

A Young Preacher's Journal

Through Turkey & Southern Greece



By Kyle Pope

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Written and designed by Kyle Pope.

Photographs and map by Kyle Pope.

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Introduction

One evening in the fall of 1994 I received a call from my parents. We talked for a few minutes about what had been going on in their lives and mine. We talked about the latest thing the kids had done and whether or not everyone was well. Then my Father said - "Well, Mom and I want to talk to you about something." Oh no! (I thought) What have I done? Has the bill come due on my upbringing? Are they going to tell me I'm adopted? Have they decided to become Buddhists?

The "long and the short" of it was in fact none of these things. Instead, due to some changes in their own plans they had decided to offer my older brother Curtis and I a trip. Curtis and I are both preachers. Curtis preaches in Temple Terrace, Florida (a suburb of Tampa) and I preach in Birmingham, Alabama. We are also both avid students of the antiquities. In addition to preaching, Curtis teaches at Florida College, a Bible college run independently by non-denominational Christians. The trip we were offered was a trip to Turkey and Southern Greece touring Biblical and historical sites. Needless to say I had little trouble accepting their offer.

The trip involved two stages. The first stage was an organized group tour spanning from May 29, 1995 through June 11, 1995. This tour was lead by Ferrell Jenkins, a colleague of my brother's at Florida College and the head of the Bible department there. It was entitled *The Steps of Paul and John*. This phase began in Istanbul working slowly down Western Turkey examining museums and ruins of the ancient cities there. From Kushadasi Turkey (ancient Ephesus) we then began a cruise of Greek islands of ancient significance, ending up in Athens Greece. Using Athens as a base for a few days we explored a few of the major sites in Southern Greece. When this ended we began the second stage of our trip. Three of us, Curtis, Ferrell and I returned to Turkey making our way to Eastern Turkey where we rented a car and explored some sites Ferrell had never visited. Beginning at Adana (near the city of Tarsus) we worked our way East going all the way to Ararat on the Iranian border.

This was a wonderful trip, that has been a blessing to me in my work, my family life and my view of the world. I hope these notes can share with any who read them a small portion of this blessing.

Kyle M. Pope
July 1995

Acknowledgments

Let me express my deepest appreciation to all of those people who helped to make this trip a wonderful success:

Thanks to my parents Ron and Doris Pope for the gift of this trip. I appreciate all that they are to me as parents, and their consideration in offering us this trip.

Thanks to my brother Curtis Pope. I enjoyed the time we spent together. He has been a wonderful example to me as an older brother. In both my spiritual life and my personal life he has helped me grow in ways he will never begin to now.

Thanks to Ferrell Jenkins for organizing the trip, letting Curtis and I “tag along” with him in Eastern Turkey, and being such a good tour leader.

Thanks to Gary and Marty Highbarger, my wife’s parents. While I was out of the country my wife and children traveled to Missouri where they stayed with my parents and her parents while I was away. Gary and Mary and my parents as well drove to Alabama bringing my family where they needed to be during the trip.

Thanks to Stephen Barker. Stephen generously gave me the palmtop computer this journal was written on, and a ride to the airport when I left town and proofread the finished product for me.

Thanks to Harmon and Marie Highbarger, Larry and Billie Courington, Paul and Oleta Woodward and Dartha Starr for their material gifts that helped out on this trip.

Thanks to the folks in our tour group for the snacks and film they gave us so freely for our Eastern Turkey trip.

Thanks to the elders where I preach: Fred Watts, Wayne Moore and Dallas Dobbins for their cooperation in giving me time away from my regular duties at church.

Thanks to Lloyd Barker, Bill Lammons and Angelyn McKenzie for covering my teaching responsibilities in my absence.

Most importantly let me thank my family, Torhi, Caleb, Nathan and my wife Toni for their love, support, patience and care for me during this trip and as I have worked on this journal. They made many sacrifices for me to go on this trip and have endured much throughout the preparation of these notes. They are always in my heart throughout all my endeavors. Thank you for being my family!

Finally thanks to God for His love in sending Jesus to die for my sins, in preserving my health, blessing me with the love of friends and family and in His providence allowing me to take this trip and receive so many blessings from it.

Sincerely
Kyle Pope

Map of Greece & Turkey



By Kyle Pope

Leaving Town

Monday - May 29th

11:57 A.M. Central Time

After staying up until 4:30 A.M. last night my day began surprisingly well. About a week and a half ago I did a trial packing to make sure I wouldn't need more luggage. I wanted to get by with only two small "carry-ons". When I saw that I could get everything I needed in the two I just left them packed. What kept me up last night was primarily last minute stuff: fixing the window in the garage door, vacuuming the floor, "cat-proofing" the house, etc. This morning I had planned to get up and go downtown to buy a little modern Greek phrasebook but couldn't find the one I wanted. Yesterday I found a Turkish book which fits in my shirt pocket. I'm going to keep looking for the Greek version of the same thing.

As I write, I am on a little shuttle van which runs from Birmingham to Atlanta. A friend of mine named Stephen Barker took me to catch the shuttle. Stephen has been very helpful to me in preparing for this trip. He even offered to deposit a check for me which I had forgotten to take to the bank earlier. I plan to meet my brother in Atlanta. I should arrive around 2:30 Eastern Time and his flight is due in at 3:55. That will give me a chance to check my electronic equipment at customs so that I will be able to prove that I am taking it with me and didn't purchase it out of the country.

4:17 P.M. Eastern Time

The Atlanta airport is quite an experience! I'd say it took me half an hour just to figure out the layout. It is arranged in a line with different concourses lying horizontally along the line like railroad ties. To travel from one point to the other you can either take a subway, walk or take a flat escalator. I was half way to where I needed to be before I realized I could ride the subway! That's all right I needed the exercise anyway. The first thing I needed to do was check my cameras and my computer. It took me a long time to find customs. By the time I did, it was too late to meet my brother's flight. As I write I am watching for him to enter the International section. I have already picked up my boarding pass. My brother will have to get his ticket at the desk right in front of me.

9:29 P.M. Eastern Time

After waiting two hours I finally found my brother. He has been walking

around the concourse the whole time. His name is Curtis. He is a teacher at Florida College in Tampa Florida. FC (as it is called) is a college run by members of churches of Christ. They focus heavily on Bible training. Many preachers around the country have attended there.

Curtis is a true scholar. When it comes to antiquities, history or Biblical studies there is very little that he doesn't know. I have learned so much from him. I am sure that on this trip I will learn even more. After we finally found each other we had about forty minutes to visit. He gave me a little Greek phrasebook he had purchased. Before the flight left I ran into the restroom and shaved. I had forgotten to earlier this morning.

As I write we are about 1000 miles into the flight. We have already passed New York and we are over the Atlantic. There has been a good deal of turbulence. The last time I flew I was just a kid. This is quite an exciting experience for me. We should arrive in Frankfurt in about six and a half hours.

Tuesday - May 30th

6:25 A.M. Frankfurt Time

I have learned it is hard to sleep on an airplane. They fed us a small meal of shrimp and pasta. Curtis and I joked- "You know about five of these meals would be pretty filling!" After that we visited for a while. Most of the people on the plane started trying to sleep. I got about an hour of sleep (more or less). The turbulence had calmed down, but as I write we just hit a pretty good bit of turbulence. Curtis is reading an Agatha Christie novel¹. Out the window to the left the sun is just coming up.

8:51 A.M. Frankfurt Time

We have just made it to Europe. Through holes in the clouds we can see Ireland. We should arrive in Frankfurt in about an hour and a half. This is a good deal earlier than expected. Perhaps we can get a little of the feel of Germany.

12:10 P.M. Frankfurt Time

We have arrived in Frankfurt and all has gone well with one exception. As Curtis was getting off the plane he slipped and cut his arm. I was a bit worried he may have broken something but he said he was all right. We thought we would have a wait in Frankfurt but weather delays caused us to land a little later than expected. At Frankfurt we met up with the rest of the people that will be with our

¹ We learned later in the trip that Agatha Christie spent a good deal of time in Istanbul.

group. One of the ladies thought that Curtis was my father rather than my brother. I'll have some fun with that on the trip! The leader of our group is Mr. Ferrell Jenkins. He is the head of the Bible department at Florida college where my brother also teaches. He has organized this trip and written a booklet to aid in our study. The first portion of the trip is called *The Steps of Paul and John*. We will go through Biblical and historical sites in Western Turkey then travel to some Greek Islands ending up the trip with some sites in Southern Greece. The last part of the trip will involve my brother Curtis, Ferrell and I returning to Turkey to tour some sites in Eastern Turkey.

As I write we are just departing from Frankfurt and expect to land in Istanbul in two hours and forty-five minutes. We are seated next to a young lady who is a native of Turkey. Her name is Ipek Kotan. Curtis is quizzing her on how to pronounce Turkish words. She and I discussed religion a bit as well. She identifies herself as an agnostic. She would like for me to send her some literature when we get back to the states.

According to Ipek and the little book I bought, there are some significant differences in how people communicate in America and in Turkey. In Turkey a person doesn't say "no" by shaking their head from side to side. That communicates, "I don't know." To say no, you make a stern face and raise your head up and back.² Just a moment ago the clouds broke and we could see land for the first time. The pilot told us this was Hungary. Shortly after this we flew over the Danube.

Istanbul

6:55 P.M. Turkish Time

We made it to Istanbul at about 4:05. This was a good deal earlier than planned. The government of Turkey requires a Visa in order to enter the country. We were able to get this quickly. It took quite a long while to get all of the luggage that had been checked. I was so glad that all my bags were carry-ons. One of the couples in our group couldn't locate their luggage. The airlines will try to track it down for them.

Turkey is an unusual place. It is Middle Eastern but it is also very Western in many ways. English is spoken freely. Signs have English on them. One noticeable difference is the free display of affection between men. The girl on the plane told us that while homosexuality is not approved of (or often practiced) in Turkey men are very affectionate towards one another as a show of friendship. This is not at all

² Tom Brosnahan, *Turkish Phrasebook* (Berkley, CA: Lonely Planet Publications, 1990), p. 23,24).

sexual in nature but it is different than you would see in America. Within two minutes of leaving the airport I had seen men kiss one another three times. I found this most interesting.³

Our Turkish Tour guide Dr. Rashyid Ergener met us at the airport and began to introduce us to the city. Rashyid teaches at a college in Istanbul and conducts tours on the side. We left the airport and drove downtown to our hotel. Along the way we observed the Muslim minarets which dotted the cityscape of Istanbul. To the right of us we passed the Sea of Marmara. Throughout the city are the remains of the old city walls. Istanbul was first Byzantium, then Constantinople the capital of the Byzantine Empire.⁴ Rashyid told us that the name Istanbul came about from an expression used in connection with the prominence of Constantinople. As Constantinople was the major city of the area, when travelers were asked where they were going they would say *Ishtanbal* meaning “to the city.” Over time this expression replaced the name Constantinople.



The Blue Mosque in Istanbul.

10:13 P.M. Turkish Time

We came back from dinner a while ago. It was delicious. We ate grape leaves and a quiche with a sour dressing on the side. Earlier Curtis and I tasted Turkish delight. It is a kind of candy made with nuts, sugar and cornstarch. Curtis describes it as “jelly beans without the hard outside.” It was delicious! Tomorrow we get up at 6:30. This has been a very long day, which began for me Monday morning. I look forward to some rest tonight.

³ A lack of non-sexual same sex affection seems to be a factor common in the background of modern day homosexuals. A study conducted by Dr. Irving Bieber found that out of 106 male homosexuals 82 had fathers who spent very little time with their sons and 79 had fathers who maintained a “detached” attitude towards them. David Jeremiah, “Is Homosexuality an Alternate Lifestyle,” *The Rebirth of America* (Philadelphia: Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation, 1986), p. 109).

⁴ A.D. 330-1204, *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2nd. Ed. (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1050), p. 447.

Wednesday, May 31st

8:13 P.M. Turkish Time

After a buffet breakfast we began our morning tour. The Turkish people as a sign of hospitality give candy to their guests. Last night two men who worked for the hotel gave us Turkish delight. On the bus this morning our guide gave us some Turkish delight as well. We were also given a little blue charm with an eye painted on it. These are visible all over the city. They are intended to ward off the “evil eye.”⁵ Evident throughout the city are many statues of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Atatürk is viewed as the founder of the Turkish republic. His picture is on all the coins.

Our first stop was the Hippodrome. In ancient Roman times it was the site of chariot races. Now it is encircled by city streets. In the center there is an Egyptian Obelisk carried here in ancient times. Facing the Hippodrome is a Muslim shrine called the Blue Mosque. This is a beautifully decorated domed building used for prayer and sermons. It faces towards Mecca, as do all mosques⁶. Inside there is a golden tower from which the Friday sermon is delivered. To enter the mosque we had to take off our shoes. Merchants peddled their wares outside the mosque. I bought a flute for my son Caleb.

To the side of the Blue Mosque and across a park is a site known as Hagia Sophia, meaning “holy wisdom”⁷. Hagia Sophia was an early Christian church built in 369 A.D. After a riot which started in the Hippodrome the first church was destroyed. It was rebuilt in 411 A.D. The building in its present form was built by the Emperor Justinian. After the Muslim conquest it was converted to a Mosque and the mosaics were painted over. In the early part of this century Atatürk allowed the whitewash to be removed,



Mosaic from Hagia Sophia.

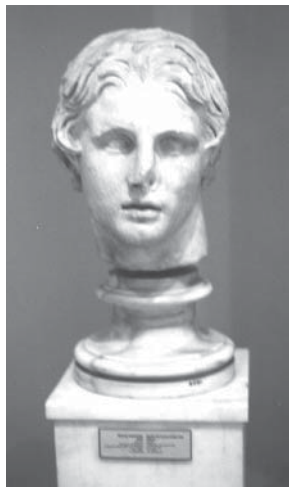
⁵ Later that evening I showed some Turkish people I was visiting with a picture of my wife and family. To praise them as being a beautiful family they used an expression which they translated to mean “against bad look.”

⁶ Dr. Ergener told us that when Islam first began, prayer was offered toward Jerusalem since Muhammed saw himself as carrying on the Jewish religion. Only after the Jews rejected Muhammed were prayers then offered towards Mecca. The Koran claims that the first house of worship was at Mecca (Sura III. 96). *The Glorious Quran*, Trans. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (USA: Muslim Students Association, 1975), p. 147.

⁷ The first name given to this building by Constantine was *Megale Ecclesia* (μεγάλη ἐκκλησία) meaning “The Great Church”. During the reign of Emperor Constantius it was given its present name. In the 4th century theologians referred to Christ as *Hagia Sophia* (ἁγία σοφία) “Holy Wisdom”. Sabahattin Türkoglu, *Hagia Sophia* (Istanbul: Net Publishing Co., 1983), p. 10.

exposing the mosaics. The building is made of mortar and stone brick with a number of domed ceilings.

When Justinian built the church it was in an attempt to make people interested in Christianity because of the beauty of the building. In fact a Russian prince was converted upon seeing the building as he was convinced that it must have been built by God not men. At the front of the church is a foyer area where *catechumens* (those considering conversion) were allowed to enter to hear the sermon. Justinian is quoted as having said upon entering the completed building - "Solomon, I have surpassed you!"⁸



Alexander the Great.

A number of parts of the building were taken from ancient antiquities. Several columns in the upper rooms are said to have come from the temple of Artemis in Ephesus (though the proportions have been shown to be different). Two large stone jars stand near the back which came from ancient Pergamum dating to 200 B.C. These were used to store water.

One of the most impressive aspects of Hagia Sophia are its mosaics. In the gallery there is a 12th century mosaic called the *deesis*⁹ meaning "the supplication". It displays Jesus in the center, with Mary and John the Baptist pleading with Him to be merciful. Many of the mosaics display Jesus with his hand up and thumb touching. This stands for the Greek word *Pantokrator*¹⁰ meaning "All-Powerful."

We then went to the Topkapi Palace built by the Emperor of the Ottoman empire in 1462. Constantinople was the center of the empire. The Ottoman empire once spread to North Africa. Earlier in this century the Greeks controlled Turkey, until Atatürk led the Turks to independence. Greek Orthodox Catholics had helped the Greeks during the war. As a result, when the Turks regained independence the Greek Orthodox Church lost favor.

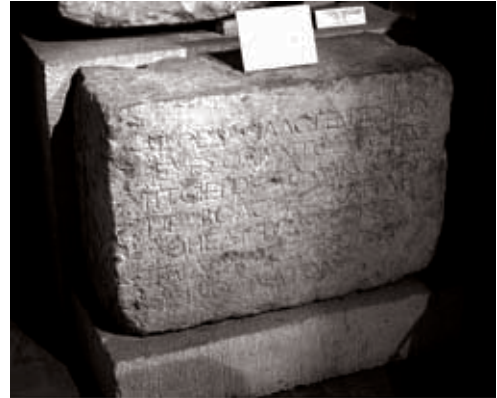
The last study site of the day was the Archeological Museum. This museum was founded after the discovery of a number of sarcophagi in the city of Sidon. It houses these along with exhibits from Troy, Babylon and other Middle Eastern sites. One of the most notable objects was the Alexander Sarcophagus. It was once

⁸ Solomon was the king responsible for building the first Jewish temple in Jerusalem. I Kings 6:1-38.

⁹ δέησις. "Want, entreaty; prayer, supplication." Harold K. Moulton, The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Co. 1978), p. 89.

¹⁰ Παντοκράτωρ. "All-mighty, omnipotent." Ibid., p. 300.

believed to belong to Alexander because of the scenes portraying him on the outside. It is now thought to have belonged to the king of Sidon. There were also a number of items with Biblical significance such as the Gezer calendar (which assisted in identifying early Hebrew script), the Siloam Inscription (which records the construction of a tunnel referred to in Scripture¹¹) and the Jerusalem Temple inscription (which prohibited Gentiles from entering the Temple¹²).



Inscription from the temple in Jerusalem.

Troy

Thursday - June 1st

10:49 A.M.

I had some packing that kept me up late last night. After I was done I still needed to work on my notes so I went down into the lobby and worked until my batteries died.¹³ After this I tested out my Turkish on the attendants in the hotel lobby. I greatly enjoyed talking with them. We talked for about an hour and a half. After this it was morning. I had just enough time to get ready, eat and then we left. As I write we are traveling on the bus down the European side of Turkey towards Canakkale in Asian Turkey. Today we will go to Troy, Alexandria Troas and Assos. Ferrell is giving a lecture as we ride regarding the Book of Revelation and the context of the letters to the Seven churches.¹⁴ During the first few centuries after Christ, Asia Minor engaged in emperor worship. In fact some of the cities competed for the right to house the temple to the emperor. Emperor worship involved two things: burning incense to the emperor once a year in his temple and receiving a certificate signed by the priest saying that he witnessed your worship.¹⁵ Understanding the power of the priests who led emperor worship

¹¹ II Chronicles 32:20.

¹² Acts 21:28.

¹³ This journal was written on a handheld computer notebook given to me by Stephen Barker mentioned at the beginning of the journal.

¹⁴ Revelation 2:1-3:22.

¹⁵ Ferrell Jenkins, "Emperor worship in the Book of Revelation," Studies in the Book of Revelation (Temple Terrace Florida: Florida College Bookstore, 1993), p. 80,81.

adds to a better understanding of the symbols in the book of Revelation.

1:37 P.M.

We have crossed the Hellespont into Asia.¹⁶ Our first stop is Troy, the city of the Iliad. We made a brief stop at the gift shop and then we were on our way. At the shop we met the author of the latest book on Troy and he signed our editions.¹⁷ Curtis has read that recent soundings have discovered a part of the city wall much larger than previously discovered. The author confirmed this but said that his latest edition was going to print when this was discovered. A map inside the book outlines the discoveries, but no commentary is made.¹⁸



The walls of Troy.

At Troy we saw the walls of the various cities during their history. We observed Schliemann's trench where his hasty excavations plowed through a good deal of important information. In addition we saw the gate where Hector and Achilles fought¹⁹ along with the altar where sacrifices were made. Homer's Troy was on the coast of the Aegean. The coast has long since silted up and now there is a plain separating the city from the Dardenelle channel. Near this site is where the Battle of Gallipoli took place during World War II.

In the bus Rashyid lectured on the history of the legends of Troy. The legend holds that the battle of Troy began with a contest among three goddesses: Hera, Athena and Aphrodite regarding who was the most beautiful. The three appeared before Paris the son of Priam the king of Troy. Each goddess promised Paris various gifts if he chose them. Aphrodite promised him the love of the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen the wife of Menelaus. Paris chose Aphrodite giving her

¹⁶ We crossed very close to the spot where Xerxes constructed a pontoon bridge spanning the Hellespont when he sought to conquer Greece. Herodotus claims that he crossed between Sestos and Madytus (*History*, Book VII. 33). We ended up crossing near Gelibolu a little North of where ancient Sestos would have been. The Portable Greek Historians, edited by M. I. Finley (New York: Viking Press, Inc. 1959), p. 96.

¹⁷ Mustafa Ashkin, Troy with Legends, Facts and New Developments, rev. ed. (Istanbul: Keskin Color Kartpostalcilik Ltd., 1995).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8,9.

¹⁹ Homer, The Iliad trans. by Richard Lattimore (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1971), Bk. XXII. 273-375, p. 442-445.



The gate where Achilles and Hector fought.

the “apple of discord”. Paris took Helen and the war began.²⁰ A league of Greeks came with Menelaus to retrieve his wife. After ten years the Greeks conquered the city by hiding in the belly of a wooden horse which the Trojans took into the city. Rashyid believes an earthquake rather than the Trojan horse trick actually destroyed Troy.²¹

Alexandria Troas

11:00 P.M.

After Troy we went to Alexandria Troas. Troas is very important to Christians because it is a site where Scripture records that Paul preached and observed the Lord’s supper.²² The sight is now only scattered ruins spread throughout fields. There are also some ruins near a little silted harbor which once connected the city to the Aegean. I was able to get up close to some very impressive ruins off the road when the bus stopped.



The ruins of Alexandria Troas.

²⁰ Euripides, “The Trojan Women,” *The Bacchae and Other Plays*, trans. by Philip Vellacott (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books Ltd., 1954), p. 111,112.

²¹ Dr. Ergener has very strong feelings about the city of Troy. He has written a beautiful poem dealing with Troy which I have included in Appendix B.

²² Acts 20:7-12.

Assos

The last stop of the day was Assos. The Apostle Paul stopped at Assos on his third preaching journey.²³ Assos was the site of Aristotle's first school of philosophy.²⁴ Assos sets on a beautiful coastline looking across the Aegean to the island of Lesbos. On the acropolis of the city is the beautiful temple of Athena looking down into the ancient harbor. Coming down from the temple I bartered with some children over the price of a lace collar to give my wife. One of the boys finally agreed to the price I proposed if I gave my hat, shoes or sunglasses along with it. This was



The temple of Athena in Assos.

fun. In a little shop in the modern village of Beramkale I bought a replica oil lamp. As I write I am trying to get packed and record my notes quickly so that I can get some sleep tonight.



The view from the acropolis in Assos.

²³ Acts 20:13,14.

²⁴ Sir William Smith claims that Aristotle went to Assos to his friend Hermias after the death of Plato in 347 B.C. and there married Pythias the adoptive daughter of the prince. Sir William Smith, *Smaller Classical Dictionary*, rev. by E. H. Blakeney and John Warrington (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1958), p. 41.

Pergamum

Friday - June 2nd

10:49 A.M.

I think Assos has been the most beautiful site so far. It was so beautiful sitting on the hill overlooking the Aegean. Our hotel was right on the coast. After leaving we had a good drive to Bergama the sight of ancient Pergamun. Before we went to the archeological site we went to a shop where onyx products are made. Outside of the shop there was a man with a camel. That's a sight you don't see in Birmingham everyday!

In Pergamum we saw the most extensive ruins of our tour up to this point.

In the modern city there is a large temple of Isis made of large reddish brick and mortar. On the acropolis we saw Trajan's temple and the Greek theater which is one of the steepest in the world. Dr. Ergener pointed out to us the differences between Roman and Greek theaters. Greek theaters have a round stage (called the orchestra) with no backdrop. Roman theaters have a semicircular stage generally with a backdrop.²⁵ On the acropolis we also saw the mound where the altar of Zeus once stood. In the 1800's German excavators removed the altar completely! It had some of the world's most beautiful sculptures of the entire Greek pantheon. It is now housed in Berlin. The Museum in Pergamum has a small replica of the altar.



Greek theater in Pergamum.

²⁵ In his larger work entitled Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities William Smith has a lengthy well documented article on the ancient theaters. Smith confirms Dr. Ergener's comments. William Smith, Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities 2nd. Ed. (Boston: Charles Little and James Brown, 1854), p. 1120-25.



The temple of Trajan.

Dr. Ergener told us that the city was founded by Pergamos,²⁶ the son of Neoptolmos and Andromache. Legend claims that after the death of Achilles in the Trojan war Hector's wife was given to Neoptolmos.

Pergamum was often chosen to be the center of emperor worship. In the museum in Bergama there were a number of pillars inscribed with the announcement that Pergamum had been chosen as "templekeeper". The prominence of this is certainly one of the reasons the writer of Revelation was inspired by the Holy Spirit to call this city "where Satan dwells" and "where Satan has his throne."²⁷ The last site in Pergamum was the Asclepium (an ancient hospital). The most prominent feature of the site is an altar with the snake symbol on it which is used in modern medicine.

2:00 P.M.

After lunch I visited with two children and gave each of them an American quarter. I have greatly enjoyed learning a little Turkish. On the bus the guide's assistant and I have talked a great deal. His name is Murat. He speaks very little English so I am testing what I have learned on him.



The serpent altar.

²⁶ J. E. Zimmerman confirms that Pergamos was the son of the legendary figures Neoptolmos and Andromache. *Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1964), p. 199. However Smith claims simply that Pergamum was founded by "Aeolic Greeks in the eighth century B.C." Sir William Smith, *Smaller Classical Dictionary*, rev. by E. H. Blakeney and John Warrington (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1958), p. 217. Homer refers to a Pergamos which was the citadel of the city of Troy (Bk. III. 508). Homer, *The Iliad* trans. by Richard Lattimore (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1971), p. 126.

²⁷ Revelation 2:12-17.

Thyatira

6:00 P.M.

Our last site of the day was Thyatira. This was the home of the woman, Lydia, who was converted by the Apostle Paul while he was in the city of Philippi.²⁸ Very little still remains here. Only a few ruins of columns and walls in the center of modern Akhisar. What fascinated us the most was a group of children learning English. They came up to us and talked for a good while. After this we left for Izmir the site of ancient Smyrna, tomorrow we examine this site. Our Turkish guide pointed out to us as we drove through Manisa that it is the site of the ancient city of Magnesia.²⁹ Apparently no ruins have survived.



The ruins of ancient Thyatira.

Smyrna

Saturday - June 3rd

11:00 A.M.

Izmir is the second largest city in Turkey with a population of 3 million people. It is the site of ancient Smyrna.³⁰ It is set on a harbor on the Aegean. When Curtis and Ferrell and I return from Greece we will dock in Izmir. We got started a little late this morning. Ferrell's wife Elizabeth got sick and they had to call a doctor. Since we had we had some sites to see in the same city she didn't have to miss any of the travel. We went on to a couple of places and they met us

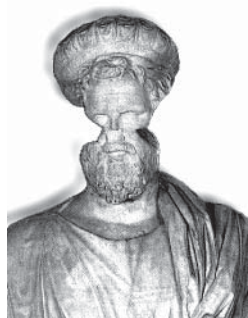
²⁸ Acts 16:14.

²⁹ There were actually two cities named Magnesia in this area. One South of Smyrna that was given to Themistocles (the general who defeated Xerxes) by Artaxerxes after he was ostracized from Athens. The other North of Smyrna (which we passed through) was the site of the defeat of Antiochos III by the Romans in 190 B.C. *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 2nd. Ed. (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1050), p. 1196.

³⁰ Revelation 2:8-11.

later at the museum. We also learned this morning that a US military plane was shot down in Bosnia. Some were concerned about our safety but Rashyid assured us that all was well.

The first site of the day was a park area looking out over Izmir. It is fenced off by an old Medieval wall. Some Gypsy women were weaving handbags there. I purchased two for my wife and daughter. Down in the city is another park that is all that is left of ancient Smyrna. This is the agora (the term used in Greek to refer to the open marketplace area). It has a number of columns, arches and even a few sculpted lions. There had been a Zeus altar here at one time. Most of the items from it are now in the museum. The Izmir Archeological Museum was our next stop. There we saw a sculpture of a priest of the Imperial cult. Ferrell told us some points about this in light of the book of Revelation. The priest is wearing a diadem. This has led many to believe that some of the symbols referring to diadems in the book of Revelation relate to those trying to force emperor worship on the people.³¹ Each day upon leaving a site we have read the Biblical passage which relates to it. As I write we are nearing Sardis located in modern day Sarti.



Imperial Priest.

Sardis

3:56 P.M.

We have now come to a number of sites in Sardis.³² The first was at a synagogue used up through the 6th century. Sardis was the home of another of the seven churches referred to the book of Revelation.³³ Ferrell and I had seen at other sites the Greek words *Pantokrator Kaisaros*³⁴



Jewish Synagogue at Sardis.

³¹ Revelation 13:1-2, 11-12.

³² In 500 B.C. Asia minor was controlled by the Persians. Sardis was a seat of this Persian power. When the Ionian cities revolted against the Persians and with the Greeks sacked and burned Sardis, Darius (and later Xerxes) was motivated to move forces into Europe ultimately burning Athens. P.V.N. Myers, *A General History for Colleges and High Schools*, (Boston: Ginn & Co. Pub., 1893), p. 80, 133, 134.

³³ Revelation 3:1-6.

³⁴ Παντοκράτωρ Καίσαρος.



Temple of Artemis

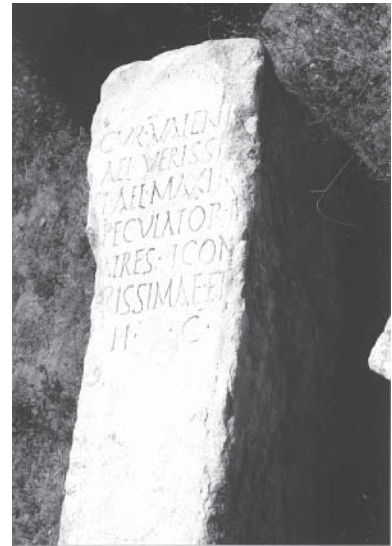
meaning “All-Mighty Caesar” a name that would have been blasphemous to early Christians. At Sardis we saw the words *Pantokrator Theou*³⁵ meaning “All-Mighty God” in the synagogue. This demonstrates a significant difference between Jewish and pagan ideas about God. The pagans could view Caesar as “All-Mighty” the Jews and Christians saw God alone as “All-Mighty.”

There was also a gymnasium there. Most of these ruins however, are rather late. The best ruins at the site came at our next stop in Sardis. About a mile from the synagogue is the beautiful temple of Artemis dating to about 300 B.C. A good deal remains of the temple. There is an inscription to the priestess of Artemis. Near this was a replica of a house in the

Lydian style. It was brightly painted as was common of most ancient architecture. The ancient city was ruled by Croesus the king of the Lydians³⁶. He is said to have been the first to mint coins.

Philadelphia

The next stop was Philadelphia³⁷ in modern Alashehir. Very little remains of Philadelphia only some late ruins of a Byzantine church dedicated to the Apostle John. As we were leaving the city we also saw the Höyück of the ancient city. Höyück is the Turkish name for the mounds produced where ancient cities once stood. In Israel these are referred to as *Tels*. Archeologists dig carefully into these höyücs (*Tels*) to learn about the ancient city which once stood there. Most höyücs in this area have not been studied.



Latin inscription from the ruins of Philidelphia.

³⁵ Παντοκράτωρ Θεοῦ.

³⁶ Herodotus in his *History* tells a story about Croesus meeting with the wise lawmaker Solon and asking him who the happiest man he ever met was. Expecting Solon to list him among the most happy Solon claimed that he could not identify anyone as truly happy unless their life had come to a happy end. *The Portable Greek Historians*, edited by M. I. Finley (New York: Viking Press, Inc. 1959), Bk. I. 30-34, p. 41-44

³⁷ Revelation 3:7-13.

Colosse

10:58 P.M.

As I write we bring to an end a busy day. We are in Pamukkale the site of ancient Hierapolis. This area is famous all over Turkey for its hot mineral springs. Calcium deposits have formed large basins where pools of water collect. Tomorrow we will see these. Hierapolis was one of three cities of the Lycus valley. With snow covered mountains to the South and rocky peaks to the North one might mistake this area for a valley in Wyoming or Montana.



The höyük of ancient Colosse.

The other two cities in the Lycus valley were Colosse³⁸ and Laodicea.³⁹ There is an unexcavated höyük where Colosse once stood. We found the höyük next to a field of opium poppies. The Turkish government regulates the production of opium for medicinal use. In a field near there we found a column or two but nothing of real significance.

Laodicea

The real prize of the day was Laodicea. At first we feared we would find nothing. We drove to the North side of the höyük and saw only a depression where a small theater had been. As we drove South of the höyük we found a collection of ruins on the top. These included a stadium; still clearly showing the shape of the architecture and the seats with grass grown



The ruins of Laodicea.

³⁸ Colossians 1:2.

³⁹ Revelation 3:14-22, Colossians 2:1, 4:13-16.



Ancient water pipe clogged
by mineral deposits.

over them. There was a theater fairly well preserved off away from the other ruins. The real thrill to us was discovering some things about the city's water system. Some have explained the reference to "lukewarm water" in the book of Revelation⁴⁰ to aqueducts flowing from Hierapolis. Ferrell suggested, and then showed us that this is a misconception. Water flowed into Laodicea from the mountains near Colosse rather than Hierapolis. The water-works system which stands among the ruins has a pipe running toward the South in the direction of the mountains. This pipe is almost completely clogged with mineral deposits. As we left the site to the South a section of the same pipe was visible running miles away from the water works system. All of us were very excited about this site because of its vast hidden potential.⁴¹ So little has been

done here. Fragments just lay everywhere. When I was walking back to the bus I saw a Corinthian capital just lying in the dirt road.

Hierapolis

Sunday - June 4th

10:10 A.M.

Near the ruins of ancient Hierapolis⁴² is Pamukkale. Pamukkale is a resort town. Travelers come from all over Turkey and Europe to swim in the springs. Our hotel was located near the springs. Our day began with a worship service in a conference room in the hotel. This was



Hot spring basins at Pamukkale.

⁴⁰ Revelation 3:16.

⁴¹ Later in the trip Ferrell told us that when he first came to the site of ancient Corinth it was no more explored than the ruins of Laodicea which we saw. Now the ruins of ancient Corinth are a major landmark in Southern Greece.

⁴² Colossians 4:13.

quite moving to worship with a small group of Christians as they had years ago in this same area. My brother gave the lesson reflecting upon his thoughts about being here.



The Domitian Gate.

After worshipping we went to the ruins of Hierapolis. Just outside of the city there is a necropolis, a cemetery. Many sarcophagi still exist there with inscriptions on them. There were two distinct types of graves evident; the Lyckian rectangular style and the Phrygian which is circular with earth on the top. Where the ancient was there were two significant features. The first was the Domitian Gate. This was an entrance to the city. Domitian was infamous for his

persecution of Christians.⁴³ Because of this all inscriptions bearing his name on the gate have been removed. Just next to this is the tomb of Flavius Elexis. The inscription tells of his extensive travels and trade, which indicates that long distance travel was not unusual in ancient times.

Aphrodisias

3:12 P.M.

We have just finished lunch at a small restaurant near Aphrodisias. A local man played an instrument called a *sass* and sang. A *sass* is like a guitar with a rounded back. Aphrodisias was an awesome sight. The city has little historical or Biblical significance⁴⁴ yet it is mainly noted because it is so

⁴³ The religious historian Eusebius (c. 260-340 A.D.) claims that Domitian initiated the second major persecution of Christians following the example of Nero before him. According to Eusebius Domitian exiled the Apostle John to Patmos and persecuted Judas (Jude) one of Jesus' brothers. Upon his succession by Nerva the Roman senate revoked the honors of Domitian. Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, trans. by Christian Fredrick Cruse (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987), Bk. III, Ch. 17-20, p. 101-103.

⁴⁴ Dr. Ekrem Akurgal claims that in the second century the writer Appian refers to Aphrodisias in claiming that in 82 B.C. the Roman dictator Sulla sent a golden crown and double axe to the city in response to a Delphic Oracle. Julius Caesar granted the city autonomy as did Tiberius in 22 A.D. During Byzantine times rather than bearing the name of the goddess Aphrodite the city was called Stavropolis ("City of the Cross"). Dr. Ekrem Akurgal, Ancient Civilizations and Ruins of Ancient Turkey 8th ed. (Istanbul: Net Turistik Yayinlar A. S., 1993), p. 172.

well preserved. There is a museum and a path cutting through the ruins. The first sight on the path was a huge building which opened to the religious section of the town. Beyond was the temple of Aphrodite; an imposing sight still large and well preserved. One can imagine the many pagan worshippers who went between the columns there. As we had seen at Laodicea there was a huge stadium. It was highly well preserved. Next to the temple of Aphrodite was a school of philosophy. It revealed a number of columns and rock walled rooms. Next was a large group of rooms, the most prominent being the odium. This was a small theater where the senate may have met. It certainly held a distinction over other theaters as seen in the ornate decoration of the seats. Each had at its base, near the stairs, a lion's paw carved of marble.⁴⁵ Down the path was a Roman bath. It had tiled floors and a pool in front. We were not allowed to go into the baths themselves because excavations are still being done. To the side of the bath was the agora, unique because of its half circle pools at either end. Over a hill to the side of the agora was the jewel of Aphrodisias - a full size theater with a stage in the Roman style yet with a round orchestra. Around the outside of the circular pit were holes where bars were set. This kept the audience safe from animals or gladiatorial contests. It was most sobering to consider that undoubtedly Christians died here for their faith.



The temple of Aphrodite.

Ephesus

Monday - June 5th

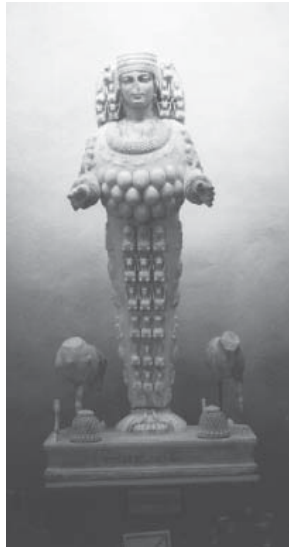
12:07 P.M.

It was good to have a night to stay in a hotel where we didn't have to pack up quickly to move the next day. Our hotel is in Kushadasi near the site of ancient Ephesus.⁴⁶ We will spend the night here again tonight then depart for the Greek islands tomorrow. As we approached Kushadasi last night we saw on our

⁴⁵ Please note the comments regarding the theater in Miletus. At the ruins of Miletus the main public theater had the lion's paw ornamentation as well. I may have misinterpreted this as a distinction of honor.

⁴⁶ Acts 18:19-24, 19:1-35, 20:16,17, I Corinthians 15:32, 16:8, Ephesians 1:1, I Timothy 1:3, II Timothy 1:18, 4:12, Revelation 1:11, 2:1.

right the site of the excavations. In ancient times the harbor came inland at least a mile. Now it is silted over, but you can still see where it would have been. Modern Kushadasi is further toward the sea.



The goddess Diana.

The ruins we have seen have been progressively more extensive. Ephesus is the most extensive site we have seen with the possible exception of Aphrodisias. From a historical standpoint Ephesus is where Paul was threatened by a riot in the theater.⁴⁷ According to history the apostle John lived and worked here.⁴⁸ A number of ecumenical councils were also held here.⁴⁹ Ephesus is also noted for its reception of Mark Anthony.⁵⁰

Upon entering the site one first comes to the area where the ruins of a number of schools still stand. Beyond is a small odium where (as in Aphrodisias) the Senate may have met. Next are some Imperial temples of Hadrian and Trajan. On the fountain of the Trajan temple there remains the fragments of a statue of Trajan with only the feet remaining. One foot rests on the earth indicating two things: 1. The emperor viewed himself as ruler of whole world, 2. They knew the world was round.⁵¹ Behind the temples is a bath where hot air was piped in under the floors. The furnaces are still visible, along with portions of the plaster on the walls. There was also a public bathroom where fresh water was piped in. The pipes are still intact.

Down from the bath is the library of Celcus, a large library dating to the 2nd century A.D. On the front are four well preserved statues with the inscriptions-

⁴⁷ Acts 19:21-41.

⁴⁸ Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, trans. by Christian Fredrick Cruse (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987), Bk III, Ch. 23, 31, p. 104-105, 116.

⁴⁹ John Laurence Mosheim in his monumental work An Ecclesiastical History: Ancient and Modern mentions the council of 431 A.D. in which Nestorius was condemned and Mary was identified as "the mother of God" and the council of 449 A.D. called the "assembly of robbers" because of the dishonorable manner in which it was conducted. John Laurence Mosheim An Ecclesiastical History: Ancient and Modern trans. by Archibald Maclaine (New York: Harper & Brothers Pub., 1864), Vol. I, p. 149-53.

⁵⁰ Plutarch claims that when Anthony came to Ephesus he was treated like Bacchus (Dionysis) being met by women dressed as Bacchantes and men and boys dressed as satyrs and fauns. Plutarch, "Mark Anthony," Lives of the Noble Romans trans. by Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., p. 1959), p. 345.

⁵¹ Pythagoras (540-510 B.C.) and Aristotle (384 B.C.-322 B.C.) both held that the world was round. In fact Eratosthenes (276-195 B.C.) had calculated the circumference of the earth to within 1-20% the true measurement. George O. Abell, Realm of the Universe 3rd. Ed. (New York: Saunders College Pub., 1984), p.16,17.

“the Wisdom of Celcus, the virtue of Celcus the mind of Philip the knowledge of Celcus.” Across from the library is what is believed to have been a brothel. Just down the road is the magnificent theater where the riot occurred when Paul was in Ephesus. This theater, which can seat some 30,000 people heard the Ephesians chant “Great is Diana of the Ephesians” for two long hours. Probably the upper portions of the theater have been added since the first century. Down from the theater is the Arcadian way (a stone walkway leading to the old harbor). Before we left the site Curtis, Ferrell and I went to see the site of the church where the council of Ephesus was conducted.

As we were leaving Ephesus we saw a single column which is all that remains of the temple of Artemis. This temple was once one of the seven wonders of the world.⁵² It was rather amazing to see this once mighty symbol of pagan worship reduced to one lone column standing in a grassy field. We next went to the Archeological museum.



Sole remaining column from the temple of Artemis.

Among the notable sites here were the head and arm of a huge sculpture of Domitian, the only known ancient painting of the Greek philosopher Socrates and two large sculptures of the goddess of the city - Artemis (or Diana).⁵³ Our next stop was Miletus and lunch.

7: 00 P.M.

Our lunch was at a little suburb of Kushadasi where carpets are made. The shop that markets them invites tourists to a free lunch and display of carpets. Curtis and I simply tried to figure out how to say “We have no money” in Turkish.

⁵² Built about 550 B.C. the temple measured 377 by 180 feet. It had 106 columns about 40 feet high surrounding the temple in double rows. Croesus the king of Lydia in Sardis is said to have donated some of the columns. William P. Donovan, “Seven Wonders of the World” The World Book Encyclopedia (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corp., 1974), p. 253. Herodotus records in his *History* that although Croesus may have contributed to the construction of the temple he also conquered the city. The Ephesians are said to have stretched a rope from the city to the temple (even today still a good distance away) in order to dedicate their city to Artemis. Portable Greek Historians ed. by M. I. Finley (New York: Viking Press, Inc. 1959), p. 39-40.

⁵³ In Classical mythology Artemis was the goddess of the hunt. She was generally pictured as a young virgin woman with a bow. Apollodorus, The Library trans. by Sir James George Frazer (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk. I, 4:1, Vol. I, p. 27. In Asia minor she replaced the mother goddess Kybele and became viewed as the goddess of fertility. Ekrem Akurgal, Ancient Civilizations and Ruins of Ancient Turkey 8th ed. (Istanbul: Net Turistik Yayinlar A. S., 1993), p. 147.

Others in our group were not so lucky. Our group bought a total of 17 carpets. The prices they quoted ranged from \$400.00 to \$12,000.00. (I doubt anyone bought any of the \$12,000.00 carpets). I chose instead to visit with the girls who made the carpets. None of them could speak English so I enjoyed testing out my Turkish and showing them pictures of my wife and children. Curtis tried to ask them if there were any birds like the ones we call “turkeys” in Turkey. After being unable to find the word in any of our books, Curtis did an imitation of a turkey call. They understood and one of the girls did her own imitation. Yes, (we learned) there are turkeys in Turkey!

Miletus

The last stop of the day was Miletus.⁵⁴ Here Paul had called the Ephesian elders to meet him as he prepared to go to Jerusalem.⁵⁵ What remains today is a theater, a bath and the ruins of the agora. In the theater we located an inscription with the words “Place of the Jews and God-Fearers”.⁵⁶ Indicating that the Jews and proselytes were assigned certain areas to sit. This could have been their request, or even the desire of the Gentiles themselves. Ferrell found what is called the Lion Fountain, but I missed it looking at other things. I was surprised at the theater to see the lion paws carved into the seats as in Aphrodisias. Perhaps this is not at all an indication of dignity as I had supposed.⁵⁷ In the bath there was a statue of the river god⁵⁸ and a lion. At the museum in Izmir we had seen a similar river god sculpture.



The agora of ancient Miletus.

After Miletus we returned to Kushadasi - tomorrow we begin the cruise. Tonight my wife will call at about 10:00. Today is her birthday. I miss her very much. I think I'll have her call again, even though we had planned only one call.

⁵⁴ Miletus was originally a Greek colony. At the peak of its prominence it actually colonized a number of areas in Asia minor. P.V.N. Myers, A General History for Colleges and High Schools, (Boston: Ginn & Co. Pub., 1893), p. 111.

⁵⁵ Acts 20:17-38, II Timothy 4:20.

⁵⁶ ΤΟΠΟCEΙΔΟΥΔΕΩΝΤΩΝΚΑΙΘΕΟΕΒΙΟΝ.

⁵⁷ Please refer to the notes and comments regarding the Odium at Aphrodisias. There I concluded (perhaps falsely) that this ornamentation itself indicated the special function of the odium.

⁵⁸ At Izmir this god was named Kaistros. I could find no references to him under that name in any of the books dealing with classical mythology. Jale Dedeoglu, Izmir Archeological Museum (Istanbul: A Turizm Yayinlari Ltd. Sti., 1993), p. 64.

Patmos

Tuesday - June 6th

1: 33 P.M.

We left Kushadasi this morning and said goodbye to Rashyid, Murat and our driver Tarik. As I write we are on board the cruise liner MTS. Odysseus moving through the Aegean. All around are the various Greek islands. Today we will go to Patmos.⁵⁹

10:08 P.M.

This afternoon we went on a three hour excursion to Patmos. This island in the Dodecanese island chain is famous for the fact that here John received the divine revelation, recorded in the New Testament book called the Apocalypse (or Revelation).



The island of Patmos.

11: 00 P.M.

Patmos is a beautiful little island. It is small and quite rocky. We have found it somewhat difficult to get a true feel for the nature of the island because of the way in which the Greek Orthodox church has exploited its religious significance. There is a shrine in a cave where tradition claims John received the revelation. In the shrine visitors can light small candles in respect. Upon entering the island a sign was visible declaring Patmos a “holy” island by an act of the Greek parliament. As a result nudism and indecent clothing are forbidden.

⁵⁹ Revelation 1:9.

We toured a monastery which had a nice little museum. Among the interesting items in the museum was a sixth century manuscript of the gospel of Mark written in gold. According to the history of the monastery some of the buildings columns were taken from an ancient temple of Isis. Our guide told us that this was intended to demonstrate the conquest of Christianity over paganism. As I was leaving the museum I noticed an inscription announcing the appointment of a priestess of Artemis. After a little shopping we returned to the ship for dinner. The day ended with a meal of Greek food. The show in the main lounge featured some of the men who worked on the ship demonstrating Greek music and dance. This was interesting.

Rhodes

Wednesday - June 7th

11:40 A.M.

Today we are at the Island of Rhodes.⁶⁰ We have taken an excursion which takes us to Lindos, the site of an ancient temple of Athena. The temple sits on the acropolis looking down into a beautiful harbor.⁶¹ A portion now enclosed is said to be where Paul may have landed on his journey. It is a steep path up to the acropolis. Many people take donkeys. I had been trying to find a gift for my one year old son, Nathan. In Lindos beneath the acropolis the shops sell little stuffed toy donkeys. I thought this would be appropriate. As I write we are on the bus headed for the North side of Rhodes.



The sun god - Helios.

2:50 P.M.

The North side of Rhodes is the site of the famous Colossus of Rhodes, a huge statue of Helios.⁶² This statue which stood straddling the harbor was another

⁶⁰ Acts 21:1.

⁶¹ According to myth Athens and Lindos were in competition for who would be the first to honor Athena. Lindos was the first to build an altar but forgot to bring fire up the hill. As a result the smoke of the sacrifice offered by Athens reached Olympus first and Athens became her chief seat but she had Zeus send a shower of gold to the Lindians. W.H.D. Rouse, "Athena and Poseidon," *Gods, Heroes and Men of Ancient Greece* (New York: The New American Library Inc., 1957), p. 54.

⁶² Greek myth held that Helios, the Titan sun god married the sea nymph Rhodos and chose the island of Rhodes for his possession. Ibid., "Artemis," p. 46.

of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Reportedly it stood for only a few years before it fell.⁶³ Much of the island of Rhodes has been controlled through the centuries by the Knights of St. John. This group took part in the crusades and



St. Paul's bay at Lindos.

many of their buildings and castle walls exist today. One of these buildings houses the Rhodes Archeological Museum. While the others went back to the ship I looked around Rhodes and went in the museum. It was a nice little museum with a bust of Helios, some ancient jewelry and weapons.

On the way back to the ship I walked to the shoreline to pick up some stones. So far I have picked up four small stones from each of the Biblical sites we have seen. I hope to make them into a little collection to give to my children. Hopefully this may reinforce, as they grow up, the fact that the places they read about in Scripture are real. Last night I thought I had "blown it!" I forgot to get any stones on Patmos. While we were still in the harbor I started searching the deck for rocks. Finally I found one small stone. When I get home I will break it into four pieces and count it since I did get it while at Patmos. As I write, Curtis is taking a nap and our room is draped with clothes lines. I miss my wife and children so very much. I am enjoying the trip but home sure does sounds nice. Tomorrow we go to Crete.

Crete

Thursday - June 8th

9:38 A.M.

Early this morning we took an excursion to the Pre-Greek Minoan palace of Knossos. The Minoans were the oldest known civilization of Europe. The ruins of the palace reveal a highly advanced culture. Here is the



Minoan theater at Knossos.

⁶³ The bronze statue was erected by the sculptor Chares in 290 B.C. It took twelve years to complete and stood 120 feet tall. An earthquake in 224 B.C. destroyed the sculpture and over time its metal was sold for scrap. William P. Donovan, "Seven Wonders of the World" *The World Book Encyclopedia* (Chicago: Field Enterprises Educational Corp., 1974), p. 253.

oldest known style of theater (squared off rather than round as the Greek or Roman.) The palace had a system of water distribution bringing fresh water in and taking waste water out. They have discovered a small bath tub as well as some elaborate jewelry. The Minoans for sport had a game of acrobatics with live bulls. Many Minoan frescoes depict this.

Little is known of the Minoan culture or their demise. Our tour guide claimed that most archeologists agree that the volcano which destroyed Acroteri on Santorini destroyed the Minoan culture. However, before the trip I watched a television program which discounted this claiming that volcanic ash is only on the North side of Crete indicating the volcanic destruction was isolated.⁶⁴ One difficulty in understanding the Minoan culture is the fact that the language has yet to be fully deciphered.⁶⁵ Curtis told me that to be able to decipher it, scholars would need to find an inscription with hieroglyphics and possibly a pre-Greek script referred to as Linear B.

In Greek mythology there is a legend of a beast known as the Minotaur which was half man and half bull.⁶⁶ The Minotaur lived in a labyrinth. Our guide told us that the word *labyrinth* means “double-headed axe.”⁶⁷ Many double-headed axes were found at



Palace of Knossos.

⁶⁴ The Learning Channel, “Archeology,” May 14th, 1995, produced by Tom Noughton.

⁶⁵ Some is known about the language of the Minoans. The language used when the palace of Knossos met its final demise was Linear B script which was deciphered in 1952 by M. Ventris. What is not known is the original language of the Minoans, referred to as Linear A. It has yet to be deciphered. J. A. Sakellarakis, Heraklion Museum (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon S.A., 1978), p. 47.

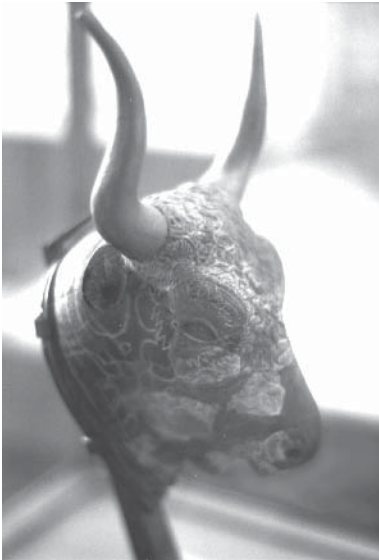
⁶⁶ Greek myth held that the Minotaur was born to Pasiphae, the wife of king Minos after she had mated with a bull which Minos had promised to sacrifice to Poseidon. The Minotaur was held in a labyrinth constructed by the architect Daedalus. Minos forced the subjects of Athens to sacrifice seven men and seven women to the Minotaur each year until Theseus succeeded in killing the Minotaur. Apollodorus, The Library trans. by Sir James George Frazier (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk. III, 1:3-4,15:8, Vol. I, p. 305, Vol. II, p. 119., and Apollodorus, Epitome trans. by Sir James George Frazier (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk I, 6-9, Vol. II, p. 135-137.

⁶⁷ I could find no authority for this claim. Liddel & Scott claim that *labyrinthos* (λαβύρινθος) means “a large building formed of numerous halls, with passages winding and crossing each other...Metaphorically, of an obscure poem...” Henry George Liddel and Robert Scott, A Greek English Lexicon (New York: Harper & Brothers Pub., 1869), p. 822. William Smith writes - “...the proper definition of labyrinth is a large and complicated subterranean cavern with numerous intricate passages, similar to those in a mine...” William Smith, Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities 2nd. Ed. (Boston: Charles Little and James Brown, 1854), p. 664.

Knossos. Some believe that the palace may be the historical basis for the legend.

11:52 A.M.

After Knossos we went to Hieraklion and had some free time. Curtis and I chose to go to the Archeological museum. There we saw the original frescoes of the bull games as well as sculptures of bull heads which played an important role in Minoan art. Double-headed axes were there in great numbers as well as weapons used by the acrobats. In the Greek and Roman wing of the museum I also found an inscribed hymn of Zeus.⁶⁸ No translation was provided. We also saw a boar's tusk helmet, made from tusks fastened side by side.



Minoan ornamental bull.

From a Biblical standpoint there is not much to see on Crete. The Bible does refer to Paul traveling through Crete.⁶⁹ The evangelist Titus worked in Crete.⁷⁰ Jews from Crete were in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.⁷¹ Paul even quotes a saying describing some of the residents - "Cretans *are* always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons."⁷² One of the members of our group chose to go to the South side of the island to see the harbor said to be where Paul landed. Since we had such a limited amount of time Curtis and I hated to miss Knossos, so we declined to go with him.

As I write we have left Crete and are sailing to Santorini. As we are closer to the Mediterranean now the water is more turbulent than previously. In the distance are the snow covered mountains of Crete. I so wish my wife could be here to see all this. I miss her very much.

⁶⁸ According to Greek Myth Zeus was born at Crete and hidden by his mother Rhea in a cave. His Father, Cronos had swallowed all of his brothers and sisters. To keep him from being swallowed as well, Rhea wrapped a rock in swaddling clothes and Cronos swallowed the rock. Hesiod, *Theogony* trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), 455-490, p. 113-115.

⁶⁹ Acts 27:7-21.

⁷⁰ Titus 1:5.

⁷¹ Acts 2:11.

⁷² Titus 2:12-13.

Santorini

9:06 P.M.

One member of our group has become rather sick. He has had to miss several excursions. The ship doctor gave him a shot. We arrived this afternoon at Santorini. Upon nearing the island the cruise director had urged us to go up on deck to see the approach. It was not a disappointment. The volcanic activity on Santorini has created layers of multicolored rock piled one on top of the other. It was beautiful.

Our excursion involved a boat ride to the side of the island then a 20 minute bus ride to the site of Acroteri. More than anywhere else we have gone, this is a “work in progress.” Excavations are still going on and researchers have fully roofed the site. As we discovered at Knossos the inhabitants of Acroteri were highly advanced. Like Knossos these ruins would be classified as Minoan ruins. We saw the same type of plumbing system. One of the rooms even had a small sink in it. The wall paintings are much like those on Crete. At Knossos we saw a huge bull horn sculpture. A smaller version of the same sculpture was at Acroteri.

It is somewhat difficult to get a real feel for Acroteri because most of the frescoes have been removed to Athens. A good deal can be discovered about Acroteri's demise. Pumice layers seem to indicate that initially there was a minor eruption after which some rebuilding took place. When the major eruption occurred followed by mud slides, Acroteri was sealed awaiting its discovery by modern man.⁷³



The ruins of Acroteri.

⁷³ Although little was said regarding this on our tour some hold that the legends related to Atlantis may (in part) relate to the demise of the civilization on Santorini as a result of the volcano. The Learning Channel, “Archeology,” May 14th, 1995, produced by Tom Noughton.

Athens

Friday - June 9th

1:38 P.M.

This morning we left the ship at Athens. We met our Greek guide. She is a young woman named Andy. She will have to do very well to surpass Dr. Rashyid. The harbor of Athens is a city called Piraeus. In ancient times a walled passageway connected Athens and Piraeus allowing the Athenians access to the harbor. During the Peloponnesian war one condition of the surrender was that Sparta be allowed to tear down the "long wall" as it was called.⁷⁴

According to our guide one of the reasons for Athens' splendor was the fact that the Greeks believed that Athena - the goddess of war had aided them in time of war. To express their gratitude the Parthenon was built in her honor.⁷⁵

After a long slow bus ride (due to the traffic) we made it to the Acropolis. There we scaled the steps to the top. First was the temple of Athena Nike, surrounded by Ionian columns. Then we walked through the Parapleium, a gateway into the Acropolis. It is surrounded by Doric columns. Passing beyond the Parapleium the acropolis opens up into a wide area housing



The Greek goddess Athena.

⁷⁴ P.V.N. Myers, A General History for Colleges and High Schools, (Boston: Ginn & Co. Pub., 1893), p. 154.

⁷⁵ In Greek mythology Athena (the goddess of war) was the daughter of Zeus (the chief of the gods). She was said to have been born from his head after he had devoured her mother, Metis. Hesiod, Theogony trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), 929, p. 147. She was considered a virgin in most myths, always pictured wearing a helmet and fully armed. The Greek word for virgin is *parthenos* (παρθένος), thus the temple honoring the "virgin goddess" was known as the Parthenon. Betty Radice, Who's Who in the Ancient World (New York: Penguin Books Ltd., 1973), p. 71.

the Parthenon and the Erechtheum.⁷⁶ I was stricken by the size of the Parthenon. I had seen pictures of it but they did not compare to the actual site. The Erechtheum



The Erechtheum.

has the unique feature of the Karyatides columns, one of the earliest examples of full-size female sculpture. The last sites of the morning were just below the Acropolis - the Areopagus and the agora. The Areopagus was where the council met. The apostle Paul met among the Areopagus and taught them.⁷⁷ We climbed to the top and looked down into the agora. Visible from there was the temple of Hephaistos. One of the only ancient buildings that has retained its roof.

After the Acropolis we went to check into our hotel. When we arrived at 11:45 A.M. we learned that our rooms would not be ready until 1:00 P.M. Some of the group ate lunch. Others explored the local shops. I chose instead to sleep a little bit in a chair in the lobby of the hotel.

6:30 P.M.

This afternoon we went to the National Museum. This was an impressive sight. Several of the famous works of antiquity are here. Among them the bronze sculptures of Poseidon⁷⁸ with a spear and Paris extending the “apple of discord”. There is the bronze mask claimed upon its



The Parthenon.

⁷⁶ The Erechtheum was said to house a snake which served as the protector of the city. Honey-cakes were offered to the serpent each month. When the cakes were left uneaten at the approach of Xerxes' army the priestess declared this to be a sign that their security had departed from them. Herodotus, *History* The Portable Greek Historians, edited by M. I. Finley (New York: Viking Press, Inc. 1959), Bk. VIII, 41, p. 173. The playwright Aristophanes calls this “the guardian serpent.” *Lysistrata* trans. by Alan H. Sommerstein, (New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1973) 759, p. 212, 252. The word he uses for “guardian” - *oikourous* (οἰκουρούς) is the same word used in Titus 2:5 translated “homemakers.” Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, A Greek English Lexicon (New York: Harper & Brothers Pub., 1869), p. 1032.

⁷⁷ Acts 17:16-34.

⁷⁸ The Greek god of the sea. After the battle with their father Cronos the three brothers Zeus, Hades and Poseidon were said to have divided the world in three parts. Zeus took the heavens, Hades the underworld, Poseidon the sea and all shared the earth. Apollodorus *The Library* trans. by Sir James George Frazer, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk. I2:1, Vol. I, p. 11.

discovery to be the mask of Agamemnon.⁷⁹ Upstairs were the beautiful frescoes from Acroteri. In addition there were many amphora and busts of Zeus, Athena (with her helmet), the Minotaur and the emperor Hadrian. Finally we also found a freeze from Eleusis showing Demeter (the mother-earth goddess) with Persephone teaching Triptolemos the art of wheat cultivation.⁸⁰

As we toured the museum, our guide lectured to us about the development of Greek sculpture. Her comments conflicted with information I had learned years ago regarding art history. She contended that early sculptures were stylized because the



The Areopagus (Mars Hill).

artists were ignorant of naturalistic techniques. My art history professors in college contended instead that the stylized form was a deliberate attempt to idealize nature, as seen in Egyptian, Minoan and later Byzantine art.⁸¹

On the way to and from the museum we saw two important sights: the arch of Hadrian and the temple of Zeus. The temple of Zeus is the only example of Corinthian columns in Athens.



Mycenaean mask.

One of the members of our group is in charge of a business back in the states. Early in the trip he learned of some problems with his business. At dinner tonight he learned that he would have to fly home in the morning.

⁷⁹ The king of Mycenae who led the Greeks in the Trojan war. Homer, *The Iliad* trans. by Richard Latimore (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971), Bk. I, 24, p. 59.

⁸⁰ Apollodorus *The Library* trans. by Sir James George Frazier, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk. I, 5:2, Vol. I, p. 39.

⁸¹ Helen Gardner, *Art Through the Ages* 8th edition, ed. by Horst de la Croix & Richard G. Tansey (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., 1986) p. 126-292.

Delphi

Saturday - June 10th

4:00 P.M.

Today we got up early and drove to Delphi. The traffic was much better today. Monday is Holy Spirit day in Greece so it is a long weekend. Along the way we passed the site of the battle of Marathon.⁸² Our guide told us the story of this battle. We also passed Thebes, the city which held out against Alexander and was destroyed.⁸³ In telling us about Thebes she related to us the story of Oedipus, the king of Thebes. Legend holds that the Oracle at Delphi had predicted upon his birth that he would kill his father and marry his mother. Though his father tried to abandon him to avoid this fate, through a number of twists and turns he survived. When he grew up unknowingly he did just as the Oracle had predicted.⁸⁴ After a three hour drive we arrived at Delphi. The site is located on a mountain called Parnassus.⁸⁵ It was here the Oracle of Apollo was located. I read prior to the trip that Delphi is one of the most beautiful sites in all of Greece. According to myth it received its name from the dolphin which brought



The "Navel of the Earth".

⁸² In 490 B.C. the Persian king Darius, angered over Ionian revolts in Asia Minor at the assistance of the Greeks, mounted a major campaign against the Greek states. After being thwarted two years earlier, near Mount Athos, Darius had succeeded in making it to Attica, at the bay of Marathon. On the plain of Marathon the Greeks successfully defeated the Persians leaving over 6000 Persians dead, while the Greeks lost less than 200 men. A mound was raised near the site to commemorate the fallen Greeks. James Henry Breasted, Ancient Times: A History of the Early World 2nd Ed. (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1944), p. 383-87.

⁸³ He spared only the house of the Poet Pindar whom he admired. Plutarch, "Alexander," Lives of the Noble Greeks, trans. by Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., 1959), 280.

⁸⁴ Sophocles, The Theban Plays, trans by E.F. Watling (Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books Inc., 1963).

⁸⁵ According to Greek myth Zeus caused a world-wide flood destroying all people except a man named Deucalion and his wife, who were preserved in a chest. The chest was said to have come to rest upon Parnassus, and the man and women repopulated the earth by throwing stones behind their backs which changed into people. Apollodorus The Library trans. by Sir James George Frazier, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1961), Bk. I, 7:2, Vol. I, p. 55.

Apollo to this spot.⁸⁶ It was viewed as the center (or navel) of the world.⁸⁷ It was open to all classes of people.



The temple of Apollo.

Our first stop was the museum. Here we saw a huge amphora that stood before the priestess. This was called the navel of the world. Later at the archeological sight we saw the stone where the tripod stood with the hole from which steam arose. While chewing laurel leaves the priestess would utter the god's response to a question in an ecstatic utterance. Priests would then interpret the meaning for the people.⁸⁸ The people of Greece gave great credence to these oracles. Our guide told us about one of the most famous examples of an oracle seemingly coming true. When asked about the outcome of the war with the Persians during Xerxes' invasion of Greece, part of the Oracle's response was - "Safe shall the wooden wall continue for thee and thy children." Since the Athenians were saved by the command of Themistocles fleet of "wooden walled" ships, they believed the Oracle

to have come true.⁸⁹ In the museum we also saw the famous bronze statue of the charioteer. Unexpectedly we also found an inscription from Roman times bearing the name of Domitian. As we observed in Hierapolis because of his persecution of Christians most inscriptions bearing his name have been destroyed.

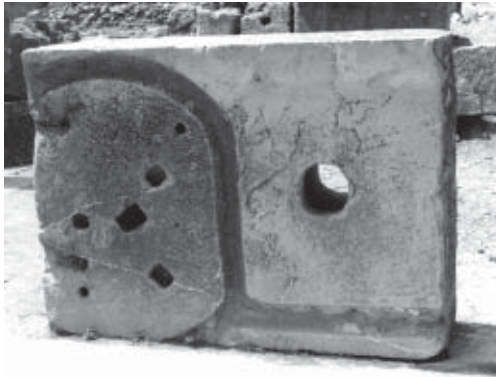
At the site we passed through some old Christian ruins on the Sacred Way leading up to where the oracle was. On either side one could find treasures (temples from the various cities). Only the Athenian treasury has been restored. About midway up the mountain is the temple of Apollo. Looking down one can see the ruins of the gymnasium and the Tholos (a round columned building). Above the temple were the theater and the best preserved ancient stadium in Greece. Curtis

⁸⁶ W.H.D. Rouse, "Apollo and Artemis," *Gods, Heroes and Men of Ancient Greece* (New York: The New American Library Inc., 1957), p. 30-34.

⁸⁷ According to myth when Zeus wanted to discover where the center of the earth was he released two eagles from opposite points in space. They met over Delphi identifying it as the *omphalos* (ὀμφάλος) "navel" of the earth. A marble amphora now housed in the museum represented this "navel." Vangelis Pendazos, *Delphi* (Athens: Yiannikos - Kaldis, 1984), p. 101.

⁸⁸ Plato, *Phaedrus*, *Plato Dictionary* edited by Morris Stockhammer (New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1963), 244, p. 164. William Smith, *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* 2nd. Ed. (Boston: Charles Little and James Brown, 1854), p. 836, 37.

⁸⁹ Herodotus, *History*, *The Portable Greek Historians*, edited by M. I. Finley (New York: Viking Press, Inc. 1959), Bk. VII, 141,42, p. 114.



Tripod stone from Delphi.

and I hiked up to see these. One of the members of our group ran down to measure the stadium. He paced it at about 120 yards.

As I write we are returning to Athens. Much of the group is asleep. It has been a good but tiring trip. Tonight I need to call my wife. When we got to Athens we found that they had moved us to a hotel that was closer to the Acropolis. If she calls me when she had planned to, she will be unable to reach me. I look forward to talking with her. Tomorrow we go to Corinth.

Corinth

Sunday - June 11th

9:00 A.M.

This is the last day of the tour for most of our group. Tomorrow all except Curtis, Ferrell and I will leave for the states. I really enjoyed talking with my wife last night. I miss her very much. She told me that my daughter Torhi, had cried some at night missing me. I talked to her for a little bit. I think it made her feel some better.

As I write we are traveling to Corinth. Ferrell is giving us a review and summary of Paul's journeys. On the way to Corinth we passed the city of Elefsis (or Eleusis). Our guide lectured on Eleusis. This was the site of mystery worship. The people went to Eleusis to learn the mysteries of eternal life and childbirth.⁹⁰



Demeter freeze from Eleusis.

⁹⁰ According to myth the one of Zeus' sisters named Demeter had a daughter named Persephone. Through a trap Persephone was taken by Hades into the underworld as his wife. In her sadness Demeter went to Eleusis to live rejecting Olympus because of the aid the Olympians had given to Hades. There she was said to have shared with the people the mysteries of eternal life. Hesiod, "To Demeter," *The Homeric Hymns* trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), 1-485, p. 289-325.

12:00 P.M.

We have toured Ancient Corinth⁹¹ along with the small museum at the site. The foremost monument of the site is the temple of Apollo. Overlooking the site is the Acrocorinth, a mountain on which the acropolis stood. On the Acrocorinth was the temple of Aphrodite in which at one time there were hundreds of shrine prostitutes. They wore sandals that had the words “follow me” written on them. Ancient Corinth had four natural springs which provided the city with fresh water. We saw one of those springs. From a Biblical standpoint it was most touching to see the *bema*⁹² - “judgment seat.” This was a raised platform from which the ruler would make judgments. Paul answered charges, and Sosthenes was unjustly beaten here.⁹³



The *Bema* - “Judgment Seat”.



Temple of Apollo at Corinth.

The museum had some impressive sculptures: one of Nero and one of Zeus. I tried to find an inscription bearing the name Erastus (mentioned in Scripture).⁹⁴ I found the odium and stadium near where the inscription is but ran out of time before I could find it.

As I write we are returning to Athens. Ferrell asked me to speak tonight at worship services. We will meet at 5:00. On the way to

⁹¹ Acts 18:1-19:1, I Corinthians 1:2, II Corinthians 1:1, II Timothy 4:20.

⁹² βῆμα.

⁹³ Acts 18:12,17.

⁹⁴ Writing from Corinth the Apostle Paul in Romans 16:23 refers to “Erastus, the treasurer of the city.” The inscription I looked for reads in Latin ERASVTS PRO AEDILIAE S P STRAVIT, translated “Erastus, in return for the aedilship [i.e. a magistrate in charge of buildings] laid the pavement at his own expense.” It may be this is the same Erastus to which Scripture refers. Ferrell Jenkins, *The Steps of Paul & John* (Tampa, Florida: Ferrell Jenkins, 1995), p. 5.



The Corinth canal.

Corinth we passed over the canal of Corinth. Both Nero and Augustus had tried to carve a canal here. It was not until the 1800's that this was accomplished.⁹⁵ One can stand and look one way and see the Ionic Sea and the other and see the Aegean.

10:00 P.M.

Worship service was most touching tonight. After we had worshipped Ferrell gave out two certificates to a couple who has made ten trips with him. Some in the group had made up to fourteen trips. Others like myself are traveling for the first time with Ferrell. After services, we had dinner together and said our good-byes to everyone. Several members of the group gave us some of their film and snacks knowing we were going on into Eastern Turkey.

Samos

Monday - June 12th

11:08 A.M.

We have left the hotel and are at the airport. The rest of the group made it off earlier this morning. Though we are excited to see the sites in Eastern Turkey a part of us wishes we were returning to the States with them. It was good to sleep a little later this morning. Ferrell had arranged for some people to pick us up and take us to the airport at 10:15. We will fly to Samos then take a ferry to Kuschadasi. From there we will take a cab or bus to Izmir. As I write we are waiting for our flight to Samos.

12: 39 P.M.

We have boarded the plane and are awaiting clearance. Our plane is named the Archimedes.⁹⁶ We have noticed that there is a museum and archeological site

⁹⁵ Nicos Papahatzis, *Ancient Corinth* (Athens: Ekdotike Athenon S.A., 1994), p. 29.

⁹⁶ A Greek Mathematician and natural philosopher from Syracuse (c. 287-212 B.C.) Sir William Smith, *Smaller Classical Dictionary* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. Inc., 1958), p. 36.

in Samos. Perhaps we will have time to see some of these things. We will have a few hours wait. As I write we are just taking off. The flight should take 35 minutes.

3:12 P.M.

We are in Samos but unfortunately we will not have time to see the museum or the archeological site. We must be at the travel office at 4:00. As I write we are at a little cafe at the harbor.

I picked up a little book about the island which related some interesting information. According to myth the island was the birthplace of the goddess Hera.⁹⁷ The ruins of a temple to her honor are on the island. Samos was also the birth place of Pythagoras.⁹⁸ The book of Acts, speaks of Paul stopping in Samos on one of his journeys.⁹⁹

5:08 P.M.

We got underway a few minutes ago, taking a ferry from Samos to Kuschadasi. The ride should take about an hour. We must go around the East side of Samos then sail South to Turkey. I hope I haven't forgotten the little bit of Turkish I had learned.



Samos.

10:00 P.M.

We arrived in Izmir about an hour and a half ago. Ferrell had arranged for someone to meet us at the harbor. They took us to get a cold drink before the drive. We then started out for Izmir. Our driver was a nice Turkish man who spoke excellent English. He had formerly served in the navy and married a Norwegian wife. That was the first time I had heard Turkish English spoken with a Norwegian accent. Near our hotel was a Pizza Hut. We decided we would eat American food for a change. I have enjoyed Turkish food but it was good to have a little taste of home. Tomorrow our flight is scheduled to leave at 8:45. We will fly to Adana and go to see the Cilician Gates and Tarsus.

⁹⁷ Hera, in Greek mythology was the sister and wife of Zeus. Hesiod, *Theogony* trans. by Hugh G. Evelyn White (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), 920-29, p. 147.

⁹⁸ A Greek mathematician and philosopher. One of the first to hold that the world was round and circled the sun. *Library of Original Sources* ed. by Oliver J. Thatcher (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: University Research Extension Co., 1911), p. 185.

⁹⁹ Acts 20:15.

The Cilician Gates

Tuesday - June 13th

8:30 A.M.

We are on the plane for Adana awaiting clearance to depart. The hotel called a cab for us and we made it to the airport in good time. Security was a little more strict here than elsewhere. We should arrive in Adana in about two hours.

10:52 AM

Our flight arrived a bit early. We flew over the snow covered Taurus mountains. We could see the huge gap running through the Mountains called the Cilician Gates from the plane. I tried to get a picture but we passed it too quickly. Through this cut in the mountains all of the major armies or land travelers journeying from Asia into Europe have passed.



Cydmus river falls at Tarsus.

On the plane I read an interesting article about boats used on the Tigris river called Kelek (from an Assyrian word). The boats are made of inflated animal skins with logs stretched over them. Traders start upstream with their goods then sell the wood downstream, deflate the skins and return home to start again.¹⁰⁰

We have rented a nice air conditioned car which will be our transport for the next few days. We are now in ancient Cilicia. Here Cleopatra met Mark Anthony.¹⁰¹ Here Paul was born.¹⁰² Curtis read from some of his travel books that when the Assyrians controlled this area Sennacharib¹⁰³ had razed the city of Tarsus. Alexander once grew deathly ill here after swimming in the Cydmus and contracting malaria from the nearby swamps.¹⁰⁴ Ferrell said that some argue that this malaria

¹⁰⁰ Alaattin Eser, "Kelek: An Ancient Form of Transport," *Skyline* (Istanbul:Cenajan Grey, 1995), June, 1995, p. 16-24.

¹⁰¹ Plutarch, "Mark Anthony," *Lives of the Noble Romans* trans. by Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., p. 1959), p. 347.

¹⁰² Acts 21:39, 22:3.

¹⁰³ An Assyrian king. (See the notes under Van).

¹⁰⁴ Robin Williams, *Paul's Journeys* (Laguna Beach, California: Robin Williams Films, No copyright.)

may have been Paul's thorn in the flesh.¹⁰⁵

We are going first to the Cilician gates then later to Tarsus. It is evident that we are no longer in Western Turkey. Less English is spoken here. The land near Adana is flatter than Western Turkey, changing somewhat as we approach the Tarus Mountains. The men often wear a baggy type of pants here that is tight around to calves but very loose in the hips and thighs. This is going to be quite an experience.

2:36 P.M.



The Cilician Gates.

The Tarus Mountains are beautiful. One could easily think of themselves as in the Rocky Mountains. We drove a couple of hours North of Tarsus until we began to exit the mountains. To the West of us is Lystra and Derbe.¹⁰⁶ To the North of us is Cappadocia which in modern times is known for the Moslem sect practicing dancing rituals known as whirling Dirvishes.¹⁰⁷ In a shop where we stopped

we saw figurines of these dancing figures. Prices are much better here than in Western Turkey.

Passing through the Gates we drove alongside a stream and an older road. Ferrell had seen pictures of this pass with the stream and a Roman road. The older road we saw was modern but it did have old rock supports. As I write we are headed back to Tarsus.

Tarsus

5:31 P.M.

Tarsus is an interesting city. While the modern city is quite run down the ancient city was highly significant.



The arch of Cleopatra.

¹⁰⁵ II Corinthians 12:7-10.

¹⁰⁶ Acts 16:1.

¹⁰⁷ Robin Williams, Paul's Journeys (Laguna Beach, California: Robin Williams Films, No copyright.)

We were able to see a number of sites. First was the arch of Cleopatra.¹⁰⁸ Though it bears her name there is no indication she had anything to do with the arch. It is a first century structure which once connected the city to the harbor. Though it has been reconstructed, there is an inscription nearby and a Corinthian column



Excavated Roman road in Tarsus

embedded in the stones. Next we went to the beautiful waterfall East of the city formed by the Cydmus river. Here Alexander swam. Certainly Paul as a boy saw this beautiful sight. Next we went to the Tarsus museum. We arrived right at closing time but the guard let us look in the courtyard. Little was there, only a broken statue, some inscriptions and a sarchophagus. The most impressive sight we found by accident. In the center of town a local university has excavated a black basalt Roman road with columns and stone walls. I'm sure

nothing has been written about this yet. This was exciting! Tomorrow we go to Adiyaman.

Karatepe

Wednesday - June 14th

8:08 A.M.

Adana is the most Middle Eastern city we have been in so far. This morning at 4:30 A.M. Curtis and I woke to the sound of the Moslem call to prayer.¹⁰⁹ We had left our window opened because the air conditioner wasn't working very well. As a result, we heard the call especially clear. As I write we have just begun our trip to Adiyaman. Depending upon our arrival time we will go to Nimrut Dagi either near sunset tonight or sunrise tomorrow. If we have time we are going to try to stop at Karatepe, the site of some ancient Hittite ruins.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ Plutarch tells us that when the two met in Tarsus the citizens met them like approaching gods. Cleopatra they treated as Venus and Anthony as Bacchus. Plutarch, "Mark Anthony," Lives of the Noble Romans trans. by Edmund Fuller (New York: Dell Publishing Co. Inc., p. 1959), p. 347-48.

¹⁰⁹ The Muslim Koran specifies times the faithful are to pray. The Glorious Quran, Trans. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (USA: Muslim Students Association, 1975), Sura XVII 78-79, p. 716-17.

10:26 A.M.

After a long drive on a dirt road we made it to Karatepe. Along the way we passed a site known as Hierapolis Castabala. According to one of Curtis' tourbooks this was a site where Alexander met with a local king before encountering Darius. Near the sight were a Roman road and some Corinthian columns.

No literature has yet been published on Karatepe. Because of this, they allow no photos. We did get some postcards and slides. The site is significant in that it assisted in unlocking Hittite hieroglyphics. There are two large roofed patios which they call their museum. There were two rock lions. On one was Hittite and Phoenician (or Northwest Semetic) script on the other. Since the latter was understood, it allowed interpretation of the Hittite.



Hittite freeze from Karatepe.

There were a number of interesting freezes. One freeze showed a boat and divers among the fish. Another was a carving of a man hunting a lion and bear. Above him were two vultures feeding on a rabbit. There were many scenes of home-life including a mother nursing a standing child. Most of the scenes portrayed soldiers with the typical Hittite helmet. One freeze showed two soldiers with Greek-like helmets. The most impressive object was a huge statue of a bearded man with a headband. He wore a tunic down to his calves and the tunic had inscriptions in front and back.

¹¹⁰ The Hittites were a people who dominated Asia minor and Syria from 2000-1200 B.C. In 1290 B.C. they clashed with Ramses II of Egypt at Kadesh. Ramases II himself married a Hittite princess. A good deal of study was done on the Hittite language by Fredrick Hronzy earlier in this century. The Columbia Encyclopedia, 2nd. Ed. (Morningside Heights, New York: Columbia University Press, 1050), p. 901. In Scripture the Hittites are one group among many to whom the land of Canaan was said to belong initially (Genesis 3:8).

As I write we are driving to Adiyaman.¹¹¹ A short time ago we passed the area where the battle of Issus between Darius and Alexander occurred.¹¹²

Nemrut Dagı

4:14 P.M.

We have arrived at Adiyaman and are going to try to make it to Nemrut Dagı. The man at the hotel said it should take two hours. If we can make it, it will save us time tomorrow. Nemrut Dagı is a site built by Antiochos I, a ruler of the Commagene kingdom.¹¹³ Curtis told me that Commagene was a



The summit of Nemrut Dagı.

¹¹¹ After I got home, in doing some study, I learned that just South of Adiyaman we passed a town named Sambayat. In ancient time this was called Somosata (or Samsat). In the second century a writer named Lucian lived there. Lucian is significant to Christians because he confirms the historicity of Jesus' life and death. In a satire he wrote called *The Passing Perigrinus* he mocks Christians faith by writing - "...the man [Jesus] was crucified in Palestine because he introduced this new cult into the world... Furthermore, their first lawgiver persuaded them that they were all brothers one of another after they have transgressed once for all by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist himself and living under his laws." (τὸν μέγαν γοῦν ἐκεῖνον ἔτι σέβουσιν ἄνθρωπον, τὸν ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ ἀνασκολοπιθέντα, ὅτι καὶ νῦν ταύτην τελετὴν εἰσήγαγεν ἐς τὸν βίον... ἔπειτα δὲ ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος ἔπεισεν αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀδελφοὶ πάντες εἶεν ἀλλήλων, ἐπειδὴν ἅπαρ παραβάντες, θεοὺς μὲν τοὺς Ἑλληνικοὺς ἀπαρνῆσονται, τὸν δὲ ἀνεσκολοπισμένον ἐκεῖνον σοφιστὴν αὐτῶν προσκυνῶσι, καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐκείνου νόμους βιώσι.). Josh McDowell, Evidence that Demands a Verdict (San Bernadino, California: Here's Life Publishers, Inc., 1972), Vol. I, p. 82.

¹¹² In 334 B.C. Alexander swept into Asia crossing the Hellespont. He first routed the army of the Persian king Darius III at Granicus. The next year in 333 B.C. they met again on the plain of Issus. Alexander defeated an army of 600,000 men. Darius family was taken captive but Darius himself fled to Susa. P.V.N. Myers, A General History for Colleges and High Schools, (Boston: Ginn & Co. Pub., 1893), p. 162-63.

¹¹³ During the Hellenistic period Commagene controlled the small region from the Taurus Mountains up to Nemrut. This was an important middle ground between the Major powers of the day. Having revolted from the Selucids they gained their independence in the first century B.C. They had their most prosperity under Antiochos I Epiphanes (not the Seleucid Antiochos). Antiochos sided with Pompey during the Roman civil war and was made the Roman king of Commagene in 62 B.C. Augustus found him guilty of murder and convicted him to death ending the kingdom of the Commagene. Dr. Sadan Gokovali, Commagene and Nemrut (Izmir, Turkey: Ofis Ticaret Matbaacilik Ltd., 1988), p. 7.

“buffer” kingdom between the Romans and the Parthians. The main significance of the site is the huge tomb of Antiochos I. Near this sight have also been a number of Bronze age (2000 B.C.) discoveries.



Antiochos I.

were out of place. Seven kilometers from the top our car stalled. After about fifteen minutes, we push started the car and went on up. We were about to lose our daylight but we pressed on. All along the way there were steep drops to the side and Ferrell had to weave back and forth between potholes and rocks. Within 100 yards of the site the car stalled again. After roll starting it Ferrell backed it up the rest of the way.

Nemrut Dagı is a huge tomb on the highest point of the mountains. A cone formed of small broken stones is at the summit. The tomb sets about 6,000 feet above sea level. You can see for miles in all directions. On the East and West sides of the site there are terraces with large seated figures. Most of the heads lie on the ground. The statues blend Greek and Persian deities into one.¹¹⁴ Zeus is portrayed with a Persian headdress.¹¹⁵ There were also some eagles, lions and a few inscriptions. It was dark as we began down. On the way back our air conditioner has gone out. We are going to check about another car tomorrow.

¹¹⁴ The Commagene rulers claimed to be the descendents of the Persian King Darius I on their Father's side, and Alexander the Great on their mother's side. Omer Yorukoglu, Nemrut Dag: Kommagene (Ankara, Turkey: Altan Yorukoglu, 1988), p. 48.

¹¹⁵ On Nemrut he is called Zeus-Oromasdes. The Persian chief god was Ahura Mazda. Dr. Sadan Gokovali, Commagene and Nemrut (Izmir, Turkey: Ofis Ticaret Matbaacilik Ltd., 1988), p. 65.

10:00 P.M.

Our trip to Nemrut Dagı has been quite an adventure! As we began our trip there in the distance we could see a tiny peak jutting out above all the other maintains on the horizon. Little did I dream that this was our destination. We followed the most recent guidebooks to the site but learned that the authors had a gift for understatement. In describing the route one book said - “The road deteriorates noticeably as you approach the site.” What they should have said was - “The road is steep and dangerous. Proceed at your own risk!” The road was cobblestoned and many of the stones



Zeus-Oromasdes

The Euphrates River

Thursday - June 15th

10:38 P.M.

Less than a week now until home! I am enjoying the sites but I am anxious for home. There were no air conditioned cars East of Adana. The rental company arranged for a local mechanic to work on the car we have. As I write we are underway headed toward Harran.

12:37 P.M.

On the road to Harran we came to the Euphrates.¹¹⁶ Unlike we had imagined, the Euphrates was clear, wide and beautiful. Near the river, was a small village made of mud houses. There were stone winnowing bins and manure cakes stacked for fire. Near the river some sheep were watering. As we were driving down to get some pictures of them, our car scraped bottom and we knocked our muffler out of



Turkish farmer winnowing lentils.



The Euphrates river.

place. We'll have to see if they can fix it in Sanliurfa. As we were leaving the village we saw some sheep huddling against a building for shade. By the river we had seen them bunch together and bow their heads to get out of the sun. A short distance from the river we passed a group of men winnowing lentils. We stopped and talked with them for a few minutes. Just beyond there we saw a shepherd leading the sheep in straight lines. We were amazed at how passively they would follow the shepherd.

¹¹⁶ The name Euphrates means "the good and abounding river." It is identified in Scripture as one of the four rivers flowing out of Eden (Genesis 2:14). When God promises Abraham the land of Canaan the Nile to the South and the Euphrates to the North are said to be the boundaries of his descendents inheritance (Genesis 15:18). William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Flemming H. Revell Co., 1982), p. 183. Together with the Tigris this formed the region known as "the cradle of civilization" - the Mesopotamia (i.e. "between the rivers").

Harran

2:40 P.M.

Arriving in Sanliurfa¹¹⁷ we have found a repairman for the muffler. No one here can speak English, so our phrasebooks are getting a lot of use. We think it should take only 30 minutes.

4:47 P.M.

After getting the car fixed, we checked into our hotel and went to the Sanliurfa museum. It was a small museum but had a few interesting things. Among them were some small idols, spearheads from the bronze age and some pottery and glass work. The most significant item was a stele referring to Nabonidus the last Babylonian king.¹¹⁸ As I write we are headed for Harran. The Biblical characters of Abraham and Jacob lived here.¹¹⁹



The modern village of Harran.

7:00 P.M.

The modern village of Harran is characterized by mud bee-hive houses. Though fully covered except the face, the women wear brightly colored garments,

¹¹⁷ Sanliurfa means "The blessed city." In Biblical times it was known as Edessa. The religious historian Eusebius (c. 260-340 A.D.) claims that while Christ was still alive the prince of Edessa, named Agbarus sent a message to Jesus asking him to come to the city. He claims further that the apostle Thaddeus preached in Edessa. Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, trans. by Christian Fredrick Cruse (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987), Bk. I, 8-Bk II, 1, p. 44-49.

¹¹⁸ Nabonidus was the Father of Belshazzar, the king who saw the inscription written on the wall MENE MENE TEKEL UPHARSIN, meaning "God has numbered your kingdom and finished it; you have been weighed in the balances and found wanting; Your kingdom has been given to the Medes and the Persians" (Daniel 5:1-31). Nabonidus and Belshazzar shared a joint-kingship. D. Winton Thomas, *Documents from Old Testament Times* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1958), p. 89-91.

¹¹⁹ Genesis 11:31-32, 12:4-5, 27:43, Acts 7:2-4.



Bee-hive houses in Harran.

some with glitter.¹²⁰ This was a surprise to all of us. There are numerous ruins around the city but most are Arabic dating to the 700's A.D. In the center of the village is the höyük. Beneath this is undoubtedly a wealth of history. Scattered throughout the village were fragments of older ruins such as columns and stone bowls. Tomorrow we look at some more sights in Sanliurfa then on to Diyarbakir.

Urfa

Friday - June 16th

8:57 A.M.

Last night I got a little sick. I don't know if it is the food or if the ice tea I drank was made from bad water. If I had to get sick this would be the time. Our schedule today is relatively light. I believe I will limit my activities to only those things with Biblical import. As I write, Curtis and Ferrell have gone to a site important to Muslims, a sacred carp pool.¹²¹



Nabonidus inscription from the Sanliurfa museum.

¹²⁰ We actually made the mistake of thinking that the glitter on one of the women's clothes were blinker lights on the back of a wagon.

¹²¹ The Muslim Koran claims that Abraham was persecuted for his faith and thrown into a fire. The fire changed into a pool of water. Muslims claim the pool in Urfa is Abraham's pool. Since it is sacred, the carp living there cannot be harvested. *The Glorious Quran*, Trans. by Abdullah Yusuf Ali (USA: Muslim Students Association, 1975), Sura XXI, 69, p. 837.



Temple of Helios beneath the monastery.

11:14 A.M.

Near the carp pool is a site where Muslims have traditionally claimed is the birthplace of Abraham.¹²² Islam, Christianity and Judaism all look to Abraham as their father of faith. There is a cave and spring at the site where Muslims pray and drink from the spring. I felt up to going in and getting a few pictures.

12:54 P.M.

A few moments ago we passed a plain just South of Mardin. On the horizon we could see into Syria. All along the way we have seen höyücs. The plains are otherwise flat such as one might see in Kansas. This would indicate that this area in ancient times was heavily populated. Most of the höyücs are within sight of one another. The plain must have been more fertile in ancient times. Now it is dry and barren.

2:14 P.M.

Near Mardin there is an Aramaic monastery called Deyurul Zerafan.¹²³ As a side trip we stopped in to see what they had. The site is built on top of an



Syriac monk from Mardin.

¹²² The Bible says that Abraham was born in "Ur of the Chaldees" (Genesis 11:27-32). When Sir Leonard Woolley excavated Tell el-Muqayyar near the Persian Gulf in the 1920's most accepted conclusively that it was "Ur of the Chaldees." There are a number of reasons which lead a few scholars to questions this: 1. The excavations there have never found a reference to "Ur of the Chaldees." Some have claimed this was an explanatory gloss by later scribes. Merrill F. Unger, *Famous Archeological Discoveries* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1960), p. 37-43. 2. The region of lower Mesopotamia was not inhabited by "Chaldeans" in either the time of Abraham or Moses (the inspired author of Genesis). During their day Chaldeans were located in the Northern Mesopotamia. 3. The word "Ur" can mean simply "city." Thus "a city of the Chaldeans." Geoffrey Bromiley, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. IV, p. 954,5. C.H. Gordon, "Abraham of Ur," *Hebrew and Semetic Studies* (G.R. Driver, 1963), p. 77-84.

¹²³ The Aramaic Church follows a tradition first established in Antioch. They look to Antioch as the seat of their church, with the patriarch of Antioch serving as their leader. The Aramaic churches have always used Syriac Bibles as their authoritative Scriptures. George Lamsa has translated these into English. *The Four Gospels According to the Eastern Version* trans. by George M. Lamsa (Philadelphia: A.J. Holman Co., 1933).

ancient pagan temple dedicated to Helios.¹²⁴ There are still two arches intact. Above this is an old church that at one point was a medical school. The main sanctuary dates to the Fifth Century A.D. Inside we saw a 500 year old Syriac Bible. On the side of the mountain, behind the monastery we could look up and see little caves cut out of the rock. The monk told us that these had been the homes of monks who lived their centuries ago.

The Tigris River

7:03 P.M.

We have arrived in Diyarbakir and have settled into our hotel. On the edge of town we were able to see a small glimpse of the Tigris river.¹²⁵ So far it is less impressive than the Euphrates.¹²⁶ I am feeling much better. In Diyarbakir we found some cold drinks (a difficult thing to do in Eastern Turkey). As I write, Curtis and Ferrell have gone to eat and I am going to rest a little. Tomorrow we go to Van.



The Tigris river near Diyarbakir.

¹²⁴ The Greek god of the sun. (See notes on Rhodes).

¹²⁵ The Turks call this the *Dicle*. In Genesis 2:14 it is referred to as one of the rivers flowing out of Eden, referred to in Hebrew as the *Hiddekel* (חִדְקֶל). In the war between the Parthians and the Romans (A.D. 114-117) the Tigris for a time served as a boundary line between the two. William Smith, *A Dictionary of the Bible* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Flemming H. Revell Co., 1982), p. 696,97.

¹²⁶ The next morning we went down close to the river. Perhaps due to its proximity to Diyarbakir it was very polluted and smelly.

Van

Saturday - June 17th

8:00 A.M.

I am back to 100%! A good night of rest has done wonders. We think it may have been a minor case of food poisoning. As I write we have left Diyarbakir and are proceeding the rest of the way towards Ararat. To break up the journey we have tried to find a place or two to stop between Sanliurfa and Ararat. Otherwise we were looking at a three day journey to Ararat.



Lake Van.

We have learned that modern Turkey is divided into different cultures not only based on East and West distinctions but also North and South distinctions. In the West we had noticed most people with Western style dress. As we drove East we saw more men wearing a cap and baggy pants some even wearing Arab headdress. The women wore full coverings varying from solid black to brightly colored. The latter exposing the face, and the former only the eyes. Some of the women near Harran and Sanliurfa had small facial tattoos. In the East many men walk around carrying worry-beads. Worry-beads are little strands of multi-colored beads with a tassel hanging off it. Everyone you see either has a cigarette or worry-beads. As we moved North we saw more Western dress even among the women.

Turkey is in the midst of a brewing cultural crisis between the Turks and the Kurdish separatists. Because of this the military is quite visible. Over the last few days we have had to go through several military check points.¹²⁷ This was a bit disarming at first but we have found all the soldiers to be cordial to us.¹²⁸ A few days ago we met some teenage boys who worked at a gas station that were Kurdish. Learning we were Americans they went through a list of all the celebrities they knew including Michael Jordan, Shaq O'Neal and Sharron Stone. The boys

¹²⁷ We estimated at least 25 by the end of our trip.

¹²⁸ We were not certain but in Dogubeyazit we thought that a soldier tried to get us to give him a bribe. After opening our suitcases, he rubbed his fingers together and said "*lira*" (the Turkish money standard). This was one situation where it paid not to understand the language very well. When he saw we didn't understand him they let us go on.

claimed to be Atheists who study Marx and Lenin. In contrast to this we met a young boy in Mardin who identified himself as a Christian. The first thing he asked us was if we were Christians. There are very few Christians in Turkey.

One thing which helped prepare us for the sight of so much military was the fact that many policemen carry automatic rifles. There is little crime in Turkey.

2:10 P.M.



The Urartian god Teisheba.

We have had a beautiful drive through the Bitlis Mountains moving toward Van. All throughout the day we have seen patches of snow. Just ahead of us now we can see a peak fully snow covered. We believe it is another mountain also called Nemrut Dagi on the other side of Lake Van. Bitlis is a town from which the mountains and river draw their name. It is claimed by the locals to have been named after one of Alexander's generals or one of his favorites.

5:33 P.M.

We have arrived at Van but too late to go to the museum which closed at 5:30. We are going to go there first thing in the morning then worship at Ararat tomorrow afternoon.

Sunday - June 18th

11:38 A.M.

The Museum at Van was a nice little museum celebrating ancient Urartian culture. The Urartu lived in Van in the 9th-6th centuries B.C.¹²⁹ Inside the museum

¹²⁹ At the height of their power the Urartu once controlled the region spanning from the Caspian Sea to the Mediterranean. Much of what we know about them comes from Assyrian inscriptions. The Urartian kings clashed with well-known Assyrian kings such as Tiglath-Pileser (I & III), Sargon II (who removed them from Syria forcing the Urartian king Rusa to flee in fear in the midst of the battle) and Ashurbanibal. Sennacherib, the king who boasted against God only to be defeated by the angel of the Lord (II Kings 18:17-19:37) gathered intelligence for Sargon II against Urartu. The Bible makes reference to the Urartian kingdom calling it the kingdom of "Ararat" (Jeremiah 51:27). The assassins of Sennacherib fled to "the land of Ararat" (II Kings 19:37). Altan Cilingioglu, The History of the Kingdom of Van: Urartu (Izmir, Turkey: Ofis Ticaret Matbaacilik Ltd., 1988), p. 1-56.

were beautiful examples of bronze belts, helmets, jewelry, horse bits and bells along with breastplates. Outside were some excellent, well-preserved stele with cuneiform inscriptions. There was also a freeze of a god riding a bull.¹³⁰ The carvings decorating the deity's robe were beautiful and delicate. No photos were allowed in the museum, though we were allowed to photograph the stele outside.

After the museum we located a tire shop. Apparently a few days ago we took a nail that had caused a slow leak for several days. It took only a moment or two to fix and we were on our way. The last site in Van was an area called "The Rock," a fortress overlooking the plain where the old city once stood. Though most of the ruins are Ottoman there are some Urartu inscriptions on the rocks there.¹³¹

As I write we are going North along the shores of lake Van. Tonight we plan to stay in Dogubeyazit at the foot of Ararat. Today is Father's Day. Only three days left. I can't wait to see my wife and children. We learned yesterday that there was some terrorism against the Turkish Army in the region through which we passed, near Diyarbakir. We have already noticed that the military now is less visible. We feel that we have passed the worst areas. We are grateful to the Lord that in His providence we have made it safe thus far.

¹³⁰ In fact this was one of the three main gods of the Urartian Pantheon - Teisheba. This stele was to commemorate the foundation of a fortress in his honor. Their chief god was Khaldi. Altan Cilingioglu, The History of the Kingdom of Van: Urartu (Izmir, Turkey: Ofis Ticaret Matbaacilik Ltd., 1988), p. 28.

¹³¹ This was actually the site of the ancient capital of the Urartian kingdom. It was called Tushpa and the Urartian king Sarduri fortified it. Ibid. p. 14.

Mount Ararat

2:05 P.M.

About 30 km. from Dogubeyazit we have seen snow beside the road. To our right a few kilometers is the Iranian border. The terrain is very green with no trees much as Scotland is often pictured. The plains are littered with piled volcanic rocks on which moss and scrub has grown.



The plains of Ararat with "Little Ararat" in the center and Mount Ararat on the left.

10:00 P.M.

This has been a wonderful day. We began seeing Ararat from a great distance away. The top was in the clouds but the sun was creeping up the mountain. This is the mountain where Scripture tells us the ark came to rest after the flood.¹³² Our hotel was East of Dogubeyazit about 20 km from the Iran border. Apparently in more peaceful times this hotel was quite a tourist spot. Set right at the base of the mountain the hotel now is empty and run down. We are the only guests in the

¹³² Genesis 6:1-9:17. Virtually all cultures of the world over have legends related to the flood. One of the most popular is the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh, which tells of Utnapishtim, the survivor of a great flood. The Epic of Gilgamesh trans. by N.K. Sandars (New York: Penguin Books, 1972). As we previously observed, the Greeks had a flood myth (see notes on Delphi), yet so did a number of other cultures. The Egyptians held that a flood had purified the whole earth and only a few shepherds escaped. The Hindus claim that Manu, being warned of a flood built a ship and escaped the destruction of all creatures. In Chinese tradition Fa-He is represented as having survived a flood with his 3 sons and 3 daughters. The Druids told of a righteous patriarch who repopulated the world after surviving in a strong ship a flood sent to destroy man for his wickedness. Similar stories are found among the Polynesians, in Greenland and among American Indians. Henry H. Halley, Halley's Bible Handbook (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing Co., 1959), p. 75.



The snowcovered peak of Ararat.

hotel.¹³³ Yet all of this is worth it given the fact that our room looks out right to the mountain.

After getting checked in, we noticed a picture on the wall of Astronaut James Irwin at one of the sites some believe to be where the ruins of the ark are buried. We asked the man at the desk if he knew how to get there. He directed a worker at the hotel to take us there. The young man's name was Mustafa. He was Kurdish and spoke very

little English. As we drove, the mountain became totally clear. At first we were worried as he took us right to the Iranian border. He showed us a meteor crater, right on the border. The border guards let us take a picture looking into Iran. From there he took us to the spot we had seen in the picture. At the site we met an old farmer who lives there and he showed us the mound.¹³⁴

During the day we had joked that the only thing that was lacking was to see a rainbow at Ararat. Before dinner we worshipped. It was very moving for just the three of us to worship together. After worship I looked out the window and saw to the side of the Mountain a small rainbow. It was fun dashing out to get a photo. We hope the pictures come out otherwise no one will believe us. Tomorrow we plan to get a few more shots of the mountain then head home, staying tomorrow night at Erzurum. Curtis and I tried to call Dad on Father's day. I wanted to tell my wife we were only going to stay one night at Dogubeyazit. Since the hotel wanted to charge \$12.00 a minute we chose to wait.



Suggested ark site.

¹³³ In 1974 the Turkish government officially banned the travel of foreigners to Ararat. Dave Balsiger and Charles E. Sellier Jr., *In Search of Noah's Ark* (Los Angeles: Sun Classic Books, 1976), p. 204. Obviously this restriction has either loosened or been repealed.

¹³⁴ The Scripture text simply claims that the ark came to rest on the "mountains of Ararat" - Genesis 8:4. Explorer Dave Wyatt has studied this site off and on for many years. Radar and molecular frequency generation tests have revealed symmetrical echo patterns, which Wyatt claims are the fossilized cross beams of a ship. Wyatt has also discovered eight tall stones with crosses etched on them and large holes carved through the top. Wyatt claims these were dreg stones marked and discovered by early Christians. The Learning Channel "Beyond Belief," (Directed by Jim Burroughs:Anchor Stones Films, 1993), July 31, 1995.

Monday - June 19th

12:30 P.M.

This morning we took some sunrise photos of the Mountain. For some reason the water was turned off at the hotel this morning. I got half showered and the water went off. We left the hotel around 9:00 and drove on to the South of the Mountain and took some photos overlooking an old Sultan's castle called Ishakpasha Sarayi. After this, we drove North of the mountain to the point we could see Armenia to the North and the mountain to the South. As I write we are headed to Erzurum. This should be a fairly uneventful day.

Going Home

8:44 P.M.

We are almost home! That is it seems that way. I drove the last leg of the driving section of our trip. It was very cool today given that we are really still in the mountains. From the street in front of our hotel here in Erzurum we can look and see snow on the mountains. There were far fewer military stops today. We are in a less volatile area now as well as being more Westernized. Tomorrow we fly to Ankara then Istanbul. We plan to spend the night at Istanbul then fly to the states the next day.

Tuesday - June 20th

9:38 P.M.

This morning we left Erzurum after a thorough search of our person and carry-on baggage. The flight to Ankara took a couple of hours. We arrived just in time to catch our flight to Istanbul. Ankara is in Northern Galatia (as it was called in ancient times).¹³⁵ I wish we had time to see more here.

Three weeks ago flight turbulence was rather unsettling now it seems almost unnoticeable. This evening we are staying in a Holiday Inn in a marina on the Sea of Marmara. Down the street is a Western style mall called the Galleria. It had a number of Western fast food shops. After eight days in Eastern Turkey this seemed like Alabama. I had a Whopper, fries and a Diet Coke. It was wonderful! Tomorrow we go home.

¹³⁵ Acts 16:6, 18:23, I Corinthians 16:1, Galatians 1:2, II Timothy 4:10, I Peter 1:1.

Wednesday -June 21st

8:08 A.M. Turkish Time

This morning we say good-bye to Turkey. This country will always hold a special place in my heart. It is the first country out of North America where I have stayed for a significant time. As I write we have just left Istanbul and are two and a half hours from Frankfurt.

Last night I couldn't sleep. It was either the excitement of going home or too much Diet Coke in my system (they didn't have diet drinks in Eastern Turkey). Today I see my wife!

10:36 A.M. Frankfurt Time

Our flight arrived a little early. This allowed us a short time to look a little at the shops at the airport. Here we separate from Ferrell. He goes on to New York and we fly to Atlanta. As I write we are waiting to board. We are about eleven hours from home.

12:12 P.M. Atlanta Time

We are less than three hours away and all has gone well. It will be good to be home but I can not yet begin to realize all of the ways I have grown from this experience. Bible places are more real to me than ever. I have grown to appreciate a whole new culture I knew nothing about a few weeks ago. I have learned that being a foreigner in another country is not nearly as unsettling as I had once imagined. I have learned a greater love and appreciation for my wife and children. My respect and gratitude for my brother and parents have deepened. Perhaps most importantly my love and gratitude to God has grown for the deeds He has done in times past and the care He has given us on this trip.

10:00 P.M. Birmingham Time

My wife and parents picked me up at the airport. They had to wait a good while as we cleared customs. Curtis was "lucky" and had to have his bags searched. I made it through without having to pay any duty. We visited with Curtis a little bit before he caught his flight. Then we headed back home. Toni and the kids and my parents hadn't eaten yet so we stopped at Shoney's in Atlanta. It was all I could do to sit there and wait with them as they ate. I had come so far only to be just a few hours from home. Finally we started back. It is so wonderful to be with my wife and family again. This has been a wonderful trip. I have learned so much. Even so, it is wonderful to be home.

Appendix A

The Group



The group participating in the *1995 Steps of Paul and John Tour* was: *Holding banner (left to right):* Kyle Pope, Dr. Rashyid Ergener (Our Turkish Guide); *First row:* Phyllis Littell, Berniece Edwards, Jeanette Freiling, Virginia Freiling, Alethea Pearson, Norma Noble, Jeanette Knaupp, Betty Drew, Dartha Starr, Wyno Watson. *Second row:* Danny Littell, Curtis Pope, Don Freiling, Virginia Smith, Betty Pack, Vivian Bowlin, Mark Nitz, David Roberts, Eleanor Roberts. *Third row:* Geri Swift, Phoebe Meister, Roy Pearson, Darlene Spivey, Richard Spivey, Melba O'Kelley, Oleta Woodward, Paul Woodward, James Noble. *Back row:* Walter Petrovich, Craig Maxson, James Pack, Ken Craig, Eleanor Copeland, John O'Kelley, Jean Faulkner, Alene Maguire, Elizabeth Jenkins, Mac Maguire. Our leader - Ferrell Jenkins (*not pictured*) snapped this picture for me.

Appendix B

Troy

*I come to Troy, at times
On the trail of lost wars
Among layers of walls
Some covered with earth, some cleared*

*There are remnants of a house
a few pots, a fireplace, two columns
Who sought refuge in Troy?
Which wars were fought?*

*Troy was once rich
full of happy men
Wells were dug ruthlessly, its treasures stolen
People are far away now*

*Three goddesses competed in front of Paris
Beautiful Aphrodite, mother Hera and Virgin Athena
Paris chose Aphrodite
Troy was damned*

*Paris was a prince, yet he belonged to the mountains, was
reared by shepherds, didn't know how to fight
He fought for Troy
So did Aphrodite, and the river Shamander, quitting its flamingoes
And Hector, Paris' brother, alone in front of the gate
behind which his parents hid*

*Hector was alone, he would die
Trojans had left Hector alone, they would also die
Aphrodite couldn't fight for long, she would leave
Troy would fall*

*I came to Troy, I'm digging for my past
there is a gate, beyond which I cannot go
Some flamingoes take off
Aphrodite smiles*

*We are nobles at birth belonging to the mountains, we choose beauty
Beauty is taken away from us, we die
We can't remember what was before death
We miss Troy*

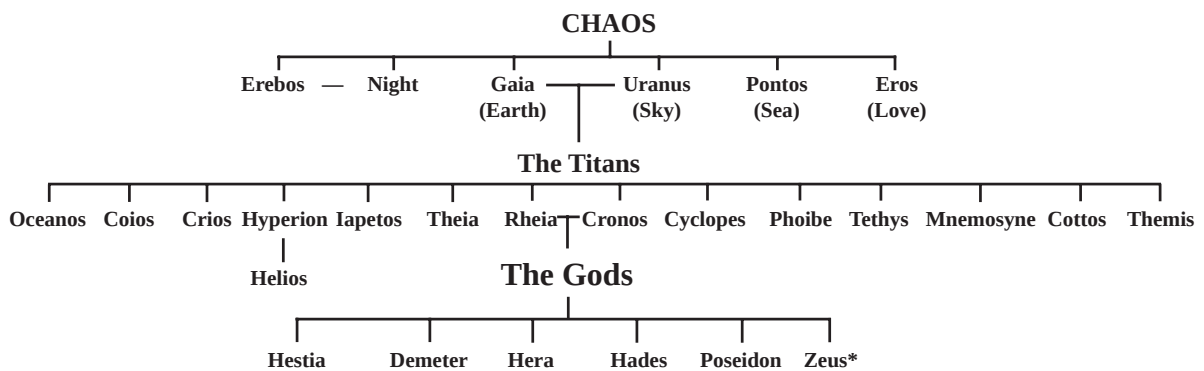
*Everybody has a Troy, fought for beauty
A gate beyond which death is encountered
New cities are founded thereafter, new wars are fought
The death becomes a legend, is passed from mouth to mouth*

Everybody has a legend written at Troy

By Dr. Rashyid Ergener

Appendix C

Genealogical Chart of Greek Mythology



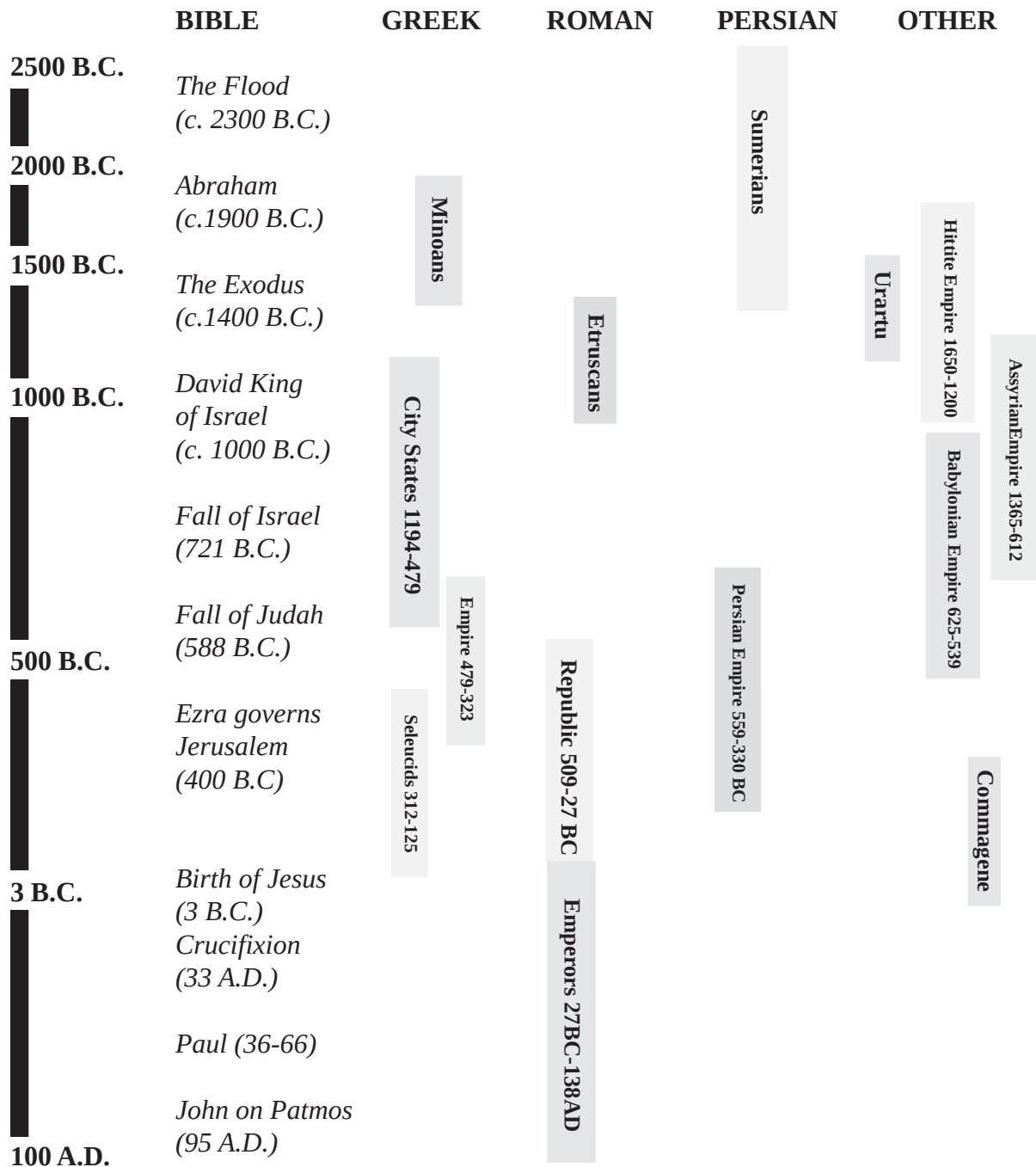
*The Twelve Wives of Zeus:

Metis	Themis	Eurynome	Demeter	Mnemosyne	Leto	Hera	Maia	Semele	Alcmene	Eyrole	Danae
Athena	Horai: (Seasons) Law Justice Peace Moirai: (Fates) Clotho Lachesis Atrops	Graces: Brightness Merryheart Bloom	Persephone	Muses	Apollo Artemis	Hebe Ares Eileithyia Hephaistos	Hermes	Dionysos	Heracles	Minos Rhadamanthys	Perseus

Borrowed and Revised from Gods, Heroes and Men of Ancient Greece, by W. H. D. Rouse.

Appendix D

Historical Timelines



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