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Ephesus, Pagan and Christian 133 B.C. - 262 A.D.

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EPHESUS, PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN

133 B.C. - 262 A.D.

by

Ruth O. Michener

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of the requirements for the degree
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INTRODUCTION

The large and varied territory known as Asia Minor is the land where the continent of Asia nearly joins hands with the soil of Europe. For it is a great peninsula where the coast of Asia almost touches the shore line of Greece. They are separated by the island dotted Aegean Sea. Asia Minor is the land which is the gateway to and from the four quarters of the earth. It is the land where the Orient and the Occident meet and mingle. This point we must not forget, for the history of the city of Ephesus is the story of the mixing of the culture of the Orient and the culture of the Greeks and the Romans. Asia Minor was the land where the great trade routes converged from Asia going to Europe, and where the trade routes from Europe joined those of Asia going East.

Ephesus was not only the capital city of the great province of Asia in the heart of Asia Minor, but it was one of the three great cities of the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. Its reputation in size, wealth, beauty, culture, and power, was shared in the first Christian century with Alexandria, Egypt, and Antioch, Syria.

This dissertation is an attempt to reconstruct and to recapture a period in the history of this famous city, a center so important in New Testament times and in the first two centuries of the Christian Church, but a metropolis which

centuries ago became buried in the silt of a river. The site and a primitive kind of settlement began in pre-historic times. We will briefly trace the story of its ancestory; its youth; its changes; traditions; then its glory between the years 133 B.C. to A.D. 262; its contribution to culture; its spirit; its contact with Christianity; its period as a Christian center; the invasion of the Goths; the inroad of Islam; its disappearance; and its partial excavation in the nineteenth century. It is the period of its glory, 133 B.C. to A.D. 262, that is the theme of this dissertation. This was the period when the religion of Artemis was at its height and her temple at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. This period includes the era when Christianity appeared in Ephesus and gained a foothold. Here at Ephesus the Christian writing was formed into a body of literature and published, and the Christian tradition became a pattern of Apostolic tradition. It was in these two Christian centuries that the episcopal form of church government and organization made its appearance.

Ephesus lives in the New Testament and in the early centuries of Christian Church History. It lives in the lives of many Christian men and women; its spirit and traditions echo and re-echo in canonical and extra-canonical Christian writings; it lives in the lives and writings of early Church Fathers. It is this city of tradition, a city long since gone from sight, whose story is to be told uncovered and re-captured.

The sources of information about Ephesus are varied, for not one of them even attempts to give a complete account, but merely reveals a little here and a little there in passing, as they write about their world as they saw it. Strabo, who wrote seventeen books; Pausanias, a traveler; Apollonius; Herodotus, the Greek historian who knew the Persian period, all give glimpses. The Greek and Roman historians, Pliny, Plutarch, Tacitus, and many other writers give us a general idea of the Hellenic and Hellenistic period. But it has been the work of archaeologists who have brought to light by their explorations and excavations many historical facts from coins, inscriptions, parts of buildings, and various objects of art.

Practically all of this material on the history of pre-Christian Ephesus, and the recovering and recapturing of pagan Ephesus was gathered from scattered secondary sources and archaeological reports as the bibliography will show. No one has seemed to put together a complete story of Ephesus throughout its history, or of any specific period of its history. Bits of information have been gleaned from histories, books on archaeology, books of early Christian writing, periodicals, and encyclopaedias. One of the purposes of writing the story of Pagan and Christian Ephesus was to bring together the far-flung pieces of information and to attempt to organize them into a chronological picture that the general pattern might be seen. Ephesus, its location, background and culture, had a great influence on Christianity, and to understand this it seems necessary to understand the background and

the Oriental and Hellenistic dualism of its culture.

When we come to Christianity in Ephesus we are much more fortunate in our source material. In the New Testament we have the book of Acts, scattered information in the letters of Paul, the Johannine writings, and perhaps I and II Timothy. And after the apostolic writing we have the letters of Ignatius and Polycarp. In the latter part of the second century we have the valuable writing of Irenaeus, and last of all we have Eusebius, who wrote a Church History in ten books, preserving many things for us that otherwise would have been lost.

In addition to this source material, there are countless books written about the events of the period of early Christianity in Ephesus. We are indebted to many writers for inspiration and the courage to complete this dissertation.

The plan of arranging this gathered information is, first, to give a brief survey of the history of Ephesus; second, to give a picture of it in the period 133 B.C. to A.D. 262 when it flourished in all its pagan glory; third, to tell of early Christianity in Ephesus and the Christian men who worked there; and fourth, to tell of the early Church Fathers who came in contact with Ephesus and who were influenced by the Ephesian aspect of Christianity.

From A.D. 70 to A.D. 200 Ephesus was the home of Christianity. The leadership of the movement came from Ephesus. By A.D. 200 Rome began assuming the leading role and by A.D. 262 was the center of Christianity. But in this comparatively short time Ephesus played a never to be forgotten influence as

the base of early Christian activity and a city of Christian tradition. Both the Oriental and the Hellenistic cultures left some mark upon Christianity. The religious tolerance, syncretism, intellectual culture, and cosmopolitan atmosphere proved to be a challenge for the Christian movement to develop, to formulate a creed of orthodoxy, to write, to publish, to organize, and to evangelize. It was at Ephesus that beginning Christianity stood for its principle and historical foundations. This is the theme of the story of Pagan and Christian Ephesus.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PAGAN EPHESUS

Ephesus, we are told, was a city of change. Its physical features changed as did its history and its peoples. For example, the present day site of ancient Ephesus has all the appearance of being inland. It is a plain, closed in on the north and south by mountains. But the ancient traveler, official, or Christian, coming across the Aegean Sea from the west sailed into Ephesus, while the modern shore is a harborless line of sandy beach, unapproachable by ship. The Ephesian plain was once the Gulf of Ephesus. Ramsay tells us,

> The river Cayster has gradually silted up the gulf to the outer coast line beyond the ends of the mountains, and has made Ephesus seem like an inland city, whereas Strabo in A.D. 20 describes it as a city of the coast.[1]

The history of Ephesus becomes somewhat clear beginning about 1044 B.C., which is approximately the time of the Hebrew monarchy in the Old Testament. "But neither the dates nor successive stages in the history of the Ephesian valley can be fully discerned."[2] Centuries before 1044 B.C. the

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[1] W. M. Ramsay, The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia (London: Hodder and Stroughton, 1904), p. 215.

[2] Merril M. Parvis, "Archaeology and St. Paul's Journeys in Greek Lands," The Biblical Archaeologist, VIII (Sept. 1945), 63.

port at the mouth of the river had attracted settlers. Pausanias, traveler and geographer of the second century A.D., called them Carians, but they were probably Hittites. At this harbor there arose a shrine of the many breasted Nature-Goddess, later identified by the Greeks with their own Artemis. The population lived in villages around the shrine and on land belonging wholly or in part to her and completely dominated by her priests. With the coming of the Ionians, or Greeks, around 1044 B.C. a long conflict took place between the hierarchy of the nature-goddess and the Hellenic political ideas of the Ionian immigrants. The conflict, even with armed priestesses, is possibly what gave rise to the legend, that the Amazons, who were mythical female warriors, founded Ephesus. Even after hostilities ceased between the native Orientals and the Hellenists, and they had settled down to live side by side, they presented two distinct cultures, and this dualism continued throughout Ephesian history.

In 560 B.C. Ephesus was conquered by the Lydian king, Croesus. But in 557 B.C. Cyrus of Persia conquered the Lydian kingdom, and the Oriental prevailed over the Hellenic. This is the same Cyrus who in 538 B.C. made an edict that permitted the Jews to return from their Babylonian captivity. Between the seventh and the fifth centuries it has been found that three different temple structures had been erected to the nature-goddess. The last of these was a yellow limestone building, called the temple of Croesus, because the King of Lydia presented some beautiful columns to it. Between 557 B.C.

and 335 B.C. Artemis, by gradual change, became a national deity of the city, and Ephesus became, not just a union of scattered villages with a Temple as the center, but it became a city with a certain organization and a form of municipal government. It had its own coins which is a sure proof of administrative independence as a city. It is from the coins of Ephesus that we learn something of its changes and its history. During this period the city was more Asiatic than Hellenic in its culture. The Ephesian goddess, Artemis, became the recognized deity of the city and the patroness of both family and city life.

The power and supremacy of the Persian Empire ended by 465 B.C. which was around the time of Ezra and Nehemiah in Jerusalem. At this change Ephesus paid tribute to Athens, but in spite of this contact with the Greek city, it remained an Oriental city. During this early period Ephesus produced a great philosopher, a great artist, and the worship of Artemis became a well developed religion. The philosopher was Heraclitus of Ephesus (ca. 540-475 B.C.), the artist was Apelles (ca. 335 B.C.).

Throughout the fifth century B.C. philosophers attempted to answer the questions raised by the world about them. Heraclitus of Ephesus in his search for reality was impressed by the act of constant change in the world he observed. "Every thing flows; nothing abides,"[3] so he said. He was a

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[3]Albert A. Trever, History of Ancient Civilization (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1936), I, 220-221.

critic of other thinkers, and a scorner of the common people, and the growing trend toward a liberal government. He was one of the early Greek metaphysicians and we are told that he "repudiated the mythologies of the poets and the traditional religious usuages of his day."[4] He himself wrote, "This world . . . no one of the gods or men has made, but it was ever, is now, and ever shall be an overflowing fire."[5]

Commenting upon his views and his work, Trever has said,

> In other language, . . . he identifies this primal fire with the logos, appearing to imply by the term spirit and intelligence. He thinks of an eternal preexistent logos or single divine law or thought through which all comes to be in the whole world, the unity in which opposites are reconciled. . . . The logos is immanent in nature and man.[6]

While Heraclitus of Ephesus viewed all as physical, the universe in constant flow, still he "regarded it as fashioned by a fiery element, the all-penetrating reason, of which men's souls are a part."[7] Many scholars suggest that Heraclitus presented the germ of the logos conception which was later to appear in Greek metaphysical philosophy and Christian theology. The logos idea appears in the prologue of the Gospel of John written at Ephesus some five hundred years after Heraclitus.

Ephesus not only furnished one of the greatest ancient philosophers, she produced Apelles, called the greatest of all

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[4] Ibid. [5] Ibid. [6] Ibid.

[7] Williston Walker, A History of the Christian Church (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 3.

classic painters. He attained his fame around 335 B.C. He was master of the use of light and dark and of illusion. According to Pliny:

> he painted for twenty talents, in the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, a portrait of Alexander holding a thunderbolt. The fingers seem to stand out and the thunderbolt to project from the picture. The reader should remember that all this was done with four colors. . . . Skilled judges of painting prefer among all his works his equestrian portrait of Antigonus and his Artemis amid a band of girls offering sacrifice, a painting thought to have excelled the lines of Homer that describes the scene. Further, he painted the unpaintable, thunder, for example, lightening and thunderbolts.[8]

The temple of Artemis seems to have begun as a primitive shrine. Eventually buildings were erected on a scale larger and grander than before, as the early temples became destroyed by fire. A temple was started 550 B.C., less than fifty years after the second temple was completed in Jerusalem, and was a hundred and twenty years in the building. Its final dedication was around 430 B.C. Herodotus, the famous Greek historian (484-432 B.C.), speaks of this temple as standing in his day.

> In 356 B.C. on the very night when Alexander the Great was born, it was burned; and when he grew to manhood he offered to rebuild it at his own expense if his name might be inscribed upon its portals. This the priests of Ephesus were unwilling to permit, and they politely rejected his offer by saying that it was not fitting for one god to build a temple to another. The wealthy Ephesians themselves undertook its reconstruction and 220 years passed before its final completion.
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> Not only was the temple of Diana [Artemis] a place

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[8] Wallace Everett Caldwell, The Ancient World (New York: Farrar & Rhinehart, Inc., 1937), I, 286.

> of worship, and a treasure house, but was also a museum in which the best statuary and most beautiful paintings were preserved. Among the paintings was the one by the famous Apelles, a native of Ephesus, representing Alexander the Great hurling a thunderbolt. It was also a sanctuary for the criminal, a kind of city of refuge, for none might be arrested for any crime whatever when within a bowshoot of its walls. There sprang up, therefore, about the temple a village in which the thieves and murderers and other criminals made their homes. Not only did the temple bring vast numbers of pilgrims to the city . . . but it employed hosts of people apart from the priests and priestesses; among them were the large number of artisans who manufactured images of the goddess Diana, or shrines to sell to the visiting strangers.
> . . . . . .
>
> In time the temple possessed valuable lands; it controlled the fisheries; its priests were the bankers of its enormous revenues. Because of its strength the people stored there their money for safe-keeping; and it became to the ancient world practically all the Bank of England is to the modern world.[9]

The conquest of Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.) was the appearing of more than a conqueror. While he practically dominated the civilized world, including the Persian Empire, Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine which are of interest to us, his real goal was to spread Greek culture. He wanted the world united but for each state to maintain its identity. While his empire fell apart at his death, still the results of his ideal and conquest go on to our times. Alexander shook the world of his day to its foundations; he disturbed old belief and brought the world to think in larger units. But most important of all he arrested the expansion and power of the despotic Oriental Persian Empire, which meant that he

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[9] E. J. Banks, "Ephesus," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, ed. James Orr (Chicago: The Howard-Severance Company, 1937), II, 961.

stopped the Eastern culture from taking over the European continent. Through Alexander the superior Greek culture was extended and the Greek language brought into use everywhere. His conquest made possible free trade, travel and communication among all peoples of the Mediterranean world, and the exchange of ideas and knowledge.

> With the conquest of Asia by Alexander the Great, after 335, the Greek spirit began to strengthen itself in Ephesus and in general throughout the country. This is first perceptible in the coinage. The bee, the sacred insect and the symbol of the Great Goddess, had hitherto always been the principal type on Ephesian coins. Now about 295 B.C. a purely Greek type, the head of the Greek Artemis, the Virgin 'Queen and Huntress chaste and fair,' was substituted for the bee on the silver coins, while the less honourable copper coinage retained the old hieratic types.[10]

It is in such discoveries as these that we become aware of the struggle of two divergent cultures. Ephesus was the melting pot of Eastern and Western viewpoints and this fact was to have some influence on the development of early Christianity.

> On the other hand Greek religion was strongly anthropomorphic, and the Hellenic spirit, as it developed and attained fuller consciousness of its own nature, rejected more and more decisively the animal forms and animal analogies in which the Anatolian religion delighted.
>
> Where Greece adopted an Anatolian cult, it tried to free itself from animal associations, and to transform the Divine impersonation after the purely human beautiful Hellenic idea. Thus to substitute the head of the huntress Virgin Artemis for the bee on the coins was to transform an Anatolian conception into a Greek figure, and to blazon the triumph of the Greek spirit over the Oriental.[11]

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[10] Ramsay, op. cit., p. 221.

[11] Ibid., pp. 222-223.

. . . . . .

> The result of that free mixture of races in the Graeco-Asiatic cities was to stimulate a rapid and precocious development. There was great ease of intercourse and freedom of trade, a settled and sound coinage and monetary system, much commerce on a considerable scale, much eagerness and opportunity to make money by large financial operations. There was also a notable development on the intellectual side. Curiosity was stimulated in the meeting of such diverse races.
>
> Thus an amalgamation of Oriental and European races and intellect, manners and law, was being worked out practically in the collision and competition of such diverse elements. . . . It was done . . ., not by Europeanising the Asiatic, but by profoundly modifying both; each learned from the other; . . .[12]

After the time of Alexander the Jews of Palestine were to be found throughout the Mediterranean world. The mixture of Greek and Jewish thought was conspicuous in Asia Minor. This spreading of the Jews and Jewish culture into nearly every city of the Greek world, and the universal use of the Greek language paved the way for the spread of the Christian message two or more centuries later.

Alexander's kingdom was divided among his generals. Under them and their successors there was much shifting of territory and some provinces fell away to become independent states. Such was the case of Pergamus in Asia Minor which became an independent kingdom and embraced a considerable portion of the land. The Hellenistic ruler, Lysimachus (287-281 B.C.), held the western part of Asia Minor which included Ephesus.

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[12] Ibid., pp. 133-134.

The Ephesus of 560-287 B.C. was in a low-lying situation, surrounded on three sides by higher ground and in time of heavy rains a great amount of water poured into the city. King Lysimachus and the Hellenistic residents wanted to abandon the low-lying location and build a new Hellenistic Ephesus. The Oriental Asiatics refused to hear of it. Lysimachus then took advantage of a heavy rain by stopping the channels which permitted the water to flow into the gulf. The city was flooded and stayed flooded for a long period. The inhabitants were forced to leave and the Asiatics were glad to rebuild on a new situation.

Between 287-281 B.C. an entirely new city was built on a better location. This site lasted nearly a thousand years; lasted until Ephesus gradually disappeared. Lysimachus made the new Ephesus a Hellenistic city and gave it a new name, Arsinoe, in honor of his wife. He had new coins made with the bust of his wife on them. This move constituted a definite break from the Asiatic plan of a city, and Artemis, who had more and more taken on the Greek concept, was the reigning goddess.

When Lysimachus died in 281 B.C. the name Arsinoe was quickly changed back to the name of Ephesus, as the coins from that period reveal. The word Ephesus is the Greek form of a native Oriental name. Thus in the end the Oriental goddess and the Oriental name survived in a Greek form. Here again we have evidence of the struggle of the Asiatic (Carian, Hittite, Lydian, Persian) and the Hellenistic (Greek), as the two

cultures blended into one of the great cities of the ancient world.

We now come to the period when Rome became the ruler of the Mediterranean world. Rome succeeded in mastering Greece by conquest during the period 215-168 B.C. In 133 B.C. the king of Pergamum in Asia Minor died leaving no heir. He realized that the Roman conquest was inevitable, so he willed his territories to Rome, and in a few years all Asia Minor was part of the vast Roman Empire. It was the centuries between 133 B.C. and A.D. 262, when Ephesus was at the height of her power and prestige, and Rome dominated the Mediterranean world, that will be covered the most fully in this dissertation.

While Rome left many territories and provinces as she found them, she made a change in Asia Minor by establishing the great Roman province of Asia in the very heart of this great peninsula. After some competition with other cities, Ephesus became the capital of this region. This province was the wealthiest district of the whole Roman Empire and it was therefore particularly tempting to the greed of the average Roman official.

Rome proved to be a good organizer and administrator with a gift for uniting her diversified Empire. The Roman spirit, law, organization, authority and power left its mark not only on the pagan world but on the development of the Christian religion.

> There can be little doubt that several of the features of Christianity were determined in Asia. Roman Provincial unity, founded in a common religion, was the strong-

> est idea in Asia, and it must inevitably influence, whether directly or through the recoil from and opposition to it, the growth of such an organization as the Church in Asia, for the Christian Church from the beginning recognized the political facts of the time and accommodated itself to them.[13]

The Romans adopted the Greek culture and became the disseminators of it. They restored law and order in the anarchy and civil war which had threatened the Greeks, and having little philosophy, literature and art of their own they adopted what Greece had to give. They also took over the task of protecting Western civilization from the inroads of the Orient.

> Rome protected and extended Greek culture. Hellenism was so closely allied to Christianity that what Rome did for Hellenism she did for Christianity. It was from the Greeks that the Romans acquired a taste for the things of the spirit. . . . The respect with which Rome treated Greek culture raised its value over the Empire and Rome opened the whole world to the intellectual conquests of Greece.[14]

Caesar Augustus was the first Roman Emperor (31 B.C.-A.D. 14). He enlarged the empire and introduced an era of peace and order such as had not been known before. His work extended to Ephesus.

> Caesar Augustus, in addition to restricting the limits of the sacred precincts of the Temple commenced many large public buildings which were probably finished by Tiberius Caesar. In the time of the Caesars, the majority of the public buildings, including the Theater and the Gymnasium, were erected. The foundations of some of the ancient Greek structures were allowed to remain wherever they could be utilized.[15]

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[13] Ramsay, op. cit., p. 115.

[14] S. Angus, The Enviroment of Early Christianity (London: Duckworth & Co., 1914), p. 201.

[15] The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., p. 66.

It was late in the reign of Augustus Caesar that there was born in Palestine (part of a Province of the Roman Empire), Jesus of Nazareth, the founder of a new religion. While Jesus was still a youth, there was born in another Jewish home of the Roman Empire, Tarsus of Cilicia, one destined to carry the Gospel to Ephesus. Concerning Paul, Goodspeed has written that he was,

> To exert a twofold influence of great range on behalf of the new Christian faith, first by his missionary travels and then a generation later by the letters he had written, when they were collected and published. Other men traveled and other men wrote, but none performed both these services to the new faith to the extent that he did. And of all the followers of Jesus, none made so great a contribution to the thinking of mankind as Paul.[16]

This Christian Jew was the first to make inroad against the worship of Artemis, the reigning goddess of Ephesus. A Christian church was established and flourished. In time pilgrims ceased to come to her shrine in large numbers, and the sale of her shrines declined. Artemis no longer was as great as she had been. A new element had entered this Graeco-Oriental city, a new way of thinking, a new standard of living, a new religion.

Near the middle of the second century A.D., when the Roman government was in a weakened state, the Goths, a primitive, barbaric people, invaded the Empire. Year by year they extended their incursions until they reached the rich province of Asia and its capital, Ephesus. They had a crude, inferior

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[16]Edgar J. Goodspeed, Paul (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1947), p. 1.

culture, few laws, and many gods. They were seeking wealth and a better place to live than their nomadic lands had provided. Ephesus was captured by the Goths and sacked. In 262 A.D. the temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, and one of the richest of ancient temples was burned for the last time. It was never again rebuilt. With the invasion of the Goths the culture and glory of Ephesus as it had developed from 133 B.C. to 262 A.D. began to decline. While there continued to be a city for several centuries, there were many changes. Ephesus continued to have Christian churches, its harbor silted up, its commerce and wealth decreased, it ceased to be an intellectual center, and it lost its historical importance.

In 306 A.D. Constantine the Great became the ruler of the Roman Empire. He was converted to Christianity, and by royal decree 325 A.D., Christianity was made the legal religion of the Roman Empire. By this act Christianity became the official religion of the Province of Asia and of Ephesus. It took centuries for Christianity to assimulate and evangelize paganism (Oriental, Greek, Roman, Gothic). "By the year 500 the pagan cults had all but disappeared. They survived chiefly in backward districts and remoted mountain valleys, or among barbarian invaders."[17]

In these five centuries Christianity had spread over

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[17] Kenneth Scott Latourette, A History of Christianity (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 240.

the Roman Empire, it had developed a literature, an organization, definite statements of belief, and we feel justified in stating that there was the beginnings of a Christian culture that was to replace the Pagan.

The followers of Christianity began building churches for their worship and in turn they tore down the pagan temples. They even used the stones for their own structures.

> Later Christian times are represented not only by the remains of Justinian's Church of St. John . . ., but also by the very interesting ruins of the double Church of the Virgin Mary, where the Council of Ephesus was held in A.D. 431. This building was built probably around A.D. 350 on the foundations of a pagan building more than 800 feet long, probably a school, which had been destroyed in the preceding century.[18]

By the time of the Roman Emperor Justinian (527-563 A.D.), Ephesus ceased to be accessable for shipping and the city harbor became an inland marsh. Her commerce was gone, Artemis was gone, her magnificent buildings had been sacked, destroyed and not rebuilt, her people moved to other places, she was no longer a capital city, she was no longer a dwelling place, and relentlessly the silt moved in to bury what was left.

In the seventh century came the rise of the Arabian religion of Islam. The miracle of this Mohammedian religion was that within a hundred years its rulers controlled an empire more vast than that of Rome. It was skillful and forceful in supplanting other religions. By 1025 the dreaded

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[18] Jack Finegan, Light From the Ancient Past (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 269.

Seljuk Turks, newly converted to the religion of Islam, made their appearance in Asia Minor. Slowly Christianity lost its foothold and the Moslem religion took over.

> With the decline of her commerce and the destruction of the Temple, Ephesus lost her historical importance, and we know but little of her history during many centuries. The city probably fell into the hands of numerous adventurers among whom is named a certain Greek pirate of the eleventh century. The Turks took possession of the city in the thirteenth century, and built a considerable town at Ayassoluk. Both Ephesus and Ayassoluk fell into the hands of the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem who struck some coins at Ayassoluk in A.D. 1365. Ephesus was by degrees deserted, and it remained for the archaeologist again to bring light a once teeming city.[19]

Neither Ephesus or Ayassoluk exists in modern Turkey. But near the ancient site is a small village known as Seljuk.

For more than two thousand years (1000 B.C.-1365 A.D.) this city of flux and change was the melting pot for the Asiatic, the Greek, the Hellenistic, the Jew, the Roman, the Christian, and the Goth. It was the home of four powerful religions, Artemis, Christianity, the Roman State religion of Emperor worship, and lastly the Mohammedan. In this city of syncretism, which lies buried in the marsh of silt and water and reeds, Christianity found a center from A.D. 70 to A.D. 262.

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[19] The Biblical Archaeologist, loc. cit.

CHAPTER II

PAGAN EPHESUS, 133 B.C. to A.D. 262

For centuries Ephesus lay buried in the land of Turkey. But it was impossible for Christendom to forget this great city, for all who read the New Testament learned of Paul's visit to this pagan metropolis. In addition ancient geographers and historians had written about it. Through the years scholars collected all the facts they could find, many of them hoping to throw light on the famous story of Paul's collision with the worship of Artemis. Early accounts revealed that Artemis had a very ancient shrine with little more than "an enclosure containing a platform, a sacred tree and an altar, and perhaps later a wooden image."[20] Artemis had begun as an Asiatic goddess but in time acquired a Hellenic flavor and genealogy, and with some of the characteristics of the Hellenic goddesses. We are told that the ancients themselves regarded Artemis of non-Hellenic origin.

This Oriental-Greek goddess was called Diana in the King James Version of the Bible; Diana being the Latin form of the word Artemis. She was a goddess of generation and vegetation, possessing the power of the life-giving earth. The best evidence of this was the traditional form of the

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[20] Finegan, op. cit., p. 267.

Ephesian idol (taken from coins of Ephesus, an alabaster statuette, and an archaic terra cotta) which in great antiquity showed she had little form, but in time she became an image with many breasts which were the uncouth symbol of fertility. The lions, the rams, and the bulls wrought in relief upon her shoulders and legs denoted a goddess who fostered the life of the wild creatures and the fields. The bee which is wrought just above her feet was a frequent symbol on the old coins of Ephesus, and possibly had some religious significance in her worship.[21]

The historian Plutarch (ca. A.D. 66), author of a book on the lives of early Greeks and Romans, attested to the strong Persian (Oriental) influence in Ephesus and the worship of Artemis. In commenting upon this Farnell writes,

> But we are not told that temple prostitution was a religious rite at Ephesus. In fact the Ephesian religion, in spite of its orgiastic elements, appears to have been in some respects of an austere character; rigid rules of chastity and purity were imposed on the Essenes, a priestly society that was attached to the temple, and if the statement of Artemidorus is correct, no woman was allowed under pain of death to enter the temple, and the functions of the priestesses of various grades must have been confined to its precints. We cannot estimate exactly how far the original worship was modified or purified by Hellenic influence; but in any case it does not seem to have been borrowed mainly from the Semitic people, but rather to express the religious ideas of the ancient races of Asia Minor who were nearer to the Hellenic stock . . .[22]

It was only tantalizing to scholars to find passages

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[21] L. R. Farnell, The Cults of the Greek States (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1896), II, 481-482.

[22] Ibid.

of description and allusions to Artemis and Ephesus. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries interest was stimulated in the critical study of the Bible. Paul had spent the longest period of his three missionary journeys at Ephesus. The Book of Revelation had come from Asia Minor. Ephesus had played an important role in New Testament history. A great need was felt to know more about it. But so complete were the ruins of the temple and the burial of the city, that no specific site was located.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the science of archaeology began to develop. An English architect, J. T. Wood, was stirred by the story of Paul in the book of Acts, and had a burning desire to find the Temple of Artemis. In 1863 he went to the site of the city of Ephesus, covered with silt and water, and began digging through layer after layer of what was left of the ancient masonary and rubble. But not until 1869, and after persistent endeavor, did he find the definite site of the old theater, the scene of the Ephesian riot. But he could find nothing of the temple. It was while digging in the old amphitheater that he found a signpost which proved to be the clue to the discovery of the temple ruins. The inscription on this sign was Roman and was believed to have been made some fifty years after Paul's sojourn in Ephesus.

> This inscription described a number of gold and silver images of Artemis (cf. Acts 19:24), weighing from three to seven pounds each, which were to be presented to the goddess and placed in her temple. According to the inscription, an endowment was provided for the care and cleaning of the images, and instruction given that when they were carried from the

> temple to the theater for the birthday anniversary of the goddess the procession was to enter the city by the Magnesian Gate and leave it afterward by the Coressian Gate. By finding the site of the two city gates mentioned and then following the road from the Magnesian Gate, Wood finally discovered the temple, which stood more than a mile northeast of the city proper.[23]

Wood came upon a magnificent pavement, the bases of massive pillars, and great stone cylinders adorned with sculptures. It was under nearly twenty-five feet of soil and rubble. At last here was the ruins of the Temple of Artemis, designed by Dinocrates, the famous Alexandrian architect, and whose splendor was in ancient times one of the Seven Wonders of the World.[24]

> Thirty-five years later [1898] one of Wood's countrymen, David G. Hogarth, found under the shattered altar a large collection of statues of the goddess made of bronze, gold, ivory, and silver. They had been made by those craftsmen and workers who scented in Paul's preaching of the gospel at Ephesus a threat to their livelihood therefore responded to Demetrius with cries of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!"[25]

In 1896 the Austrian Archaeological Institute began its long continued excavations at Ephesus which has brought to light many interesting facts about the ancient city. In 1904-1905 the entire history of the temple was studied. So carefully have the excavated remains of Ephesus been considered that even maps have been made of the city as well as

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[23] Ibid., p. 267.

[24] Werner Keller, The Bible as History, trans. William Neil (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1956), see pp. 382-384.

[25] Ibid.

plans of the temple. In some measure it is possible to present a word picture of this metropolis and perhaps recapture some of its culture, customs, color and magnificance in the period of 133 B.C. to A.D. 262. Here in our own twentieth century we can discuss: the road systems; the sea ways and ships; the city wall; the Magnesian and Coressian Gates; the Arkadiane; the shops and crafts; the government and administration buildings; the school of Tyrannus; publishing houses; the baths; the gymnasia; the stadium; the theater; religious shrines such as Serapis; the library; and the temple of Artemis itself.

The City of Ephesus

Ephesus was located at the confluence of the Meander and Cayster rivers, three or more miles inland from the Aegean Sea. In the absence of a natural harbor the progressive and energetic Ephesians had converted the Cayster river into a navigable stream for smaller vessels. While this today is filled in with silt and marsh, evidences of the city piers may be seen as well as the foundation stones of the municipal wharf where vessels unloaded and received cargo. In addition dim lines of ancient canals from the city and temple area can still be followed. Large vessels with passengers and cargoes bound for Ephesus stopped at the city of Miletus, the principal seaport about thirty miles south. Between Miletus and Ephesus was a connecting highway of Roman construction over which the cargoes of the larger vessels were

transported on land.[26]

> The sea paths that criss-crossed the Mediterranean and the Aegean, between cities great and small, were crowded by the single ships of traders, the ladened argosies of importers, the great grain fleets of the companies operating under the Government, the heavy transport ships that carried cattle and troops, and the fishing fleets.[27]

Ephesus was also situated at the confluence of the Meander and Cayster valleys, beautiful, fertile farm lands, which were easily approached by all interior highways. All roads ultimately reached Ephesus. But especially important were the trunk lines running East and West. The position of the city converted it into an open market place (agora) where native and foreign wares were bought and sold. Into this great emporium of land trade came merchants from the ends of the earth. The roads along the low-lying hills were lined with dromadary caravans, and the march of many peoples.[28] The function of these ancient road systems was not only commercial, but they served the great Roman army; the emperor and his agents on their administrative duties; the man of affairs on his business missions; the commercial traveler making his rounds; the student going to some school to finish his training; the rich man making the grand tour; the farmer going to town; the neighbor going for a visit; the family out on a

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[26] J. McKee Adams, Biblical Backgrounds (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1934). See pp. 452-456 for discussion.

[27] Grant Showerman, Home and Romans (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948), p. 499.

[28] Adams, op. cit., p. 453.

pleasure jaunt; and for the communication of news and messages.[29]

Much of the city of Ephesus was enclosed in a wall approximately seven miles in circumference. The city was entered by two great gates, the Magnesian Gate and the Coressian Gate. By finding the site of these two gates, the archaeologists were able to find the Temple of Artemis which to their surprise was located outside the city wall.[30] A magnificent street paved with marble, about thirty-five feet wide, and believed to have been lined by a colonade of marble pillars and gardens, led out of the city through these gates.[31] Over this costly highway passed the great festival processions. Over this road would pass the throng of merchants, government officials, visitors Oriental and Occidental, among them Paul of Tarsus.

Some place near the great market where merchandise was brought from the four quarters of the earth, were rows of shops for merchants and craftsmen, some of them behind the colonnade called "Arkadiane" which connected the theater with the harbor and the Harbor-Gate.[32] In such a place as a shop went on the publishing of books written by hand. We are told that the book trade began in the fifth century B.C., and that

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[29] Showerman, op. cit., p. 496.

[30] Finegan, loc. cit.

[31] Adams, op. cit., p. 454.

[32] The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

there was even an importing and exporting of books. The publishing house was usually a large room with many desks, perhaps a hundred. At each desk sat a professional copyist, perhaps a slave or a freedman. A dictator read aloud. Each copiest would write. Thus a considerable number of books were brought out at one time. Eventually Ephesus became a publishing center for the Christian writings; from here they were distributed to the Christians throughout the Roman Empire.

Somewhere in Ephesus was the school of Tyrannus where Paul taught for two years during his stay (Acts 19:9).

> The presumption is that Tyrannus himself was a Greek and a public teacher of philosophy and rhetoric and his school was a seat of culture. Paul may have alternated sessions with Tyrannus, and thus gained a hearing among the more intellectual forces in Ephesus. 'The school of Tyrannus alone had never been a great moral force in Ephesus. But the school of Tyrannus with Paul to teach in it exerted a tremendous influence in all that region.'[33]

The Shrine of Serapis brings to our attention the cosmopolitan nature of Ephesus. This was an outstanding religious cult taken over from the Egyptians, put under a Greek name, and adapted to the Hellenistic world. Serapis was the guardian of sailors and was worshipped far and wide. Since Ephesus was a city of sea traffic as well as caravan roads it was not surprising to find this cult flourishing among the many cults of this great city.

Within the city walls, built on the western slope of Mt. Pion was the famous theater of Ephesus. This was the

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[33] F. N. Peloubet, Peloubet's Bible Dictionary (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1925), p. 708.

place of assembly for the citizens of the city. Here the mob gathered in a riot directed against Paul and where "all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians."[34] It was a stone structure built on the side of the mountain with ascending aisles and tiers of seats. It has been estimated from the excavated ruins that it would accommodate 24,500 persons. The site of this place of assembly overlooked the busiest part of the city. It was a most imposing structure. It was open to the sky. It was adorned with the finest of statuary. It was built in a semi-circle approximately 495 feet diameter.

> The Theater is connected with the harbor by the 'Arkadiane', a marble paved street approximately thirty-six feet in width. On both sides, it is lined by a colonnade behind which are store rooms and shops. The length of the 'Arkadiane' is about 1735 feet. Opposite the little square which is before the Great Theater, the street was closed by a great double-arch. At the western end of the 'Arkadiane' is the magnificient Harbor-Gate.[35]

A short distance to the north of the theater was a massive pile of ruins where once stood the magnificent stadium. One recalls at this point the familiar metaphor of Paul regarding combats between men and beasts at Ephesus. This type of structure was for races, games and gladitorial exhibitions. Chariot races were usually an outstanding feature of all the festivals. The performances were of two main kinds; fights

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[34] Acts 19:34.

[35] The Biblical Archaeologist, loc. cit., pp. 68-69.

[36] I Cor. 15:32.

between men and beasts, occasionally between two kinds of wild beasts, and fights between men and men. There was no make-believe about these combats; they meant at least serious wounds, even when they did not mean death. Those who fought with beasts might in some cases be volunteers; in other cases they might be captives or condemned criminals. It was not intended that the criminal should escape death, but only that he should be able to make a fight for his life.[37]

Other buildings excavated have included baths, gymnasia, and burial monuments.[38] The huge baths could be likened to our modern club houses. They were more than for cleanliness; they were recreation and social centers. In addition to swimming pools, they had a library, lounges and other accommodations. They were rarely free of charge, but prices were scaled in such a way that none but the absolutely penniless were denied the pleasure and privileges of them. They varied in size, a very large one in Rome accommodated 3000 at one time.

In Asia Minor, and Ephesus in particular, there developed for use on the state administrative and public buildings an original and remarkable facade or front. This architectural style seems to represent the blending of the Asiatic, Greek, and Roman building skill. Its composite capitals and ornaments were influenced by Roman art, but its various parts

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[37] T. G. Tucker, Life in the Roman World of Nero and St. Paul (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), p. 282.

[38] Finegan, op. cit. See pp. 265-269 for discussion.

and structural spirit were Greek. The Library of Celsus at Ephesus, built just after the turn of the first century, was an example of this architecture. The broken roof-lines gave a sense of movement. The archways and side wings presented force, size, nobility to the plan. Here again we see the visible evidence of the blending of cultures.

The excavations at Ephesus have brought forth a library with a back-room without a portico, but having a facade with ornamental columns and an outside staircase. In order to protect the papyrus rolls from dampness, it has been discovered, an outer wall was frequently built around the inner wall, so that a narrow passage ran between the two. So far as the stonework, and artistic decoration were concerned, libraries resembled the other monumental structures of the age. It is believed that the statue of some pagan deity was always placed in a recess of the great library hall. Accompanying it were busts and medallions of ancient scholars and writers. A great deal of ornamentation was in evidence, but in order to spare the eyes, gold was avoided and a greenish marble was selected for the floors. The book rolls, each bearing a ticket with the title often on the end of them, lay in the pigeonholes of the wooden shelves. These were symmetrically arranged and often sunk into niches in the walls. When necessary there were several such rows of shelves, one above the other. The top rows were then reached by means of galleries which rested on columns. Very little is known about the practices of arranging the book stock, since quite scanty fragments of catalogues have been preserved.

We do know that some of the public libraries circulated their books, that libraries were frequently in the public baths, and that they were often administered by the priests of the temples.[39]

This information is of interest to us, in view of the fact that Paul was a missionary to large cities. He carried Christianity to a cultured and educated people, to a society which had access to a vast amount of pagan literature and knowledge. Christianity entered a city with famous schools of learning, a city where there was every opportunity to know the culture of Asia, Greece, and the Roman Empire. More than this Paul entered an environment full of religions, the religions of many gods and goddesses who were not at war with each other. One would be justified in saying that pagan Ephesus was a religious city. The worship of Artemis had been going on for a thousand years, and while Artemis was the leading religion there were many others, some of them old religious cults taking on new forms.

The Temple of Artemis

The worship of Artemis presents a story of the development of a very primitive concept to a very complex and cultured cult, at least cultured from the standpoint of ancient paganism. "Most of her cult is genuinely Hellenic, although in some places we can discover Oriental influences and ideas."[40]

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[39] Alfred Hessel, History of Libraries (Washington, D.C.: Scrarecrow Press, 1950), pp. 7-8.

[40] Farnell, op. cit., p. 425.

This fusion of the ideas of the Orient and the Occident grew to dominate not only the life of Ephesus but of many cities and peoples. For this pagan religion was not limited in scope nor small in influence.

> The worship of Artemis at Ephesus is a conspicuous instance of the fusion of Eastern and Western religious ideas; and of all these hybrid cults this is the most important for the student of Greek religion, since, according to Pausanias, it was known in every Greek city, and it spread to the Westernmost parts of the Mediterranean. . . . At Ephesus, in the Artemision, the goddess was worshipped as . . . supreme in divine power and place;[41]
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> To those who regard Artemis simply as the pure virgin of Greek religion, innocent of all orgiastic extravagance, it may seem strange that her maidenly character could not save her from this later association with the Oriental goddess of generation, with a Semitic divinity whose worship was solemnized by temple-harlots. But it has been shown that this ideal aspect of Artemis was the fair outgrowth of the popular imagination in literature, legend, and art, and was not her aspect in the primitive rite and conservative cult of Greece.[42]

For a description of the religion of Artemis as it was carried on when Christianity entered Ephesus, the following phases will be discussed: the temple structure; the shrine of Artemis; the nature and character of the Goddess; the priests and priestesses; the temple wardens; the town clerk; the festivals; the temple sacrifice; the shrine makers and guilds; and lastly the place of superstition and books of magic.

The Temple of Artemis was one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

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[41] Ibid., p. 480. [42] Ibid., p. 486.

> Pausanias said that it 'surpassed every structure raised by human hands.' Another ancient writer said: 'I have seen the walls and hanging gardens of Old Babylon, the statue of Olympian Jove, the Colossus of Rhodes, the great labour of the lofty Pyramids, and the ancient tomb of Mausolus. But when I beheld the Temple at Ephesus towering to the clouds, all these other marvels were eclipsed.'[43]

The Temple today lies buried beneath twenty to thirty feet of silt, and is covered by a swamp of wiry grass and reeds that rustle in the wind. From 133 B.C. to 262 A.D. the temple stood on a plain outside the city wall. It stood apart, shining with the blues and reds and golds with which her marble was embellished. The traveler to Ephesus either by land or by sea would have an excellent view of it as he approached the city. Building the temple had begun around 350 B.C. and it had not been completed until 150 B.C. The best material and the best talent of the ancient world had gone into this structure.

The Temple itself was set on a raised platform nearly 240 feet wide and 418 feet long. There was a flight of steps which lead up to the pavement of the platform. On this base stood the exquisitely proportioned temple, brilliant with color and the extensive use of gold. It was some 160 feet wide and 340 feet long and flanked by columns which were more than six feet in diameter at the base. Some of these beautiful marble columns were sculptured to a height of about twenty feet. Some special columns were estimated to be between 66

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[43] H. V. Morton, In the Steps of St. Paul (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1936), p. 371.

and 77 feet high. The roofed part was covered with large white marble tiles, and the building was adorned with sculpture, painting and gold.[44]

Let us try to picture this great marble edifice, facing east, and reached by a flight of marble steps which led inside a court walled with columns. The columns around the platform were of Ionic design and each pillar had been erected by some monarch of the ancient world as a memorial of his devotion to Artemis. The temple was entered through a colossal doorway, which was the only source of natural light in the whole structure. But once within the great entrance a myriad of ancient lamps reflected upon curious and precious objects. There were three great rooms in this temple, and only the first two were connected. Between them an immense purple curtain hung from the ceiling to the floor. This great curtain was never lifted except when religious service was in progress, for in the second and middle room was the sacred shrine, the statue of Artemis.

> Originally a meteorite, the image which 'fell from heaven' is now a mummy-like figure carved from material so blackened by age and smoke that one can hardly tell if it is ivory or wood. The feet of the goddess peep out below the casings which swathe her legs and thighs. Above the wrappings are rows of breasts. The goddess' head is topped by a tower-crown, which denotes her sovereignty as mother of all deities.[45]

The third and back room was the treasury whose door

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[44] Finegan, op. cit., p. 268.

[45] F. A. Spencer, Beyond Damascus (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1934), p. 303.

opened on the colonnaded platform and was guarded by day and night, for great was the treasure kept there. "It was considered so sacred and inviolable that not only the Ephesians but also foreign individuals, king, and peoples deposited money there for safe keeping."[46]

To comprehend something of the worship of Artemis it is necessary to know something of her nature and character.

> The innumerable worshippers of the goddess required innumerable dedicatory offerings of the style which was most likely to please her. A great city erected a great shrine with a colossal statue of the goddess; private individuals propitiated her with miniature shrines, containing embodiments of her living presence. The vast temple near Ephesus and the tiny terra-cotta were equally acceptable to Artemis; she accepted from her votaries offerings according to their means. She dwelt neither in the vast temple nor in the tiny terra-cotta; she was implicit in the life of nature; she was the reproductive power that kept the great world ever the same amid the constant flux of things. Mother of all and nurse of all, she was most really present wherever the unrestrained life of nature was most freely manifested, in the woods, on the mountains, among the wild beasts. Her worshippers expressed their devotion and their belief in her omnipresence by offering shrines to her, and doubtless keeping shrines of the same kind in their own homes, certainly also by placing such shrines in graves beside the corpse, as a sign that the dead had once more gone back to the mother who bore them.[47]

This worship of Artemis as the Great Mother at Ephesus is believed to have left its influence on Christianity.[48] In discussing this briefly Cobern writes the following con-

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[46] Floyd V. Filson, "Ephesus and the New Testament," The Biblical Archaeologist, VIII (Sept. 1945), 76.

[47] W. M. Ramsay, The Church in the Roman Empire (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1893), pp. 125-126.

[48] W. M. Ramsay, "The Worship of the Virgin Mary at Ephesus," The Expositor, XI (June, 1905), 401-415.

cerning inscriptions which archaeologists have found in the ruins of Ephesus.

> A number of inscriptions mentioned the Virgin Mary, and Sir. W. M. Ramsay is certain that the worship of the Great Mother at Ephesus led to special reverence for the virgin. The supposed recent discovery in a dream of the House of the Virgin at Ephesus is, of course, absolutely valueless; but the 'virginizing' of Christianity is largely due to the influence of Ephesian thought, and Ephesus--'the most important city of Christianity next to Jerusalem'--was affected largely by the ancient reverence for the 'Great Mother.' It was not so much due to the residence of Mary at Ephesus--which is not very thoroughly proved--as to the ancient cult that the early Christian bishops emphasize the 'glory of the female' and give their panegyrics of the 'Mother of God.'[49]

The Worship of Artemis

The head of the temple hierarchy was the Megabyzus, or chief priest. Many hundreds, if not thousands, of priests apparently were connected with the temple ritual. Priestly cells have been found within the temple area. A multitude of priestesses, who came as virgins to the temple, were dedicated to prostitution in the temple's service in the Roman period. Music seems to have had a great part in the temple ritual. There has been mention of a boys' choir and one inscription speaks of a golden chaplet being voted to a flute player who had won honors during a festival.

> There were twelve temple wardens in the Ephesian temple, two being constantly in service, the term of office being two months each. One inscription

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[49]Camden M. Cobern, The New Archeological Discoveries And Their Bearing Upon The New Testament and Upon The Life and Times of the Primitive Church (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1917), p. 481.

> declares that both of these were required to accompany processions in order to see that the sacred images got safely to and from the temple. They were required to be present also when the images were cleaned; they had charge of the sacrifices; they were treasurers of certain funds and took fines due to the goddess; they had general charge of the temple and temple repairs.[50]

March and April were especially dedicated to Artemis, and the greatest of all the religious festivals was held. This included athletic, dramatic and musical contests in connection with the ritual. The Asiarchs, who were provincial officers, had special charge of the great festival from the standpoint of the city. The town clerk was a most important person, for even native officials of the city were part of the religion of Artemis.

> He was responsible for the form of the decrees which were submitted to the popular assembly and helped to draft them; he sealed such decrees with the public seal; he often proposed decrees and acted as chairman at popular meetings, which meetings were commonly held in the theater; he had charge of the money bequeathed to the people; in fact, he was so great a man that events are sometimes dated by reference to the year when such and such a town clerk held office.[51]

In fact we find that the names of town clerks appeared upon some of the coins of Ephesus. He was the keeper of the archives of the city. His work brought him close to the lives of the citizens and close to the worship of Artemis. Paul was to owe his life to the authority and influence of a level-headed town clerk who reminded the Ephesian mob that they would be held accountable to Rome for any violence. But it was the Rome-appointed Asiarch who would act officially for the Roman government in case of disturbance.

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[50] Ibid., p. 468. [51] Ibid., p. 467.

According to an ancient inscription, an endowment was provided for the care and cleaning of the images, and instruction was given that when the images were carried from the temple to the theater for the birthday anniversary of the goddess, the procession was to enter the city by the Magnesian Gate and leave by the Coressian Gate. During this month Artemision (March-April) tourists and devotees of Artemis thronged Ephesus and brought with them great wealth to the temple and to craftsmen and tradesmen. The gifts to the goddess included costly satuettes of gold and silver and other precious metal and were carried in public processions during the festivals of Artemis.[52]

Both literary records and inscriptions make it clear that Ephesus was enormously wealthy, and the source of revenue was the cult of the goddess Artemis. Festival time was the season when "The economic effects of Paul's preaching against idolatry would be most bitterly felt by the craftsmen and tradesmen, and when the jealousy for the goddess could be aroused most easily to riot intensity."[53]

The worshippers of Artemis expressed their devotion to her and their belief in her creative power by offering small shrines or images to her, and by keeping them in their homes. The demand for them was great since tourists, pilgrims, and travelers wanted a shrine from Ephesus itself. This helps to

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[52] Filson, The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., p. 76.

[53] Ibid.

account for the fact that the city was full of artisans, skilled craftsmen and tradesmen. It was the custom for people to engage in some craft, and for each craft to form a guild. These ancient guilds were not for the betterment of labor conditions but for fellowship. The members ate and drank together, they exchanged ideas, and agreed on the mutual support of each other in certain matters. They had officers and paid dues, the dues serving as an insurance for a decent burial and proper respect for the dead according to the prevailing pagan religious belief.[54]

> Although shrines of terra cotta and marble have been found during excavations at various places, no silver shrines have come to light thus far.
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> Moreover, excavations seeking light on the New Testament period have usually been more interested in temples, markets, theaters, and public places than in the homes where such shrines might have been kept. Furthermore, the fading of the Artemis cult, conversions to Christianity, hostility to idolatry, theft, war, and plunder would all unite to decrease the number of shrines or images that survived, and any object of precious metal might thus be destroyed or melted down for other uses.[55]

We are told in Acts that Demetrius, a silversmith, made silver shrines for Artemis, and that this brought no small gain to the craftsmen.[56]

Another phase of this cult was the sacrifice. Artemis worship involved a devotion for a material reward. It was a religion of material bargaining and wholly devoid of spiritual

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[54] Showerman, op. cit., p. 288.

[55] Filson, The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

[56] Acts 19:24.

values. Flowers and fruit were laid on the altar of the temple, a libation of wine was poured, the lamb or kid or oxen was slaughtered before the eyes of the worshippers gathered outside before the steps to the great temple. A general departing for war; a trader setting sail with ladened argosy; the state official seeking prosperity; would promise the goddess a gift of gold, or a definite percent of the spoils of war or of the grain shipped. If the person promising fulfilled his part of the contract, the deity was bound to grant his desire. There was no demand for belief or faith, no subscription to a creed, the correct performance of ritual was all that was required.[57] But Artemis' chief concern was the ritual sacrifice for fertility.

> Although images of Artemis in earlier times had been more of the Greek type, such images in the times of the Roman Empire were covered from neck to waist with breasts. In other words, Artemis was the mother goddess, Oriental rather than Greek, and her worship was much concerned with fertility in flocks, herds, and the human family. It was akin to the earlier fertility cults in Palestine against which Elijah and other prophets of Israel had to fight.[58]

It has been said that the priests of the temple of Artemis were eunuchs because the goddess was so fastidious that she could not endure a real male near her; but on the other hand it was said she was so lascivious that it was unsafe for any normal male to be near her.

> The worship of the temple was a weird, ecstatic, hysterical business. To the accompaniments of

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[57] See Showerman, loc. cit.

[58] Filson, The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., p. 75.

> shouts and wailings, the burning of incense and the playing on the flute, the worshippers worked themselves up into an emotional and hysterical frenzy in which the darkest and most shameless things could and did happen.[59]
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> The temple was also the centre of the sale of Ephesian Letters. These letters were charms. If a person wanted a safe journey, success in any enterprise, he would come to Ephesus and buy one of these Ephesian Letters. If a couple were childless and wished a child, if people were ill and could not be cured, these letters with their unintelligible words were considered to be the most powerful charms in the world . . .[60]
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> Into Ephesus there poured a stream of criminals of every kind, fugitives from the law, escapers and avoiders of justice, and into Ephesus there flowed a torrent of credulous, superstitious people, for in a superstitious world Ephesus was well-nigh the most superstitious city in the world.[61]

This city had accumulated a vast knowledge on the subject of magic which was known and used by astrologers, witch doctors and exorcists. The ancient world, being a pre-scientific world, believed whole-heartedly in demons. Demons were usually the cause of sickness, disasters, or any untoward circumstance. Formulas in the name of various gods were used to exorcise the demon. A great many books on the subject of magic and exoricism were published in Ephesus and they were widely consulted. In fact the Roman government felt it necessary to pass laws against the religion of witchcraft and playing the prophet, offering sacrifice with the

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[59] William Barclay, Letters to the Seven Churches (Naperville, Ill.: SCM Book Club, 1957), p. 16.

[60] Ibid., p. 17. [61] Ibid., p. 18.

hope of injuring; participating in magic; and possessing books on the subject of magic. But it was the Apostle Paul who was able to persuade many Ephesians that the practice of magic was evil and they burned their books in the presence of their fellow citizens. It is reported that ten thousand dollars was the value of the books burned.[62]

It was in Ephesus that Paul had an experience with the Jewish Sceva and his seven sons who were exorcists, and who were using the name of Jesus to cast out demons.[63]

> The following example is from the so-called Paris magical payrus; 'I adjure you, demon, whoever you are, by this god Sabarbarbathioth Sabarbarbathiuth Sabarbarbathioneth Sabarbarbaphai, come out, demon, whoever you are, and depart from so and so now, now, right now. Come out, demon, for I bind you with adamantine bonds not to be loosed, and I deliver you to black chaos in utter destruction.'[64]

These formulas were usually handed down orally, but sometimes they were transmitted in books. They had to be said at the right time, in the right kind of clothing, and with the right words.

Approximately contemporary with Paul was the pagan wonder worker, Apollonius of Tyana. He traveled extensively, knew all languages without learning them, and knew the inmost thoughts of men and animals. The following story is said to have taken place in Ephesus.

> When the plague began to rage in Ephesus, and no remedy sufficed to check it, they sent a deputation to Apollonius, asking him to become physician of

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[62] Acts 19:18-20. [63] Acts 19:13-17.

[64] Filson, Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., p. 79.

> their infirmity. . . . And forthwith he was in Ephesus. He therefore called together the Ephesians, . . . and . . . led the population entire to the theatre. . . . And there he saw what seemed an old mendicant artfully blinking his eyes as if blind . . . and he was clad in rags and . . . very squalid of contenance. Apollonius . . . ranged the Ephesians around him and said: 'Pick up as many stones as you can hurl at this enemy of the gods.' Now the Ephesians . . . were shocked at the idea of murdering a stranger . . . for he was begging and praying them to take mercy upon him. Nevertheless Apollonius insisted. . . . Then the Ephesians recognized that he was a demon, and they stoned him so thoroughly that their stones were heaped into a great cairn. . . . When therefore they had exposed the object which they thought they had thrown their missiles at, they found that he had disappeared and instead of him there was a hound . . . there he lay before their eyes, pounded to pulp by their stones. . . . Having purged the Ephesians of the plague, . . . he [Apollonius] started for Hellas.[65]

The Ephesians evidently lived in terror of their own superstitions, omens, demons, and magic. It is recorded that they were alarmed by thunder and lightning, earthquakes, bad dreams, ravens seen on the wrong side of the road and other evil tokens. Demons existed everywhere, and life consisted in making every effort to ward them off. It was a colorful world but hardly a secure world in which to live.

Emperor Worship

We are not to get the idea that Artemis was the only deity worshipped in Ephesus. The fact is it was a city of polytheism. We are so accustomed to the strong religious feeling of the Jews and the Christians against the worship of gods that we forget that this intense feeling was not shared

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[65] Philostratus, The Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Trans. F. C. Conybeare (New York: G. P. Putman's Sons, 1917), Loeb Classical Library, I, 363-367.

by the pagans who did not care whether their neighbor worshipped ten or fifty gods. Christianity was to have many competitors and many of them would seem to have a marked advantage over this new religion.

The mystery religions were prominent, several of them being built around the god Dionysus. There were various sects associated with Orpheus. There was the Great Mother who loved the virgin-born shepherd Attis. With this cult was the famous taurobolium. "In this a bull was killed and the devotees bathed in its blood as means of dying to the old life and being born again."[66] In addition there were cults to Posidon, to Demeter, Adonis, the Egyptian Serapis, the Persian Mithra and others.

But the most outstanding of the cults next to Artemis was the officially supported cult of the Roman Emperor, the Imperial Cult.

> The universal religion which Rome offered the world was a political one, the cult of the emperors. It was Roman policy to draw the attention of all to the centre of power, and the imperial cult was one of the best means of giving cohesion to a vast empire.[67]
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> This cult was one in which all could unite and which represented a visible unity. It strengthened Roman authority and helped to unify the world. The living emperor was a visible god dispensing justice . . .
>
> Never possessed of any religious value, the imperial cult betrays in a remarkable way the tendency of that age to look for an incarnation of deity, and to prefer a praesens deus to all the gods of polytheism.[68]

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[66] Latourette, op. cit., p. 25.

[67] Angus, op. cit., p. 85.

[68] Ibid., p. 88.

In the Book of Acts we are told that the city of Ephesus was temple keeper of the great Artemis.[69] We also learn that it was temple keeper of the Imperial Cult.

> Josephus (Wars V. 9.4) speaks of the people of Israel as 'temple-keeper' or, better, 'guardian' of the shrine of their God. This reference to a people as a guardian of a temple resembles both the use in Acts, where the people of Ephesus are called 'temple-keeper of the great Artemis' and the other use in which the word refers to the Ephesians as 'temple-keeper' of the imperial cult.[70]
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> . . . . . .
>
> Indeed, an inscription refers to Ephesus as the 'temple-keeper of Artemis.' But the same title was used at Ephesus and elsewhere to indicate that the city was the 'temple-keeper' of the imperial cult. In addition to the temple in Ephesus which served this purpose in Paul's time, the city later added a second and then a third temple for this purpose, and so finally came to be called 'thrice temple-keeper' of the imperial cult. In Ephesus this cult was overshadowed by Artemis worship in the middle of the first century, but by the close of the century, as the book of Revelation and other evidence combine to show, emperor-worship had become widespread.[71]

From this we assume that Ephesus became a center of Emperor worship and three great temples were built for the elaborate ritual that went with Emperor worship.

This brings to a close the word picture of Ephesus in the centuries of her pagan glory. We are told that "The character of the people of Ephesus was notoriously bad. The people had the reputation all over Asia of being fickle, superstitious and immoral."[72] However we will find in the

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[69] Acts 19:35.

[70] Filson, Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., p. 80.

[71] Ibid., p. 77.

[72] Barclay, op. cit., p. 18.

next chapter that there was an undercurrent of awakening to something better. Paul brought Christianity to Ephesus, later it became the home of John and the center of early Christianity.

The centuries old syncretism, the inbred blending of the Asiatic; the Hellenistic; the Roman; of polytheism; Artemis and her grip on the life of the people; the mystery religions; Emperor worship; philosophy, astrology; magic; superstition; human slavery; brutal contests; traditions and beliefs presented an obstruction and a challenge to Christianity. They were a menace and a threat to the purity of the divine revelation of Christianity. The roots of paganism penetrated deeply, the density of its materialism was thicker than the walls of the city. But Christianity entered this famous metropolis, it found a following, it established itself, and penetrated the social, economic and religious life of the people. Ancient Ephesus left some evidence of its influence upon Christianity. But Christianity left its indelible marks on Ephesus. The city did not change in a day, or in a decade, or in a generation, but Ephesus did change.

> Christianity was from the beginning a missionary and exclusive religion. While other religious movements in the Roman melting pot . . . were mutually tolerant, Christianity refused to be absorbed into any kind of syncretism and fought its way through to final victory. In that attitude of exclusiveness it never wavered. Christianity was right, and hence all that was not Christian was wrong.[73]

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[73] Ephraim Emerton, trans., The Letters of Saint Boniface (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p. 3.

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY IN EPHESUS

Asia Minor has been spoken of as the bridge from Asia to Europe, the land where the Orient and the Occident met, the land whose greatest city was Ephesus.[74] But Asia Minor was not the only bridge of land in the ancient world. For situated in the heart of the Fertile Crescent, between two great civilizations, the Egyptian and the Babylonian, was the bridge of Palestine. We are told that the selection of Palestine as the home of the Hebrews, and the birthplace and cradle of Christianity was clearly related to a higher purpose than to be a geographical center of the ancient world.

> That out of its manifold contacts should come a spiritual contribution to color and determine the whole course of world history. The all-seeing eye that chose this narrow strip of territory bordering on the Mediterranean, looked beyond the horizon to adjacent countries, and to the islands of the sea . . . it was prophetic of a master plan which included the world in its scope and interests. . . . 'We may thus perceive the wisdom of the divine counsels in planting in this narrow and apparently isolated land the people to whom the knowledge of the true God and of the Gospel was to be revealed, in order that they should make it known to other nations. Probably from no other spot in the ancient world could this knowledge have been spread abroad, in all directions, so widely, so constantly, and for so long a series of ages.'[75]

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[74] J. McKee Adams, op. cit., pp. 403-412.

[75] Ibid., pp. 85-86.

Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee were small compared to Ephesus. The Jewish temple at Jerusalem was not one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The bridge of hills and valleys was not more than one hundred and fifty miles long and seventy-five miles wide at some points, which was tiny compared to the vast territory of Asia Minor. On one side of the bridge was a great desert and on the other side was the Mediterranean Sea but no natural harbors. Just as Ephesus had long been a caravan center for the converging of roads from the four quarters of the world, so we are told that in Palestine "There is probably no older road in all the world than that which is still used by caravans from the Euphrates to the Nile, through Damascus, Galilee, . . . the maritime Plain, and Gaza."[76] In Palestine the Jews struggled to live and the struggle meant that they had to rely on their God. There was always an uncertain water supply. Asia Minor was a large, fertile, well watered land. Palestine was small, with rocky soil, and inadequate rainfall. "Palestine was thus an ideal land in which to develop increasing trust in Providence as against reliance on the magic and divination which were the mainstay of surrounding peoples."[77]

The great difference between the Jews and Christians

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[76] George Adam Smith, The Historical Geography of the Holy Land (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1895), pp. 11-12.

[77] W. F. Albright, The Archaeology of Palestine (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1954), p. 255.

in Palestine and the polytheistic Ephesians was the character of their God. They had one God who was moral and righteous. The Jews had no genius for art, politics, speculation as did the Greeks. They lived for their God alone. The Master Christian, Christ Jesus, was the fulfilment of Hebrew prophecy. He lived, taught, healed, was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended in the land of Palestine at the time that Ephesus was at the height of her pagan glory. At the time of Jesus' ascension he had instructed his disciples "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit shall come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."[78] "To the end of the earth" meant the great Roman Empire and it included Asia Minor and Ephesus. Thus it was inevitable that the Christian Gospel would sooner or later find Ephesus and penetrate the materialism of the worship of Artemis. Although the pagan world had been undergoing a preparation for the appearance of Christianity, outwardly Ephesus seemed quite unaware of it.

> The heathen world had been prepared for the reception of a universal religion by two important forces supplied by Greece and Rome. One of the greatest debts posterity owes to the Greeks is that they first taught mankind how to think. The bold questions of the Greek philosophy made men enquire into the truth of that which custom taught them. Thus at the time of our Lord, when the Roman empire had been Hellenised, a spirit of enquiry was abroad ready to give new doctrines a hearing. . . .
>
> The work of Rome was to unite and organize the world, to destroy nationalities, and to improve communication. Under her rule men began to move freely from place to

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[78] Acts 1:8.

> place, and the Christian preacher went from town to town in the track of the merchant.[79]

Not all of the people of Ephesus were satisfied with their way of life. There were those who felt a religious destitution and were striving for a better and a more universal religion. There was a new note of seriousness existing among some and they were questioning about ethics, morality, religion and the place and value of the individual. "Man had turned from the investigation of the problems of the external world to probe the secret of his own nature."[80] Man was turning inward. The attention that he had paid to politics, philosophy, festivals, many gods, he now began to center on morality. That which a man was, became more important than what a man had.

> The ancient world was anxiously searching for an authority, especially about the time of the appearance of Christianity. The Orient, relying less on the capacities of man, looked to God for knowledge given by revelation and embodied in the lore of priesthoods. The Greeks looked to man himself for knowledge; they considered it no irreverence to pry into the secrets of the Almighty. As the Greeks sought salvation by wisdom, the question of a criterion to distinguish truth from falsehood was a matter of supreme importance.[81]

In the pagan writings of this period no subject was more frequently discussed than that of prayer.[82] Angus writes "It is impossible here to give any idea of the--often

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[79] F. J. Foakes Jackson, The History of the Christian Church (Cambridge: J. Hall & Son, 1914), p. 14.

[80] Angus, op. cit., p. 112.

[81] Ibid., pp. 114-115.

[82] Ibid., p. 124.

conflicting--opinions of heathen writers on prayer, or specimens of extant prayers."[83]

> One of the characteristics of Greek and Roman paganism was the absence of a sense of sin and a proud reliance on human nature. But with a growing spiritual experience this self-sufficiency of man was shattered, and a sense of sin appeared. . . . Numerous voices were raised against vice, hypocrisy, formality; there were more protests against sin than positive calls to righteousness. This need not surprise us; the destructive precedes the constructive.[84]

This kind of thought and religious activity was going on among the common people. Philosophers, religious teachers, politicians and statesmen looked with anxiety upon this questioning among the masses.

> Among the masses was the greatest religious activity, and more faith than among their leaders; the people went their own way leaving their aristocratic and literary brethern to their intellectualism. If the inner history of the pagan masses of Greece and Rome were written we should find many phenomena analogous to those which meet us in early Christianity--immense religious activity, the people taking the initiative and inaugurating movements that conquered the upper classes.[85]
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> . . . . . .
>
> The ancient world was persuaded that it would not look in vain for salvation. There was an attitude of expectancy in the East and West about the time of the appearance of Christianity.[86]

Paul's Introduction to Ephesus

According to Edgar J. Goodspeed, Paul of Tarsus, the Christian Apostle and Roman citizen, reached Ephesus and worked there during the years A.D. 52-56.[87]

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[83] Ibid., p. 126. [84] Ibid., pp. 130-131.

[85] Ibid., p. 134. [86] Ibid., p. 136.

[87] Edgar J. Goodspeed, Paul (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1947), p. 222.

> The Apostle Paul evidently followed a deliberate missionary strategy; he chose to center his work in the important cities of the eastern Roman Empire. This was not due merely to the fact that he was born and bred a city man, with his home first in Tarsus of Cilicia and then in Jerusalem. It was due mainly to his insight that by establishing himself in a key city he could not only reach a large number of residents, but could also get the Gospel before the people of the surrounding area. He could either meet them when they visited the city for festivals or business, or send out helpers, such as Epaphras (according to the probable text of Col. 1:7), to preach and found churches in smaller places.[88]

For the account of Paul in Ephesus we have his own letters, especially I and II Corinthians and Romans, and we have Acts written by Luke, Paul's co-worker on many of his journeys.[89] During Paul's experiences in Ephesus we meet other interesting Christians such as Aquila and Priscilla, and Apollos.

Paul's first visit to Ephesus was by ship. He had just completed eighteen months work in Achaia, and desired to return to Jerusalem to the Passover before continuing his work. Luke tells us briefly of Paul's stop over in Ephesus.

> After this Paul stayed many days longer, and then took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. . . . And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there; but he himself went into the synagogue and argued with the Jews. When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined; but on taking leave of them he said, 'I will return to you if God wills,' and he set sail from Ephesus.[90]

Paul's first entrance and exit from Ephesus had been

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[88] Filson, op. cit., pp. 73-74.

[89] Acts 18:1-4, 18-21, 24-28; 19:1-7.

[90] Acts 18:18-21.

by ship. But after accomplishing the object of his visit to the mother church at Jerusalem we find a brief notice of his return to Ephesus, this time by the land route through Asia Minor.[91] This is the simple unspectacular account of the entrance of Christianity into the city of Artemis. It was an entrance both by sea and by land. It included Paul's co-workers. And according to the Biblical account Paul remained in this great pagan city longer than in any other city.

> Ephesus, as the seat of government, was the centre from which the whole province of Asia could best be affected; and the effect of Paul's long work there extended far over that vast province, but chiefly, of course, along the great lines of communication. . . . All the seven Churches mentioned in the Revelation were probably founded during this period, for all were within easy reach of Ephesus, and all were great centres of trade.[92]
>
> In the ordinary communication between the capital and the other cities of the province, the influence from Ephesus would be carried to these cities; but that was not the only way in which these other Churches grew. Paul had with him a number of subordinate helpers, such as Timothy, Erastus, Titus, etc.[93]

It is interesting to note at this point that Canon Farrar thinks that it was at Ephesus that the Christian Church came to its full development.

> At Jerusalem, Christianity was born in the cradle of Judaism; Antioch had been the starting-point of the Church of the Gentiles; Ephesus was to witness its full development, and the final amalgamation of its unconsolidated elements in the work of John, the Apostle of Love.[94]

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[91]Acts 18:23, 24; 19:1.

[92]W. M. Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1896), p. 274.

[93]Ramsay, loc. cit.

[94]Canon Farrar, The Story of St. Paul (Cincinnati: The Standard Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 353.

Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos

While in Corinth Paul formed an intimate friendship with a man and his wife which was to continue for many years. This was his friendship with Aquila and Priscilla from Pontus. Priscilla is mentioned first in three of the six references to this couple. It was unusual for a woman to have her name placed before that of her husband, hence it seems fair to assume that Priscilla was the stronger personality.[95] They had come from Pontus to Rome and had been caught in the command of the Emperor Claudius that all Jews must leave Rome.[96] They then went to Corinth where they carried on their trade of tentmakers. Here Paul found them and this was the first thing Paul had in common with them, for Paul also was a tentmaker. Paul lived with this couple and earned money for his support. He was later to tell the Ephesian elders, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, you yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me."[97]

Aquila and Priscilla came to dedicate their lives to the work of Paul. They went with him from Corinth to Ephesus, and not only made a home there for themselves and Paul, but they made their home a center of Christian influence.[98]

> There were no church buildings in those days. The Christians met where they could. In time there grew

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[95] Holmes Rolston, Personalities Around Paul (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1954), pp. 97-101.

[96] Acts 18:2. [97] Acts 20:33-35. [98] I Cor. 16:19.

> up in Ephesus a community of believers that met in the home of Aquila and Priscilla.[99]

Paul left these two Christians in charge of the work at Ephesus while he returned to Antioch. In this interval they met Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria. He came to Ephesus "and taught diligently the things of the Lord knowing only the baptism of John."[100]

> It seems impossible to us that more than twenty years after the death of Christ there could have been educated Jews who knew the baptism of John but did not know the fulfillment of John's message in the work of Jesus. But a little later Paul found a similar group in Ephesus.[101] With infinite tact, the tentmakers from Corinth called aside the brilliant orator of Alexandria 'and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.'[102] They did their work so well that Apollos accepted the fuller faith of Aquila and Priscilla. When he went on to Corinth, 'he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.'[103] Apollos became one of the greatest preachers of the early Church. He developed the church in Corinth. But when we think of Apollos we should never forget the man and his wife who led this brilliant scholar and preacher to a full faith.[104]

Aquila and Priscilla were evidently with Paul in Ephesus throughout the difficult period of his correspondence with the Corinthian church. They stood by Paul not only in the difficulties in Ephesus, but shared with him the problems of the early Christian communities. We are told in Romans

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[99] Rolston, op. cit., p. 99.

[100] Acts 18:25. [101] Acts 19:1-7.

[102] Acts 18:26. [103] Acts 18:28.

[104] Rolston, op. cit., p. 100.

that they "laid down their own necks" for Paul's life.[105] "We do not know just what Paul is referring to here. We do know that the incident happened before he wrote the letter to the Romans. Paul's life was in danger. Aquila and Priscilla risked theirs to save Paul."[106]

As an explanation and justification for using the sixteenth chapter of Romans as historical information concerning Ephesus we give the following:

> Finally, it should be observed that Paul's references to the fact that Aquila and Priscilla had laid down their necks in his behalf, and that Andronicus and Junias had been his fellow-prisoners, references which seem to recall events well known to the Christians to whom he was writing,--point to dangers and sufferings similar to those which we know he was called upon to face in Ephesus. In the light of such facts as these, it is altogether probable that we have in the sixteenth chapter of Romans, a letter addressed to the Ephesian church.[107]

Ephesus became Paul's headquarters, and the home of Priscilla and Aquila became the first church and the center of the Christian movement. Ephesus was to become the center and headquarters for all Christianity and it held this place through the second century.

> Paul had built at Ephesus the most important Christian structure which it was given to him to raise--a community of great life and vigour, from which Christianity radiated abroad. In modern parlance he founded a diocese and not a congregation.[108]

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[105] Rom. 16:4. [106] Rolston, loc. cit.

[107] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, A History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 277.

[108] Arthur Darby Nock, St. Paul (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1938), p. 134.

As usual Paul began his work in the Jewish synagogue. It was the natural starting point, for the synagogues were filled with the most religious people of their day. But in town after town Paul had been forced to leave the synagogue and look for a more responsive group. He found the same experience in Ephesus.

> And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God; but when some were stubborn and disbelieved, speaking evil of the way before the congregation, he withdrew from them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.[109]

It was a big step forward when Paul acquired a public hall, the school of Tyrannus, where he taught for two years.

> Paul's program in Ephesus was an intensely busy one. Like other workmen in the Greek world, he got up early in the morning, by daylight or before, and put in the long hours of the Greek working day in the shop of Aquila and Priscilla, which was probably in their house or attached to it. The late afternoon, which the Greeks devoted to relaxation, athletics, theaters, and the like, and probably the evening also, he spent preaching in the lecture hall of Tyrannus and holding discussions with inquirers. These addresses and debates attracted a great deal of attention in Ephesus; visitors to the city from other parts of Asia were drawn to them and carried back his message to the neighboring towns. It was in this way that the gospel began to spread from Ephesus over the whole province.[110]

We have already learned that the Jews were in opposition to Paul. In general the Roman world did not object to a new religion. But Paul's preaching was in opposition to the magic,

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[109] Acts 19:8-10.

[110] Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 116.

superstition and demonology which filled the ancient world.

> The superstition of all Asia was concentrated in Ephesus. Throughout the early centuries the city mob, superstitious, uneducated, frivolous, swayed by the most commonplace motives, was everywhere the most dangerous and unfailing enemy of Christianity, and often carried the imperial officials further than they wished in the way of persecution. Moreover round the great Ephesian temple, to which worshippers came from far, many tradesmen got their living from the pilgrims, supplying them with victims and dedicatory offerings of various kinds, as well as food and shelter. During the year 55, the tension in Ephesus grew more severe; on the one hand, the teaching spread so fast that Paul was tempted to remain longer than he had intended; on the other hand, his success only enraged and alarmed the opposing forces.[111]

It was a common practice in Ephesus to exorcise demons, to use magical formulas, and curious arts. It need not be surprising to read that Paul's handkerchiefs and aprons, which he probably wore while making tents, were considered magical.[112] Paul became known as the friend of the people; he comforted them; he told them the Gospel story; he visited them in their homes; and undoubtedly gave his own hard-earned money to relieve poverty and misery. The physically and mentally distressed whom he helped, and who were not well versed in the Gospel teaching, associated Paul with the customary practices of Ephesus.

> The story of the seven sons of Sceva shows that these wandering Jewish exorcists had strayed from home religiously as well as geographically. They probably made considerable money at their evil art of casting spells about people, reciting formulas

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[111] Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen, op. cit., p. 277.

[112] Acts 19:12.

> which called upon evil spirits to come forth, and claiming generally to perform magic cures through the naming of unseen powers who heal and bless.[113]
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> The wandering Jews, or at least two of them, when they tried their new up-to-date formula containing the name of the latest divinity, met with an unexpected reception.[114] The contrast between Paul's unselfish helpfulness and the money-making schemes of these men, and the even greater contrast between Paul's possible description of the Great Physician and the monotonous magic incantations of these exorcists, angered the afflicted man. News of the way in which he attacked the exorcists and put them both to flight spread to the company of Christians and then into the synagogue and to the Greeks of the city.[115]

The incident with the sons of Sceva spread far and wide among the gossiping Ephesians and produced fear and astonishment. The stir brought discomfort of mind, as well as the uncovering of the fact that many who were believing in Christianity were practicing magic. The incident led to a great burning of books on magic, and burning them publicly. Following this upheaval we learn "So the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily."[116]

Paul's work in Ephesus had met with extraordinary success. His message had penetrated the city of Artemis. The enlightening effect of Christianity made people realize the wickedness of magical arts. It was clear that Paul's preaching was at war with superstition. A new standard of

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[113] Benjamin Willard Robinson, The Life of Paul (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1918), p. 157.

[114] Acts 19:13-17.

[115] Robinson, op. cit., p. 158.

[116] Acts 19:17-20.

morality was being set in circulation. A community of Christians was established. A hall for teaching was maintained continuously. The Christian Gospel was taken from house to house to many Ephesian homes.[117] Many co-workers were at work helping under the direction of Paul. But this was not accomplished without opposition and persecution.

The Corinthian letters in particular give hints of persecution and unpleasant experiences. The growing resistance possibly impelled Paul to write, "Why am I in peril every hour? . . . What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus?"[118] It probably caused him to write, "But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."[119] In his second letter to the Corinthians Paul says,

> For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethern, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Why we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead; he delivered us from so deadly a peril, . . .[120]
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> We put no obstacle in any one's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, watching, hunger; by purity, knowledge, forbearance, kindness, the Holy Spirit, genuine love, truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; . . . We are treated as impostors and yet are true;[121]

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[117] Acts 20:20. [118] I Cor. 15:30, 32.

[119] I Cor. 16:8, 9. [120] II Cor. 1:8-10.

[121] II Cor. 6:3-8.

We already know that Aquila and Priscilla rescued Paul from some peril.[122] It must have been in Ephesus that Paul endured the imprisonment that he shared with Andronicus and Junias.[123] "Many scholars now believe that it was during an Ephesian imprisonment that Paul wrote Philippians, and perhaps also Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon."[124]

After the burning of the books on magic Paul resolved to revisit his churches in Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. He tarried for a time in Ephesus while he sent his two helpers, Timothy and Erastus, ahead to Macedonia.[125] It was at this point that the smoldering conflict with the worshippers of Artemis was fanned into a flame. A man named Demetrius, who was probably the head of a guild of silversmiths, and who was a skilled craftsman making silver shrines of the goddess, reacted to Paul's attack on the idolatry practiced in Ephesus. Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen were making a living selling silver shrines of the goddess. The influence of Christianity was spreading and the effect of its spread was to decrease the sale of images not only in Ephesus but in the neighboring cities. Christianity was penetrating the economic life of the city, it was interfering with making a living. Demetrius was a leader and he gathered his fellow

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[122] Rom. 16:3, 4. [123] Rom. 16:7.

[124] G. H. C. Macgregor, "Introduction and Exegesis to the Acts of the Apostles," The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1954), IX, 251.

[125] Acts 19:21, 22.

craftsmen into a meeting and addressed them. He does not say that the problem is economic, but rather religious.[126]

> Wherever Paul went he stirred up trouble. In Ephesus it involved the whole city. The clash was between the religion of Diana and the religion of Jesus. Diana was the goddess of fertility. Her temple in Ephesus was one of the wonders of the world, and her worshippers were numbered by thousands and thousands. Images of the goddess could be seen in almost every home, and the making of the images kept scores of silversmiths busy and rich. Jesus, on the other hand, had no temple and only a handful of followers. The only image of him was a mental image, and no business prospered because of him. In the conflict between Jesus and Diana it looked as though Jesus had lost before the battle began. But let us see what happened.[127]

Demetrius had a grievance. His address to his fellow workers made sense from beginning to end. He stated the case directly. The meeting was evidently held in a guild hall possibly where they regularly met. Demetrius

> pointed out that Paul, by teaching the worthlessness of images, was seriously affecting public opinion and practice over almost the whole province of Asia,[128] and endangering their business as well as the worship of the goddess. The tradesmen were roused; they rushed forth into the street; a general scene of confusion arose, and a common impulse carried the excited crowd into the great theatre. The majority of the crowd were ignorant what was the matter; they only knew from the shouts of the first rioters that the worship of Artemis was concerned; and for about two hours the vast assembly, like a crowd of devotees or howling dervishes, shouted their invocation of 'Great Artemis.' In this scene we cannot mistake the tone of sarcasm and contempt, as Luke tells of this howling not praying.[129]

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[126] Acts 19:24-27.

[127] Macgregor, The Interpreter's Bible, op. cit., IX, 258.

[128] Acts 19:26, 27.

[129] Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen, op. cit., pp. 278-279.

It has been attested by several inscriptions found in the ruins of Ephesus that the words "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians"[130] was a common formula of devotion and prayer.[131]

Instinctively the citizens of Ephesus gathered in the theater. Very few knew what the riot was about, and apparently no one knew what they wanted to accomplish. But in some manner they felt that the goddess Artemis was involved. A certain Jew named Alexander tried to address the howling mob in the theater, but the confusion only increased.

> Two of Paul's companions in travel, Gaius and Aristarchus, had been carried into the theatre with the crowd; and he [Paul] himself was on the point of going there, but the disciples would not allow him, and his friends among the Asiarchs sent urging him not to risk himself among the mob.[132]
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> . . . . . .
>
> The Asiarchs,[133] or High Priests of Asia, were the heads of the imperial, political-religious organization of the province in the worship of 'Rome and the Emperors'; and their friendly attitude is a proof both that the spirit of the imperial policy was not yet hostile to the new teaching, and that the educated classes did not share the hostility of the superstitious vulgar to Paul.[134]
>
> The demonstration continued for about two hours.[135]
>
> Suddenly the noise dies away. The town-clerk of Ephesus has entered the Theatre. He mounts the stage. He looks round at the crowded tiers of marble seats rising before him in a semi-circle. And he makes a brilliant, typically Greek speech. The cold logic

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[130] Acts 19:28. [131] Ramsay, loc. cit.

[132] Ramsay, Ibid., p. 279.

[133] Acts 19:31.

[134] Ramsay, op. cit., p. 281.

[135] Acts 19:34-41.

> of his words falls like ice on the heated audience. He tells them that the supremacy of Artemis is not in question; that the Christians have neither robbed the temple nor blasphemed the goddess; that the law courts are available for such disputes and that, unless they go away peacefully, the Roman authorities may look upon the incident as a riot and impose the usual penalties. 'And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.'[136]

From this outburst of opposition it would seem clear that Paul could not continue his work in Ephesus. His friends the Asiarchs no doubt would cast their influence to persuade him to leave. He had penetrated into the city of Ephesus as far as Christianity could go at this time. But the departure of Paul was not the departure of Christianity from Ephesus. The Christian church had been firmly established and workers trained. The movement continued.

> While Paul and his missionary companions escaped from this extraordinary mob scene unharmed, it plainly hastened his departure from Ephesus, and he never returned to the city. But his work there was perhaps in some respects the most fruitful and far-reaching of his whole career, for a generation later it was the church at Ephesus that collected and published his letters; that church was the home of the writer of the Revelation; there the Gospel of Luke and The Acts of the Apostles were written, and fifty years after Paul's work there it gave the world the Gospel of John and then collected and published the four Gospels. No church of the first century made a greater contribution to enduring Christianity than the one Paul founded in Ephesus. It was his last foundation, and his greatest.[137]

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[136] Morton, op. cit., p. 386.

[137] Goodspeed, op. cit., p. 137.

Timothy and Titus, The Pastoral Epistles, and Their Relationship to Ephesus

Two of Paul's most trusted workers were Timothy and Titus. These two men, both as individuals and as having epistles addressed to them, have an association with Ephesus. Paul found Timothy at Lystra on his second missionary journey.[138] The relationship between these two men presents the picture of a beautiful friendship between an older and a younger man which is helpful to both of them. We find Paul explaining to the Corinthians, "Therefore I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church."[139] Of Titus Paul wrote to the Corinthians,

> But thanks be to God who puts the same earnest care for you into the heart of Titus. For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest he is going to you of his own accord. . . . As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker in your service;[140]

Timothy worked with Paul throughout his stay in Ephesus. It was from there that he was sent on the very delicate mission to Corinth. When Paul wrote II Corinthians from Macedonia later the same year that he left Ephesus, we find Timothy with him. Timothy was still with him when he wrote Romans from Corinth, for he joins Paul in sending salutations.[141] But there is no mention of Timothy during Paul's experience in Jerusalem or during Paul's two years of

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[138] Acts 16:1-5. [139] I Cor. 4:17.

[140] II Cor. 8:16-24. [141] Rom. 16:21.

imprisonment at Caesarea. It has been assumed by some that he was in charge of the churches in this period. But we learn that Timothy did join Paul during the imprisonment at Rome, for the Epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are written in the name of Paul and Timothy.[142]

The few additional facts that we find about Timothy are found in the two letters addressed to him. I and II Timothy and Titus are a group of three letters obviously written at the same time, to the same place, for the same purpose. They are written in the name of Paul, who says to Timothy,

> As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine. . . . This charge I commit to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophetic utterances which pointed to you, that inspired by them you may wage the good warfare.[143]

Modern Biblical scholarship has quite generally concluded that Paul himself did not write these three Pastoral letters, but that they were written a generation or more later to the clergy of Asia Minor. It is believed that the Pastorals were written to attain the unity of the Christians; to strengthen the leadership of the church; written in defense of the heresy attacking the church and urging for an orthodoxy. This view assumes that the Pastorals are pseudonymous, and that the names of Timothy and Titus stand to the clergy many years later as Timothy and Titus stood to Paul

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[142] Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Phile. 1:1.

[143] I Tim. 1:2, 3, 18.

in the apostolic age. The Pastorals tell of a clergy current at the time of their writing and assume that the readers have a full knowledge of the situation. It is also obvious that since the Pastorals were written generally to the clergy in Asia Minor the writer could not have been immediately or simultaneously present with them all.

> Having made such observations, one may hazard the guess that the letters were written in Asia Minor, perhaps in Ephesus. Such phrases as 'remain in Ephesus' (I Tim. 1:3); 'all who are in Asia' (II Tim. 1:15); 'you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus' (II Tim. 1:18); 'this is why I left you in Crete' (Tit. 1:5), suggest that the letters were written primarily for the churches of Asia, and therefore were written in Asia.
>
> However, the opinion that the Pastorals were written in Rome has been maintained by some scholars. . . . However all of these arguments may also be used to support the theory of Ephesus. . . . Asia was a hotbed of heresy and syncretism; . . . Asia, probably Ephesus, therefore remains the most probable place of origin.[144]

We have several times spoken of the syncretism of Ephesus. It may well be that this Ephesian syncretism sprouted into heresy and false teachers, forcing the Christians to begin to set up a pattern of orthodoxy and to defend themselves against heresy.

> As might be expected, all the literature we have reflects the syncretistic nature of the Ephesian religion. When the Pastorals present the problem of heresy--i.e., of chaotic conglomerations of Jewish, pagan, and Christian ideas and practices offensive to the church officials but championed by vigorous and effective teachers--as their basic problem, we may be sure that they reflect accurately

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[144] Fred D. Gealy, "The First and Second Epistles to Timothy and the Epistle to Titus," The Interpreter's Bible (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1955), XI, 368.

> the anguish of the church in that period when it was seeking to define and standardize its faith in the midst of a bewildering bedlam of insistent and inconsistent voices. It is always well to remember that in its creative periods the church has achieved its most significant statements of faith, not in unawareness of the thought currents of the time, nor yet in meek conformity to them, but in reaction to and interaction with them.[145]

Our next point has to do with church organization. During the lifetime of Paul and his workers any church organization that can be discerned was simply to meet the needs of the specific community and was very simple. In general the apostles had charge. There were prophets, teachers, men especially entrusted with some responsibilities, elders for shepherds of the flock, bishops or presbyters who probably were the more mature men of the church, and deacons for the administration of material matters.

> But very soon a division of labour became imperative. . . . For before the Apostolic age had passed we find not one class of officers but two, [The bishop or elder and the ministers].[146] The two classes are in close relation; they are for the most part spoken of together; in the Pastoral Epistles the qualifications of the one are difficult to distinguish from the qualifications of the other; and it is not until we pass from the Apostolic age . . . that the nature of the division of labour between them becomes clearly defined.[147]

In the Pastorals we find a church organization which we have not found before. They do not tell what the bishop, elder, deacon are supposed to do; they assume that the reader

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[145] Ibid., p. 382.

[146] Between the parentheses is the writer's translation.

[147] Edwin Hatch, The Organization of the Early Christian Churches (London: Longman's Green, and Co., 1895), pp. 48-49.

knows and the church knows. Thus we probably have in these letters a glimpse of the slowly developing church organization which may well have been going on in the Ephesian churches. According to Goodspeed "There were evidently at least three groups or meetings within the Ephesian church, and possibly five, which is not at all improbable after Paul had worked there almost three years."[148] With this growth during Paul's residence in Ephesus, there must have been many Christian communities or churches a generation or two later.

> Asia Minor, and especially the province of Asia, was during the century following A.D. 70, to use the words of Bishop Lightfoot, "the spiritual centre of Christianity." There the new religion spread most rapidly and affected the largest proportion of the whole population; the conduct of the Asian communities during that period, their relations with the imperial government, with their pagan neighbors, and with other Christian communities gave to a considerable extent the tone of the development and organization of their church.[149]

To return to the man Timothy we find that I and II Timothy assume that Paul and Timothy were together in Ephesus, and when Paul left to go to Macedonia, he left Timothy in charge in Ephesus. Paul wrote the first letter (I Timothy) from Macedonia, the second letter (II Timothy) was written from Rome. There is no situation in the book of Acts where this fits. If Paul wrote the Pastorals it was after a release from the Roman imprisonment and during an interval before a second imprisonment, and we have nothing to substantiate this.

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[148] Goodspeed, Paul, op. cit., p. 146.

[149] Ramsay, The Church in the Roman Empire, op. cit., pp. 171-172.

All that we know about Timothy ends with the epistles which Paul wrote.

More than two hundred years after the death of Timothy, Eusebius (ca. 260-340 A.D.) wrote that it was related that Timothy held the office of overseer of the diocese of Ephesus.[150] Five hundred years later, Nicephorus (ca. 850) wrote that Timothy was beaten to death by an Ephesian mob for protesting against the licentiousness of the worship of Artemis. The truth of this has not been verified.

This account has discussed Timothy's work with Paul; the place of the three Pastoral letters and their content; syncretism at Ephesus and its possible result; a glimpse at a developing church organization; the growth of the church; and Christian tradition concerning the man Timothy.

John's Work in Ephesus According to Christian Tradition

The Apostle Paul's work came to a close during the reign of Nero (A.D. 54-68). By this time the Jews in Palestine were in revolt against Rome. This conflict had been building up over a period of years, but as the climax of A.D. 70 approached it is related that the Christians of Jerusalem were warned in a dream to leave and take refuge in Pella. It seems fairly well agreed that John left Jerusalem around that time and sailed to Ephesus. With Peter and Paul both gone the Christian churches were in need of leadership.

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[150] H. E. Eusebius, III, 4.

Up to this point the Christians had regarded their church in Jerusalem as the mother church, and the city as the center of their movement. With Jerusalem destroyed, the Christians scattered, John became the leader, and Ephesus became the center of the Christian movement. It is this period of less than two hundred years (A.D. 70-200) that is of great interest to Christians.

Although we know that John was heir to Paul's labors at Ephesus and in Asia, still John seems to disappear from the New Testament records save in the Johannine writing. The following explanation is of interest.

> John had no Luke to write his life. His own writings were all done toward the close of the first century unless the Apocalypse be dated shortly after Nero's reign, a view now held by only a few scholars. But we are not to think of John as idle, or restless, or ineffective. His personality and power are evident in the writings that he has left. They constitute an immortal memorial. The Gospel is regarded by many, probably by most Christians, as the profoundest book of all time. It is significant that much time elapsed before John wrote. Paul and Peter and James had all passed on. Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. The Jewish nation was no more. Persecution of Christians by the Roman emperor had come from Nero and now again under Domitian. The Gnostic heresy had grown apace, but John lived, growing riper and richer in the grace and love of Jesus Christ.[151]

The Christian movement in Ephesus and Asia was confronted by hostile and powerful competitors. False teachers were troubling the churches as John took charge. The world of Asia Minor was filled with beliefs alien to Christianity. While the anthropomorphic gods of Olympus were gravely

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[151] A. T. Robertson, Epochs in the Life of the Apostle John (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1935), p. 101.

questioned, there was uneasiness and uncertainty as to what to believe. Fortune, fate, astrology, superstition, magic, demonology were common beliefs. The long standing syncretism had come to flower in Gnosticism. The religion of Emperor worship had grown in strength and in its demands. R. H. Charles has given a picture of Ephesus in this period.

> Ephesus was the centre of Roman administration in Asia. As the Province of Asia was senatorial the governor was called proconsul, and it was at Ephesus that he was bound to land and to enter on his office. As a free city it had a board of magistrates, a senate, and a popular Assembly. Under the Empire the power of the popular Assembly, which in earlier days had really held the reins of power, had declined until its chief function was to approve the Bills submitted by the Senate. It had its regular times of meeting, but no extraordinary meeting could be summoned except by the Roman officials. . . . From its devotion to Artemis, Ephesus appropriated to itself the title Temple Warden. But the word took on additional meaning and came most commonly to be applied to a city as a warden of a temple of the imperial cultus. The Ephesian Neocorate is first mentioned on coins of Nero. The first temple was probably erected to Claudius or Nero, the second to Hadrain, and the third to Severus. A 2nd century inscription . . . speaks of Ephesus as being warden of two imperial temples as well as of that of Artemis. . . . Now it was at this city that Paul founded a Christian Church. . . . Though of very secondary importance for a couple of decades, it must after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. have quickly risen into a position of supreme importance and become the chief centre of the Christian Faith in the East. . . . Judaizing and Gnostic teachers early showed themselves active, . . . The presence of such elements testified to the danger of schism.[152]

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[152] R. H. Charles, "A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Revelation of St. John," The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1920), I, 47-48.

The Johannine Writings

In the New Testament there is a body of five writings commonly known as the Johannine writing. There are three epistles, I John, II John and III John; the Gospel of John; the Revelation. They were written toward the end of the first Christian century, and according to Christian tradition they were written by the Apostle John. All five of them are tied together. Even modern Biblical scholarship of the last two hundred years has no final way of deciding whether they were written by the Apostle, the Elder, or the Seer. But it is generally conceeded that whoever wrote the Fourth Gospel wrote the Epistle of I John also.

> Of the three epistles ascribed by tradition to the apostle John, the first and longest is certainly by the same author as the Gospel. Both literary style and religious conceptions are too closely related to permit any doubt upon this point. . . . The epistle was evidently called forth by the existence of false teachers, who were at once Docetists and libertines.[153]

According to Christian tradition these five writings were written in Ephesus by the Apostle John to meet the changing situation of Ephesian and Asian Christianity. The study of these writings reveals the problems of false teachers, heresy and the needs of Christianity in the later part of the first century. It is part of the record of the second generation of Christians. These Christians were called upon to meet the demands of new problems and to preserve the treasure of Christian revelation. Ephesus had become the center of

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[153] McGiffert, op. cit., p. 617.

the heresies of Docetism and Gnosticism which were a grave threat because they entered into the Christian church itself. They presented a false philosophy which threatened to destroy the true faith and which gave rise to frequent warning on the part of the authors of the books of the New Testament.[154]

> The Gnostics were distinguished as the most polite and most learned, and the most wealthy of the Christian name; and that general appellation, which expressed a superiority of knowledge, was either assummed by their own pride, or ironically bestowed by the envy of their adversaries. . . . Their principal founders seem to have been natives of Syria or Egypt, where the warmth of the climate disposes both the mind and the body to the indolent and contemplative devotion. Gnosticism blended [syncretism] with the faith of Christ many sublime but obscure tenets, which they derived from oriental philosophy, and even from the religion of Zoroaster, concerning the eternity of matter, the existence of two principles, and the mysterious hierarchy of the invisible world. As soon as they launched out into the vast abyss, they delivered themselves to the guidance of a disordered imagination; and as the paths of error are various and infinite, the Gnostics were imperceptibly divided into more than fifty particular sects. . . . Each of these sects could boast of its bishops and congregations, and of its doctors and martyrs; and, instead of the Four Gospels adopted by the church, the heretics produced a multitude of histories, in which the actions and discourses of Christ and of his apostles were adapted to their respective tenets. The success of the Gnostics was rapid and extensive.[155]

Many Christians became Gnostics while at the same time they were members of the Christian community. Gnosticism gave Christ a central place in its system, yet they did not understand Christianity as Jesus had taught it. Christianity

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[154] See John 20:31; I John 2:22; Rev. 2:15; Jude.

[155] Edward Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, ed. Ernest Rhys, Everyman's Library (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1910). I, 442-443.

could not be syncretized, it was one unlike element that could not be blended into the many diverse factors of Gnosticism. Christians with a pagan background could see no difference between Gnosticism and Christianity as Jesus taught it, and to many, distinctions made no great difference. Plainly Gnosticism was a threatening syncretism which Christianity would have to come to grips with, and pagan Ephesus, the city famous for its syncretism and change, was the place for it to happen.

> Obviously Gnosticism tended to minimize the historical element in Christianity and to divorce the faith from the life, acts, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. It was a group of attempts at a universal religion which would take advantage of contributions from many sources, but which would hold as a basic assumption a sharp distinction between spirit and matter and would give to Christ a central place in achieving man's salvation. It was an effort, perhaps not consciously recognized as such, to acclimatize Christianity in a popular religious trend of the day and to show it to be consistent with it and a fulfilment of it. In doing so, by omission and interpretation it so badly distorted Jesus as to make him quite different from the Jesus recorded in the Gospels. Had Christianity come to be identified with Gnosticism, presumably it would have disappeared as the contemporary beliefs of non-Christian origin which were the outstanding features of Gnosticism ceased to have currency.[156]

Gnosticism presented syncretism, a menace, a threat and a crisis. To meet this need Christian tradition believes that the Apostle John wrote the Fourth Gospel and I John. "Early Christianity was met with hostility in many areas of ancient life. . . . In the days when Christianity was organizing its defense and moving to counter-attack, the Fourth Gospel

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[156] Latourette, op. cit., p. 125.

was written."[157] The movement of Christianity from Palestine into the pagan world of the Roman Empire; a new center of operation at Ephesus; the need of a Gospel adapted to pagan converts with an Hellenistic background; the need of a Gospel less Jewish than the three in circulation; the fact that Christianity was no longer regarded as a sect of Judaism; the inroads of syncretism, Gnosticism, Docetism; the influence of false teachers and teaching; the need of a unifying step for the many churches; the growing need of a more developed organization of the churches; and the preparation of Christians for the type of Gospel John was capable of writing, prepared the way for the great contribution coming from Ephesus, The Fourth Gospel. John wrote not only to supply the needs of Ephesus but of Asia Minor. "Only one man in the course of centuries is capable of such thought as we find in the Fourth Gospel, and we cannot imagine that a group of men, all of them of that magnitude, were teaching at the same time in the church at Ephesus."[158]

> The Christian movement had now identified itself with the Gentile world. . . . The conception of a Catholic church had now taken root. In the earlier time each community had stood by itself, with its own beliefs and customs. . . . Now it had become evident that if the church was to survive in face of all the hostile forces, it must be united. It must arrive at a common type of government and worship and doctrine. The separate communities must learn to merge themselves in

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[157] Ernest Cadman Colwell, John Defends the Gospel (Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1936), Preface.

[158] Ernest Findlay Scott, The Literature of the New Testament (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), p. 246.

> a Catholic or universal church. . . . Christian thought had now become Hellenized--that is to say it worked with Greek instead of Jewish ideas. Not only did the Gospel appeal more directly to the Gentiles when it was thus expressed in their own terms of thought, but there was much in its message which became more intelligible. The ideas taken over from Greek philosophy were in many ways more adequate to the purpose of Jesus than those which had come to him through Judaism.
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> The Fourth Evangelist writes for that later time in which so many new interests had arisen and the mode of conceiving the Christian message had so radically changed. . . . He saw that Christianity, under the later influences, was in danger of losing itself in mystical and philosophical speculation, and his aim was to anchor it again to the primitive tradition.[159]

John himself gives the reason for the writing of this Fourth Gospel, "but these are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name."[160]

Emperor Worship and the Persecution of the Christian Churches

Emperor worship gradually increased from the time of Alexander the Great. Augustus Caesar, who ruled when Jesus was born, saw how easy it would be for parts of his vast empire to rebel and that there was need of a unifying force. The unifying force developed was for the emperor to become a deity, a god. Many took kindly to the idea; some questioned it; the Christians rebelled against it. This may well raise the question as to what was the attitude of early Christians to the many gods, even the emperor god, of paganism.

> The established religions of Paganism were seen by the primitive Christians in a . . . odious and

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[159] Ibid., pp. 249-250.

[160] John 20:31.

> formidable light. It was the universal sentiment both of the church and of heretics, that the daemons were the authors, the patrons, and the objects of idolatry.[161] Those rebellious spirits who had been degraded from the rank of angels, and cast down into the infernal pit, were still permitted to roam upon earth, to torment the bodies and to seduce the minds of sinful men. The daemons soon discovered and abused the natural propensity of the human heart towards devotion, and, artfully withdrawing the adoration of mankind from their Creator, they usurped the place and honours of the Supreme Deity. . . . It was confessed, . . . that they had distributed among themselves the most important characters of polytheism, one daemon assuming the name and attributes of Jupiter, another of Aesculapius, a third Venus, and a fourth perhaps of Apollo; . . . They lurked in the temples, instituted festivals and sacrifices, invented fables, pronounced oracles, and were frequently allowed to perform miracles. . . . <u>But the belief of the Christian was accompanied with horror.</u>[162] <u>The most trifling mark of respect to the national worship he considered as a direct homage yielded to the daemon, and as an act of rebellion against the majesty of God.</u>[163]

As Emperor worship developed three temples were built in Ephesus, which involved a costly and elaborate ritual, ceremony, and the homage of all Roman citizens. This harmonized very well with the worship of Artemis and the other pagan religions. The Emperor Domitian (A.D. 81-96) was very zealous for the maintenance of this State religion for regarding the Roman Emperor as a deity, and looked upon secret religious societies (as Christianity was regarded), as hotbeds of treason which must be destroyed.

> He instituted a system of espionage and encouraged slaves to betray their masters. During the last

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[161] See Justin Martyr, Apolog, Atheneagoras, Legat, Lactantius, Institut.

[162] The underscoring by the writer of this dissertation.

[163] Gibbons, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 444-445.

> two years of his reign his suspiciousness and cruelty became intensified. Christians . . . suffered severely at his hands. . . . The banishment of the Apostle John to Patmos is commonly referred to his reign.[164]

The law of the Roman government to conform to Emperor worship or be destroyed brought a crisis in the province of Asia. John was banished to the island of Patmos, where he wrote to seven of the cities which seem to have been involved: Ephesus, Sardis, Pergamum, Smyrna, Philadelphia, Thyatira, Laodicea.[165] We are told of Antipas of Pergamum being a martyr,[166] and how many others we do not know.

> The mere profession of Christianity became a crime. The persecution was widespread and severe while it lasted. The usual form of punishment was confiscation of property or death. The Christians were represented as disloyal and dangerous characters whom it was the duty of the State to exterminate. The persecution, however, like that under Nero, served to promote the development of the Church. The efforts of the Emperor to suppress it produced the opposite effect from that intended, and the Christians generally remained loyal to their faith, which through the persecution became better and more favorably known than before.[167]

While on Patmos John received a vision which he describes.

> I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, "Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum

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[164] Albert Henry Newman, A Manual of Church History (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1933), I, 120-121.

[165] Rev. 1:9-11. [166] Rev. 2:13.

[167] William Scott, A History of the Early Christian Church (Nashville: Cokesbury Press, 1936), p. 264.

> and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.[168]

John wrote the vision. It is the apocalyptic book of Revelation. In his instructions it is interesting to note that Ephesus was named first.

> We gather from the Apocalypse that John . . . exercised an unquestioned authority over the Churches of the Province of Asia. To seven of these, chosen by him to be representative of Christendom as a whole, he wrote his great Apocalypse in the form of a letter, about the year 95 A.D. The object of the Apocalypse was to encourage the faithful to resist even to death the blasphemous claims of the State, and to proclaim the coming victory of the cause of God and of His Christ not only in the individual Christian, and the corporate body of such individuals, but also in the nations as such in their national and international life and relations.[169]

The message to the Christians contained in Revelation was written in symbols, in cryptic language with concealed meaning. It had to be for the safety of the recipients and in order for the letter to reach its destination. The message is considered to have been inflammatory, it was against Rome, it predicted the destruction of Rome, it symbolized the Emperor as a beast. The book reached its destination, it was understood by the Christians under persecution, and it was preserved. Revelation was not just one vision, but rather was it the embodiment of years of insight which crystalized into the apocalyptic communication when severe persecution brought the need of such a message.

> Thus the Apocalypse carried forward the revelation of the Gospels. It carried it, however, into a

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[168] Rev. 1:10, 11.

[169] R. H. Charles, op. cit., p. xxii.

> region where the methods of the biographer and historian avail nothing. We are in the hands of a prophet, who sees and hears things that elude the eyes and ears of other men; the simple narrative of the Evangelist has given place to a symbolism which represents the struggle of the Apocalyptist to express ideas that lie in great part beyond the range of human thought.[170]

The Letter to Ephesus, Rev. 2:1-7

The letter addressed specifically to the Ephesians is addressed to the "angel of the church of Ephesus." A few scholars have wondered if this could be Timothy. The works of the Ephesian church were known; it was a laboring church; a patient church; a church that hated evil and refused to accept false teachers, and those who claimed to be apostles and were not. They had not fainted in their work. They had hated and resisted the Nicolaitanes which seems to have been some form of heresy which probably fostered immorality. This is a most commendable record, and indicated a church that was holding its ground in the face of paganism, Gnosticism, heresy and lack of organization in the Christian groups. Knowing the great city of Ephesus as we do by this time, John presented a fine record of the Christians of the Ephesian church.

But the Ephesian church did have a fault. They had fallen through the fact that they had abandoned their first enthusiastic love for Christ and Christianity. Paul had established Christianity in pagan Ephesus in the middle of

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[170]Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922), Third Edition, in the Preface of the First Edition.

the century. Around A.D. 70 John had come and had taken over the work. By the close of Domitian's reign there was a new generation of Christians, old workers were passing away. Either through fear of standing for Christianity in a pagan world; or fear of persecution; or through the infiltration of syncretism; or division of thought in the church; or lack of understanding the true meaning of the Gospel; or because of the controversies over Gnosticism; or because of apathy and neglect; or for all of these possible reasons together, the Ephesian church was rebuked sharply and called upon to repent. "Remember then from what you have fallen, repent and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent."[171]

From the prologue of the Epistle to Ephesus by Ignatius, written some fifteen or twenty years later, we have evidence that the Ephesian church came through the persecution by the Roman government. They must have recovered their warm and enthusiastic Christianity, for Ignatius wrote,

> I have through God approved your well-beloved name which you bear by reason of your upright nature, by faith and love in Christ Jesus our Savior. You are followers of God's example, and rekindling your proper task by the blood of God, you have finished it perfectly.[172]
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> . . . . . .
>
> I rise again through your prayer, in which may I always share, so that I may be found in the class

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[171] Rev. 2:5.

[172] Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Apostolic Fathers, An American Translation (New York: Harpers & Brothers, 1950), p. 207.

> of the Christians of Ephesus who were always in accord with the apostles, by the power of Jesus Christ.[173]

The Roman Emperor Domitian was assassinated in A.D. 96. A reaction to the enforcement of his laws followed his death, and the severe persecution gradually subsided. John was able to return to Ephesus. Eusebius in his Church History records the following:

> For in Asia also great lights have fallen asleep, which shall rise again at the last day, at the coming of the Lord, when he shall come with glory from heaven and seek out all the saints. Among these are Philip, one of the twelve Apostles, who sleeps at Hierapolis, and his two aged virgin daughters, and another daughter who lived in the Holy Spirit and now rests at Ephesus; and moreover John, who was both a witness and a teacher, who reclined upon the bosom of the Lord, and being a priest wore the high priest's mitre, also sleeps at Ephesus.[174]

In concluding this chapter on the appearance of Christianity in Ephesus we can summarize by saying: the end of the first Christian century found Christianity well established and vigorous in Ephesus. The conflict with Emperor worship and severe persecution had not exterminated it. The five great writings of John had been given to Christendom. There now existed a body of Christian writings; the Gospels and the letters of Paul. There was a second and even a third generation of Christians most of them converts from a Hellenistic, pagan background. All of the apostles

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[173] Ibid., p. 210.

[174] Eusebius Pamphili, Ecclesiastical History, trans. Roy J. Deferrari (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1953), I, 189.

were now gone, and there was enough organization in the Christian churches to carry on. Tertullian, (A.D. 150-220) wrote, "The sequence of bishops traced back to its origin will be found to rest on the authority of John."[175]

> St. John did not confine his activities to Ephesus. He toured the neighboring churches, ordaining bishops and supervising their work. The organization of the Church owed much to him. Early in the second century we find that each of the churches in this area has its bishop with elders and deacons serving under him.[176]

Ephesian Christianity was the outgrowth of the work of both Paul and John. Paul had planted Christianity in Ephesus and had given his letters to be incorporated into the body of Christian literature. John had written last and defined the historical foundations; he had sought to spiritualize worship; he laid down the Christian principles as he understood Jesus to have taught them; he sharply distinguished between the Christian church and the Judaic religion; he differentiated between Christianity and the world; he endeavored to present Christ, the Son of God, to the inner experience of man. It did not matter to John when the Christ entered the world, he had been divine for all eternity. In this view he had presented the Logos doctrine.[177] John had translated a Jewish message into Greek terms, not only for the Gentile people of the Roman Empire, but for all time to come, in the writing he left to Christianity.

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[175] Foakes Jackson, op. cit., p. 42.

[176] A. D. Welsford, Life in the Early Church A.D. 33-313 (Greenwich: Seabury Press, 1954), p. 112.

[177] John 1:1-5.

Out of Ephesus came a distinct aspect of Christianity.

> Even a casual persual of the New Testament discloses differences, as for instance, between the Gospel of John and that of Mark, between the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and between the Epistle of James and that to the Hebrews.[178]

Out of Ephesus had come the blending of the Jewish Christianity with the Hellenistic terms and language. The Fourth Gospel was a distinct contribution from Ephesus. Out of Ephesus came the Apocalypse, a unique and outstanding contribution. Ephesus proved to be the testing ground for the purity and vigor of early Christianity; it was the testing ground for the collision of Christianity and Emperor worship. Ephesus, the city of paganism in all its glory, the center of the worship of Artemis, had produced a distinguished aspect of Christianity, and become the center of the Christian movement.

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[178] Kenneth Scott Latourette, The First Five Centuries (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1937), p. 61.

CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIAN EPHESUS UNTIL 200 A.D.

Let us remind ourselves at this point that we are relating the story of a city, one that now lies buried beneath silt and water, a city known to us from ancient writers and archaeological discoveries. Henry Barclay Swete has brought together a description of life in Ephesus in this period.

> In the life of Ephesus commerce occupied no less important a place than local politics. The silting up of the harbour had indeed begun to threaten the city's command of the seas, but Strabo was able to report that in every other respect it was growing in prosperity day by day, and that Asia within the Taurus had no market that could vie with it. Foreign trade brought it into communication with Greece, Egypt, Spain, and on the other hand with the Euphrates and the East. Among its local specialities were marble, vermilion, oils and essences, and the handicraft of workers in gold, silver and copper. Its slaves fetched fabulous prices in the Roman market. Nor were the intellectual interests of the place less keen or varied. In the first century the city of Heracleitus abounded with persons who followed the profession of the philosopher or the RHETOR, and added to its reputation as a seat of learning. It will not be forgotten that according to Eusebius (H.E. iv. 28) Ephesus is the scene of Justin's dialogue with Trypho, and probably also of his initiation into the Stoic, Peripatetic, and Platonist philosophies. . . . Nor was art neglected in Ephesus; the city was a famous school of sculpture and architecture; the great theatre remains to witness to the passion of its citizens for the drama. But religion was the paramount power at Ephesus, and perhaps in all the Asian cities. The worship of the Ephesian Artemis was an inheritance from pre-Hellenic times, and possessed all the attractions which bind a people to a traditional

> localized cult. The Artemision did not indeed dominate the city as the Parthenon dominated Athens; it lay in fact, as was demonstrated by Mr. Wood's discovery on the last day of 1869, on the plain outside the Magnesian gate of Ephesus. Nevertheless it was the chief glory of the place, and life in Ephesus was at every point brought into contact with the great presiding deity of the city. . . . In the Ephesian calendar the month of the spring equinox was named after Artemis, and during that month the city celebrated a yearly festival in honour of the goddess. On great festivals a sacred carriage carried the image of Artemis through the streets of the city. The great temple employed an army of officials; it had its wardens, its guards, its hierophants and choirmen, . . . its priests and priestesses. Private beneficence added to the splendours of the goddess; a great inscription of the year A.D. 104 records the munificent bequest of a citizen for the maintenance of the worship of Artemis, 'marking' in the judgment of Canon Hicks, 'a reaction against Christianity,' which from the first had been felt to be a serious rival of the Ephesian cult. It is worthy to remark that the worship of the Emperors did not present itself to the people of Ephesus in this light, and was even regarded as an ally of the local religion; a statue of Augustus was set up in the precinct of the Artemision, . . . Indeed there is abundance of evidence that in the cities of Asia generally the Caesar-worship was a welcome adjunct to the worship of the local deities.[179]

We are not to get the idea that Ephesus changed because Christianity was established there. The worship of Artemis and Emperor worship were far more imposing and colorful than Christianity. Ephesus continued to be the melting pot of the Orient and the Occident; continued to prosper; to be an intellectual center; to be materially beautiful and powerful. But Christianity had something to offer and slowly its gifts were heeded and accepted. Christianity had penetrated and infiltrated during the Apostolic age. Probably the actual

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[179] Henry Barclay Swete, The Apocalypse of St. John, Third Edition (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922), Chap. V.

numbers of Christians were small compared to the throng of pagans, but Christianity had covered a wide area and had touched most the cities of the Roman Empire. Wherever the currents of trade, commerce, travel went, Christianity went with them.

The most outstanding centers of evangelization were Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth and Rome. "Each in its own way was typical of a different aspect of Christianity."[180] It was a great challenge and a grave responsibility to the converts and workers of Christianity when the Apostles were gone, and they were called upon to carry on and to follow through. The primitive Christians were a brotherhood of the Spirit.

> They acknowledged the authority of the Spirit wherever it manifested itself. Other than this, the only persons to whom the early Christians deferred as in any sense exercising authority over them were the traveling missionaries or apostles.
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> As Christian churches multiplied, ecclesiastical organization tended to come into being and to expand. The later writings of the New Testament reveal a system of church government in process of establishing itself. . . . Undoubtedly the bishop was at first only an informal functionary overseeing the conduct of affairs in a local Christian group which recognized in its elders a number of leaders of equal standing. Presently the bishop came to be recognized as the chief authority in the group.[181]

With the passing of the apostles bishops became the leaders of the groups. Eusebius writes, "so Timothy is recorded as the first to receive the bishoporic of the diocese

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[180] Foakes-Jackson, op. cit., p. 39.

[181] Elmer W. K. Mould, Essentials of Bible History, Rev. Ed. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1951), p. 535.

of Ephesus, as also was Titus of the churches of Crete."[182] There is evidence that Crescens mentioned in II Timothy 4:10 was sent to Gaul, while Linus became the first after Peter to be bishop of Rome. He was followed by Anencletus and Clement. Dionysius seems to have become shepherd of the church of Corinth. At Jerusalem Symeon the son of Clopas had succeeded James. Ignatius who was called a worthy follower of the apostles became Bishop of Antioch. Thus one by one bishops assumed the authoritative leadership of groups, regulating the preaching, teaching and ritualistic observances. "The free Christian brotherhood of the earliest days of Christianity had given way to a Christian ecclesiastical organization."[183] To these bishops the great work of Christianity was entrusted. "The bishops of early Christianity are the link which binds together the Church of history and the Church of apostolic tradition."[184] Although we are grateful for these early church leaders they did not have the stature of Paul or John. But their writing, teaching and leadership was given as they understood it.

> In attempting to appraise the importance of 'Paul' in his time, it may be said quite frankly that in the New Testament, after Jesus, there are but two great seminal minds who were able to translate one religious tradition (Judaism) into another (Hellenism) in such a way as to create a genuinely new religion (Christianity)--Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel. Both of them were men of such spirit,

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[182] Eusebius, op. cit., p. 142.

[183] Mould, op. cit., p. 536.

[184] Foakes-Jackson, op. cit., p. 40.

> imaginative insight, and religious intensity, so bold and expressive in language and metaphor, that between them they have practically determined what Christian language is. In contrast to these two giants, the author of the Pastorals, and indeed most other later New Testament writers, seem without originality--sincere and devoted, it is true, but without fresh ideas.[185]

At the beginning of this chapter a brief picture was given of pagan Ephesus. In contrast we should have a brief picture of Christianity in Ephesus. The church was composed of all sorts of people, the rich, slaves, shopkeepers, builders, schoolmasters, lawyers, matrons, maidservants, the nobility and the scum of society. Christian services were held in homes on the Lord's Day which is the first day of the week. Christianity was a singing religion. Prayer was a vital feature. The office of reader was one of the early functions connected with worship. The letters of Paul were read. The gospels were written for worship and were read aloud. "The telling of the gospel story led to discussion and interpretation for the Christians would naturally understand the story in the light of their immediate social and religious experiences and problems."[186] Christian fellowship with meals together was a vital part. Baptism was a ritual from the beginning.

Social distinctions were ignored among Christians. A slave or freedman might rise to the office of bishop. Slavery was accepted as an institution of this world. We have read that the Ephesian slaves brought fantastic prices. Numerous

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[185] Gealy, The Interpreter's Bible, op. cit., VII, 373.

[186] Mould, op. cit., p. 529.

slaves became Christians. Astrology, sooth-saying, spiritualism, magic, demonology had to be given up by those converted to Christianity. The immorality of the theatre of this period was condemned. Both craftsmanship and manual labor were recognized as part of the Christian pattern of life. We are told,

> Celsus despised the Christians because so many of them were working men, 'wool-dressers, cobblers, and fullers,' 'uneducated and vulgar persons,' as he scornfully called them: but the Christians themselves were proud to carve the tools of their trades on their tombstones in the catacombs. Shop-keeping was also recognized as lawful, provided that the goods sold were not idolatrous and that the prices charged were fair.[187]

Laborers, craftsmen, traders, slaves, could have their share in the public amusements of the circus and amphitheatre, and public festivals of the pagan gods. But a Christian had no part in them. The education of Christian children was a problem. There were schools, but the books studied were the pagan writings and they were taught to recognize the heathen gods. Christians were gradually forced to organize schools of their own. In the eyes of the pagans the Christians rejected pleasure and cut themselves from society. It was difficult for a Christian to be married to a pagan. And while the Christians were far from perfect and were very immature in their understanding of the teachings of Christianity they did leave behind them a record of good works.

> The spirit of love which filled the early Church found expression in numerous ways. Christians were hospitable.

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[187] Welsford, op. cit., p. 316.

> They welcomed brethern from distant churches, whether they knew them or not, and they helped them if they were in difficulties. Christians were liberal in giving alms, whether the money was needed for the poor, or for the needs of prisoners, or for redeeming slaves.
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> In the terrible outbreaks of plague which devastated many cities . . . Christians nursed friends and enemies alike. Their behaviour was in striking contrast with the selfish fear which made pagan families thrust their sick and dying relatives into the street. A new spirit was abroad in the world, and from it new customs and new social ideals were growing up.[188]

The Persecution of Christians

In the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81-96) occured the second persecution of Christians and an attempt to wipe out Christianity. Domitian's successor relaxed the measures against the Christians, but the persecution was resumed in the reign of Trajan (A.D. 98-117). Christianity had come to be regarded as an illegal religion and it remained illegal until the edict of Constantine A.D. 313. It was not illegal in the sense of a regulation or law enacted by the Roman government against those who professed Christianity. But the Church itself was an unincorporated society and had not received the recognition of the State. It was not licensed, hence it was unrecognized. To be a member of the Christian group was illegal, not because of its faith, because it was the policy of the Roman Empire to tolerate the religions of its conquered people. Tertullian said that Christians were looked upon as a guild or association as early as Nero (A.D. 54-68). For a time Christianity was looked upon as a

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[188] Ibid., pp. 333-334.

sect of Judaism. When it was found to be a new religion it was looked upon with disfavor. Trajan found no great fault with the Christian doctrines but because Christians steadfastly refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, they were persecuted in various degrees of punishment from social ostracism to the death penalty.

There are various reasons given for the persecuting attitude taken by the Roman government to the Christians. They were considered to be a secret society which was contrary to Roman law; they had an evangelizing spirit and to proselyte was unlawful; they aspired to be a universal religion, to have Christ's Kingdom set up throughout the world. This would make Christianity a rival and a threat to the Roman Empire. Christians refused to conform to the State religion of Emperor worship; to take part in any of the idolatrous rites; they refused to serve in the Roman army or to take much part in the civil administration; they drew their recruits from the poor, the outcasts, the slaves, the working people which caused the well-to-do to be suspicious; they met in private homes; they were known to be closely bound in a brotherhood; they claimed to drink the blood of Christ; and expected the end of the kingdom on earth. This was interpreted to mean that they expected the end of the Roman Empire. The Christians came into conflict with pagan priests, makers of idols, pagan festivals and most of the pagan way of life.

But within the ranks of Christianity itself there were difficulties. The Gnostic heresy was not to be settled for

many decades. There was a growing feeling for the need of unity of action in all sections of the church, in order that they might meet the problems constantly arising. In the New Testament books of Timothy and Titus we are given a picture of what existed in the churches at Ephesus. The episcopal form of church organization had taken place, had crystalized. There was a common belief or orthodoxy. There were heresies and divisions as well as personal conflicts in the body of Christians. There was need of unity and uniformity, and there was need to strengthen the bishops, elders, deacons. Gradually we are to see the appearance of a Christian answer to the threat of Gnosticism, syncretism, paganism and heresy. It is the fixing of an Apostolic tradition; Apostolic creed; the Apostolic organization; and the Apostolic New Testament. Scott writes "Synods of bishops were first called soon after the year 160 to settle the question of Montanism, which was a very disquieting influence in the life of the Church at that time."[189]

> The sense of the unity of the Church in all its parts gave rise to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. When the term was first used, it had reference simply to the universality of the Christian message, but in the latter third of the second century the Church began to be referred to as the Catholic Church in the technical sense of a Church closely knit together in all its parts in government, doctrine, and worship. A difficulty soon arose as to whether the final authority in the Catholic Church was vested in one person, the bishop of Rome, or in the decision of the majority of the bishops. . . but it is important to

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[189] William Scott, op. cit., p. 304.

> observe that even as early as the second century a remarkable development towards centralization of authority had already taken place.[190]

Early Christians and Bishops Connected with Ephesus

Many early Christian teachers, elders, and bishops lived and worked in Asia while Ephesus was the center for the Christian movement, and most of them would at some time have contact with Ephesus. We can gather this from the seven letters written by John to the neighboring cities, and from the writing of the early bishops which have come down to us. It was in Ephesus and the outlying cities that episcopacy was first definitely established as an indispensable element in the government of the Church. We are also greatly indebted to Eusebius who enables us to piece together, at least a part of, the experiences of the courageous Christians who followed John in Asia and Ephesus.

Papias (A.D. *ca.* 60-140)

> Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, who perhaps born as early as A.D. 60, and had consequently come to years of discretion long before the death of St. John. No facts are known as to his life: . . . Irenaeus calls him a hearer of St. John and a friend of Polycarp, and there is a statement found in Eusebius that he was a very learned man.[191]

Papias is valuable to us because he preserved oral traditions, he tells us himself that he made it his object to gather information from the elders of the Church. He continu-

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[190] *Ibid.*

[191] Foakes-Jackson, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

ally was enquiring what was said about Andrew, Peter, Philip, Thomas, James, John or Matthew. And he repeatedly asked, "What do Aristion or the Presbyter John say?" This collecting of oral information is the connecting link between the apostles and their helpers, and the writing of church history. Out of his interviews with elders "Papias produced a work of his own, in five books, which he called the INTERPRETATIONS OF SAYINGS OF THE LORD."[192]

> This work has disappeared, but Irenaeus and Eusebius knew it and made use of it, and what they and later writers quoted from it shows that it contained traditions of the utmost value about the beginnings of Christian history and literature.[193]

Concerning the writings of Papias which evidently existed until the end of the ninth century[194] Eusebius has written, "he was responsible for the great number of Church writers after him holding the same opinion as himself, who proposed in their support the antiquity of the man, as for instance, Irenaeus and whoever else appeared to hold similar views."[195] Papias has handed down to us the tradition as to the origin of the Gospel of Mark. He says that some persons raised from the dead by Christ Jesus lived until the reign of Hadrian A.D. 117, and it has been written that he was "the earliest witness to the Book of Revelation."[196] Being a hearer

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[192] Edgar J. Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 161.

[193] Ibid. [194] Ibid., p. 164.

[195] Eusebius, op. cit., see pp. 202-206.

[196] Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature, op. cit., p. 164.

of John and a collector of information, Papias undoubtedly was familiar with Ephesus and interviewed Ephesian Christians and has aided in bringing to us the Ephesian traditions of Christianity.

Polycarp (A.D. ca. 65-156), Bishop of Smyrna

There is nothing authentically known about the parentage of Polycarp. From his own language it is believed that he had been a Christian from his earliest youth. The place of his birth is not definitely known, it may have been Palestine. But we do know that he lived in the time when Ephesus was the center of the Christian movement. We learn that he knew the Apostle John, and through the writings of his pupil Irenaeus, and the historian Eusebius, we find considerable about his life.

We already know that in Ephesus John had gathered disciples about him, that he had ordained bishops and presbyters, and visited neighboring districts. Of his circle of disciples Polycarp seems to be the most famous. Long years after the death of John, and in his own old age, it was his delight to relate to his younger friends and pupils what he had heard John tell as an eye-witness of Christ Jesus' life, and while Polycarp stressed his talks with John it is to be gathered that he talked with other disciples who had been eye-witnesses to the life of Jesus.

Irenaeus, the pupil of Polycarp, speaks of his master as having not only been taught by Apostles, and lived in familiar intercourse with many that had seen Christ, but also

as having received his appointment in Asia from the Apostles to be bishop of the church of Smyrna. Tertullian definitely names John as having appointed him to this office, and there seems no reason to question it. Polycarp was thirty or more years old by the time of the death of John. The examples of Timothy at Ephesus in a previous generation or of Athanasius at a still later epoch, bear testimony to the practice of placing young men in the highest offices of the Church in the earliest centuries. If Polycarp was appointed to the episcopate by John he must have held the office more than a half century.[197]

> It seems highly improbable that Polycarp and Papias should have been unknown to each other. Being strictly contemporaries and living at no greater distance than the interval which separates Smyrna and Hierapolis, they could hardly fail--as the two most famous Christian teachers in those parts--to have been in frequent communication the one with the other.[198]

Polycarp and Ignatius

But there is no question about the acquaintance of Polycarp and Ignatius (A.D. ca. 60-115). Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was condemned as a Christian in his home city, in the last years of Trajan's reign (A.D. 110-112) and was sent a prisoner to Rome to be thrown to the wild beasts in the arena. On his way to Rome to be a martyr he halted at Smyrna where he received attentions from the Smyrneans and

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[197] J. B. Lightfoot, The Apostolic Fathers (London: Macmillan and Co., 1889), Second Edition, I, 440-451.

[198] Ibid., p. 442.

from Polycarp their bishop. In the letters which Ignatius wrote from Smyrna he speaks in affectionate terms of Polycarp. Moving on from Smyrna to Troas he dispatched two letters, one to the Smyrna community and another addressed especially to Polycarp, but as its closing injunctions show, he intended it to be read publicly in the Church.[199] Ignatius then charged Polycarp with a task which due to his hurried departure from Troas he had been unable to execute. We are to note in this letter that Ignatius asks that a council be called to appoint some one to take over in Antioch, Syria. Here we see the calling of a church council and the leadership of the bishop of a church. We also see examples of the writing of early Christian bishops and observe how far this writing comes from the quality of that incorporated in the New Testament.

> Since the church at Antioch in Syria is at peace, as has been reported to me, through your prayer, I myself have taken fresh courage, with God-given freedom from anxiety, if only, through suffering, I may reach the presence of God, so that at the resurrection I may be found your disciple. It is your duty, most blessed Polycarp, to call a most holy council and to appoint someone who is greatly loved and resolute, who can be called God's messenger; command him to go to Syria and to glorify your determined love, to the glory of God. A Christian has no authority over himself but devotes himself to God. This is God's work, and yours also, when you achieve it. For I trust in grace, that you are ready to do something good in the service of God. I have exhorted you in a few words, for I know the intensity of your sincerity.[200]

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[199] Goodspeed, The Apostolic Fathers: An American Translation. Letter to the Ephesians, pp. 207-213. Letter to the Magnesians, pp. 213-217.

[200] Ibid., p. 234.

Not only was Polycarp requested to write to the churches lying eastward and instruct them to send letters and delegates to Antioch, but the Smyrneans themselves were also directed to write to the church at Antioch and to place their letter in the hands of some exceptionally trustworthy representative. Fulfilling this business brought Polycarp into correspondence with the Philippians, whom Ignatius had also requested to write to Antioch. They complied and sent their message to Smyrna and requested that their letter be carried to Antioch by the Smyrnean messenger. Polycarp replied to this letter, and the reply has come down to us, and appended to his own epistle, copies of all the letters of Ignatius which he had in his hands, including those addressed to himself and his church. He asks them in turn to communicate to him any later news which they may have respecting Ignatius and his companions. This letter of Polycarp to the Philippians is the only writing from him that we have. Goodspeed comments:

> Polycarp urges them to be harmonious and steadfast, but does not stress the threefold ministry, as Ignatius had done, writing simply in the name of "Polycarp and the elders with him." He shows a wider knowledge of Christian literature than Ignatius, using not only Matthew, Luke-Acts, and the letters of Paul, but Hebrews and I Peter.[201]

The Letters of Ignatius

On his journey from Antioch to Rome to be killed for his Christian convictions Ignatius wrote seven letters which have come down to us. One of them was to the Ephesians, the

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[201] Ibid.

others were to Magnesia, Tralles, Rome, Philadelphia, Smyrna, and the one Polycarp. It is the letter to the Ephesians, his relationship to Polycarp, the developing church authority which he reveals, and his early Christian writing as a bishop which associates Ignatius with Ephesus and makes him a connecting link in early church history. Also Ignatius introduces us to a long list of Christian martyrs, one more of them will be Polycarp.

Presumably the prestige of Ignatius as head of the Antioch church had brought forth the death sentence for him. He called his ten Roman guards "leopards." As they traveled through the province of Asia Christians welcomed him and gave all the comfort and encouragement that they could to a man sentenced to death. Before his stop over with Polycarp and the Smyrnean church Ignatius seems not to have written anything for the Christian movement. He probably was instigated by the Christians who befriended him to write. One gathers that Onesimus, bishop of Ephesus; Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna; and Burrhus, a deacon of Ephesus took charge of his letters. Of the seven letters he wrote the one to the Ephesians is the longest. It is about the length of Paul's letter to the Colossians. Concerning these letters Goodspeed writes,

> The letters reflect the mind of a deeply religious man facing a hideous and violent death, and at the same time warning the churches which had shown themselves his friends in his ordeal, against the errors and delusions of Docetism. The letters reflect the threefold ministry--bishops, elders or presbyters, and deacons. . . . After the books of the New Testament that had been written, the letters of Ignatius are among the most primitive documents of Christianity.

> But it is clear that the alert men who enabled Ignatius to write them lost no time in giving them at least a limited publication among the churches immediately concerned.[202]

Ignatius highly regarded the Ephesian Christians and from his letter we have a glimpse of the church; an Ephesian Bishop; and an Ephesian deacon. Ignatius writes,

> I have through God approved your well-beloved name which you bear by reason of your upright nature, by faith and love in Christ Jesus our Saviour. You are followers of God's example, and rekindling your proper task by the blood of God, you have finished perfectly. For when you heard that I was on my way from Syria in chains for our common name and hope, in the hope of being permitted to fight wild beasts in Rome in order that by being permitted by your prayer I might be able to be a disciple, you were eager to see me. Since therefore I have received your whole congregation in the name of God, in the person of Onesimus, a man of inexpressible love, and your bishop in the flesh, I pray that you will love him in Jesus Christ, and will all of you be like him. For blessed is he who has favored you, worthy as you are, with having such a bishop.
>
> As to my fellow slave Burrhus, by the will of God your deacon blessed in all things, I beg that he stay on with me, to the honor of yourselves and the bishop. And Crocus too, who is worthy of God and of you, in whom I have received an example of your love, has refreshed me in every way; may the Father of Jesus Christ refresh him so! With him came Onesimus and Burrhus and Euplus and Fronto, in whom I have seen you all in love.[203]

Now let us return to Polycarp, the disciple of John, the teacher of Irenaeus, the friend of Ignatius, and the writer of a letter to the Philippians which has been preserved for us. In the closing years of his life Polycarp

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[202] Edgar J. Goodspeed, The Twelve (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1957), p. 124.

[203] Goodspeed, The Apostolic Fathers, op. cit., pp. 207-208.

visited Rome and conferred with Bishop Anicetus (A.D. 154-168) of that city. These two Christian bishops were of a different opinion in regard to celebrating Easter. Polycarp pleaded for the practice of John and the other Apostles for observing the actual day of the Jewish Passover, the 14th day of the month Nisan, without respect to what day of the week it fell on. On the other hand Anicetus pointed out that those who had succeeded in the Roman church after the beginning of the century, had always kept the anniversary of Easter on a Friday and that of the Resurrection on a Sunday, thus making the day of the month give place to the day of the week.[204] Neither bishop convinced the other, but they parted good friends. This difference of usage did not interfere with their cordiality; and, as a token of this Anicetus allowed Polycarp to celebrate the eucharist in his place in the Roman church. Here we have a glimpse of the growing authority and domination of the Roman church which will be a factor in Rome becoming the center of the Christian movement instead of Ephesus. Eusebius records,

> On the 22nd of February, A.D. 156, Polycarp, the venerable and renowned bishop of Smyrna, suffered martyrdom. He was eighty-six years old, and had been bishop for fully forty years. He had only returned from a visit to Rome, where he had tried in vain to reach an agreement with Bishop Anicetus on the proper date for the celebration of Easter, when he was arrested, condemned, and brutally put to death.
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> So great was the dismay and sorrow occasioned by this startling event that the church at Smyrna recorded it in detail in a letter, sent to the church at

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[204] Eusebius, op. cit., p. 338.

> Philomelium two hundred miles to the east, and this came to be circulated among the churches generally. It was a moving story, and marks the virtual beginning of the great literature of martyrdom, which eventually grew to vast proportions; . . . Such stories stirred Christians to hold to the line in times of persecution.[205]

Since we are discussing the bishops and Christians of Ephesus we will again bring to mind Bishop Onesimus whom Ignatius regarded highly, along with Burrhus, and his mention of Eupulus and Fronto. In this dissertation we have stayed close to historical material, but Goodspeed has found Onesimus of Ephesus a character to excite his imagination in the realm of possibilities. He writes,

> It is not without reason therefore that Polycarp with Onesimus have been styled Apostolic Fathers, since Onesimus in particular can be shown with some probability to have been none other than the slave boy of Philemon who was freed at Paul's request, Philemon 15-20, and then it would seem because a Christian leader of such stature that he was made bishop of Ephesus by 115 or 120, and cooperated with Polycarp in making it possible for Ignatius, although a prisoner, to meet Christian delegations and write a whole series of letters to churches. I have even felt that it was this very Onesimus who had long known of two letters of Paul, to the churches of Colossae and Laodicea, who, after Luke-Acts came out with the names of so many other churches which Paul had founded, thought of inquiring among them for any old letters of Paul's they might still possess, and so collected and published along with them the group of Paul's letters that from that time onward have so greatly influenced Christian thought! . . . And was he not just the man to put the means of writing a group of letters to churches into the hands of Ignatius, a prisoner for Christ's sake, just as Paul had been? The man's name is the same, and he has the same ways of working; what more proof do we want?[206]

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[205] Goodspeed, The Apostolic Fathers, op. cit., p. 245.

[206] Goodspeed, The Twelve, op. cit., pp. 129-130.

Christian Writing

In the pagan Ephesian world there were many writers. They had their publishers; their libraries; their schools, and their reading public.

> The heathen writers of the first century took no notice of Christianity. They did not think it worth refuting, and they did not regard it as powerful enough to be dangerous to the state. Their silence is not strange, for most Christians belonged to the lower classes. Christianity was not a fashionable religion. As a movement it did not attract the attention of the educated. It built no great temples; it had no mysterious and imposing sacrifices or ritual. Besides, it came from the Jews. It was in fact regarded as a Jewish sect, and so its adherents were regarded with the same dislike and prejudices as the Jews. More than this, there were no Christian writers that appealed by their writings to the general public. They addressed no apologies to the heathen, and produced no polite literature that would challenge the attention of the educated world. Not one of the writings of the New Testament is addressed to the heathen. Christianity was for a long time propagated by the spoken, not by the written word.[207]

But the Christians did write. They wrote to meet the need of communities situations, of churches, of persecuted peoples. Paul wrote letters, some of them coming from Ephesus. John wrote his Gospel, his letters, and his Revelation, from Ephesus and to Ephesus. The Pastorals were connected with Ephesus. Goodspeed maintains that Luke-Acts was written in Ephesus.[208] He also thinks that Paul's letters were collected at Ephesus, and that the Gospels were put together at Ephesus.

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[207] Oliver J. Thatcher, A Sketch of the History of the Apostolic Church (New York: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1898), pp. 276-277.

[208] Edgar J. Goodspeed, An Introduction to the New Testament (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937), p. 208.

> For probably early in the second century, at Ephesus, where Paul's letters had so recently appeared, Christian publishers put together all four of the Greek Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and the new Gospel of John, arranged from the most Jewish to the most Greek and achieved a publishing success that had never been surpassed!
>
> We cannot learn that it was ordered by any council--there were no church councils as yet--or by any church. A Christian publisher or a group of them under the aegis of the great church at Ephesus, the greatest of Paul's foundations, in an inspired moment saw the supreme value in the four together and set them on their way.[209]

Added to the New Testament books, the bishops began to write and some of their writing has been handed down to us. We have fragments from Papias, letters from Ignatius, one letter from Polycarp, some of the writings of Justin Martyr and in the latter half of the second century the valuable writings of Irenaeus.

> The New Testament was really the bursting-forth of a great spring of religious expression that flowed on copiously far and wide for five hundred years. This literature sprang not only out of the Christian life and experience but also directly out of the New Testament. Its first literary models and patterns were found in the sermons, letters, revelations, gospels, and acts of the New Testament. There was something about the Christian experience that drove men to record it in books, to express it, defend it, and explain it.[210]

In the second century the Christians discovered that they knew too little about the Apostles. They came to feel that they must know more about them. So traditions, legends, fictitious writing full of imagination, sprang up to take the

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[209] Goodspeed, The Twelve, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

[210] Goodspeed, A History of Early Christian Literature, op. cit., p. vii.

place of history. Thus "An elaborate apocryphal literature was created, filled with tales of their lives and deeds and particularily of their heroic deaths."[211]

> In this gradual way the strange fairy-story literature about the apostles and their individual 'Acts' sprung up in the latter half of the second century and the first half of the third. It contributes almost nothing to our knowledge of their actual work and fates, only revealing the keen interest in anything that could be said about them in the life of the expanding church. This was just one minor strain in the varied and growing literature of Greek Christianity in that age of persecutions.[212]

This apocryphal literature reveals a certain trend in the Ephesian aspect of Christianity which we will find crystalizing in the days of Irenaeus.

> In the primitive days--even well on into the second century--there were living prophets to whom Christianity could look for a knowledge of the truth. Through them the Spirit was speaking and to appeal to the past was quite unnecessary. . . . But in the latter part of the century all was changed. . . . If a belief or a practice was not apostolic it was not Christian. The composition of pseudonymous writing containing the alleged teachings of this or that Apostle on various subjects, doctrinal and practical, was inevitable and was not confined to the Gnostics. Much of this Pseudonymous literature was produced in perfect good faith.[213]

We are not to forget that the second century of Christianity was an age of persecution. But the Christian movement continued to grow stronger and to spread. It became more organized, more prepared to use the pen in its own de-

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[211] Arthur Cushman McGiffert, A History of Christian Thought (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 164.

[212] Goodspeed, The Twelve, op. cit., p. 147.

[213] McGiffert, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

fense, and it sought to reduce the martyrdoms and persecutions by writing what are known as Apologetics. These Apologies were not written to convert the pagans or the Roman officials to Christianity, but they were usually written to the emperors in defense of the charges made by the pagans against Christianity. Three of the common charges were that the Christians were atheists, licentious, and cannibals. The Apologists refuted such charges and explained why they were not true. They sought to show that Christ was the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. "The purity of Christ's life and teachings, and the marvelous transforming power of Christianity are constantly and most impressively set forth."[214] These Apologists were Christians who had a knowledge of pagan philosophy and they used their knowledge and ability to make a written defense of Christianity. We now come to our first Christian Apologist from Ephesus. It is believed that he was taught philosophy at Ephesus, and wrote a book from there. After this discussion of Christian writing we can easily say that Ephesus was the publishing center of the Christian movement in the second century.

The Apologist, Justin Martyr (ca. 100-164 A.D.)

Justin was a pagan and a Smaritan by birth. He early gave himself to the persuit of truth, and sought to find the truth in the philosophy of the Ephesian world.

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[214] Newman, op. cit., p. 239.

> He found the Stoic instructor to whom he first joined himself unable to give him any knowledge of God. He found the peripatetic, to whom next he went, more concerned about the fee than about the truth. He learned from the Pythagorean, whom he next sought, that a long course of discipline in music, astronomy, and geometry was necessary to enable the soul to apprehend spiritual and invisible realities. Finally he became a disciple of Plato, and thought that he had indeed found 'wings for his mind' in the 'contemplation of ideas,' and that he would soon attain the end of the Platonic philosophy, and 'look upon God.'[215]

About all that we know about Justin is found in his writing which has come down to us. He himself tells us of his conversion to Christianity, which probably took place at Ephesus. He was walking in a field near the sea when he met a meek and venerable old man with whom he had a lengthy conversation. The old man told him that the truth he sought was imparted by God through a certain man called Jesus. The old man urged Justin to pray "that above all things the gates of Light may be opened to you, for these things cannot be perceived or understood by all, but only by the man to whom God and His Christ have imparted wisdom."[216] Justin then writes,

> Straightway a flame was kindled in my soul; and a love of the prophets, and of those men who are friends of Christ, possessed me; and whilst revolving his words in my mind, I found this philosophy alone to be safe and profitable. Thus, and for this reason, I am a philosopher.[217]

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[215] George T. Purvis, The Testimony of Justin Martyr to Early Christianity (New York: Anson D. F. Randolph and Company, 1889), p. 13.

[216] Ibid., p. 96.

[217] Justin Martyr and Athenagoras, Anti-Nicene Christian Library: ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donalson (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1870), pp. 96-97.

Justin became a Christian but he did not lose his love for philosophy, but because of his knowledge of pagan philosophy he was able to effectively defend Christianity.

> To him, as we shall see, Christianity was the true philosophy, the absolute truth, in the reception of which alone earnest minds could find peace. And therefore, after he became a Christian, he did not cease to be a philosopher. He always wore the philosophic mantle. He appears, like other philosophic teachers of the day, to have moved from city to city to spread his doctrines. Like others, also, he gravitated to Rome, where he became actively engaged in teaching and defending Christianity to all whom he could reach. There is nothing to show that he ever held any ecclesiastical office. He was rather a philosophical evangelist. He gathered pupils about him, . . . He distinguished himself in controversy with the powerful heretical teachers who had, like himself, drifted to Rome, and who were at that very time sowing the seeds of discord in the Christian Church.[218]

Justin became a voluminous Christian writer and his Dialogue is considered to be the longest Christian book written up to this time. It is a writing in the form of a dialogue between Justin and a Jew named Trypho. In addition Justin speaks of his treatise Against All Heresies. In spite of his influence and fame as a Christian teacher, writer, traveler, philosopher much of his work has disappeared. But what we have throws light upon the conditions of early Christianity. Justin was martyred for his Christian faith.

Polycrates (A.D. ca. 125-202), Bishop of Ephesus

We are indebted to Eusebius for preserving for us a very important incident in the life of the Church, and in the experience of the Bishop of Ephesus. In the reign of Commodus

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[218] Ibid.

(A.D. 180-192) Victor became Bishop of Rome, while at the same time Polycrates was Bishop of Ephesus. We do not know much about Polycrates beyond his conflict with Victor, but Eusebius mentions him several times.

> Victor of Rome tried to unify the practice of the whole Christian world in the matter of celebrating Easter, and so he called meetings of bishops in different places to report on the practice of their localities. The answer from every other place except that of Polycrates was that the feast of our Lord's Resurrection was celebrated only on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan, the day when the Jewish people put away their leaven, whatever day of the week that might be. Thus they were often called Quartodecimans. This letter is the only writing of Polycrates of which we know; . . . Both Eusebius and Jerome praise Polycrates highly, especially for his orthodoxy, all of which shows to what extent the Quartodeciman practice had become a dead issue in their time.[219] [A.D. 340-420]

Polycrates led the bishops of Asia to carry on the tradition of observing the fourteenth day of the month Nisan as Easter no matter what day it fell on. He wrote in protest to Victor of Rome and from his letter we can see how very earnestly he protested; how deeply he loved the Ephesian tradition of celebrating Easter; and how greatly he valued the episcopate. Here we can note the trend of the Apostolic tradition of Ephesus. He wrote in part:

> We, therefore, keep the precise day, neither adding nor taking away, for even in Asia great luminaries have fallen asleep, which shall rise on the day of the coming of the Lord, when he comes with glory from heaven and shall seek out all the saints, Philip of the twelve Apostles, who have been sleeping in Hierapolis, and two of his daughters who had grown old as virgins, and another daughter of his who lived in the Holy Spirit and rests at Ephesus. Furthermore,

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[219] Eusebius, op. cit., pp. 332-333. See footnote.

> there is also John, who leaned on the breast of the Lord, and was a priest wearing the breastplate, and a martyr, and teacher. This one rests at Ephesus. Then there is also Polycarp in Smyrna, both bishop and martyr; and there is Thraseas, both bishop and martyr, from Eumenaea, who rests at Smyrna. And why need I mention Sagaris, bishop and martyr, who rests in Smyrna, and also Papirius the blessed and Melito the eunuch, who lived entirely in the Holy Spirit and lies in Sardis awaiting the visitation from heaven when he will rise from the dead? All these observed the fourteenth day of the Passover according to the rule of the faith. And I also, Polycrates, do so, the least of you all, according to the tradition of my kinsmen, some of whom I have followed. Seven of my kinsmen were bishops, and I am the eighth. . . . So, my brethern, having lived sixty-five years in the Lord and having associated with the brethern from the entire world and having read all holy scripture, I am not frightened at what is threatened us, for those greater than I have said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'[220]

Polycrates goes on to say that he could name many bishops who were in accord with his views, and that they had given consent to this letter, "knowing that I did not bear my grey hairs in vain, but have always lived in Christ Jesus."[221]

Victor's response to this earnest appeal was to promptly excommunicate the Asiatic churches from the common unity. Various bishops, including Irenaeus, requested him "to consider the matters of peace and unity and of love toward one's neighbors, and the words of these as they sharply rebuked Victor are in circulation."[222]

This same question had come up in the last days of Polycarp and he had visited Bishop Anicetus of Rome in order to persuade him to follow the Johannine apostolic tradition.

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[220] Ibid., pp. 335-336. [221] Ibid., p. 336.

[222] Ibid.

Neither bishop changed his view but they had parted in a friendly spirit. In this later period neither bishop changed his view, and the Roman bishop assumed the authority to cut off the bishops of Asia and the churches of Asia from the Church as a whole, in spite of debate and synods being called. The churches of Asia Minor, with Ephesus as the center had exercised leadership in matters of doctrine all during the second century, but gradually the Roman church had gained prestige, authority and leadership.

> Although there was much dissension from the action of Rome in the Church at large, the churches of Asia Minor declined in influence from that point on, while the church of Rome rose to a position of undisputed supremacy not only in spiritual matters but in legislative authority over the whole Church.[223]

Irenaeus participated in this bitter controversy between Polycrates of Ephesus and Victor of Rome. He sought to calm the storm with a letter to Victor, pointing out that the East had long differed from the West in this matter, and yet the churches had respected and tolerated these differences of practice, and urged that they continue to do so. But not only do we see the growing supremacy of the Roman church, but we see the beginning of a separation of the Eastern and Western churches. Irenaeus corresponded with most of the Christian leaders of his day concerning this crisis, and while nothing outwardly happened to the Church, a great change had begun that would decide the direction of the Christian movement. Roughly speaking Ephesus held the leadership and was the center

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[223] William Scott, op. cit., pp. 329-330.

of the Christian movement from A.D. 70 to A.D. 200, and Ephesus continued to be an outstanding church long after that. It was a brief period but a critical one, and the contribution of the Ephesian aspect of Christianity cannot be over-estimated. The Church as a whole was infiltrated with false doctrines, compromises, laxity in standing firm, opinions, and political aspirations. The Ephesian church at this point was standing for the Johannine tradition and standing uncomprisingly.

Irenaeus (A.D. 135-202) The Johannine Tradition and the School of Asia Minor

In Asia Minor during the second century there was an active, vigorous church life, and a lively Johannine tradition. Gnosticism, which had brought one crisis in the time of John, was still a problem in the church. Gnosticism and the influence of Marcion, and Montanism, and the conflict with them, shows that the church was susceptible, alert, vivacious, and that it had leadership. Irenaeus, pupil of Polycarp, and Hippolytus, a learned man in the church at Rome, were vigorous opponents of Gnosticism. And while they both found their field of work in the West, they both thought and wrote in Greek and kept the characteristics of the East, and the traditions of the Asia Minor school.

Irenaeus, pupil of Polycarp, was a native of Asia Minor, trained in the Johannine tradition, and was the leading representative of the school of Asia Minor. He both emphasized and illustrated the thoughts of the bishops whose work had been

done earlier, and he represents the central forces of the Ephesian Christianity of the latter part of the second century. This school of Asia Minor permeated all Christendom and left an indelible mark on Christianity through Irenaeus.

> Brought up in the tradition of Asia Minor and spending his later life in Gaul, Irenaeus was a connecting-link not merely between distant portions of the empire, but between the old theology of the Johannine and Ignatian literature and the newer presentations which the Apologists and the 'Catholic' movement of his own day were introducing. A man of deeply religious spirit, his interest was in salvation.[224]

Although Greek by birth and of the Ephesian tradition, Irenaeus had made several journeys to Rome and spent thirty-four years as a worker in Roman Gaul. This meant that he was familiar with the viewpoint of Western Christianity and its literature. As we have mentioned he had corresponded with nearly all the bishops of the Christian movement. He knew their viewpoints and their problems. He knew the Gnostics and the Gnostic literature. He knew pagan writing and the pagan world. With this background Irenaeus did what was so characteristic throughout Ephesian history, he combined the more metaphysical Eastern aspect of Christianity with the more practical, legalistic, authoritative view of Rome and the West. And out of this syncretism, which he used to meet the problems of the Church and to defend it from heresy, he determined the trend of the Christian Church and "founded historic Catholicism."[225]

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[224] Walker, op. cit., p. 66.

[225] McGiffert, op. cit. See p. 148 for discussion.

When Gnosticism, Marcionism, and Montanism threatened to take over the Christian Church and cause the traditional apostolic teaching to disappear, Irenaeus was aroused to action. His one great interest was to defend and protect the apostolic tradition. Some of his contemporaries tried to interpret Christianity in terms of philosophy. The whole mass of Gnostic theories ran into the wildest speculation. This Irenaeus objected to and distrusted, and he took a positive position against it.[226] He wrote a great work called AGAINST HERESIES of which there are five books.

> The work of Irenaeus AGAINST HERESIES is one of the most precious remains of early Christian antiquity. It is devoted . . . to an account and refutation of multiform Gnostic heresies which prevailed in the latter half of the second century.[227]

The popularity of Gnosticism, the teaching of Marcion (ca. A.D. 140), and the Montanist movement forced the Christians to develop a tighter church organization, to clarify and formulate their Christian beliefs, and to decide upon a canon of the New Testament. "By the end of the second century the word 'catholic' was increasingly applied to the Church and in a technical manner, meaning both universal and orthodox.'[228] In this latter sense it was meant to distinguish the orthodox Christians from the heretics and to keep out of the Church

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[226] Robert Rainy, The Ancient Catholic Church (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902). See pp. 180-184 for discussion.

[227] Ante-Nicene Christian Library, The Writings of Irenaeus, trans. Rev. Alexander Roberts and Rev. W. H. Rambaut (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1869), Irenaeus I. See Introduction.

[228] Latourette, op. cit. See pp. 129-133 for discussion.

those who were deviating from the true apostolic teaching. There were several motives behind this gradual development. One was to unite all Christians in a common faith. A second was to preserve, transmit, and spread the Christian Gospel in its purity by the selection of a canon. A third was to define orthodox Christianity so all could understand it. And a fourth was to develop a Church organization that could stand up to the menace of Gnosticism. Simple as this may sound it was a critical period in the destiny of Christianity.

It was Irenaeus, the Christian who could syncretize, who did much toward shaping the Christian Church in this period of formation. In his AGAINST HERESY, he not only described the Gnostic beliefs in detail, but he set forth that which he believed and understood to be the true apostolic doctrine. This was a great step toward defining Christian doctrine. Irenaeus made it unmistakably clear that to him the church in Rome was the Christian church which best represented the teaching of the apostles. This gave Rome an unprecedented position and helped to transfer the leadership from Ephesus to Rome. In his writings he indicates that he could give lists of bishops of all the churches as they had followed in an unbroken line and as they had kept the apostolic teaching, but he singles out the church of Rome which he held to have been founded and organized by Peter and Paul. Irenaeus writes:

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[228]Latourette, op. cit. See pp. 129-133 for discussion.

> In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth have come down to us. And this is most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which had been preserved in the church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth.[229]

Irenaeus then begins with Peter and names the bishops of Rome down to his own time, each having in succession received apostolic authority as it had decended from Peter rather than from bishop to bishop.

> Clement of Rome had appealed to the apostolic appointment of the officers of the church in opposition to those who would remove them from office. But Irenaeus was the first so far as we know to appeal to it in support of episcopal infallibility. According to his theory the bishops were not ordinary officials chosen by the people and responsible to them; they owed their appointment to the Apostles, by regular succession from the original appointees, and possessed an authority quite independent of the churches over which they ruled. They were bishops by divine right and were subject to no control except that of the collective episcopate speaking in synods and councils.[230]

Gnosticism forced the apostolic, orthodox Christians to condense their Christian teaching or doctrine into a creed which could be memorized and held to as a rule that would separate them from Gnostic beliefs. At Rome this creed developed, apparently between 150-175 A.D. into a baptismal formula, which is the earliest known form of the so-called Apostles Creed. It is believed that this Roman creed was in large part known to Irenaeus. It is not known whether it was used in Ephesus or not, but it was considered to be a summary

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[229] Irenaeus, Against Heresy, op. cit., Book III, Ch. 25.

[230] McGiffert, op. cit., p. 161.

of apostolic teaching, and to have apostolic authority. It served as a barrier between orthodox Christianity and heresy. In its original form it read:

> I believe in God the Father Almighty; and in Christ Jesus, His only begotten Son, our Lord, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried; the third day He rose from the dead, ascended into the heavens, being seated at the right hand of the Father, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead; and in the Holy Spirit, holy church, forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the flesh.[231]

How much Irenaeus and Ephesian tradition contributed to the Apostles Creed we do not know, but it was in keeping with the views of Irenaeus. Of the work of Christ he wrote,

> We follow 'the only true and steadfast Teacher, the Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, who did through His transcendent love become what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself.'[232]

And of the Virgin Mary Irenaeus wrote,

> 'The knot of Eve's disobedience was loosened by the obedience of Mary. For what the Virgin Eve had bound fast through unbelief, this did the Virgin Mary set free through faith.' In this curious ascription is one of the earliest evidences of that exaltation of the Virgin which was to play so large a part in Christian history.[233]

May we not raise the question at this point as to the possible influence of Artemis and her exalted place at Ephesus?

A New Testament Canon

Gradually, by common usage and consent, books of Christian authorship were brought together. The Christians

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[231] Williston Walker, op. cit., p. 61.

[232] Ibid., p. 66. [233] Ibid.

themselves were aware of the difference between the Gospels, the writings of Paul, and other epistles and the fictitious writings, later apocalypses, and apologetics. The apostolic, orthodox Christians were forced to set up a standard or canon for Christian writings. And the standard set was that it must be written by an apostle or directly inspired by one. This standard explains why certain anonymous writings are ascribed to one or another Apostle, and to the production of pseudonymous writings bearing an apostolic name.[234]

> Marcion had a Scripture canon made up of a gospel of Luke and ten epistles of Paul. . . . In opposition to him Irenaeus, . . . framed a different canon composed of apostolic writings, a canon as they claimed more complete and accurate than Marcion's. This canon was authoritative not because it was inspired, or because it had to do with Christ and contained his words and works, but because it was apostolic. It arose as a result of the effort to define the teachings of the Apostles, and its historic significance lies in this fact. The criterion of canonicity from that day to this has been not the inspiration of a book, or its Christian character, but its apostolic origin. Of course this meant a closed canon. Other writings of equal religious and ethical value might be produced with the passing of time, but they could not be included in the Bible because they could not be traced back to an Apostle.[235]

In the face of the Gnostic crisis, in the formative period of the second century, Irenaeus of the Johannine Christian tradition, native of syncretistic Asia Minor, had been a leader in establishing an apostolic doctrine; the Roman church as a pattern for Christianity; Apostolic succession of bishops with Apostolic authority; an Apostles

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[234] McGiffert, op. cit., p. 155.

[235] Ibid., p. 154.

Creed for orthodoxy; the beginning exaltation of the Virgin Mary; an apostolic standard for the New Testament canon; and had saved the Old Testament for the Christian Church.

> It is impossible to exaggerate the significance of Irenaeus. He vindicated the new in Christianity, as the Gnostics did too, but he saved the Old Testament for the church as they did not; he explained the relationship between Christianity and Judaism and showed Christians why they were justified in retaining the moral law of the Jews while rejecting the ceremonial; . . . he attached fundamental importance to the incarnation which had meant little or nothing to the Apologists and had been denied altogether by the Gnostics; he interpreted Christ's work in such a way as to give saving value to all parts of his life, as no one else did; he supplied a doctrinal basis for the belief in the resurrection of the flesh; and he placed baptism and the eucharist at the very heart of Christianity. Above all, he united the ethical and religious, the legal and the mystical, and so founded historic Catholicism. It is Irenaeus' interpretation of Paul . . . which has been received ever since in the Catholic church, an interpretation that removes all his radicalism and grounds of offense. To no other Father does Catholic theology owe so much.[236]

Christianity had been forced to take a position in self defense. The step was taken. Aytoun writes,

> Humanly speaking, it is to Ephesus that we owe this peculiar outlook and temper of the Johannine writings which helps to make them so valuable.
> . . . . . .
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> Perhaps the most striking characteristic of what one might call Ephesian theology is its spirituality. It translates, so to speak, the facts and practices of Christianity into the language of the spiritual spheres. It gets to the back of things--to the very heart and soul of the Christian religion.[237]

But Ephesian Christianity had not prevailed in this great

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[236] Ibid., p. 148.

[237] Robert Alexander Aytoun, City Centers of Early Christianity (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1915), pp. 29-30.

formative step. Judiasm had given Christianity a heritage, the Old Testament, ethics, a pattern. Greece had given a language adapted to metaphysical ideas; had taught men to think; had taught the value of individual man; had given a pagan philosophy of life. The Orient had given symbols, mysticism, a quest for salvation. The Roman culture had been practical, utilitarian, outstandingly organized, with law, order and authority. Christianity was a revelation, an inward experience, a way of life, a revealed truth. "The early Christian community was a brotherhood of Spirit-filled men."[238] Ephesian syncretism had prevailed. Out of these elements and the sincere work of Irenaeus, the Roman catholic Church was in the building.

> The recognition of the apostolic as the norm of all Christian truth was a momentous step. The appeal was thenceforth to the past. What was apostolic, that is, what belonged to the first two generations of the church, was alone Christian. . . . It now became necessary to trace everything--doctrine, ethics, polity--back to the Apostles. If a belief or a practice was not apostolic it was not Christian.[239]
> . . . . . .
>
> The establishment of Irenaeus' principles meant the permanent loss of the primitive trust in present-day revelation. It was now believed that while the Apostles still lived, there had been direct communications from God; but after they passed from the scene there were no more. Under the pressure of heresy faith gave way to fear and the present was put under bondage to the past. Not new revelations were now counted upon, opening the way to fresh disclosures of God's will and truth, but a revelation given once for all in days long gone and never to be added to or altered. Of course such a change could

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[238] Mould, op. cit., p. 532.

[239] McGiffert, op. cit., p. 163.

> not have come about in a period when the sense of the Spirit was still everywhere vivid and when prophets were still common. . . . But the primitive enthusiasm--the primitive trust in a present Spirit and reliance upon living prophets--did not disappear without a protest.[240]

In this chapter of Ephesian Christian history we have covered the century beginning with the first bishops. We have seen how Papias gathered oral tradition; how Polycarp and Ignatius contributed to the Ephesian Johannine tradition; and we have indulged in some speculation about Onesimus. We have discussed Christian writing; taken note of the important Easter controversy; been introduced to our first Christian Apologist, Justin Martyr; and have related the way Christianity met the Gnostic crisis and in doing so built itself into an Apostolic Christianity and a Catholic theology. This is a divergence from the Johannine tradition and the revelation of Christianity as set forth in the four Gospels. Possibly an understanding of the trend Christianity is taking can be found in the history and syncretism of pagan Ephesus.

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[240] Ibid., pp. 164-165.

CONCLUSION

We have traced the history of Ephesus for more than a thousand years. We have shown the development of Christianity in Ephesus from its beginning with the work of Paul to the Johannine aspect with its exalted spirituality. Under the Gnostic crisis in Asia Minor, and the growing authority of the Roman church, we have seen the Ephesian tradition and leadership superseded, and its Christian tradition emerge into the Apostolic Church. The Christian movement was in the end saved from Gnosticism as a whole, but in the struggle the real teaching and revelation of Christ Jesus came to be misunderstood.

> Ephesus long continued to hold a fairly important place in the Christianity of the East. The Bishop of Ephesus was metropolitan of Asia. But even in the East it soon came to be of less account than Alexandria and Antioch, and later was quite overwhelmed by Constantinople. In the Church at large, it soon fell to second-rate importance, even though it owed somewhat to its claim to represent primitive apostolic traditions.
>
> It ever tended to live on its past.[241]

When Christianity was made legal in the Roman Empire it was possible for Christians to build houses of worship.

> In the year 325 the Emperor Constantine issued the Edict which made Christianity a legal religion. Immediately there was a movement on the part of Christians all over the empire to build more stately

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[241] Aytoun, op. cit., p. 30.

houses of worship which should be able to give adequate expression to the place of importance now held by their faith. The Christians of Ephesus entered wholeheartedly into this movement. They obtained possession of one of the most favorable building locations in the city, then occupied only by the ruins of the once great Museum.

. . . . . .

The Church of Saint Mary was identified definitely by means of an inscription which was found on the site. From this inscription (a quotation from a pastoral letter of the Archbishop Hypatius in the time of Justinian and preserved on a stone slab inside of the narthex) we know that the church was named for Mary the mother of Jesus ('the all-holy Mother of God and Perpetual Virgin'). It is certain, therefore, that this was the church in which the Council of 431 was held. In the official Acts of this Council, the church was designated as the church of the 'Holy Mary, Mary Mother of God,' or simply as 'The Great Church.'[242]

It is very difficult to find any evidence outside of Christian documents concerning Christianity in Asia Minor and Ephesus, but everything we know points to the conclusion that Christianity made rapid progress in the first century. The testimony of the Roman Pliny is, "that before 112 Christianity had spread so widely in his province that the pagan ritual was actually interrupted and the temples almost deserted."[243] But W. M. Ramsay concludes from inscriptions found that paganism continued dominant till the third and fourth century, which is after the destruction of the temple of Artemis in 262 A.D. We might conclude that Ephesus remained about equally Christian and Pagan. The Christians appear to be numerous and influential but are not the dominating

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[242] Merrill M. Parvis, The Biblical Archaeologist, op. cit., pp. 71-72.

[243] Ramsay, The Church in the Roman Empire, op. cit., p. 146.

influence. It is interesting to note that where the Greek spirit and education prevailed, Christianity spread with considerable rapidity. Where the Oriental culture prevailed Christianity made no progress at all.[244] From first to last Ephesus remained a city of syncretism, it was both Oriental and Occidental, it was Greco-Roman and Asiatic, it was Pagan and Christian. Ephesus was tolerant of Christianity, but Ephesian culture failed to submit to the primitive teaching of Johannine Christianity.

The Roman Church

The Roman Church had been an outstanding church since the time of Paul. From the second century this church had caught the Roman spirit of discipline, administration, law, order, authority. It was a practical church. It had endured severe persecution; it was located in the capital of the Roman Empire; it seems to have been the largest single congregation in Christendom; it reflected Roman authority and strength; it early took a big-brother attitude to the other Christian churches; it successfully resisted Gnosticism and Montanism which threatened to overwhelm the Ephesian Christians; it was first to form a creed to prevent Gnosticism and heresy in the ranks of the church; and Rome, as well as Ephesus, had a strong Apostolic tradition, since Peter and Paul had been there. From Rome, Clement of Rome (A.D. 93-97) had written to the Corinthian church in the name of the Roman church, and

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[244] Ibid. See pp. 146-148 for discussion.

had written as though the advice was to be obeyed. Victor the Bishop of the Roman church had sought to settle the Easter controversy, and assumed the authority to excommunicate the churches of Asia Minor. Around 190 A.D. synods were held in Rome concerning the problem, and the matter was finally decided in favor of the Roman practice. Irenaeus, of the school of Asia Minor and Ephesian tradition, had pictured the Roman church as founded by Peter and Paul and declared "it is a matter of necessity that every church should agree with this church."[245]

> While Rome was thus gaining in strength Asia Minor was relatively declining. At the beginning of the second century Asia Minor and the adjacent portion of Syria had been the most extensively Christianized sections of the empire. That was probably, also, true at the century's close. Ephesus and Antioch had been, and were still, great Christian centres.
> . . . . . .
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> These embittered controversies were costly to Asia Minor, and any possible rivalry on equal terms of Ephesus and Rome was out of the question. The collapse of Jewish Christian leadership, the apparent lack at Antioch of men of eminence in the second century, and the decline of the influence of Asia Minor left Rome, by 200, the most eminent and influential centre of Christianity--a position of which the Roman bishops had the will and the ability to make full use.[246]

With the loss of leadership, and her position as center of the Christian movement, with the establishment of Apostolic Christianity to replace the Johannine tradition, we close our story of Christianity in Ephesus. Christianity neither dominated nor conquered this stronghold of Artemis

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[245] Williston Walker, op. cit., p. 63.

[246] Ibid., pp. 64-65.

and pagan syncretism. Could syncretism be conquered was a question. In a little less than a thousand years the once great city of Ephesus will be buried in sand and water. Had the center of the Christian movement not moved to the aggressive, uncompromising, administrative, Romanly practical and authoritative capital of the Roman Empire, would Christianity eventually have been buried by Ephesian syncretism? Is there anything symbolic in the slow death and final burial of a city which could incorporate and embody a culture ranging from the blackest evil to the purity of the Johannine Gospel? We do not know.

The End of the Pagan Glory of Ephesus

From 200 A.D. when Ephesus ceased to be the Christian center of the Roman Empire to 262 A.D. Ephesus continued in her pagan glory. But a storm cloud was gathering which not only would change Ephesus but the entire Roman world. This was the appearing of barbarian tribes, the Ostrogoths and Visigoths from the North. They had first appeared in the Roman Empire around 100 B.C. and had continued their marauding, infiltration, migrations for several hundred years. They had a primitive tribal culture, a lower level of values than the Roman world, and a different attitude to the place of the individual. They were strong, vigorous, uncultured, seeking new hunting grounds, plunder, a new place to live. Rome saw the danger as wave after wave appeared, but Rome was declining in power and vigor. These great barbarian invasions covering several centuries changed the culture of the Graeco-Roman

world into something entirely different. The old order was destined to pass away and a new world order came into being. In the gradual change Rome had less and less need for Ephesus as a capital of the great Roman Province of Asia. In 330 A.D. Constantine, only five years after Christianity became a legal religion, made Constantinople the seat of the Roman Empire. The commerce of Ephesus began to change, the harbor was slowly silting up, and roads now turned to the new capital.

In 262 A.D. one of the marauding movements of the Goths swept over the whole of Asia Minor. Their warriors were brought in by the sea. They sailed through the Hellespont, embarked in great droves, and fell upon the cities, plundering, burning and terrorizing. There seemed to be no one to challenge their invasion. They were out for plunder. They sacked the rich and beautiful city of Ephesus, and reduced to rubble and ashes the glory of pagan Ephesus, for they destroyed the temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.[247] They robbed the temple of its great treasure. On their return to their tribal grounds they even destroyed the time-honored site of Troy. The glory of Ephesus was gone. The temple was never rebuilt. The city began its decline until it was finally abandoned and became buried in the silt and marsh.

Christianity had no visible temple to rob; no buildings to sack; no material wealth to plunder. The treasure of

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[247] Cambridge Ancient History (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), VXII, 148.

Christianity was the revelation and teaching of Jesus Christ. Its wealth was the New Testament. Its temple was the inward man, that flaming spark of divinity in the children of God. Its province was the Kingdom of God, an unconquerable Kingdom within the spiritual understanding of man. Neither paganism, syncretism, Gnosticism, heresy, divergence, barbarian tribes, or the ignorance of mankind could destroy divine revelation. The gates of hell could not prevail against it. Ephesus might be buried; the Roman Empire disintegrated; men misunderstand and corrupt the teaching of Jesus; but pure revealed truth would endure forever.

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