

Ephesians

Introduction & Chapter 1:1-6

February 13, 1994

Ephesians 1:1-6

Authorship: Traditionally Paul as substantiated by internal proof.

Destination: Traditionally the church at Ephesus as substantiated by internal proof.

Background: Ephesus located in what we call Turkey today, was the capital city of Asia Minor. It was an extremely important city in that it was located on a harbor of the ocean and over 230 communities surrounded the city. The city was known around the world for its Temple to Diana (Artemis).

On his way from Greece (Corinth) to Syria during his second missionary journey, Paul stopped in Ephesus for the first time. Although this was intended to be a brief stop while on his way to Jerusalem, the Jewish leaders of the city requested that he stay because they were so impressed with Paul's teaching about Jesus as the Holy One of God. While unable to change his plans, Paul does promise the church that he will return as soon as possible and he leaves behind Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:18-21). It is commonly thought that this first visit occurred in 51-52 A.D.

A short time later, probably 54 A.D., Paul returns to Ephesus and is thought to have stayed there for at least three years (Acts 20:31). During this time Paul says that he did not fail to declare the whole counsel of God to them (Acts 20:27). It is after this extended stay that this epistle was written to the Saints in Ephesus during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome.

Place of Origin: It is commonly believed that Ephesians and the other prison epistles (Colossians, Philippians, Philemon) were prepared by Paul in jail at Rome.

Date: ~A.D. 60-61

Exposition:

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Strong's #652 apostolos (ap-os'-tol-os); from 649; a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ ["apostle"] (with miraculous powers): KJV-- apostle, messenger, he that is sent.

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

When we bless God, it is praise. When we bless someone else, it is a prayer for God to bless them. When we are blessed, we have received blessing from God.

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

This type of wording is not uncommon in the Bible. Refer to 1 Peter 1:20, note that contextually, Christ was foreordained to be the Lamb that shed his blood before the foundations of the world; before sin existed. cf. 2 Timothy 1:9

5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

This predestination is not referring to our salvation in general. Refer to Romans 8:23 where this adoption is defined as the redemption of the body.

Note that this election, and predestination is according to His good pleasure.

6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. (NKJ)

We must believe that this understanding is a glorious one and not make apologies for it. All of the glory goes to God; not man in his ability to choose.