

## Aspects of Laodicea at the time of Revelation

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- J Founded by Seleucid king, originally as Diospolis (“city of Zeus”) and then fortified by a later Seleucid king who re-named it for his wife, Laodice (= “justice of the people”).
- J Came under Roman control in 133 BCE and maintained close relations with Rome. A late republic inscription proclaimed the Romans to be “savior and benefactor.”
- J Close geographic neighbors with Hieropolis and Colossae (see Colossians 2.1; 4.13-16) in the Lycus River Valley, along a major route from Mesopotamia to the Aegean Sea.
- J Rebuilt after 17 CE earthquake with aid from Tiberius, but when it was destroyed again by an earthquake in 60 CE, it was rebuilt with only local financing.
- J Was a regular cite for the Roman governor to decide lawsuits in the region.
- J Zeus and Apollo, along with Cybele (earth mother), were worshiped from earliest times.
- J The imperial cult was strong early on in both Laodicea and Hieropolis. However, Pergamum, Smyrna and Ephesus were all honored as “neocorus” (“temple warden”) before these two cities. The cult festivals were major opportunities for social bonding.
- J There was an established, stable Jewish population with no apparent tension with others in the city.