

Aspects of Ephesus at the time of Revelation

-) Ancient history, back to Ionian times, circle 900 BCE
-) Largest city in Roman Asia, estimated population of 200,000, and home to the provincial proconsul (but not the provincial capital, which was Pergamum).
-) A major port of trade, and closest of the seven cities to Patmos.
-) Host to the Artemision, temple to the goddess Artemis, one of the “seven wonders of the ancient world” (see Acts 19.24ff), and “twice *neokoros*,” i.e., honored as “temple warden” of the Artemision. The Artemision was approximately 425 feet long and 230 feet wide, thus, about the size of today’s sports stadia. It was destroyed in 262 CE. Center of Artemis worship was the May 25 procession and pageant, which could draw as many as 30,000 revelers.
-) Likely origin of the “imperial cult,” a set of rituals that honored the emperor as divine
-) Host to an imperial temple to the reigning emperor, Domitian (reigned 81-96)
-) Also host to temples of Apollo and Athena.
-) Little evidence of a Jewish community of any size.