The Seven Wonders of The World

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Introduction:

When you hear the phrase "Seven Wonders of the World", people have different thoughts about what it means. In fact, if you survey people what are the seven wonders, you would probably get different answers. Depending on the era that you are talking about, you can get different results. From ancient time until this time, people have different points of view on what are those seven wonders.

The Wonders are cultural landmarks placed in the form of a list containing the most important human-made creations, ancient Greeks has chosen to have a number seven because they believed that the number seven represents abundance and perfection.

In addition, usually the wonder is something unusual was chosen because of their strength of design and construction and the Miracles.

So, what are the 7 wonders of the world?, why they chose every one of them?,

Why were they built?, And what happened to them till now?, Are there modern wonders or only the ancient ones?.

We'll see....
1. The wonders of the ancient world:

1.1 The Colossus of Rhodes:

The Colossus of Rhodes was located on the island of Rhodes (off the coast of the modern Turkey). The Colossus of Rhodes was a giant statue, about 110 feet tall, of the Greek sun–god Helios. This wonder was chosen because of its enormous size.

Why was the Colossus of Rhodes built?

The city of Rhodes located on the island of Rhodes, had been under siege for a year. Caught up in the heated and bloody between the three successors of Alexander The Great (Ptolmey, Seleucus and Antigonus). For supporting Ptolemy, Antigonus’ son – Demetrius– attacked Rhodes.

Demetrius tried everything to get inside the high–walled city of Rhodes. He brought 40,000 soldiers (more than the entire population of Rhodes), catapults, and pirates. He also brought a special team of engineers that could make siege weapons specially geared to break into this particular city.

The most spectacular thing that these engineers built was 150–foot tower mounted on iron wheels that hosted a powerful catapult. Each of its nine stories needs its own water tank. It took 3,400 of Dmetrius’ soldiers to push this weapon into place.

The citizen of Rhodes had fought back valiantly. When reinforcements came from Ptolemy in Egypt, Demetrius left the area in a hurry, and left all of the weapons behind. So, the people of Rhodes decided to build a giant statue in honor of their patron god –Helios– to celebrate their victory.

The citizens used the weapons that Demetrius had left behind. They melted down many of the weapons to get bronze; also, they sold other weapons for money, and then the uses the enormous weapon as a scaffolding for the project.

They chose Rhodian sculptor Chares of Lindos –the student of Alexander the Great’s sculptor Lysippus– to build this huge statue. However, unfortunately, Chares of Lindos died

before the statue could be completed. All we know that it took 12 years to build the colossus of Rhodes, likely from 294 to 282 BCE.

**What Did The Colossus of Rhodes Look Like?**

The statue was about 110 feet high, on the top of 50–foot stone pedestal. Inside were two to three columns of stone that were the main supports for the structure. Iron rods connected the stone columns. One of its arms was holding a framework covered with bronze plates. It was likely naked, maybe holding or wearing a cloth, and wearing a crown of rays.

**The Collapse:**

For 56 years, the Colossus of Rhodes was a wonder to see until 226 B.C.E, an earthquake struck Rhodes and toppled the statue. They said that the Egyptian king ptolemy III offered to pay for rebuilt it but the people of Rhodes refused because they believed that somehow the statue had offended the real Helios.

For 900 year, huge pieces of the broken statue lay along the beaches of Rhodes. Even these broken pieces were are huge and deserve to be seen.

In 654 CE, Rhodes was conquered by Arabs. As spoil of war, Arabs cut the remains of this statue, and took them to Syria to sell.

**2.1. The Statue of Zeus at Olympia:**

This particular wonder was chosen because of the wonderful sculpting of the statue. Located in the sanctuary of Olympia on the Greek Peloponnese Peninsula

The Statue of Zeus stayed at the temple in Olympia until 392 A.D., when Roman emperor 1st Theodosisus decided to abolish the Olympic Games believing it represented a pagan rite. It was made by Phidias.
Who is Zeus?²

Zeus is also called Jupiter, Dias. He was the god of the sky and ruler of the Olympian gods. He overthrew his father Cronus, and then drew lots with his brothers Poseidon and Hades, in order to decide who would succeed their father on the throne. Zeus won the draw and became the supreme ruler of the gods. His weapon was a thunderbolt. He was married to Hera. As the father of the gods, Zeus insisted that each deity perform their individual duty, punish their misdeeds, settle their disputes, and acted towards them on all occasions as their all-knowing counsellor and mighty friend.

The statue of Zeus:³

The Statue of Zeus was much like the Lincoln Statue in Washington DC, but it was more than double the Lincoln Statue. The Zeus's statue had 20 feet wide by 3 feet tall base. The base was made out of wood. The statue itself is 40 feet tall. It was at the west end of the temple. The statue itself was made of ivory and gold like many other statues of gods in Greece. Zeus's skin was composed of ivory and the beard also, the hair was made of gold. The head of the statue of Zeus was decorated with a wreath of olive sprays. In the right hand of the statue, a small gold statue of the goddess Nike goddess of Victory. In the left hand, a scepter inlaid with every metal and an eagle perched on the scepter. The statue wore a gold robe and sandals. Its garments were decorated with carved animals and lilies. The throne of Zeus was said to have been more elaborate than the statue itself. It was made of ebony, ivory, precious stones and gold. It was also decorated with mythical creatures like the sphinxes on it, and winged figures of victory like the goddess of victory Nike.

What Happened To The Statue Of Zeus?⁴

According to historian Georgios Kedrenos, wealthy Greeks carried the statue to Constantinople and was destructed during a great fire in 462 A.D. The temple of Zeus

²http://www.greekmythology.com/Olympians/Zeus/zeus.html
³http://www.clccharter.org/elana1/ancient_civ/Greece/zeus_statue.html
⁴http://www.unmuseum.org/ztemp.htm
itself, after many years of natural disasters, was completely damaged by a fire happened in the fifth century AD.

Since then, many archeological excavations saw the light, revealing many hidden remains of the temple and the statue of Zeus. Amongst them, a group of French archeologists discovered in 1829 the outlines of the temple, fragments of the temple, and shipped them to Paris where they still can be visible at the Louvre museum. Another expedition, headed by Germans in 1875 was able to map the whole temple and discovered more remains of the temple.

Finally, between 1954 and 1958, archeological excavations revealed many tools and terracotta molds, bearing the inscription “I belong to Phidias”, objects that were studied by scientists who confirmed the date of the Statue of Zeus’ creation.

Today, all that remains in Olympia are the temple’s fallen columns and the foundation of the building, which were uncovered during 19th and 20th Century archaeological digs.

3.1. The temple of Artemis:

The Temple of Artemis – sometimes called the Artemisium – was a huge, beautiful place of worship that was built around 550 BCE in the rich, port city of Ephesus – west of Turkey –. Artemis was worshiped in most Greek cities but only as a secondary god, to the Greeks in Turkey she was a prominent god. In Ephesus, a great temple was built in her honor, which became one of the ‘Seven Wonders of the Ancient World’.

Who Was Artemis?

Artemis was also called Cynthia, from her birthplace, Mount Cynthus in Delos. She was the daughter of Zeus, and the twin of Apollo. She is the goddess of the wilderness, the hunt and wild animals, and fertility. Often depicted with a bow and arrow, she is the helpers of midwives as a goddess of birth. She was the sponsor god of the city.

http://www.ephesus.us/ephesus/mythology_of_artemis.htm
What Did Artemis Look Like?

The few sculptures that remain of Artemis of Ephesus show a woman standing, with her legs fitted tightly together in a long skirt covered with animals, such as stags and lions. Around her neck was a necklace of flowers and on her head was either a hat or a headdress, and her arms held out in front of her. However, what most pronounced was her torso, which was covered with a large number of eggs.

The Temple of Artemis:

The first shrine: The first shrine to the Goddess Artemis was probably built around 800 B.C.E on a marshy strip near the river at Ephesus. That earliest temple contained a sacred stone, probably a meteorite, that had “fallen from Jupiter.” The shrine was destroyed and rebuilt several times over the next few hundred years. By 600 B.C.E, the city of Ephesus had become a huge port of trade and an architect named Chersiphron was engaged to build a new, larger temple. He designed it with high stone columns. Concerned that carts carrying the columns might get mired in the swampy ground around the site, Chersiphron laid the columns on their sides and had them rolled to where they would be erected.

This temple didn't last long. According to one story in 550 B.C., King Croesus of Lydia conquered Ephesus and the other Greek cities of Turkey and during the fighting, the temple was destroyed. An archeological examination of the site, and suggests that a great flood hit the temple site at about the same time and may have been the actual cause of the destruction. In either case, the victorious Croesus proved himself a gracious new ruler by contributing generously to the building of a replacement temple.

This next temple dwarfed those that had come before it. The architect is thought to be a man named Theodorus.

http://www.unmuseum.org/ephesus.htm
Theodorus's temple was 300 feet in length and 150 feet wide with an area four times the size of the previous temple. More than one hundred stone columns supported a massive roof. One unusual feature of the temple was that a number of columns had bases that were carved with figures in relief.

The new temple was the pride of Ephesus until 356 B.C. when tragedy struck. A young Ephesian named Herostratus, who would stop at nothing to have his name go down in history, set fire to the wooden roof of the building. He managed to burn the structure to the ground.

The citizens of Ephesus were so appalled by this act that after torturing Herostratus to death, they issued a decree that anyone who even spoke of his name would be put to death.

One of the legends that grew up about the great fire was that the night that the temple burned was the very same night that Alexander the Great was born. According to the story, the goddess Artemis was so preoccupied with Alexander's safe birth she was unable to save her own temple from its fiery destruction.

The Great Temple:

Shortly after the fire, a new temple was commissioned. The architect was Scopas of Paros, one of the most famous sculptors of his day. By this point Ephesus was one of the greatest cities in Turkey and no expense was spared in the reconstruction. According to Pliny the Elder, a Roman historian, the new temple was a "wonderful monument of Grecian magnificence, and one that merits our genuine admiration."

The temple was built in the same wet location as before. To prepare the ground, Pliny recorded that 'layers of trodden charcoal were placed beneath, with fleeces covered with wool upon the top of them.' Pliny also noted that one of the reasons the builders kept the temple on its original marshy location was that they reasoned it would help protect the structure from the earthquakes which plagued the region.
The great temple is thought to be the first building completely constructed with marble. Like its predecessor, the temple had 36 columns whose lower portions were carved with figures in high relief. The temple also housed many works of art including four bronze statues of Amazon women. Pliny recorded the length of this new temple at 425 feet and the width at 225 feet. Some 127 columns, 60 feet in height, supported the roof. In comparison the Parthenon, the remains of which still stand on the Acropolis in Athens today, was only 230 feet long, 100 feet wide and had 58 columns. According to Pliny, construction took 120 years.

**The Collapse:**

For 500 years, the Temple of Artemis was revered and visited. Then, in 262 C.E, the Goths, one of the many tribes from the north, invaded Ephesus and destroyed the Temple. This time, with Christianity on the rise and the cult of Artemis on the decline, it was decided to not rebuild the Temple.

Sadly, the ruins of the Temple of Artemis were eventually plundered, with the marble being taken for other buildings in the area. Over time, the swamp in which the Temple was built grew larger, taking over much of the once-grand city. By 1100 CE, the few remaining citizens of Ephesus had completely forgotten about the existence of the Temple.

In 1864, the British Museum funded John Turtle Wood to excavate the area in the hopes of finding the ruins of the Temple of Artemis. After five years of searching, Wood finally found the remains of the Temple of Artemis under 25 feet of swampy mud.

Later archaeologists have further excavated the site, but not much has been found. The foundation remains there as does a single column. The few artifacts that have been found were shipped to the British Museum in London.

4.1. The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus:

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus was a large and ornate mausoleum built both to honor and hold the remains of Mausolus of Caria. It was built from about 353 to 350 BCE. When Mausolus died in 353 BCE, his wife Artemisia wanted the most beautiful tomb built for her departed husband. Sparing no expense, she hired the very best sculptors and architects that money could buy. It is unfortunate that Artemisia died just two years after her husband, in 351 BCE, not seeing the Mausoleum completed.

Who Was Mausolus?

Upon the death of his father in 377 BCE, Mausolus became the satrap (a regional governor in the Persian Empire) for Caria. Although only a satrap, Mausolus was like a king in his realm, ruling for 24 years.

Mausolus was descended from the indigenous herdsmen of the area, called Carians, but appreciated Greek culture and society. He encouraged the Carians to leave their lives as herdsmen and embrace the Greek way of life. He was also all about expansion. He moved his capital city from Mylasa to the coastal city of Halicarnassus and then worked on a number of projects to beautify the city, including building a large palace for himself. Mausolus was also finesse and was able to add several nearby cities under his influence.

What Did the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus Look Like?

There were five famous sculptors that worked on the exquisite tomb. Each sculptor had a portion that they were responsible for: Bryaxis (north side), Scopas (east side), Timotheus (south side), and Leochares (west side). The chariot on top was created by Pythis.

The structure of the Mausoleum was made up of three parts: a square base on the bottom, 36 columns (9 on each side) in the middle, and then topped by a stepped pyramid that had 24 steps. All of this was covered in ornate carvings, it was designed with life-size and larger than life-size statues. At the very top was a 25-foot-high marble sculpture consisted of standing statues of both Mausolus and Artemisia riding in a chariot pulled by four horses.
Much of the Mausoleum was made out of marble and the entire structure reached 140 feet high. Although large, the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus was known more for its ornate sculptures and carvings. Most of these were painted in vibrant colors.

There were also friezes that wrapped around the entire building. These were extremely detailed and included scenes of battle and hunting, as well as scenes from Greek mythology that included such mythic animals as centaurs.

**The Collapse:**

After 1,800 years, the long-lasting Mausoleum was destroyed by earthquakes that occurred during the 15th century CE in the region. During and after that time, much of the marble was carried away in order to build other buildings, Some of the elaborate sculptures were moved into the fortress as decoration. In 1522 CE, the crypt that for so long had safely held the remains of Mausolus and Artemisia was raided. Over time, people forgot exactly where the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus had stood. Houses were built on top. In the 1850s, British archaeologist Charles Newton recognized that some of the decorations at Bodrum Castle, as the Crusader fortress was now called, could have been from the famous Mausoleum. After studying the area and excavating, Newton found the site of the Mausoleum. Today, the British Museum in London contains statues and relief slabs from the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.

5.1. The Great Pyramid of Giza:
The Great Pyramid of Giza located about ten miles southwest of Cairo, was built as a burial site for Egyptian pharaoh Khufu in the 26th century BCE. The Great Pyramid was not only the largest pyramid ever built, it remained one of the tallest structures in the world until the late 19th century. It has with stood the test of time, standing for over 4,500 years; it is the only wonder to have survived to the present.
**Who Was Khufu?**

Khufu was the second king of the 4th dynasty in ancient Egypt, ruling for about 23 years in the late 26th century BCE. He was the son of Egyptian Pharaoh Sneferu and Queen Hetepheres 1st. He had two children (Khafra and Djedefra) and they both had been pharaohs after him, he also had three wives.

**The Great Pyramid:**

The Great Pyramid is a great mixture of good engineering and workmanship. It stand on a rocky plateau located on the west bank of the Nile River in northern Egypt.

The Great Pyramid is huge, covering a little over 13 acres of ground. Each side, although not exactly the same length, is about 756 feet long. Each corner is nearly an exact 90 degree angle. Also interesting is that each side is aligned to face one of the cardinal points of the compass north, east, south, and west. Its entrance lies in the middle of the north side.

The structure of the Great Pyramid is made from 2.3 million, extremely large, heavy, cut-stone blocks, weighing an average of 2.5 tons each, with the largest weighing 15 tons. It is said that when Napoleon Bonaparte visited the Great Pyramid in 1798, he calculated that there was enough stone to build a one-foot-wide, 12-feet-high wall around France.

On top of the stone was placed a smooth layer of white limestone. At the very top was placed a capstone, it was made of electrum (a mixture of gold and silver). The limestone surface and the capstone would have made the entire pyramid sparkle in sunlight.

Inside the Great Pyramid are three burial chambers. The first lies underground, The second, often mistakenly called the Queen's Chamber, is located just above ground. The third and final chamber, the King's Chamber, lies in the heart of the pyramid. A Grand Gallery leads up to it. It is believed that Khufu was buried in a heavy, granite coffin within the King's Chamber.

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**Figure 8: The Great Pyramid of Giza**
How Did They Build It?  
It seems amazing that an ancient culture could build something so massive and precise, especially since they had only copper and bronze tools to work with. Exactly how they did this has been an unsolved puzzle perplexing people for centuries. It is said that the whole project took 30 years to complete: 10 years for preparation and 20 for the actual building. Many believe this to be possible, with the chance that it could have been built even faster.

The workmen who built the Great Pyramid were not slaves, as once thought, but regular Egyptian peasants who were conscripted to help with building for about three months out of the year, during the time when the Nile floods and farmers were not needed in their fields. The stone was quarried on the east side of the Nile, cut into shape, and then placed on a sledge that was pulled by men to the river’s edge. Here, the huge stones were loaded onto barges, ferried across the river, and then dragged to the construction site. It is believed that the most likely way the Egyptians got those heavy stones up so high was by building a huge, earthen ramp. As each level was completed, the ramp was built higher, hiding the level below it. When all the huge stones were in place, the workmen worked from top to bottom to place the limestone covering. As they worked downward, the earthen ramp was removed little by little. Only once the limestone covering was completed could the ramp be fully removed and the Great Pyramid be revealed.

Looting and Damage:
No one is sure how long the Great Pyramid stood intact before being looted, but it was probably not long. Centuries ago, all of the pharaoh's riches had been taken, even his body had been removed. All that remains is the bottom of his granite coffin even the top is missing. The capstone is also long gone.

In 818 CE Arab ruler Caliph Ma'mun ordered his men to hack their way into the Great Pyramid. They did manage to find the Grand Gallery and the granite coffin, but it had all been emptied of treasure long ago. The Arabs pried off the limestone covering and took some of the cut-stone blocks to use for buildings. In total, they took about 30 feet off the top of the Great Pyramid.

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8 http://geography.about.com/od/egyptmaps/fl/Great-Pyramid-at-Giza.htm
6.1. The Famed Lighthouse of Alexandria:

The famed Lighthouse of Alexandria, called Pharos, was built around 250 BCE to help mariners navigate the harbor of Alexandria in Egypt. It was truly a marvel of engineering, standing at least 400 feet tall, making it one of the tallest structures in the ancient world.

Why Did Alexandria Need a Lighthouse?

The city of Alexandria was founded in 332 BCE by Alexander the Great. Located in Egypt, just 20 miles west of the Nile River, Alexandria was perfectly situated to become a major Mediterranean port, helping the city to flourish. Soon, Alexandria became one of the most important cities of the ancient world.

The only stumbling block to making Alexandria great was that mariners found it difficult to avoid the rocks and shoals when approaching Alexandria’s harbor. To help with that, as well as to make a very grand statement, Alexander the Great’s successor ordered a lighthouse to be built. This was to be the first building ever built only to be a lighthouse.

What Did the Lighthouse of Alexandria Look Like?

The Lighthouse of Alexandria was a strikingly tall structure. Located on the eastern end of the island of Pharos near the entrance of Alexandria’s harbor, the Lighthouse was soon itself called “Pharos.”

The Lighthouse was at least 450 feet high and made of three sections. The bottommost section was square and held government offices and stables. The middle section was an octagon and held a balcony where tourists could sit, enjoy the view, and be served refreshments. The top section was cylindrical and held the fire that was continually lit to keep mariners safe. At the very top was a large statue of Poseidon, the Greek god of the sea.

Amazingly, inside this giant lighthouse was a spiraling ramp that led up to the top of the bottommost section. This allowed horses and wagons to carry supplies to the top sections.

the fire light at the top was effective, and mariners could easily see the light from miles away and could thus find their way safely to port.

How Was the Lighthouse of Alexandria Destroyed?
The Lighthouse of Alexandria stood for 1,500 years. It had kept mariners safe for centuries; but an earthquake sometime around 1375 CE finally destroyed the Lighthouse of Alexandria. Some of its blocks were taken and used to build a castle for the sultan of Egypt; others fell into the ocean. In 1994, French archeologist Jean Yves Emperor of the French National Research Center investigated the harbor of Alexandria and found at least a few of these blocks still in the water.

7.1. The Hanging Gardens of Babylon:
The city of Babylon was founded around 2300 BCE, or even earlier, near the Euphrates River just south of the modern city of Baghdad in Iraq. Since it was located in the desert, it was built almost entirely out of mud–dried bricks. the city was destroyed a number of times in its history.

we don't know exactly where The Hanging Garden was located. It is said to have been placed close to the Euphrates River for access to water and yet no archeological evidence has been found to prove its exact location. It remains the only Ancient Wonder whose location has not yet been found.

What Did the Hanging Gardens of Babylon Look Like?
According to legends, King Nebuchadrezzar II built the Hanging Gardens for his wife Amytis, who missed the cool temperatures, mountainous terrain, and beautiful scenery of her homeland in Persia. her hot, flat, and dusty new home of Babylon must have seemed completely drab.

It is believed that the Hanging Garden was a tall building, built upon stone (extremely rare for the area), that in some way resembled a mountain, perhaps by having multiple terraces.

Located on top of and overhanging the walls (hence the term “hanging” gardens) were numerous and varied plants and trees. Keeping these exotic plants alive in a desert took a massive amount of water. Some sort of engine pumped water up through the building from
a well located either below or directly from the river. Amytis could then walk through the rooms of the building, being cooled by the shade as well as the water–tinged air.

## Did the Hanging Gardens Ever Really Exist?

There is still much debate about the existence of the Hanging Gardens. The Hanging Gardens seem magical in a way, too amazing to have been real. And yet, so many of the other seemingly–unreal structures of Babylon have been found by archaeologists and proven to have really existed.

Yet the Hanging Gardens remains aloof. Some archaeologists believe that remains of the ancient structure have been found in the ruins of Babylon. The problem is that these remains are not near the Euphrates River as some descriptions have specified.

Also, there is no mention of the Hanging Gardens in any contemporary Babylonian writings. This leads some to believe that the Hanging Gardens were a myth, described only by Greek writers after the fall of Babylon.

A new theory, proposed by Dr. Stephanie Dalley of Oxford University, states that there was a mistake made in the past and that the Hanging Gardens were not located in Babylon; instead, they were located in the northern Assyrian city of Ninevah and were built by King Sennacherib. The confusion could have been caused because Ninevah was –at one time– known as New Babylon.

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2. The Wonders of the Modern World:

"The wonders of the modern world" is an explanation commenced that was suggested by the Canadian director (Bernard Viber) at 1999. It was a profit company, its name was – New Open World Corporation – , its aim was to get bonus by insert people in a competition of voting all around the world, to vote for the new seven wonders of the world. The one and only provision to choose those wonders is to be built by humans before the ending of 2000, and they must be immovable till that time. And those were the winners:

1. Chichen Itza (Mexico)
2. Christ the Redeemer (Brazil)
3. The great wall of China (China)
4. Machu Picchu (Peru)
5. Petra (Jordan)
6. Taj Mahal (India)
7. The colosseum (Italy)

However, those wonders were not taken in a serious way, because there weren't any conditions to choose them except voting, so they are not official.
**Conclusion:**

Every culture tried to vie other cultures by special things they did. Focused on the world that was known at the time, these wonders are part of an amazing journey across varied cultures and civilizations, and show the sheer will and determination of these ancient societies to honor their gods and create lasting impact on their world. While huge in scope and size, time and nature has taken its toll on the massive undertakings and only one of the wonders still stands.

Every wonder of those wonders had something special that distinguished it, some historical buildings that aren't usual, were selected by special structural and architectural conditions. In addition, all of them are a testament to the greatness of the human nation.

**Recommendations:**

After I did this research I recommend to:

1. Do more researches in this field to find out the hidden secrets about those miraculous statues.
2. Choose official wonders of the modern world that really deserve to be wonders to see but in an accurate historical way.
References:


http://geography.about.com/od/culturalgeography/fl/The–Colossus–at–Rhodes.htm 5/9/2015 1:00 A.M


