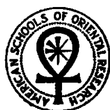
The
BIBLICAL ARCHAEOLOGIST



Published By
The American Schools of Oriental Research
(Jerusalem and Baghdad)
Drawer 93A, Yale Station, New Haven, Conn.

Vol. XIII | February, 1950 | No. 1

Fig 1 Lower Valley of the Lycus looking from Hierapolis toward the mountains of Caria, travertine deposits in the foreground (Photographs by the author reproduced by courtesy of the Zion Research Foundation Brookline Mass)

LAODICEA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

Sherman E. Johnson

Episcopal Theological School Cambridge Massachusetts

Colossae, Laodicea and Hierapolis, the three cities of the Lycus valley in Asia Minor, are mentioned only occasionally in the New Testa-

The Biblical Archaeologist is published quarterly (February, May, September, December) by the American Schools of Oriental Research. Its purpose is to meet the need for a readable, non-technical, yet thoroughly reliable account of archaeological discoveries as they are related to the Bible.

Editor: G. Ernest Wright, McCormick Theological Seminary, 2330 N. Halsted St., Chicago 14, Ill. (Only editorial correspondence should be sent to this address.)

Editorial Board: W. F. Albright, Johns Hopkins University; Millar Burrows, Yale University.

Subscription Price: $1.00 per year, payable to the **American Schools of Oriental Research, Drawer 93A, Yale Station, New Haven, Conn.** Ten or more subscriptions for group use, mailed and billed to one address, $0.50 per year for each. Subscriptions run for the calendar year. **IN ENGLAND: seven shillings, six pence per year, payable to B. H. Blackwell, Ltd., Broad St., Oxford.**

BACK NUMBERS: Available at $1 per volume, 25c per copy

Entered as second-class matter, October 2, 1942, at the Post Office at New Haven, Connecticut, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

ment. One of the Apostle Paul's letters was addressed to the church at Colossae and in it he mentions the other cities (Col. 2:1; 4:13-16). The church of Laodicea is addressed in such scathing terms in one of the letters to the seven churches (Rev. 3:14-22) that it has been a by-word ever since; yet in the fourth century Laodicea was the meeting place of an important regional council. Hierapolis, nearby, was the home of the Christian writer Papias, and here, according to tradition, the evangelist Philip (Acts 21:8 f.) spent his last days. These well-known facts do not, however, tell the whole story. The full significance of the Lycus valley for the development of early Christianity emerges only when all the relevant information from archaeology and early Christian literature is brought together.

I. THE LYCUS VALLEY AND THE ROMAN ROADS

The Maeander river (now called Menderes), which has contributed a verb to the English language, rises in the Phrygian highlands and flows into the Aegean not far from the site of ancient Miletus. More than a hundred miles east of its mouth the Maeander is joined by the Lycus (Churuk su), one of its principal tributaries. The junction is near the modern town of Seraikoi, about 12 miles from the site of Laodicea. From Ephesus, near the lower end of the Maeander valley, it is an eight hour trip by train to Denizli, the modern successor of Laodicea. The valley presents a striking aspect, with the winding and continually shifting river, the fields marked out by mud walls topped by brush and roads and ditches between the walls at a lower level than the fields. Olives, figs, grapes and broad beans grow in profusion, and stacks of licorice root are piled everywhere.

This typical vegetation of the Mediterranean littoral is gradually left behind as one ascends the Maeander. Beyond Seraikoi the railroad comes out from between two mountain ranges into the broad plain of the Lycus, which runs from southeast to northwest, a distance of about 24 miles. The Lycus valley has a maximum breadth of a little more than

1. A Philippson, **Reisen und Forschungen im westlichen Kleinasien**, IV (**Petermanns Mitteilungen**, Ergaenzungsheft Nr. 180. Gotha, 1914), pp. 85 f. This work is the finest geographical description of the region and includes a magnificent map, scale 1:300,000.

six miles, and its elevation above sea level varies from 500 to 820 feet. Highlands hem it in on the northeast; to the west is Mt. Messogis, which runs along the north side of the lower Maeander; and on the south are the great mountains Salbacus (Baba-dagh, 7590 ft.) and Cadmus (Honaz-dagh, 8250 ft.), approached by gradual steps and foothills.[1]

The Lycus valley is the meeting point of ancient Caria, Lydia and Phrygia, and it looks like the gateway that it is. On the one hand

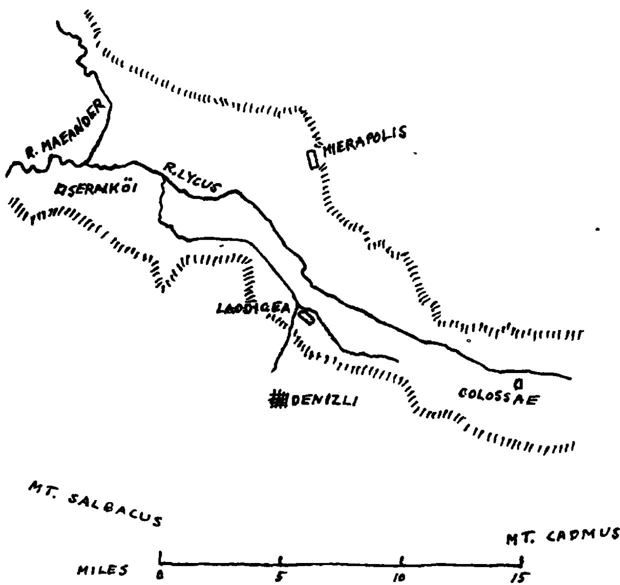


Fig. 2. Sketch Map of the Lycus Valley (after Philippson).

it is closely connected with the lowlands. The olive grows only as far east as Denizli. The region produces sesame, vegetables, fruits and almonds. Where water is plentiful there are groves of trees. But east of here trees are infrequent. The Lycus is on the edge of the steppe land, the lonely sheep country. The ravines of the upper Maeander and Lycus lead northeast and southeast into Phrygia. At the northwest end there is an easy pass over the hills, probably not more than 2000 feet high, into the Hermus valley.

The valley was accordingly the junction point of several important roads. Two main routes – now followed by the railroads – led from the Aegean coast to the Anatolian hinterland. One ran from Ephesus up the

Maeander valley, past Magnesia and Tralles, to Laodicea; then it turned southeast to follow the Lycus and went to Apamea, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Tyana, and, through the pass in the Taurus known as the Cilician gates, to Tarsus. The south gate of Laodicea was significantly called the Syrian gate. The second route eastward followed the Hermus valley from Smyrna to Sardis and Philadelphia, then ascended the Phrygian mountains in the direction of Ancyra (the modern Ankara).

Laodicea was the first and most important junction point in the system. The two main routes were connected by a road from Laodicea and Hierapolis to Tripolis and Philadelphia. In addition roads ran south over the mountains to Attalia and Perga on the Pamphylian coast, and northeast across Phrygia to Lounda and Brouzos.[2]

The exact itinerary of St. Paul's travels in Asia Minor has often been debated and probably can never be settled. According to Acts the apostle certainly passed through Phrygia on his "second" and "third" missionary journeys. The question is whether "the region of Phrygia and Galatia" (Acts 16:6) refers to two separate localities or should be translated "the Phrygian-and-Galatic region," as Sir William Ramsay thought. In the latter case the apostle may have come through the part of Phrygia which belonged to the Roman province of Galatia and did not go into Galatia proper at all.[3] The route of the so-called "second" journey is obscure, but there is a good chance that Paul went through the Lycus valley on the "third". Acts 18:23 speaks of his going through "the Galatic region and Phrygia," and in 19:1 we read that "having gone through the upper country he came down to Ephesus." Most map-makers in England and America, following Ramsay, take this to mean that Paul came west from Pisidian Antioch, just north of Hierapolis, and followed a hill road across Mt. Messogis down to Ephesus.[4] But this is an unnatural and unlikely route. The "upper country" is simply the whole hinterland of Ephesus and refers to "the Galatic region and Phrygia" of 18:23.[5] The most natural route for Paul to take from Syria would be from Tarsus through the Cilician gates to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Pisidian Antioch, Apamea, Colossae and

2. Sir William M. Ramsay, **The Historical Geography of Asia Minor** (London, 1890), pp. 35, 49, 59; M. Cary, **The Geographic Background of Greek and Roman History** (Oxford, 1949), pp. 151-64, with maps on pp. 152 and 160; W. M. Calder, "The Royal Road in Herodotus," **Classical Review**, XXXIX (1925), 7-11.

3. Sir. W. M. Ramsay, **St. Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen** (New York. 1897), pp. 104, 180 f., 210-12; E. D. Burton, **A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians** (New York, 1920), pp. xxix-xliv.

4. G. E. Wright and F. V. Filson, eds., **The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible** (Philadelphia, 1945), Plate XV. **Hammond's Atlas of the Bible Lands** (New York, n. d. (1949?) gives two choices. On Plate B 26, which gives routes for all of St. Paul's journeys, the third journey goes from Laodicea to Philadelphia, Sardis and Smyrna, while on Plate B 28 the third journey goes between the Maeander and Hermus valleys, as in the **Westminster Historical Atlas**. C. C. McCown does not commit himself to any route in **A Remapping of the Bible World** (New York, 1949), Plate 40.

5. K. Lake and H. J. Cadbury, **The Beginnings of Christianity**, IV (London, 1933), pp. 235 f.

6. Philippson, **op. cit.**, p. 96 f.; Victor Schultze, **Altchristliche Staedte und Landschaften. II. Kleinasien** (Guetersloh, 1922), pp. 445-49.

Laodicea in the Lycus valley, and down the Maeander to Ephesus. From Laodicea he may have crossed the pass to Philadelphia and so have come down the Hermus valley, but this would have been far less likely.

Ramsay and other geographers have no doubt been influenced in their choice of routes by the statement of Col. 2:1, "For I want you to know how great a conflict I have on behalf of you and those in Laodicea and as many as have not seen my face personally" (literally "in the flesh"). The Greek does not, however, compel us to suppose that the Christians of the Lycus do not know Paul personally; and even if most of them were later converts and did not know him by sight, he may well have passed through their cities on one of the journeys.

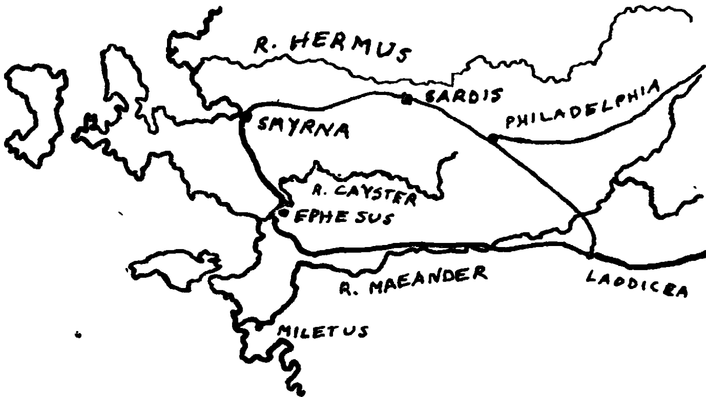


Fig. 3. Sketch Map of Roman Roads in Asia Minor (after Ramsay).

II. COLOSSAE

The site of Colossae is toward the upper end of the Lycus valley, perhaps 11 or 12 miles east and a little south of Laodicea, not far east of the Botzeli station on the railroad. The valley, less than two miles wide and walled in by great precipices, is largely covered with travertine deposits through which the river has cut its bed. The city stood on a small double hill or terrace south of the Lycus, hemmed in on two sides by streams that flowed from the snows of Mt. Cadmus.[6]

Little is known of the city's history. It was, according to Herodotus (vii. 30), a great city as early as the time of Xerxes, and Xenophon marched past it with the ten thousand (*Anabasis* i. 2. 6). In contrast to the newer towns, Laodicea and Hierapolis, it was ancient and autochthonous, i.e. populated by natives of Phrygia. Although it was a center for wool industry and dyeing, by New Testament times it had been eclipsed by its neighbors. Colossae must originally have

been of military importance, since it commanded the road eastward toward Apamea and the Cilician gates.

Coins of the city show that in the Roman period Isis and Serapis were worshipped here, together with Helios, Demeter, Selene, Artemis the huntress and the Ephesian Artemis, and the native Phrygian god Men.[7] Paul's letter to the Colossians lifts the veil a little, and discloses a church whose members were attracted toward a curious perversion of Christianity, in which Jewish and pagan elements were mingled. The letter speaks of reverence to angels (1:16; 2:15, 18), rules or scruples about foods and holy days (2:16), and some type of asceticism

Fig 4 Upper Valley of the Lycus looking from Laodicea in the direction of Colossae

(2:23; 3:5-10). If the obscure verse 2:18 refers to a pride produced by visions and revelations, it does not seem strange in a Phrygian background.

Epaphras, Paul's disciple, had been active in the evangelization of the Lycus cities (Col. 1:7 f.; 4:12 f.; Phm. 23). Buckler and Calder

---

7 Schultze **op. cit.**, p 447

8 W H Buckler and W M Calder **Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua, Vol. VI. Monuments and Documents from Phrygia and Caria** (Manchester 1939) p 1 Here and in W M Ramsay **The Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia**, Vol I (Oxford 1895) is to be found most of the important inscriptional material bearing on Colossae and Laodicea

9 Buckler and Calder **op. cit.**, p 15 The authors remark (p xi), 'To archaeological research Kolossai offers attractions similar to that of Sardis historical renown plus an accessible site completely unoccupied"

10 W J Hamilton **Researches in Asia Minor, Pontus and Armenia** (London 1842) I 509

11 Pauly-Wissowa **Enzyklopaedie**, XXIII cols 722-24 This article lists most of the important coins inscriptions and literary references relating to Laodicea

believed that they had found the name on a marble altar from Laodicea discovered at Denizli.[8] Epaphras is, of course, a shortened form of the not uncommon name Epaphroditus, and an inscription from Colossae mentions one T. Asinius Epaphroditus.[9]

Colossae was later the site of a bishopric, but the name of only one bishop is known – Epiphanius, whose metropolitan, Nunechius of Laodicea, signed the decrees of Chalcedon in 451. Some time about the year 700 the city was deserted, no doubt because of earthquakes, and the population moved to Chonai (the modern Honaz), which lies nearer the foot of Mt. Cadmus.

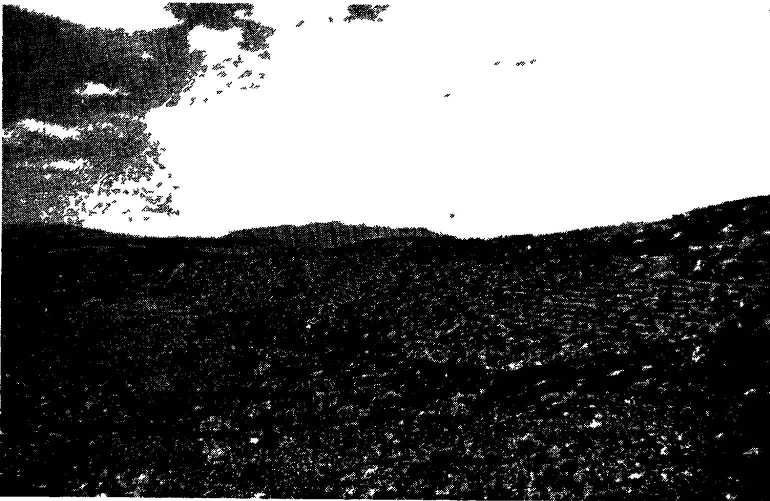


Fig 5 One of the theatres of Laodicea

When Hamilton visited the site in 1835 he saw huge blocks of stone, foundations of buildings, and fragments of cornices, architraves and columns.[10] These have since been quarried out and used for building operations in Honaz and elsewhere. Actual excavation might, however, yield interesting results because of the city's great antiquity.

III. LAODICEA

The history of Laodicea is much better known than that of Colossae and has been more fully studied. Before the Seleucid period the town had borne the names of Diospolis and Rhoas. Antiochus II refounded it about 250-240 B.C. as a military stronghold on the north border of his realm, and named it for his sister-wife Laodice.[11] Not long afterward it was able to erect with its own funds a meeting hall for its *strategoi,*

or magistrates.[12] After Laodicea passed into Roman hands as part of the province of Asia, it developed greatly in wealth and importance. Although suffering severe damage from earthquakes in the reigns of Tiberius and Nero, the city was able to rebuild without imperial or provincial help. Its chief source of wealth was the world-famous black glossy wool of the region.[13] It is not certain whether the color came from a special breed of black sheep, for which there is some evidence, or from dyes. The water of the Lycus was in any event well suited for dyeing. The wool was not woven into bolts of cloth, as in modern times, but directly into garments of the shapes and sizes required – dalmatics, *paragaudae* with purple borders, *chlamydes* or short cloaks, and the *paenulae* (II Tim. 4:13) or seamless overcoats with a hole for the head, woven to resist rain, which later became popular in Rome and finally developed into the ecclesiastical chasuble. The city was also a center for banking; in fact Cicero planned to cash drafts there on his way through Asia Minor (*ad Fam.* iii. 5).

Laodicea apparently included in its population a large colony of Jews. When the pro-praetor Flaccus seized the gold collected there for the Jerusalem temple in 62 or 61 B. C. he found that it amounted to more than twenty pounds in weight. Josephus tells of a letter sent by the Laodiceans a few years later to Gaius Rabirius, proconsul of Asia, informing him that in obedience to his command they will permit the Jews to keep the Sabbath and their sacred rites and that the Jews will be regarded as their friends and confederates (*Ant.* xiv. 10. 20) – this although the citizens of Tralles, farther down the Maeander valley, were opposed to the decree. Thus there is evidence for oppression of the Jews in this region.

Political life in the province of Asia centered in the *koinon* or council of the province, one of the chief functions of which was maintenance of the worship of the emperor. The imperial cultus was introduced early into Laodicea, and the city proudly participated in the *koinon*. The coins bear witness to several treaties of *homonoia* or friendship between Laodicea and other cities of the province such as Smyrna, Pergamum and Ephesus. But there is no evidence that the city received the honor of *neokoros* or temple-keeper of the imperial cult, on which

12. Buckler and Calder, **op. cit.**, p. x.

13. Buckler and Calder, **Ibid.**, p. 11, publish an inscription which seems to refer to a guild of graziers in Laodicea. There was a similar organization at Hierapolis.

14. Acts 19:35 refers to Ephesus as **neokoros** of Artemis; the worship of the local goddess and the emperor was, however, closely intertwined.

15. Ramsay, **Cities and Bishoprics**, pp. 51-55; **The Letters to the Seven Churches** (New York. 1904), pp. 417-19. By the year 150, joint worship of Zeus Laodicenus and the emperor had been established.

16. E. J. Goodspeed, **An Introduction to the New Testament** (Chicago, 1937), pp. 109-24, adopts and develops the earlier theory of K. G. Wieseler. It ought also to be remembered that the second-century heretic Marcion regarded the epistle to the Ephesians as a letter to the Laodiceans. Ernst Percy, **Die Probleme der Kolosser- und Epheserbriefe** (Lund, 1946), pp. 451-58, identifies the "letter from Laodicea" of Col. 4:16 as Ephesians, and believes that it was originally sent to several churches in inner Asia Minor.

Ephesus prided itself (Acts 19:35), before the reign of Commodus.[14] Other gods worshipped in Laodicea were Zeus Laodicenus (perhaps a native Phrygian god later Hellenized), a goddess, who figures rather little on coins, and Asclepius. The last-named may have been identified with Men Karou, a healing deity whose temple was at Attouda, a few miles to the west. The famous medical school of Laodicea may have been under his aegis.[15]

The names of a number of famous Laodiceans of the period from 100 B. C. to 200 A. D. are known to us. Most of them were members of the family of Zenon, the orator who encouraged the people to defend their city when the Parthians under Labienus and Pacorus invaded Asia

Fig 6 The travertine deposits of Hierapolis

Minor. Zenon's son became king of Lycaonia, Pontus and part of Cilicia in the first century B. C. M. Antonius Polemo, a noted literary figure who lived about 90-146 A. D., belonged to this family. The city produced a few intellectuals such as the skeptics Antiochus and Theiodas of the school of Zeuxis (*Diogenes Laertius,* ix. 116). But Laodicea does not appear to have been particularly distinguished as a center of culture. It was rather a bustling, ambitious mercantile center, loyal to the empire, proudly situated at the road-junction, on the very edge of the barbarian highlands.

Christianity spread to Laodicea within a generation of Jesus' death, as we know from the letter to the Colossians. It is an attractive hypothesis that Paul addressed the little letter to Philemon to the Laodicean church, and intended it to be sent on to Colossae and read there also.[16]

It was a natural place for a wealthy slave-owner to live. Lightfoot remarks that the name Philemon, though borne by a famous Phrygian, that husband of Baucis who offered hospitality to Zeus, is not distinctively Phrygian, and that while it is found in inscriptions of the country, it does not occur with any special frequency.[17] But Ramsay publishes an inscription from Laodicea, evidently erected by a freedman to one Marcus Sestius Philemon.[18] While it would be fanciful to identify this with our Philemon, it is clear that the city had at least one prominent citizen of this name who owned slaves. The Apphia of Phm. 2 is usually taken to be Philemon's wife. The masculine form of this Phrygian name, Apphios or Apphianos, is attested from Hierapolis.[19] One is even tempted to wonder if Luke the physician, who joins in the salutations (Phm. 24, Col. 4:14), and who may or may not be the author of Luke-Acts, did not at one time study medicine at the Laodicean school.[20]

In the last decade of the first century, when the Book of Revelation was written, the Laodicean church was reproved by the prophet John: it was neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm; it boasted that it was rich and in need of nothing, not knowing that it was poor, blind and naked; therefore let it buy of the risen Christ gold refined by fire, white garments and salve for the blind eyes (Rev. 3:14-22). Sir William Ramsay saw local references in this – Laodicea was rich, famous for its garments, and perhaps the "Phrygian powder" for diseases of the eyes was compounded here.[21] One might go on in the same vein and suppose that the city water of Laodicea was literally lukewarm. This has been suggested by commentators,[22] and it is not impossible. One of the few remaining monuments of the city is the water tower, the terra cotta pipes of which are completely choked by lime deposits. The water came, not from Hierapolis, but from the south, first by aqueduct and then, nearer the city, through stone barrel pipes.[23] All of this was seen by Hamilton more than a hundred years ago, but the stones have since disappeared, along with most of the other ruins of Laodicea – some of them un-

---

17 J B Lightfoot **Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon**, 3rd ed (London, 1879), p 302

18 Ramsay, **Cities and Bishoprics**, p 72

19 **Ibid.**, p 88, Lightfoot, **op. cit.**, p 305

20 The school was established by Zeuxis and later carried on by Alexander Philalethes of Laodicea (Strabo xii 8 20) I must make it clear that this suggestion, like some of Sir William Ramsay, is no more than guess-work

21 **Cities and Bishoprics**, pp 39 f , 52, **Letters to the Seven Churches**, pp 428 f

22 H B Swete, **The Apocalypse of St. John**, 3rd ed (London, 1907), saw in the statement of Rev 3 16 an illusion to the water of Hierapolis, which becomes lukewarm by the time it has fallen over the cliff "The allusion is the more apposite since the letter for Laodicea was practically addressed to the other Churches of the Lycus valley" Unfortunately a later commentator speaks of these springs as becoming lukwarm by the time they reach Laodicea and form a waterfall'

23 Hamilton, **op. cit.**, p 515

24 Th Zahn **Geschichte des neutestamentliche Kanons** (Erlangen, 1890), II, 193-202 An English translation of the canon, is given in C J Hefele, **A History of the Councils of the Church** (Edinburgh 1876), II, 295-325 together with comments

fortunately used by the builders of the railroad. The water may have come from hot springs, of which there are many in the neighborhood, and have been cooled down to lukewarmness; but even if it was originally cold, the heat of the sun no doubt warmed it until it was flat and unpalatable.

Eusebius tells of a paschal controversy in Laodicea about 164-166 (*H. E.* iv. 26. 3), and about this time its bishop Sagaris, who bore a Phrygian name, was martyred (v. 24. 5). As the seat of the metropolitan of the neighborhood, the city was important ecclesiastically. The synod of Laodicea, held in 367, though only a regional council, is highly sig-

Fig 7 View from upper tiers of the Hierapolis theater looking toward Laodicea The baths are on the extreme right of the picture ruins of a basilica are to the left of the baths

nificant for the history of the New Testament canon and for the development of church law generally.[24] The council's stringent measures against Montanist and Quartodeciman Christians, and its rules for worship, exhibit the final triumph of orthodox uniformity over local Phrygian pecularities. It is striking that the council's list of 26 canonical New Testament books omits the Book of Revelation, even though it had been written not far away and must have profoundly influenced Christian thought in Asia Minor. The council was evidently controlled, not by local sentiment, but by the consensus of opinion of the church in the eastern Mediterranean. Laodicea continued to be an important city until the Seljuk period; then, in the fourteenth century, it was abandoned, and Denizli took its place.

The site is a little hill or plateau, about a square mile in area, lying between two small tributaries of the Lycus. In almost every direction high mountains are visible, snow-capped through much of the year, and the white travertine deposits of Hierapolis are plainly to be seen, six miles away, with the broad expanse of the Lycus valley in the foreground. Two theaters, of uncertain date, are still to be seen; so are the baths (or gymnasium), and blocks of stone from the eastern gate, as well as the stadium, which was probably dedicated in 79 A. D.

IV. HIERAPOLIS

Hierapolis was a place well fitted to excite the imagination of the ancients. The Charonion, a cave filled with deadly fumes, now no longer identifiable, and the hot springs – not unlike the Mammoth Hot Springs of Yellowstone – were no doubt from earliest times sacred to nature divinities. The town stood on a terrace a mile and a third long and several hundred yards wide, from which a precipitous cliff drops down toward the Lycus plain. In the sunlight the cliff, over which several streams flow, is blinding white, though streaked here and there with yellow and black, and its appearance is that of a frozen waterfall.

On reaching the top of the terrace, which has an elevation of 1296 ft., as compared with 732 ft. for the bridge across the Lycus river below, one sees reddish-brown stone buildings of the Roman period surrounded by grassy pasture, and behind them a pool in the middle of the terrace, hemmed about with oleander bushes, from which the streams flow to the cliff. The temperature of the pool is 95° F. The waters are milky from tertiary marl and contain carbonates, sulphates and chlorides of calcium and sodium. The flow has been estimated at 10.000 gallons per minute, and about 26 cubic yards of deposit is laid down daily. It is estimated that the lower courses of the buildings are covered to a depth of at least six feet with this deposit.[25]

Hierapolis probably took its name from a mythical Amazon queen Hiera, and thus does not originally mean "holy city." The name may have been given by the Pergamene kings. The area was under Seleucid control in the third century B. C., but after 190 B. C. it came under Pergamum and the city may have been built up by Eumenes II as a defense against Laodicea. Shortly after 190 an inscription, which is the first evidence of Hierapolis' existence, calls it a city, and coins begin to appear. It became part of the Roman empire in 133 B. C.[26] Wool, metal working and stone cutting industries were developed.[27] The stones of the baths are beautifully cut and joined.

25. Philippson, **op. cit.**, pp. 68 f.; F. Akçakoca Akca, **Pamukkale Sulari**, 2nd ed. (Denizli, 1946). The local name is Pamukkale ("cotton castle").

26. Carl Humann, Conrad Cichorius and others, **Altertuemer von Hierapolis (Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archaeologischen Instituts**, Ergaenzungsheft IV, Berlin, 1898), pp. 22-27.

27. Schultze, **op. cit.**, p. 413.

We have a continuous series of coins of Hierapolis from the time of Augustus to the early years of Nero's reign, when the coins stop abruptly. The city was extensively destroyed by an earthquake in A. D. 60, and only in the middle of Trajan's reign, fifty years later, do a few types of coins begin again to appear. Thus Hierapolis is just being restored to normal life and wealth at the time when we hear of famous Christians, like Philip the Evangelist and Papias, as residents of the place. Its prosperity was broken now and again by later earthquakes, but a Hierapolitan, the sophist Antipater, was secretary to Septimius Severus and tutor of his sons, Geta and Caracalla Caracalla

Fig 8 North side of Hierapolis theatre

seems to have honored the city with the neocorate. Hierapolis was a flourishing episcopal see in Byzantine times, and finally became the seat of a metropolitan. Some time in the middle ages it was ruined and finally deserted.

When Denizli was built, Laodicea served as the principal quarry, and Hierapolis, being farther away, was spared the extensive depredation suffered by its neighbor.

Two theaters are still to be seen — the smaller one, which belongs to the Hellenistic age, and the Roman theater on the side of the hill at the east edge of the city, which is one of the most impressive archaeological remains of Asia Minor. Though not to be compared with the vast theater at Pergamum, it has a front width of more than 325 ft.

and an orchestra measuring about 65 ft. in diameter, and it overlooks the city and the Lycus valley. Most of the seats remain, and some stones of the scene building are still in place.

On the west side of the city, at the edge of the cliff, the baths cover a large area. Some of the great arches are still standing, with a width of as much as 52 ft. and containing stones as large as 78 in. by 35 in. by 28 in., laid without mortar. Next to the baths are the monolithic pillars of what appears to be a gymnasium, and to the northeast of this, and east of the present pool, is what Humann called the statuary hall because he believed that the niches in the walls had held statues of emperors.[28] Some of these buildings are dated by archaeologists about 100 A. D.

Hierapolis was apparently laid out all at one time, and in typical Hellenistic fashion, with a great street running the length of the city, from southeast to northwest, with covered sidewalks on either side, and cross streets at right angles. Along this street are numerous tombs, of no particular artistic interest, and a large cemetery lies beyond the north gate.

The original colonists of Hierapolis were no doubt Greeks of Macedonian and Pergamene origin. Many Romans settled there, and in all probability native Phrygians were absorbed into the population. This is confirmed by what we know of the local religions. Apollo Archegetes, to whom one of the theaters was dedicated, and who had a temple next to the Charonion, was identified with the native god Lairbenos. Leto, or Cybele, was served by eunuch priests, who – it was believed – alone knew how to go through the fumes of the Charonion with safety. The healing deities Asclepius and Hygeia were also worshipped, along with Pluto, Men, Isis, and many others. The imperial cult is known at least from the time of Caracalla on.[29]

The next largest community was Jewish. Inscriptions speak of "the people of the Jews," "the settlement of the Jews who dwell in Hierapolis," and "the archives of the Jews." P. Aelius Glycon directs that his grave shall be decorated annually on the feast of Unleavened Bread and Pentecost.[30] In the course of time these Jews disappeared, no doubt by absorption into the Christian church. The Talmud preserves a memory of this in a saying which no doubt alludes to Hierapolis: "The wines and the baths of Phrygia have separated the ten tribes from Israel" (*T. Bab. Shabbath* 147b).

Perhaps the most famous man that Hierapolis ever produced was Epictetus, a younger contemporary of the Christian Onesimus, and like

28. Humann, op. cit., pp. 12 f.
29. Strabo xiii. 4. 14; Humann, op. cit., pp. 42-44.
30. Humann, Ibid., Inscriptions 69, 212, 342.

him a slave. Epictetus knew relatively little about Christianity, which must have come to the Lycus valley when he was a child. It is significant that at one point when he speaks of Jews he may actually mean Christians. "Whenever we see a man wavering," he says, "we are accustomed to say, 'He is not a Jew but is pretending to be one.' But when he adopts the inward disposition of the man who has been baptized and made a decision, then he is really one and is called a Jew" (ii. 9. 20). Baptism was the initiatory rite of both Jews and Christians, and some of those who were known to the Colossian Christians were certainly Jews — Mark, Barnabas, Jesus Justus, and perhaps some others.

According to the tradition handed down by Polycrates of Ephesus, Philip the Evangelist spent the latter part of his life in Hierapolis. Poly-

Fig 9 Gymnasium with monolithic pillars Hierapolis

crates and later tradition make no distinction between the Evangelist and the Apostle (Eusebius *H. E.* iii. 31. 3), although the Philip of Acts 21:8 f. who had four daughters is there called an evangelist and one of the Seven. Philip no doubt belonged to the Jewish community; on the other hand, his four daughters were prophetesses, and there were women prophets in Phrygia at a later time. An inscription refers to a church in Hierapolis built in Philip's honor: "Eugenius the least, archdeacon who is in charge of [the church of] the holy and glorious apostle and theologian Philip." At least four Christian churches can be identified in Hierapolis. Cichorius refers this inscription to a great basilica which stands outside the city in the older part of the necropolis.

He suggests that the church was erected on what was believed to be the location of the saint's tomb.[31] Victor Schultze was, however, inclined to identify Eugenius' church with an octagonal building east of the city in another cemetery. This he assigned to the end of the fourth or the beginning of the fifth century. The octagonal form was usual in the fourth century for memorial churches, and the dimensions (28½ ft. for each of the eight sides; diameter 69 ft.) are comparable to those of the octagon in Constantine's church at Bethlehem.[32] If this building was not a baptistery, it was almost certainly a *martyrium.*

The most prominent and enigmatic Christian figure of the city was Papias, author of the *Exposition of the Oracles of the Lord* in five books. He commented on some of the materials of the gospels, but apparently all that he says about the gospels is for the purpose of depreciating them,[33] for he much preferred the "living and abiding voice" of oral tradition to any written gospels. He was essentially an antiquarian, intensely interested in anything that "elders" or Christians of an older generation could tell him, and an avid collector of prophecies, the more fantastic the better. Perhaps he was a native of the old Phrygian stock. His name, well known from inscriptions and coins, was an epithet of Zeus, and when applied to a mortal might correspond to "Diogenes." Yet a contemporary rabbi, known to us from the Mishnah, bore what is apparently the same name.[34]

We have already noted that Paul in writing to the Colossians denounced the worship of angels. Papias also refers to the angels, saying, "To some of them he [i. e. God] gave charge over the affairs of the earth and he ordered them to rule well. . . . But their order ended in nothing."[35] Papias was either affected by speculations on the role of angels, or wished to warn his Christian neighbors that angels are subordinate beings who sometimes have sinned, who must not be given the reverence due to Christ alone. Canon 35 of the Council of Laodicea forbids the worship of angels. It may not be by accident that the Book of Revelation, despite the immense part that angels play in it, contains a similar warning: When John fell down before the angel to worship him, the latter forbade it, saying, "I am thy fellow servant, . . . worship God" (Rev. 22:8-9).

31. Cichorius in Humann, **op. cit.**, pp. 46 f.; Inscription 24. Several white lambs were penned up in one corner of the church when we visited it on March 14, 1948.

32. Schultze, **op. cit.**, pp. 430 f.; J. W. Crowfoot, **Early Churches in Palestine** (London, 1941), pp. 18, 22-30; Andre Grabar, "Christian Architecture, East and West," **Archaeology**, II (1949) 95-104.

33. I owe this suggestion to my colleague, Prof. Charles H. Buck, Jr.

34. Lightfoot, **op. cit.**, p. 48; Shekalim 4:7; Eduyoth 7:6; R. M. Grant, "Papias and the Gospels," **Anglican Theological Review**, XXV (1943), 218-22.

35. Andrew of Caesarea **in Apoc.** 34, 12; R. M. Grant, **Second-Century Christianity** (London, 1946), p. 68.

36. Irenaeus v. 33. 3 f.; Grant, **Ibid.**, pp. 66 f.

37. Lightfoot, **op. cit.**, pp. 94 f.; S. E. Johnson, **Journal of Near Eastern Studies**, V (1946), 52, and literature cited there.

A full study of Christianity in the Lycus valley would have to take account of later Montanism in Phrygian and the religious situation in the churches of the lower Maeander valley. One point may be mentioned here in passing.

Papias' absorbing interest was in the literal coming of a messianic age, in which grain and wine would be produced in miraculous plenty.[36] A generation or less before his book was written, apocalyptic had appeared at the other end of the Maeander valley; the prophet John saw the visions of the Book of Revelation on the island of Patmos, not far from Miletus. These are two types of apocalyptic. A third is seen in the fourth book of the Sibylline Oracles, which must be dated in

Fig 10 Basilica on the east side of the main street of Hierapolis possibly a church dedicated to St Philip bearing the Chi Rho monogram

A. D. 81 and was almost certainly written in the Maeander valley or not far from it.[37] It is not clear whether the book is Jewish or Christian. As in Epictetus, so in this oracle, baptism is the outer mark of the convert to Judaism; not a word is said about circumcision. One is tempted to think of those disciples whom Paul met at Ephesus a generation earlier (Acts 19:1-5), who knew nothing of the gift of the Holy Spirit but had received the baptism of John. It should be remembered that Judaism and Christianity were not yet completely distinct religions. Many people must still have had a "dual membership" as late as the time of the Fourth Gospel, when believers in Christ were being excommunicated from the synagogues (John 9:22, 34; 16:1). And

what are we to think of Rev. 2:9, which speaks of those in Philadelphia who say they are Jews but lie – for they belong to the synagogue of Satan? Finally, when Ignatius of Antioch writes to the church at Magnesia on the Maeander, early in the second century, he devotes most of his letter to the danger of relapse into Judaism. When the Council of Laodicea met in the late fourth century, there was probably not much danger that Christians would actually embrace Judaism, but there may have been some sabbath-keeping, for Canon 29 of the council reads: "Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday, but shall work on that day."

It appears, then, that the Christianity of Laodicea and its neighbors were subjected to various sorts of influences – Jewish, pagan, apocalyptic, prophetic, perhaps even gnostic – and went through many vicissitudes in the first two centuries. Jewish and Christian preachers of different and dynamic personalities left their mark on the churches of the Lycus valley in this formative period. Since these cities were on the main highway, this is to be expected. Further archaeological discovery, it is hoped, may some day provide us with a clearer picture of Christianity in this region.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

CHANGES AFFECTING MEMBERSHIPS AND PERIODICALS OF THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ORIENTAL RESEARCH

Changing times and conditions have made necessary certain changes in our administration of memberships and in the prices of certain of our publications. These changes were discussed by the Trustees in April and were approved by the Corporation of the Schools at its meeting in Cincinnati on December 28, 1949. We believe that ultimately they will make both memberships and publications of greater value to all concerned.

Effective July 1, 1950 all members of the American Schools (Associate, Contributing, Sustaining, Life Members, Patrons and Corporation Members) will receive the *Biblical Archaeologist* without further charge as part of their return for the payment of membership dues.

For non-members the subscription price of the *Biblical Archaeologist,* which has remained unchanged since 1938 when it began as a four-page, photo-offset leaflet, will be raised to $1.00 per year, effective January 1, 1950. This is to meet the rising cost of printing and to permit the Editor to maintain the periodical at its high standard of excellence and interest.

Copyright and Use:

As an ATLAS user, you may print, download, or send articles for individual use according to fair use as defined by U.S. and international copyright law and as otherwise authorized under your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement.

No content may be copied or emailed to multiple sites or publicly posted without the copyright holder(s)' express written permission. Any use, decompiling, reproduction, or distribution of this journal in excess of fair use provisions may be a violation of copyright law.

This journal is made available to you through the ATLAS collection with permission from the copyright holder(s). The copyright holder for an entire issue of a journal typically is the journal owner, who also may own the copyright in each article. However, for certain articles, the author of the article may maintain the copyright in the article. Please contact the copyright holder(s) to request permission to use an article or specific work for any use not covered by the fair use provisions of the copyright laws or covered by your respective ATLAS subscriber agreement. For information regarding the copyright holder(s), please refer to the copyright information in the journal, if available, or contact ATLA to request contact information for the copyright holder(s).

About ATLAS:

The ATLA Serials (ATLAS®) collection contains electronic versions of previously published religion and theology journals reproduced with permission. The ATLAS collection is owned and managed by the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) and received initial funding from Lilly Endowment Inc.

The design and final form of this electronic document is the property of the American Theological Library Association.