



WORKSHEET

Ancient: Episode 7

East Meets West

Quote

“Let us, therefore, forsake the vanity of the crowd and their false teachings, and turn back to the word delivered to us from the beginning.”
(Polycarp)

Summary

In this episode, we trek across Asia Minor to unearth the roots of Western Civilization. We begin by unraveling the history and archeology of the ancient city of Smyrna on the shore of the Aegean Sea. We meet a man named Polycarp whose martyrdom left an indelible mark on Christian history. We walk the ruins of Sardis and study the Apostle John’s compelling message to the city’s inhabitants, as preserved in the Book of Revelation.

Discussion Questions

1. List some items that originated in Turkey.

2. Why was ancient Smyrna powerful as a city?

3. What was the Royal Road and why was it significant to travel and trade?

4. Who rebuilt the city of Smyrna? Who then developed it further?

5. What high-ranking person was worshipped as a god in the Roman Empire?
What consequence did this have on Jews and Christians?

6. Who was Polycarp? Describe his life, death, and significance in the history of Christianity.

Suggested Reading

Cyrus' Defeat of Croesus

Side Road

The Book of Revelation is the final book of the Bible's New Testament. It was recorded by the Apostle John on the island of Patmos, as a series of visions he received from Jesus Christ. As part of Revelation, John delivered seven letters to seven actual churches in Asia Province of the first century AD. The term "church" referred to groups of Christians living in and around each of the following cities: Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7), Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11), Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17), Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29), Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6), Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13), and Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22). Remarkably, archaeological ruins of all seven of these ancient cities have been uncovered in present-day Turkey. Through John's writing of Revelation, Jesus aimed to encourage his followers to remain faithful and courageous in the midst of the chaos and persecution of the period. Some of the warnings and rebukes in Revelation are difficult to read, but probably still apply to many Christian churches today.