

The
ACTS
of the Apostles



God can use any type of person to overcome any type of obstacle that stands against His mission

Acts 19

Introduction

- This chapter begins Paul's third missionary journey, recording the details of the apostle's work in Ephesus.
- Luke focuses on God's incredible power to overcome various obstacles, like false religions.
- No matter what Paul and his team face in Ephesus, no matter what we face today, this chapter shows us God can overcome it all to move the Gospel forward.

God can overcome any obstacle that
tries to hinder the Gospel's
advancement

Acts 19:1-20

Paul in Ephesus

- Aquila and Priscilla have been heading up the church in Ephesus while Paul has been away.
- Luke shifts the focus back to Paul. The apostle is finally in Ephesus and begins his ministry, starting with his desire to equip the believers.
- The men Paul finds seem to be disciples, but it becomes obvious their loyalty is more to John the Baptist than to Christ.

Paul in Ephesus

- Paul's question shows us his belief that faith in Christ and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit go together.
- Seeing where the problem lies, the apostle now starts to distinguish between John's message and Christ's work.
- John's baptism, he tells them, was a "baptism of repentance," something that pointed beyond itself to One coming after, namely, Christ.

Paul in Ephesus

- In focusing on Jesus now, the true peak of divine revelation, this group is now formally baptized in the “name of the Lord Jesus,” not John.
- This group is not getting “re-baptized,” but upon their profession of faith, are getting baptized once and for all under the proper name and work of Jesus Christ.

Paul in Ephesus

- Upon hearing the Gospel, professing faith, and being baptized, these men are filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Tongues and prophecies show up a few different times in Acts as a “mini-Pentecost” of sorts, the Holy Spirit’s way of validating His advancement of the Gospel.
- In this section, we see that God can overcome the false religion of Christ-less Christianity by restoring the focus on Jesus when it’s on the wrong person.

Paul in Ephesus

- Paul was able to preach there for two full years.
- We see that Paul used this blessing of God wisely and productively.
- Paul taught six days a week for about five hours a day (according to ancient sources), so he ended up providing 3,120 hours of lecture, discussion, persuasion and reasoning in the hall of Tyrannus over the course of two years in Ephesus.

Sons of Sceva

- The miraculous works done in the name of Jesus gets the attention of the Sons of Sceva, local Jewish exorcists.
- Pagan exorcists could only invoke the name of their own gods, who had limited jurisdiction.
- Jewish exorcists claimed the ability to summon the secret name of Israel's God, Yahweh, who held power over all of heaven and earth, making these exorcists' practice more lucrative and in-demand than others.

Sons of Sceva

- They try to call oppressive spirits out of their “clients,” using the name of Jesus.
- If this guy, Paul, could do these miraculous things in the name of Jesus, why couldn't they?
- Much to their dismay, the oppressive spirit puts them in their place, showing all the onlookers just how unimportant and unable they are to access God's power.

Sons of Sceva

- It's not long before everyone in the city knows what happened, and it is clear who is in control.
- Many unbelievers come to fear the Lord and hold high the name of Christ, the One who can even overcome demons.
- In fact, they showed they feared the Lord by coming forward to confess their occult habits, repenting of them by burning materials used to practice the magic arts.

God uses both believers and
non-believers to move
His mission forward

Acts 19:21-24

A Riot in Ephesus

- In these verses, Paul makes a major decision to conclude his ministry in the east and move westward to Rome.
- Before Paul heads west, however, he faces a riot instigated by a band of angry craftsmen.
- The initial ringleader of the riot is a silversmith named Demetrius, who fashioned silver shrines to the goddess Artemis, the deity in Ephesus.

A Riot in Ephesus

- The temple of Artemis was the hub of economic life in this city, and the goddess was known most for her alleged ability to protect and preserve all living things.
- Demetrius understandably mixed economics with religion.
- Worship of the goddess required all sorts of goods like shrines, replicas, festival supplies and offerings.

A Riot in Ephesus

- The silversmith sees a major problem with Paul's message, especially that a god could not be made with human hands.
- His speech highlights the economic ramifications of the Gospel. They could lose their business.
- To cover himself, though, Demetrius slides in some pious words about Artemis to finish his speech, ensuring his motives are seen as religious.

A Riot in Ephesus

- His speech electrifies the anger of his fellow craftsmen, who also base their livelihood on fabricating goods for idol worship. Together, they cry out in solidarity for Artemis, and drag out various companions of Paul.
- The town is celebrating the Artemis festival: a month of debauchery chock-full of athletic contests, drinking, partying, prostitution, and more. Given the city's total drunkenness, it is no wonder the crowd seems to be confused about why they are even rioting.

Town Clerk

- After hours of shouting, the mob finally quiets enough for the town clerk to talk some sense into them.
- The town clerk held much influence.
- He was the chief administrative officer of the city, presiding over both the council of city magistrates and the public assembly, and operating as a liaison between the city and the Roman provincial administration.

Town Clerk

- His biggest concern is likely the impression this riot would make on Roman officials.
- If Rome catches wind of how out of hand this was getting, they will lose their self-governing privileges.
- The clerk speaks logically, helping the crowd see that, from the pagan point of view, there is no real threat to Artemis, the goddess everyone knows came to them from the sky itself (he is likely referring to a meteorite).

Town Clerk

- Then he moves to the legal side of things, pointing to the fact that the Christians have done nothing illegal to the goddess or her temple.
- They have not blasphemed her, robbed the temple, or committed any type of vandalism against places of worship.
- As odd as Paul and his companions are, they are guilty of no official crime.

Town Clerk

- Finally, the clerk offers Demetrius and his fellow artisans two courses they could take if they desired further legal action.
- Then he dismisses the crowd, and the riot is over.
- Most striking is that the town clerk is a local pagan official, yet God moves him to fulfill His will for Paul and the Gospel's advancement.

History, geography, and archaeology of Corinth

Cosmopolitan City



Arch-Corinth



Sexual Immorality

Strabo claimed the city had 1,000 temple prostitutes at the temple of Aphrodite.



Commerce



Commerce



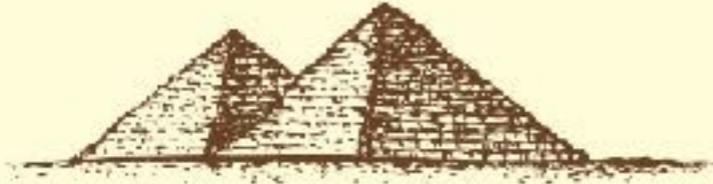
History, geography, and archaeology of Ephesus

An Important City



Temple of Artemis

7 Wonders of the Ancient World



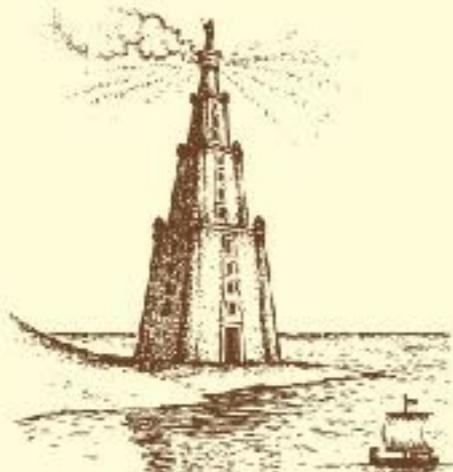
The Great Pyramid of Giza



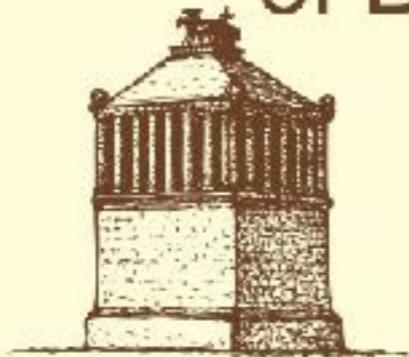
Hanging Gardens of Babylon



Temple of Artemis



Lighthouse at Alexandria



Mausoleum of Mausolus



The Statue of Zeus



Colossus of Rhodes

Temple of Artemis

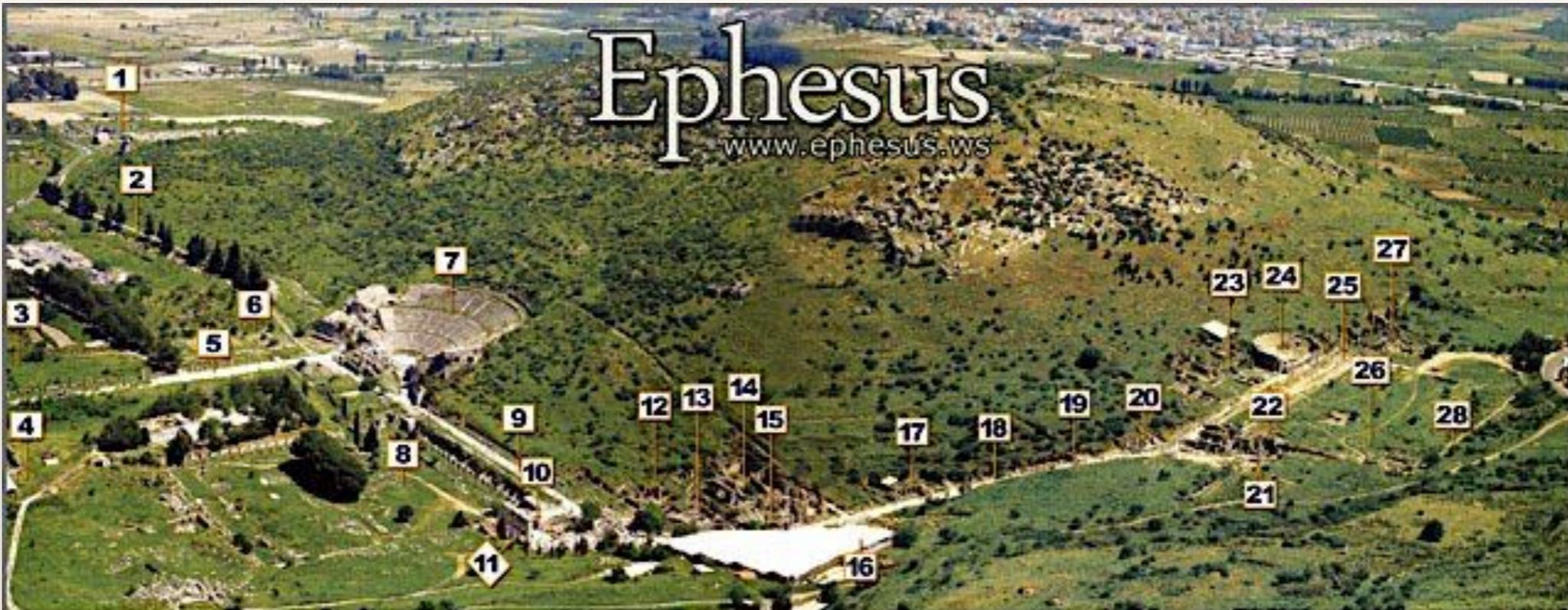


The Goddess Artemis



- The Goddess Artemis was a life-sized statue that has been discovered.
- Visitors to the city were able to purchase tiny replicas from silversmiths like Demetrius.

City of Ephesus



- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. The Stadium | 8. The Agora | 15. The Temple of Hadrian | 22. The Fountain of Pollio |
| 2. The Stadium Street | 9. The Marble Street | 16. The Houses on the Slopes | 23. Palace of Council, Prytaneion |
| 3. The Church of St. Mary | 10. Mazeus & Mithriadates Gate | 17. The Fountain of Trajan | 24. Odeon, Bouleuterion |
| 4. The Harbour Bath | 11. The Library of Celsus | 18. The Curetes Street | 25. The Basilica |
| 5. The Harbour Street | 12. The Brothel | 19. The Heracles Gate | 26. The State Agora |
| 6. The Theatre Gymnasium | 13. The Public Toilets | 20. The Memmius Monument | 27. The Varius Baths |
| 7. The Grand Theatre | 14. The Bath of Skolastica | 21. The Temple of Domitian | 28. The Water Palace |

City of Ephesus



City of Ephesus



City of Ephesus



City of Ephesus



City of Ephesus



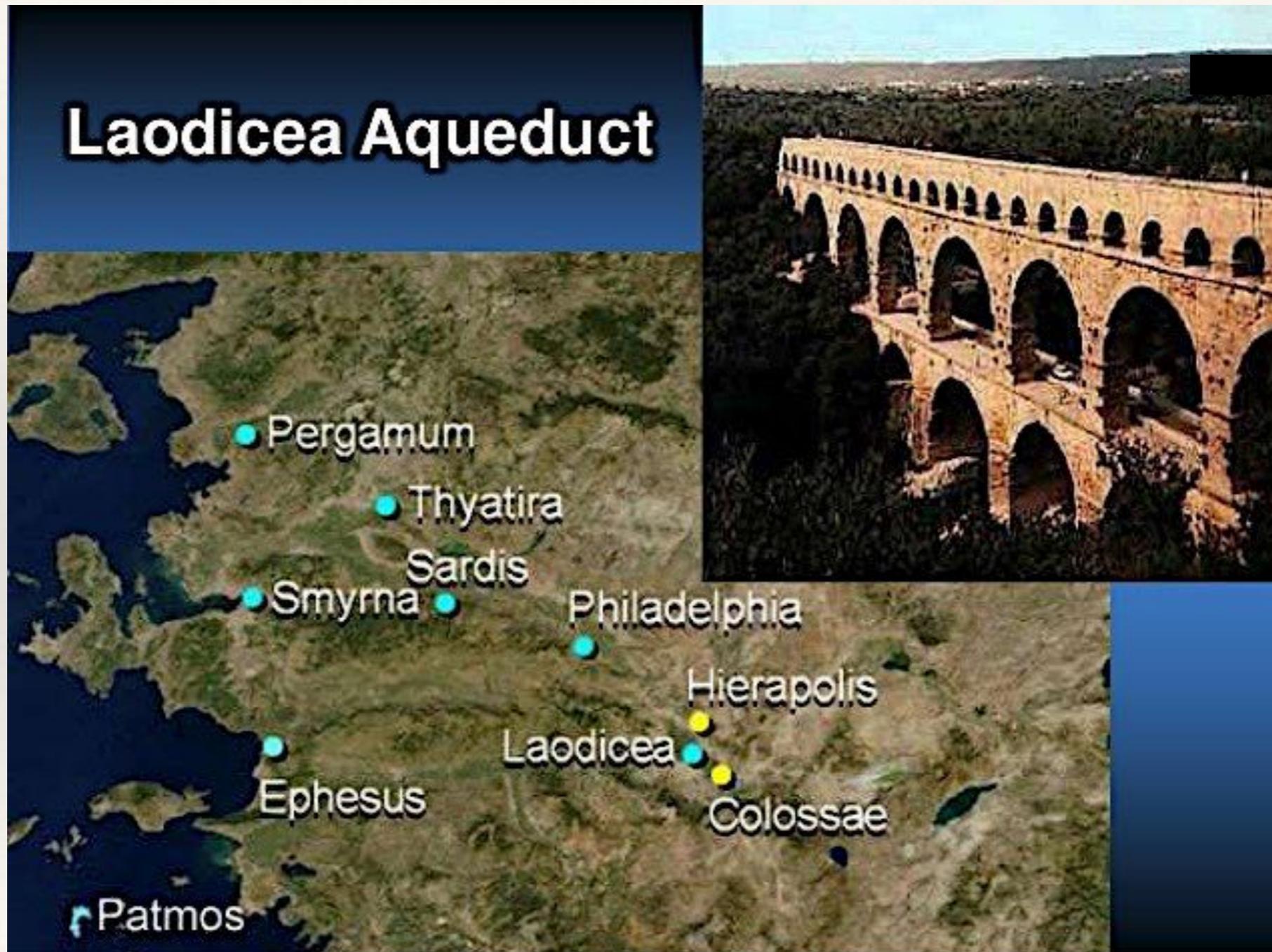
City of Ephesus



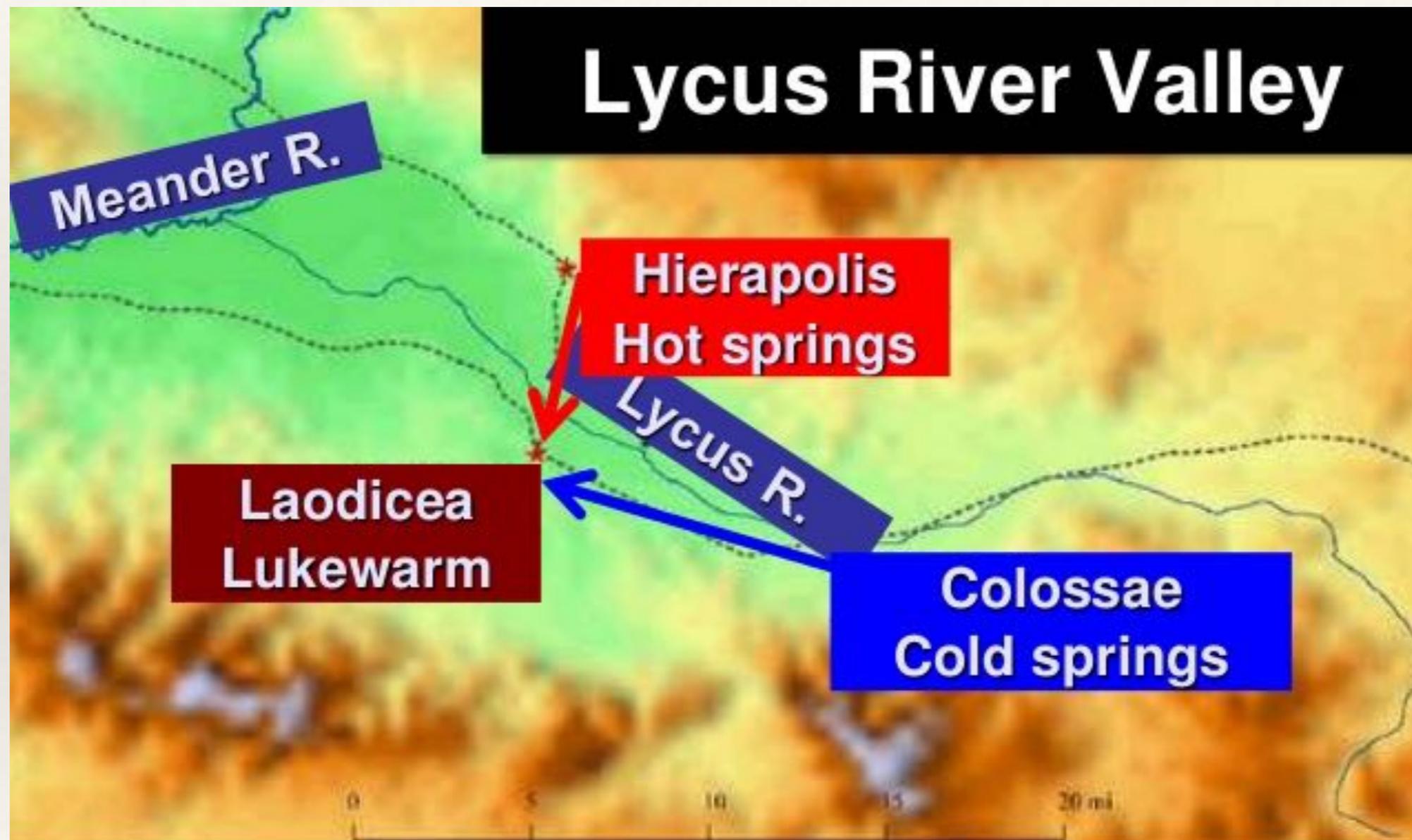
Miletus Theater



Laodicea



Laodicea



Laodicea



Laodicea's water channelled through this dual pipeline but it carried thick calcium impurities. Combined with its lukewarm temperature, it would make a visitor vomit.

Revelation 3:14-16

“To the angel of the church in Laodicea write:

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God’s creation. I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.

PETER WALKER

IN THE STEPS OF SAINT PAUL

AN ILLUSTRATED
GUIDE TO PAUL'S
JOURNEYS

