

Colossae

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In the Greek the word is KOLOSSAI, and is defined as “punishment.” The city was situated on the Lycus River in Phrygia. From its inception, the city was important according to Herodotus and Xenophon. Xerxes halted at Colossae in 481 BC. And Cyrus the Younger passed through it in 401 BC.

It is apparent that the Apostle Paul never visited Colossae in person. The church’s place there was due to Epaphras and Timothy, according to Colossians 1:17, and the church in Colossae was located in the home of Philemon, and Epaphras was the Pastor. Documentation that a church was established in Colossae is found in Colossians 4:12,13; Revelation 1:11; 3:14.

Colossae was the home of many Jews, and the major industry in Colossae revolved around collossinus, a type of wool which was purple in color. The

religious trend in the city was Gnosticism, and it was this problem that prompted the writing of the Colossians Epistle by the Apostle Paul.

In the 7th and 8th centuries Colossae was occupied by the Saracens, who were a North Arabian Muslim tribe. In the 12th century, the Turks destroyed the city. The ruins of the city have been excavated. During the Middle Ages the city was known as Chonae and is presently called Chonas.

Phrygia was called Asia Minor by the Romans. For purposes of administration the Romans divided Phrygia into two parts: the northeastern portion to the Galatian Province, the western part to the Province of Asia. Under the Romans, grapes were cultivated extensively in the area, and Phrygian marble was quarried. And from this area originated the ‘Phrygian Cap,’ which was a cloth head-covering adopted by freed-slaves during Roman rule; it was a symbol of emancipation.