

# THE LIGHTHOUSE OF ALEXANDRIA

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# The beginnings

- The building of the house began in 280 BCE and took approximately 33 years to complete. It took twice the expense used in building Parthenon (which used to be a temple) at Athenian Acropolis in Greece.
- The then ruler used slave labor to get the construction complete. It was constructed in three phases and stood more than 300 feet tall when the work was done.
- The house was completed when Ptolemy's son (the 1<sup>st</sup>) was in the ruling. Some historians believe that the builders completed the house in 283 BC when Ptolemy's son was holding a festival to honor his parents.
- The son, whose name was Ptolemy Philadelphus, commissioned the house. It was among the tallest man-made tower for many centuries.



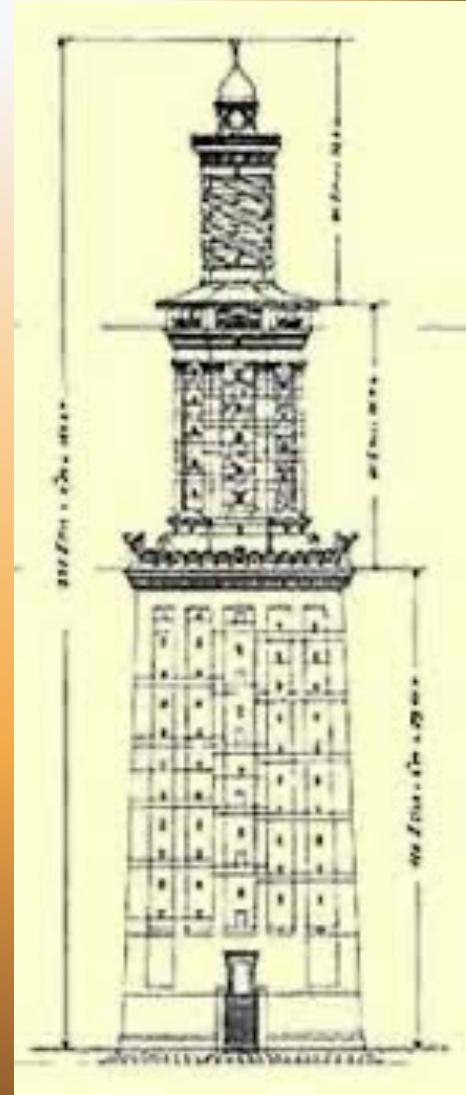
# The purpose of Alexandria's Lighthouse

- ❖ According to historians, the building of the structure was important to the locals. It ensured that the sailors returned to the Great Harbor safely while crossing the Mediterranean Sea.
- ❖ It was used as the sun during the day, and as a fire at night to guide the ships safely into the harbor. A reflective mirror on the very top of the tower would reflect the sunlight and guide the shipmen.
- ❖ Scientists found it a fascinating mystery. It was so necessary and impressive that it became one of the ancient world's seven wonders. It stood at its height until it was damaged by strong regular earthquakes. After the damage to this tower, Sultan Qayetbay made the site his coastal defenses and then later built his castle there.



# The Destruction of the Lighthouse

- A part of the Lighthouse was damaged when two earthquakes struck the area in 796 and 951. It was still standing until three more earthquakes followed in 1303 and 1323 and destroyed it.
- Historians believe that the earthquake that originated on Greece Island of Crete in 1303 was the most destructive.
- The remains from the destruction disappeared in 1480 after Quatbay ordered men to build a medieval fort in the place of the Lighthouse.



# The rediscovery of one of the 7<sup>th</sup> wonders of the world

- UNESCO sponsored an archaeological expedition in 1968 that led to the rediscovery of the Lighthouse of Alexandria. The rediscovery was made in Alexandria, Egypt in the Mediterranean Sea. The team found ruins representing a part of the ancient giant. Other physical remains of the household were discovered on the Eastern Harbor of Alexandria.
- The columns and statues rediscovered underwater were captured by a cinematographer. Other expeditions followed, and divers can see the remains that submerged as a result of the destructive earthquakes.
- Currently, the UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage is working with the Egyptian Government to include Alexandria Bay in the World Heritage List of submerged sites. There were plans underway to turn the remains of the Lighthouse into an underwater museum.

