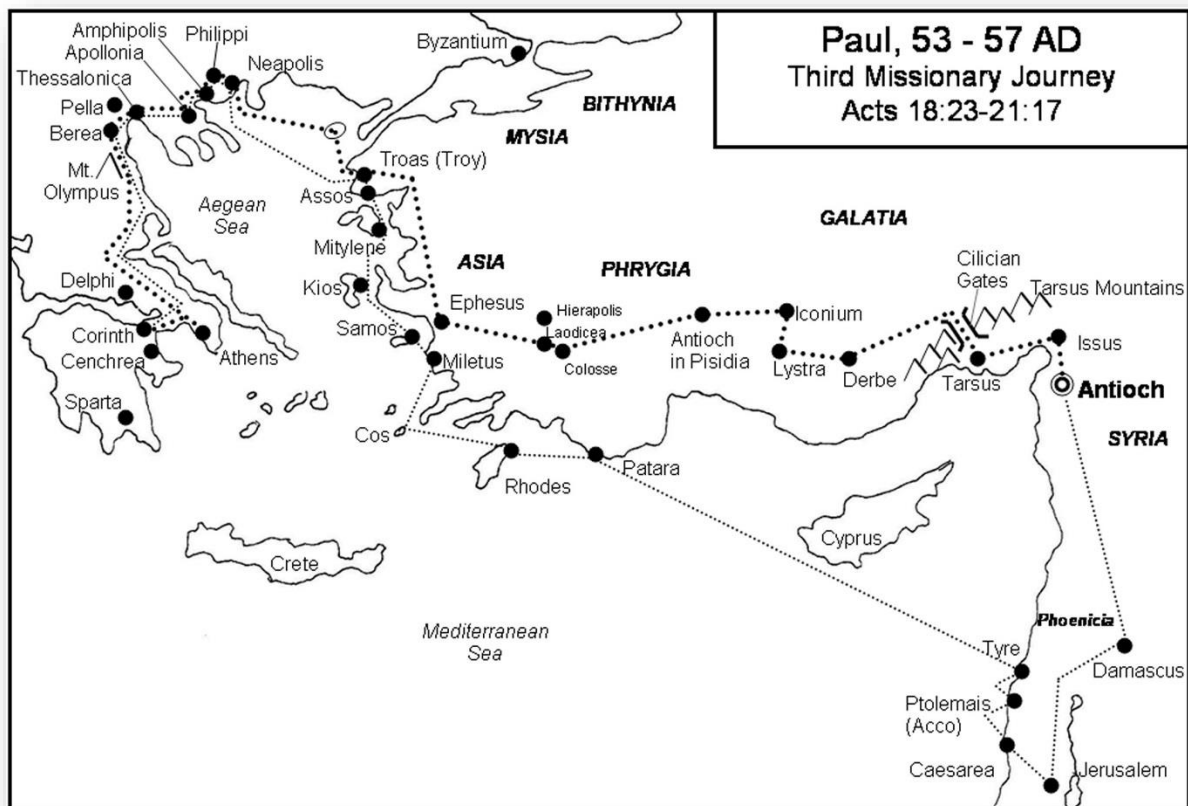
## Acts 19:1-20:1 (53-56 AD)

**Acts 18:22-23** – Paul covers 1,500 miles in these verses recorded by Luke. Then in 19:1 Paul heads back to Ephesus.

**Acts 18:22-19:1** covers about one year. Paul returns to Ephesus by land through Galatia and Phrygia to visit the churches in Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe.

### Acts 18:24-28

- Aquilla and Priscilla are in Ephesus
- Timothy and Silas are in Greece (Corinth) and Macedonia (Thessalonica)
- Paul is in Syria
- Apollos comes to speak in the Ephesian Synagogue. He is an articulate orator from Alexandria, Egypt who is trained in speaking, educated in the Old Testament and believes (though knowledge is limited) in Jesus as the Messiah



### Acts 19:1-7 - EPHESUS

Paul spends 3 years in Ephesus. Compare this with 18 months in Corinth.

Ephesus is a port city in 52 AD

The great Temple of Artemis is in Ephesus. It is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Artemis is the official goddess of Ephesus, but as many as 50 other gods are worshipped here.

Ephesus is:

- In the Meander Valley, which is a plain southeast of the Cayster River (Meander River) which connected the Aegean Sea (Mediterranean) to the harbor for the port of Ephesus.
- The ancient port of Ephesus is 4 miles inland from the coast of the Aegean Sea.

- By 350 AD the Cayster River was so silted up from 1,000's of years the channel was no longer useable. Today the area and the ancient port are marshy land
- Described in many ancient inscriptions as:  
"THE FIRST AND GREATEST METROPOLIS OF ASIA"
- Population is 250,000 which places Ephesus 4<sup>th</sup> behind Rome, Alexandria and Antioch
- For 150 years Ephesus was Rome's administrative center in Asia
- Roman mile markers in Asia were numbered from Ephesus
- Ephesus was very prosperous and controlled the economics of Asia
- Ephesus is mentioned 18 times in the NT
- Today ancient Ephesus is known as Efes and is 2 miles from the city of Selcuk (population 30,500)

#### Archaeology:

- Excavation began in 1863
- Since 1895 there have been annual excavations with published reports every year by the Austrian excavation team working the site.
- 3,500 inscriptions have been found
- Foundations and walls have been identified for temples, a library, two market places, fountains, gymnasiums, bath houses
- Houses with 3 floors surrounding the columned open center court have been excavated that belonged to the wealthy. These homes show remains of walls decorated with fresco and floors with scenes from Greek literature designed in mosaic.
- Paul worked in this city for 3 years and wrote 1 and 2 Corinthians from Ephesus.
- Timothy worked here and received 1 and 2 Timothy from Paul while living in Ephesus.
- John wrote his Gospel and 1, 2 and 3 John from Ephesus, and, also, addressed the Ephesian church from the Isle of Patmos in the book of Revelation.
- Much of the city, including the Jewish quarter from the first century, remains unexcavated.

**Acts 19:1** – Paul meets followers of Jesus who only know John the Baptist's message and introductory statements concerning Jesus plus bits and pieces from Jesus' teaching and ministry. This is 20 years after the resurrection. They did not know about Jesus' death, resurrection and the out pouring of the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit had not yet come on these men. Romans 8:9 says that if you do not have the Spirit you do not belong to Christ.
- Paul teaches, the Ephesian disciples of John the Baptist believe, Paul baptizes and the Holy Spirit manifests
- This is very similar to Apollos' situation in Acts 18:25

**19:8** – Paul spoke for 3 months in the Ephesian synagogue.

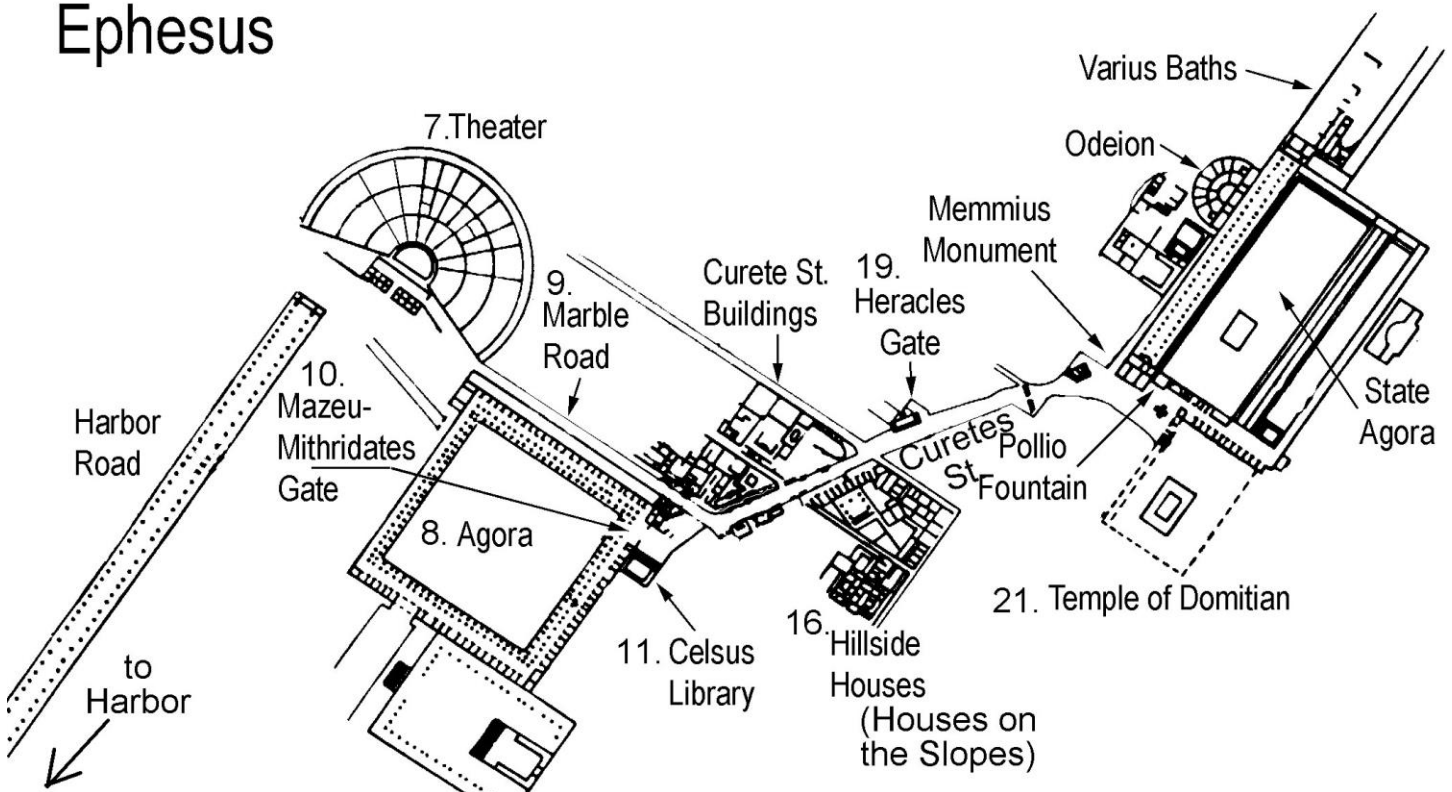
- Synagogue rulers were more tolerant in Ephesus than those in Thessalonica who only listened for 3 weeks and the Corinthians who soon became abusive and took Paul to court.
- The Jewish Quarter in Ephesus has not been excavated yet. So, the Ephesian synagogue(s) has not yet been found.
- Inscriptions found include:
  - Stone fragment inscribed with a menorah with inscription: "THE ALTAR"
  - An inscription that reads: "MAY THE YEARS OF THE RULERS OF THE SYNAOGUE AND OF THE ELDERS BE MANY"
    - "rulers" is "archisynagogoi" and "elders" is "presbyteroi"
  - Josephus says the Jews in Ephesus were granted citizenship and were given exemptions for certain Sabbath activities
  - Three inscriptions from Jewish tombs have been found. One refers to the deceased Jew as "THE CHIEF DOCTOR OF THE CITY."

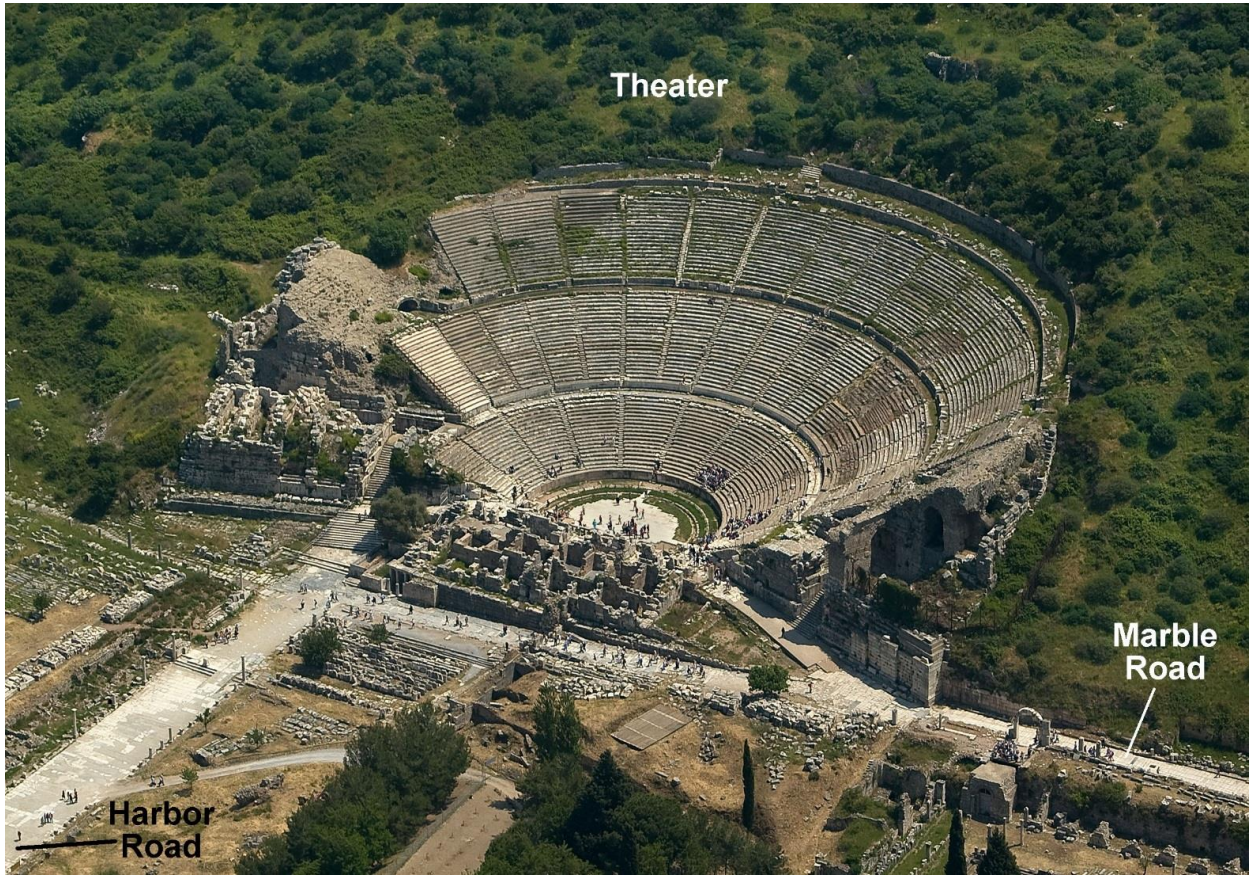
**19:9** – Tyrannus Lecture Hall

- Wider variety of buildings, halls and schools have been excavated. One library is named "Library of Celsus" but none with Tyrannus' name.. yet.
- Tyrannus either owned the building or used the building for his morning classes

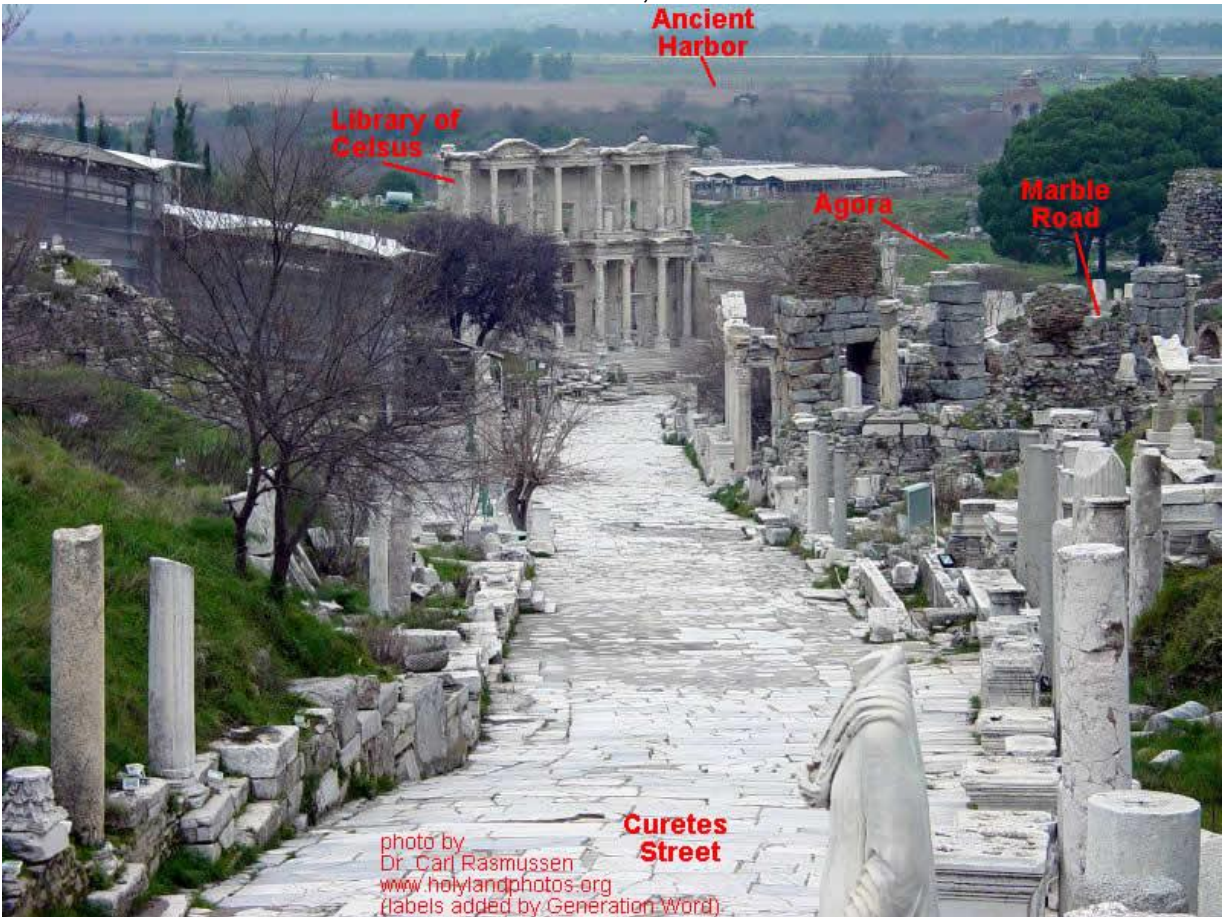
- When Opposition in the synagogue was too intense and prevented Paul from executing his duties as an Apostle he began to teach intensely every day at noon in an available Lecture Hall of Tyrannus
- Many Jews followed Paul out of the synagogue to the lecture hall
- Notice that Paul did not set up a synagogue, a synagogue service or even a church, but simply began teaching.
- The Western Text has the information here at 19:9 that says that Paul taught from 11 AM until 4 PM daily.
- Paul's day in Ephesus:
  - 7 AM (sunrise)-11 AM, working with his trade as a leather worker
  - 11 AM-4 PM – teaching during the lunch, rest and personal time (See Acts 20:34)
  - 4 PM – 8 PM (sunset) – return to work
- At 11 AM public activity came to a stop. Scholars say there were more people asleep in Ephesus at 1 in the afternoon (1 PM) than at 1 o'clock in the morning (1 AM.)
- People were forfeiting their daily naps/siesta for Bible teaching.
- 19:10** – Paul did this in Tyrannus' Lecture Hall for 2 years.
  - During this time missionary activity spread into Asia
  - It was at this time Epaphras enters the story (Unwritten in Acts) by evangelizing the Lycus Valley (Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis)
  - John's seven churches of Asia would have originated at this time.

## Ephesus





seats 24,000



**19:11** – “extraordinary miracles”

The verb “did” in the phrase “God did extraordinary miracles” is in the imperfect tense which means Paul cast out demons on a regular basis.

**19:12** - “Handkerchiefs” is the word *soudarion* and refers to a face cloth for wiping perspiration.

“Aprons” is the word *simikinthion* and refers to a belt including a tool belt.

It was common belief and practice in the occult and pagan view of the day that spiritual power could charge an object so that the spiritual power could be transferred from one place to the other through the object. This is not necessarily Paul’s idea or his common practice, but it is what the Ephesians assumed should happen. So, it appears that God met the people at their level of understanding. Through this and other methods God is going to demonstrate his superiority in the spiritual realm during Paul’s three years in Ephesus.

In Jesus ministry and in the book of Luke the reality and power of the demonic world is assumed to be real.

**19:13-16** – Jewish exorcist – coming to us from antiquity are the remains of numerous magical amulets of the Jews which were objects used to protect people from demonic powers. Many incantations and exorcism techniques supposedly handed down from Solomon where practiced. Even Josephus writes: “God granted Solomon knowledge of the art used against demons for the benefit and healing of men. He also composed incantations by which illnesses are relieved, and left behind forms of exorcisms with which those possessed by demons drive them out, never to return.”

We may see Jesus referring to these things in:

- Matthew 12:27 – “And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? therefore shall they be your judges.”
- Luke 11:24-26 – ““When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first.”

Any name that supposedly contained power would be used in magical incantations, since names also contained a spiritual charge similar to the way an object could.

Sceva, the Jewish chief priest, may have been referenced by Jesus in Matthew 12:27 when he says to the Jewish leaders, “by whom do your sons cast them out?”

Spiritual power need not be aligned with Jesus as seen in these situations in Ephesus.

But, Paul makes clear in both letters sent back to this area (Ephesians and Colossae) that Jesus is the head over every power.

- Ephesians 1:20-22 – “...when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church.”
- Colossians 1:16-19 – “For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created

through him and for him. ...so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him.”

**19:17-20** – Repentance and revival in Ephesus –

50,000 drachmas – the current market value of the scrolls was equal to 50,000 days of wages or 150 people’s annual salary.

(So,  $\$35,000 \times 150 = \$5,250,000$ ;  $\$50,000 \times 150 = \$7,500,000$ ;  $\$100,000 \times 150 = \$15,000,000$ )

This culture had grown up with this pagan, magic Greek religion. With the introduction of Christ they throw it all away.

**19:21-22** – Paul’s travel plans and his need to go to Corinth.

Timothy and Erastus are sent ahead. Timothy went to Corinth from Ephesus at this time is seen in:

- 1 Cor. 4:17 – “For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.”
- 1 Cor. 16:10-11 – “When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. <sup>11</sup> No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers.”

**19:23-41** – The Ephesian Riot in the Theater

“Demetrius” – In the 1800’s an inscription found in Ephesus from the middle of the first century was found that mention the men who served as the “temple wardens” for the temple of Artemis in Ephesus. One of the men’s names was Demetrius, son of Menophilos and grandson of Tryphon.”

In the fall of 67 AD Paul writes to Timothy in Ephesus in 2 Timothy 4:14 – “Alexander the metal worker did me a great deal of harm...You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message.”

**Acts 20:1** – Paul leaves for Macedonia to meet with churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, etc. before moving on to Corinth in Achaia (Greece).