

# Ephesians

Ephesians presents the church as a reconciled people in Christ, especially the joining of Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity.



**Interpretive reconstruction.** The scene visualizes the Paul-and-Tychicus setting presented by the letter without choosing a prison city or deciding the authorship question.

**Date · Confidence: Inferred**  
c. AD 60–62

Rome, Caesarea, and Ephesus have all been proposed, and the destination “in Ephesus” is itself textually uncertain in some early witnesses.

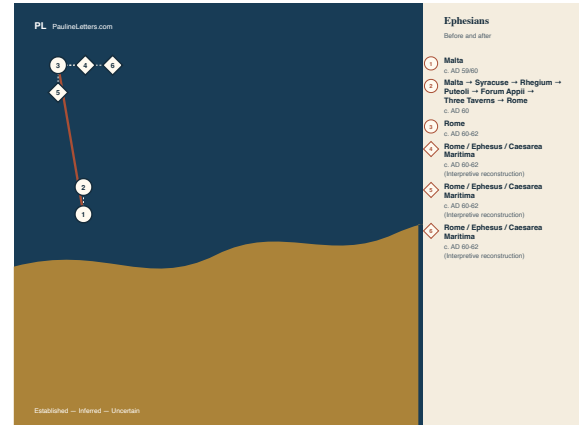
**Place · Confidence: Inferred**

Traditionally Rome (authorship and setting debated)

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## Before and after

- 1 **c. AD 59/60** The storm and shipwreck; all 276 survive; the snakebite; healings on Malta.  
Malta · Established
- 2 **c. AD 60** From Malta to Italy and up the Appian Way to Rome; the brothers meet him.  
Malta → Syracuse → Rhegium → Puteoli → Forum Appii → Three Taverns → Rome · Established
- 3 **c. AD 60–62** Acts ends with Paul in Rome under house arrest. The prison-letter placements traditionally associated with this period are reconstructions, not claims made by Acts.  
Rome · Established
- 4 **c. AD 60–62** Philemon says that Paul is sending Onesimus back to Philemon. Overlapping names with Colossians suggest a connection but do not establish a shared delivery, completed route, or prison city.  
· Inferred
- 5 **c. AD 60–62** Ephesians presents union with Christ and Jew–Gentile unity. Direct Pauline authorship, destination, and prison setting are debated.  
· Inferred
- 6 **c. AD 60–62** Philippians presents imprisonment as advancing the gospel and includes the Christ hymn. The prison city is debated.  
· Inferred



## What the text establishes

### Established

Ephesians presents the church as a reconciled people in Christ, especially the joining of Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity.

The intended readers are predominantly Gentile believers who are taught to understand their new shared life with Israel in Christ.

### Leading reconstruction

The traditional reconstruction shown here places Ephesians in Rome around AD 60–62 and compares it with Acts’ Roman house arrest.

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### Other credible readings

Many scholars attribute Ephesians to a close Pauline associate who extends and develops themes found in the undisputed letters.

The absence of “in Ephesus” from some early witnesses supports reading Ephesians as a circular letter for several communities.

## A ten-minute teaching plan

1. Ephesians presents the church as a reconciled people in Christ, especially the joining of Jews and Gentiles into one new humanity.
2. The traditional placement comes after arrival in Rome and sits near Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians in the prison-letter cluster.
3. The traditional reconstruction shown here places Ephesians in Rome around AD 60–62 and compares it with Acts’ Roman house arrest.
4. Many scholars attribute Ephesians to a close Pauline associate who extends and develops themes found in the undisputed letters.

## Primary texts

Romans through Philemon, World English Bible (public domain).

Acts 7–28, World English Bible (public domain).

## Sources

Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (Doubleday, 1997). — Chapter 28, “Epistle (Letter) to the Ephesians,” “General Analysis of the Message”  
Brown surveys the letter’s argument and broad pastoral address.

Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford University Press, 1996). — Chapter 1, “The Chronological Framework,” “The Evidence from the Pauline Letters” and “The Evidence from the Acts of the Apostles”

Murphy-O’Connor explains why chronology must weigh the letters and Acts without treating either as a complete timetable.

Scripture references only; no protected Scripture body is included.