

1 Corinthians 16:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost.

Analysis

But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost—Paul remained in Ephesus, his ministry base during his third missionary journey, until the Jewish feast of Pentecost (May/June), approximately 50 days after Passover. This time reference suggests Paul wrote 1 Corinthians in the spring, likely AD 54. The mention of Pentecost may indicate Paul hoped to observe it in Jerusalem, maintaining Jewish festival practices despite his Gentile mission (Acts 20:16 shows similar concern).

Ephesus was Asia Minor's most important city, a commercial hub and center of Artemis worship. Paul's ministry there lasted approximately three years (Acts 20:31), producing explosive church growth but also violent opposition, culminating in the riot of the silversmiths (Acts 19:23-41). Despite danger, Paul saw strategic value in remaining.

Historical Context

Ephesus, with a population of perhaps 250,000, ranked among the Roman Empire's greatest cities. The temple of Artemis (Diana) was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Paul's teaching devastated the idol-making industry (Acts 19:26-27), creating economic and religious opposition. His decision to remain until Pentecost despite threats demonstrates missionary courage.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What made Ephesus worth staying in despite the dangers Paul faced there?
2. How do you balance strategic ministry opportunity with personal safety concerns?
3. Does Paul's observance of Jewish festivals like Pentecost after conversion suggest continuity with his Jewish heritage?

Interlinear Text

ἐπιμενῶ	δὲ	ἐν	Ἐφέσω	ἕως	τῆς	πεντηκοστῆς·
I will tarry	But	at	Ephesus	until	^{G3588}	Pentecost
G1961	G1161	G1722	G2181	G2193		G4005

Additional Cross-References

Acts 2:1 (Parallel theme): And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Exodus 23:16 (Parallel theme): And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field.