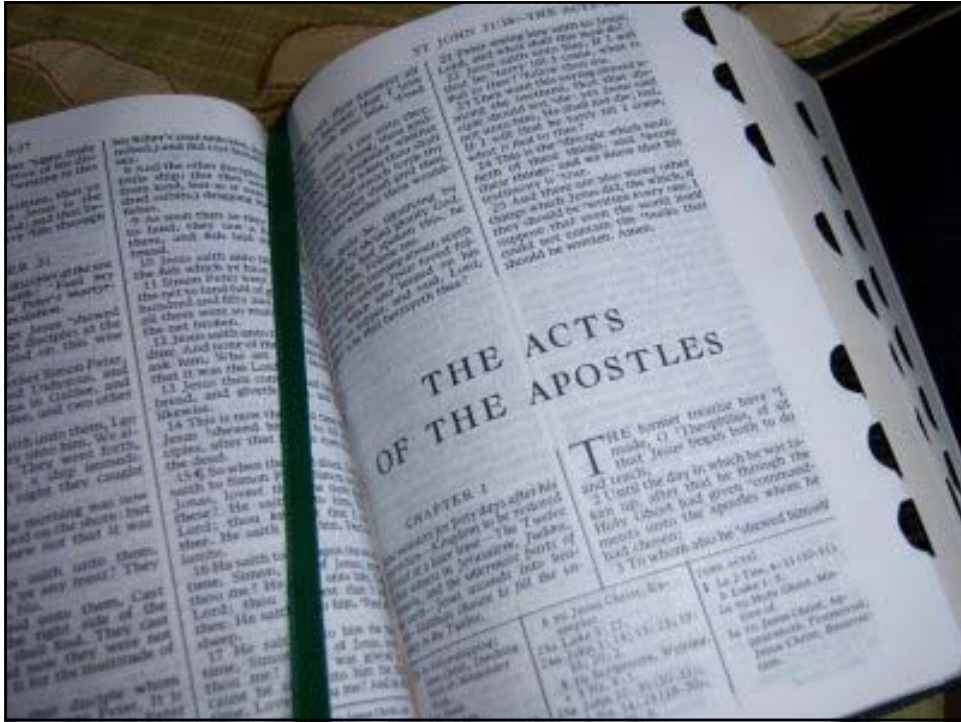


9

WHAT THE
BIBLE
IS ABOUT

Book of Acts
Part 7–Chap. 16-18:23

A dark blue rectangular slide with a white border. On the left side, the number "9" is displayed in a large, white, sans-serif font. To the right of the number, the text "WHAT THE BIBLE IS ABOUT" is written in a white, serif font, arranged in three lines. Below this text, a white-bordered box contains the text "Book of Acts" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, followed by "Part 7–Chap. 16-18:23" in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.



KEY THEME

Jesus offers salvation to everyone.

Acts

KEY VERSE

⁷ And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:8

The book of Acts in two acts

THE MINISTRY OF PETER (Chapters 1-12)

- Peter and the Jews, Acts 1—7
- Peter and the Samaritans, Acts 8
- The conversion of Paul, Acts 9
- Peter and the Gentiles, Acts 10—11
- Peter’s arrest and deliverance, Acts 12

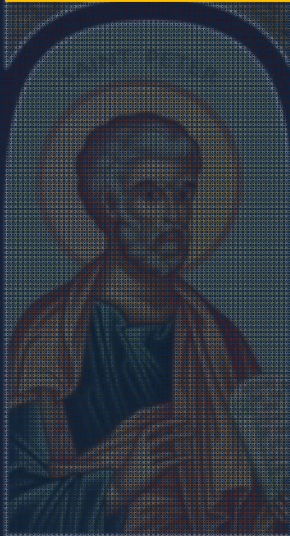
THE MINISTRY OF PAUL (Chapter 13-28)

- Paul’s first missionary journey, Acts 13—14
- The Council of Jerusalem, Acts 15
- Paul’s second missionary journey, 16:1—18:22
- Paul’s third missionary journey, 18:23—21:25
- Paul’s arrest and trial in Caesarea, 21:26—26:31
- Paul’s voyage to Rome, Acts 27-28

Seven Progress Reports

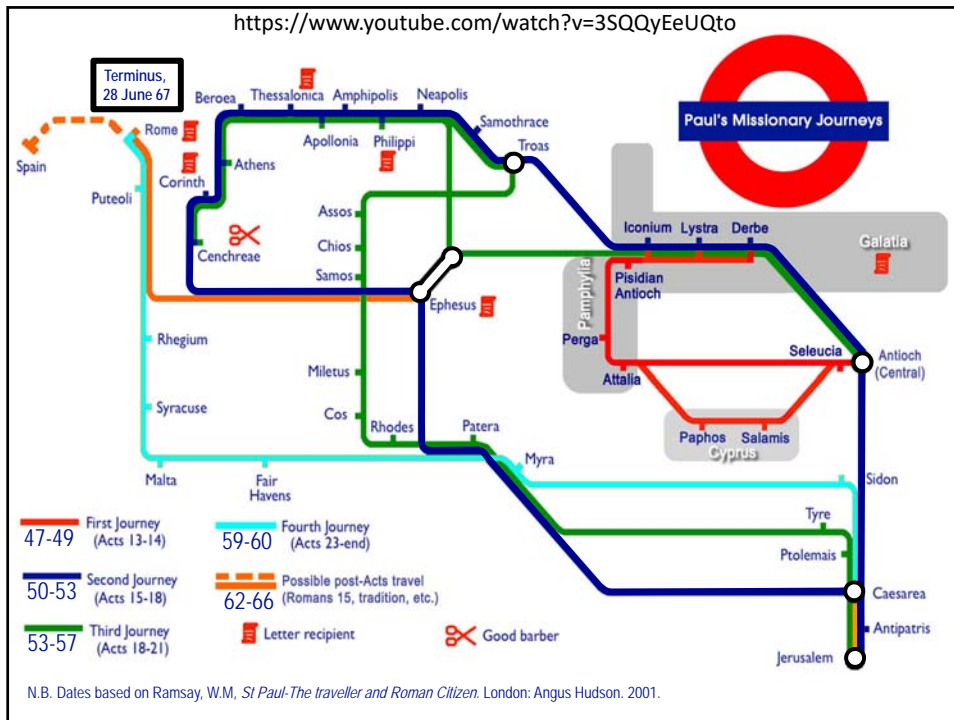
1. ~~“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47).~~
2. ~~“So the Word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly” (Acts 6:7).~~
3. ~~“Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria...was strengthened; and [it was] encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord” (Acts 9:31).~~
4. ~~“But the Word of God continued to increase and spread” (Acts 12:24).~~
5. “So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers” (Acts 16:5).
6. “In this way the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power” (Acts 19:20).
7. “Paul...welcomed all who came to see him. Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 28:30-31).

*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and **unto the uttermost part of the earth.***
Acts 1:8



The Acts of Paul 13-28

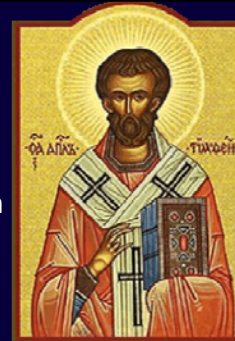




Acts 16

Timothy Joins Paul and Silas

- 1 Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek.
- 2 He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.
- 3 Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and **circumcised him** because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek.



³ I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day, ⁴ greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears, that I may be filled with joy, ⁵ when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, **which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice**, and I am persuaded is in you also.

[2 Timothy 1:1-5]

- 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.
- 5 So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily.



- 6 Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. ⁷ After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.
- 8 So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.





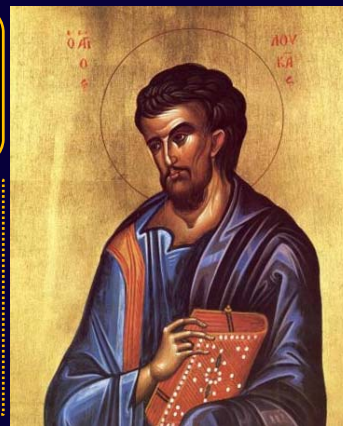
Troas

Ancient Troy

- ⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- ¹⁰ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately **we** sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called **us** to preach the gospel to them.

This is the point where Dr. Luke, the precise historian, joins Paul. He remains with Paul to the end of Acts.

After being told "No!" about evangelizing in Asia and Bithynia, Paul is told "Yes!" about Macedonia in the form of a vision during the night. The next verse, a young (Macedonian?) doctor named Luke has joined him. Was Luke the person in Paul's vision?



Lydia Baptized at Philippi

¹¹ Therefore, sailing from Troas, we ran a straight course to Samothrace, and the next *day* came to Neapolis, ¹² and from there to Philippi, which is the foremost city of that part of Macedonia, a colony. [*Colonia Victrix Philippensium*]

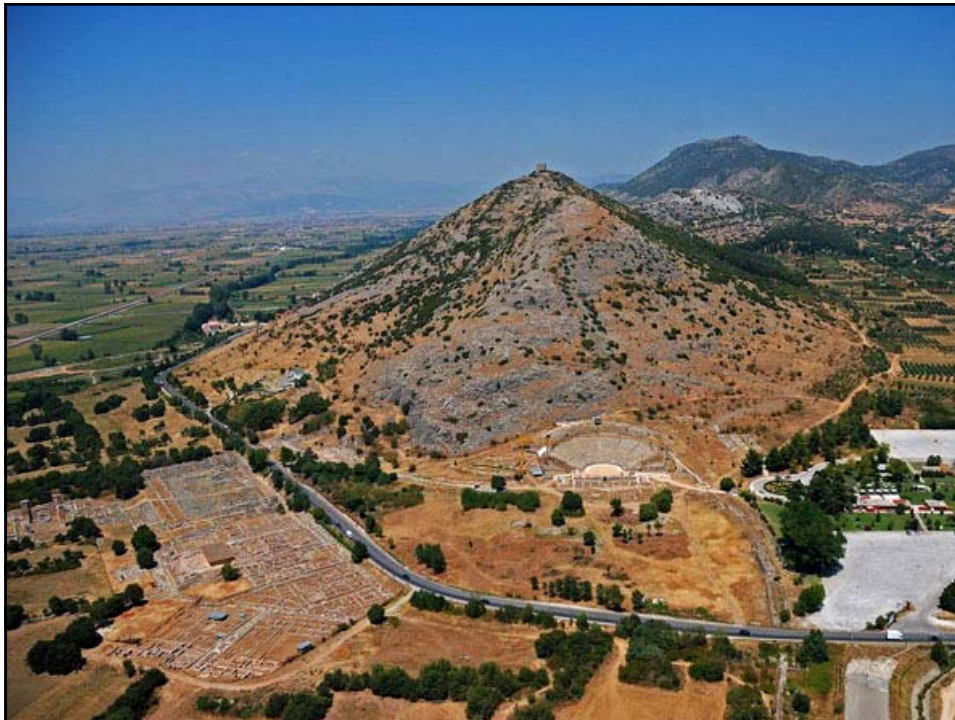
And we were staying in that city for some days.



Neapolis (modern Kavala)

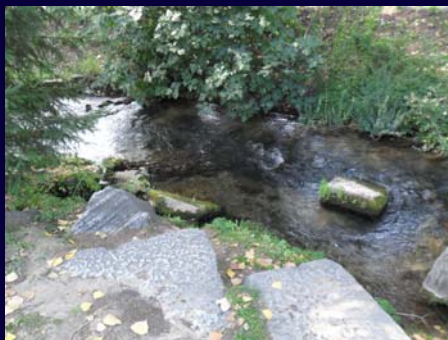


Ancient Philippi, Macedonia





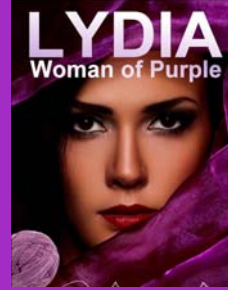
¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went out of the city to the riverside, where prayer was customarily made; and we sat down and spoke to the women who met *there*.



¹⁴ Now a certain woman named Lydia heard *us*. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. ¹⁵ And when she and her household were baptized, she begged *us*, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded *us*.

Purple

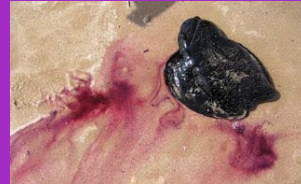
Paul met Lydia of Thyatira in Philippi. She sells purple cloth and dye, a trade carefully controlled by Thyatira. Purple was the color of emperors and nobility. Anyone wearing purple without being entitled to purple could be put to death.



Murex shells



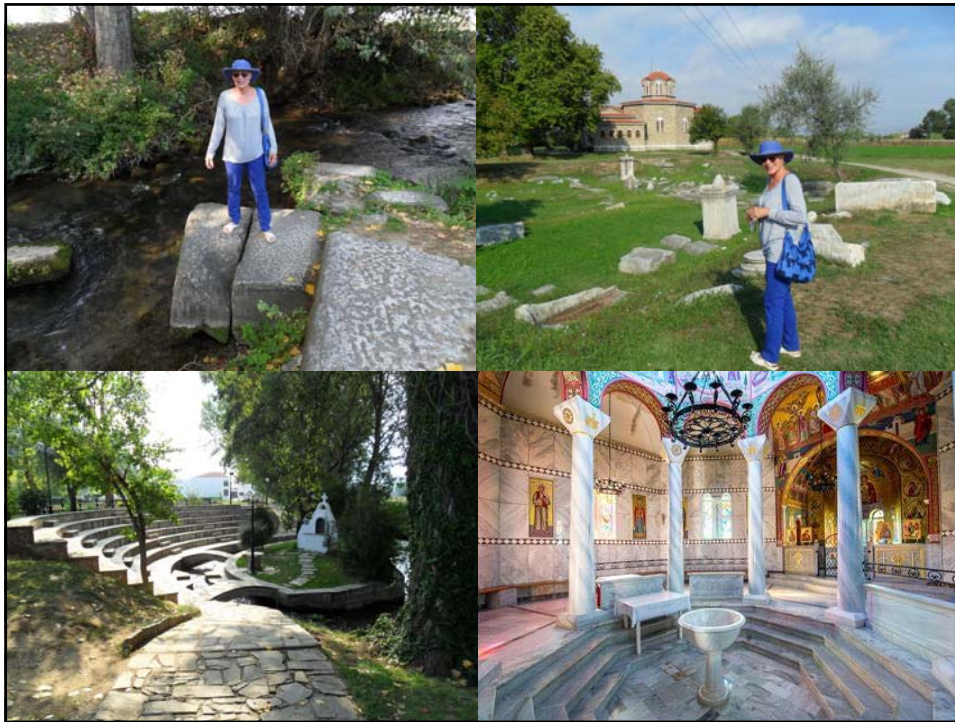
1st century AD mosaic



An extracted murex snail

Imperial purple, also called Tyrian purple, was secreted from a predatory murex sea snail, *bolinus brandaris*. People "milk" them for the secretion or they dry and crush the snails to obtain a lower quality but more easily obtained dye. The dye was so valued that the animals were harvested to the point of extinction.





Paul and Silas Imprisoned

¹⁶ Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling.

¹⁷ This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying,

“These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation.”

¹⁸ And this she did for many days.



But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit,

“I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.”

And he came out that very hour. ¹⁹ But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged *them* into the marketplace to the authorities.

²⁰ And they brought them to the magistrates, and said,

“These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; ²¹ and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”

²² Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded *them* to be beaten with rods.

²⁰ And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, “These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; ²¹ and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe.”

²² Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded *them* to be beaten with rods.

²³ And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw *them* into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely.



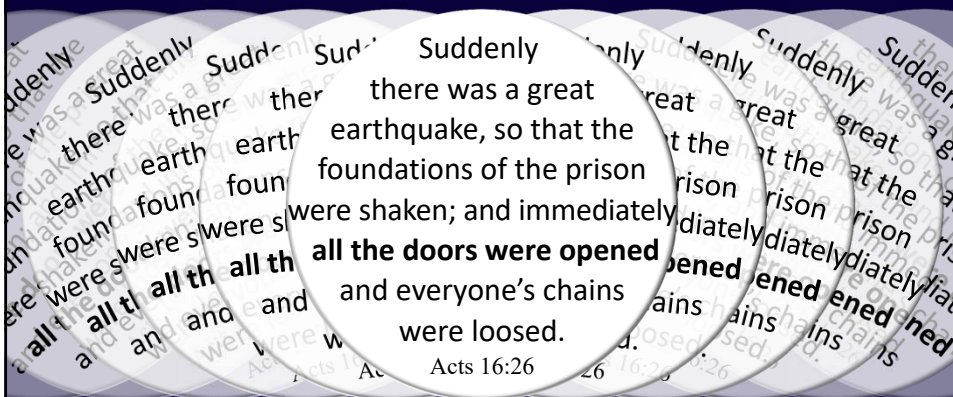
²⁴ Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.



²⁵ But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.

The Philippian Jailer Saved

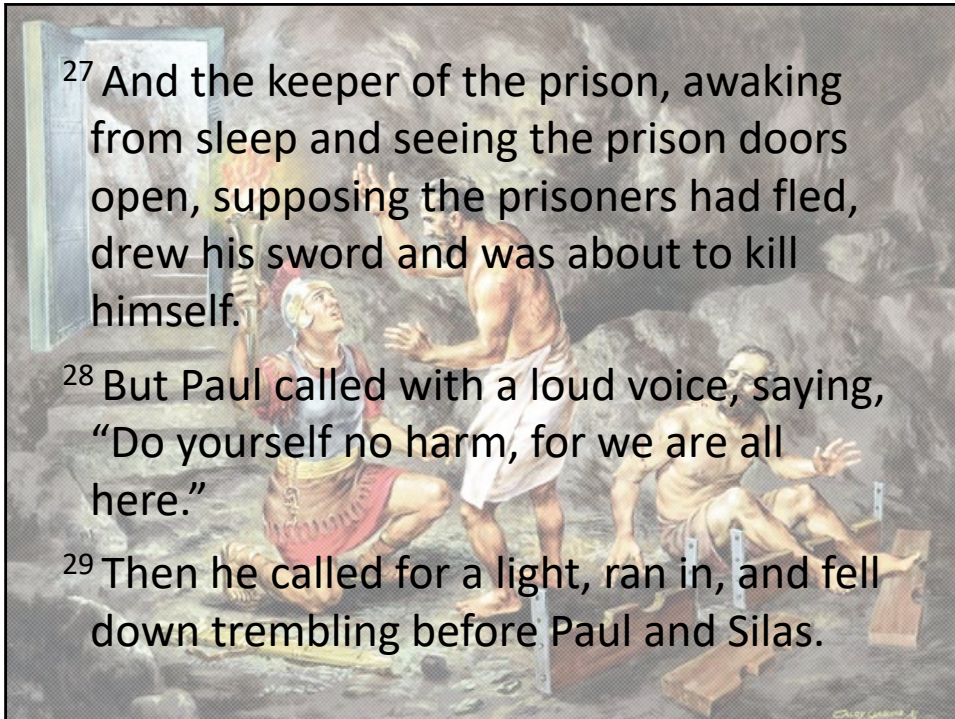
²⁶ Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.



²⁷ And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself.

²⁸ But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."

²⁹ Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas.



³⁰ And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

"Sirs, what must **I do** to be **saved**?"

³¹ So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."



³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.

³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his *family* were baptized.

³⁴ Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

BELIEVE
in the Lord
Jesus and
you will be
SAVED

Acts 16:31

Paul Refuses to Depart Secretly

³⁵ And when it was day, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go."

³⁶ So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace."

³⁷ But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us openly, uncondemned Romans, *and* have thrown *us* into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out."

³⁸ And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans. ³⁹ Then they came and pleaded with them and brought *them* out, and asked *them* to depart from the city. ⁴⁰ So they went out of the prison and entered *the house of* Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.

Acts 17

Preaching Christ at Thessalonica

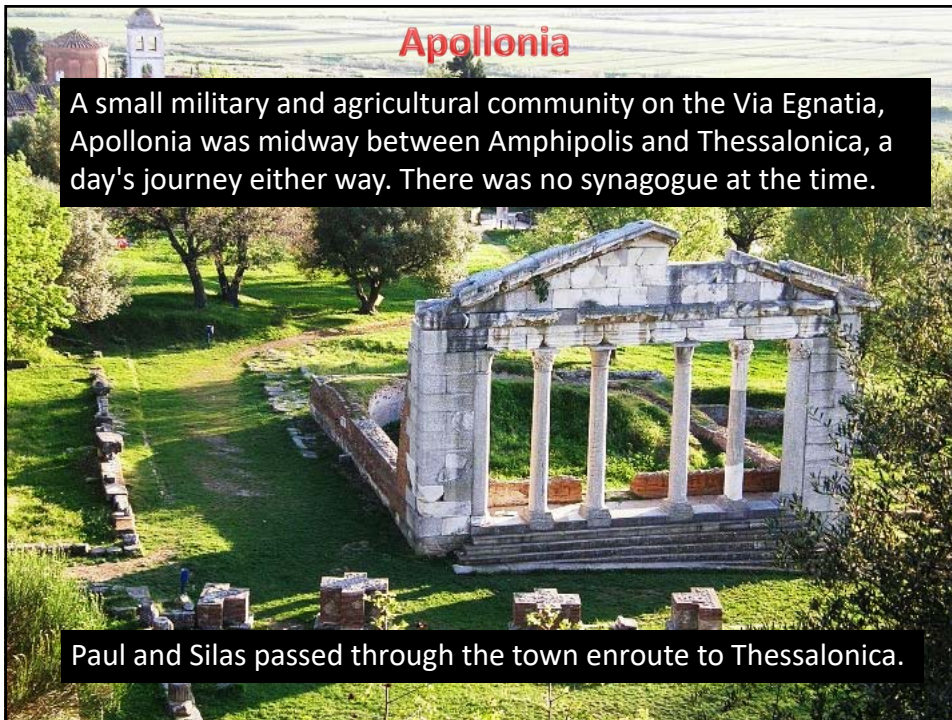
¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.





Amphipolis

- This ancient Athenian colony was site of a famous 422BC battle between Sparta and Athens
- It was HQ of Alexander the Great and where his wife Roxana and their son were exiled (only to be murdered) after his death.
- Located on the Egnatia Way, Paul and Silas travelled through ~50 AD.
- The city was abandoned in the 8th century AD.
- The 4th century BC Lion Monument was discovered by British troops digging trenches in WWI in 1916.
- The largest ancient Greek tomb was discovered in 2012 in Kasta Hill.



Apollonia

A small military and agricultural community on the Via Egnatia, Apollonia was midway between Amphipolis and Thessalonica, a day's journey either way. There was no synagogue at the time.

Paul and Silas passed through the town enroute to Thessalonica.

Thessalonica

- Ruled by a Plutarchy (as noted by Luke in Acts), it was a Roman provincial capital since 168 BC.
- Large mixed population of 200,000 (300,000 today), plus many Jewish traders – major road (*Via Egnatia*) and sea routes.
- In WWII, the occupying Germans sent its Jewish population of 60,000 to extermination camps. 4% survived. Nazis destroyed most of the 60 synagogues, but one was saved by the Red Cross.





- ² Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead, and *saying*,

“This Jesus whom I preach to you is the Christ.”

- ⁴ And some of them were persuaded; and a great multitude of the devout Greeks, and not a few of the leading women, joined Paul and Silas.
- ⁵ But the Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people.



The monastery of Vlatadon in the Old City, 1351 AD, traditional site of Jason's House.

- ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out,

“These who have turned the world upside down have come here too. ⁷ Jason has harbored them, and these are all acting contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying there is another king—Jesus.”



- ⁸ And they troubled the crowd and the rulers of the city when they heard these things. ⁹ So when they had taken security from Jason and the rest, they let them go.

Ministering at Berea

¹⁰ Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews.



¹¹ These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.

¹² Therefore many of them believed, and also not a few of the Greeks, prominent women as well as men.

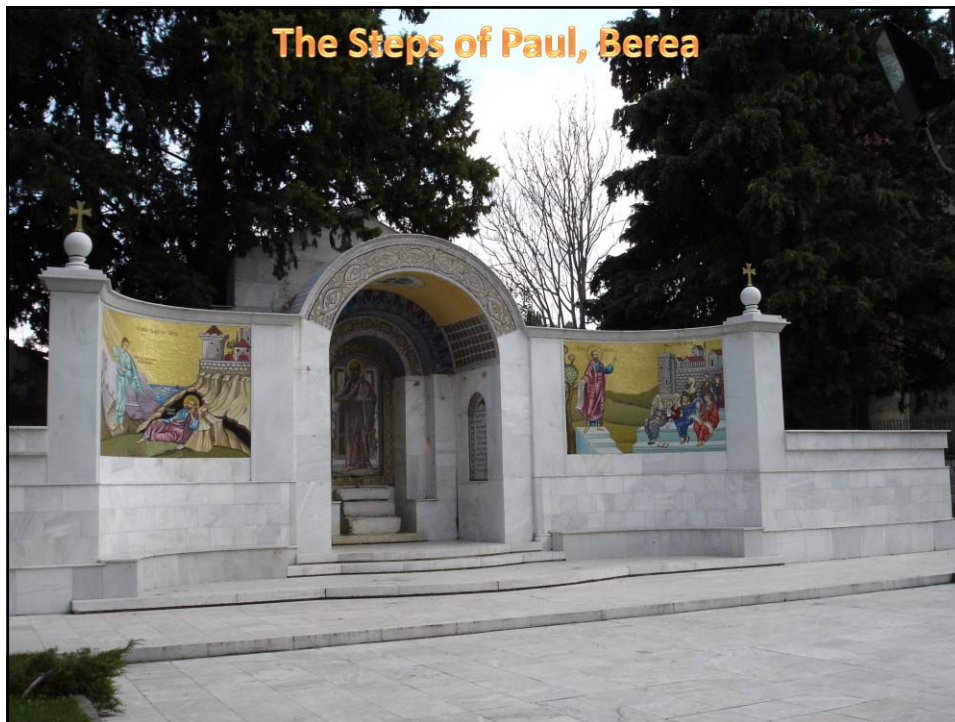
¹³ But when the Jews from Thessalonica learned that the word of God was preached by Paul at Berea, they came there also and stirred up the crowds.

¹⁴ Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there.

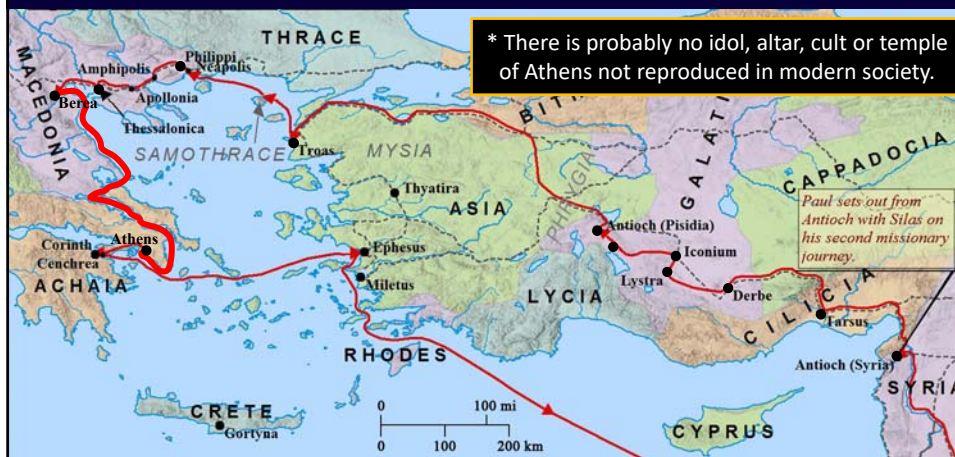


In Berea they received the word with all eagerness, examining the scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

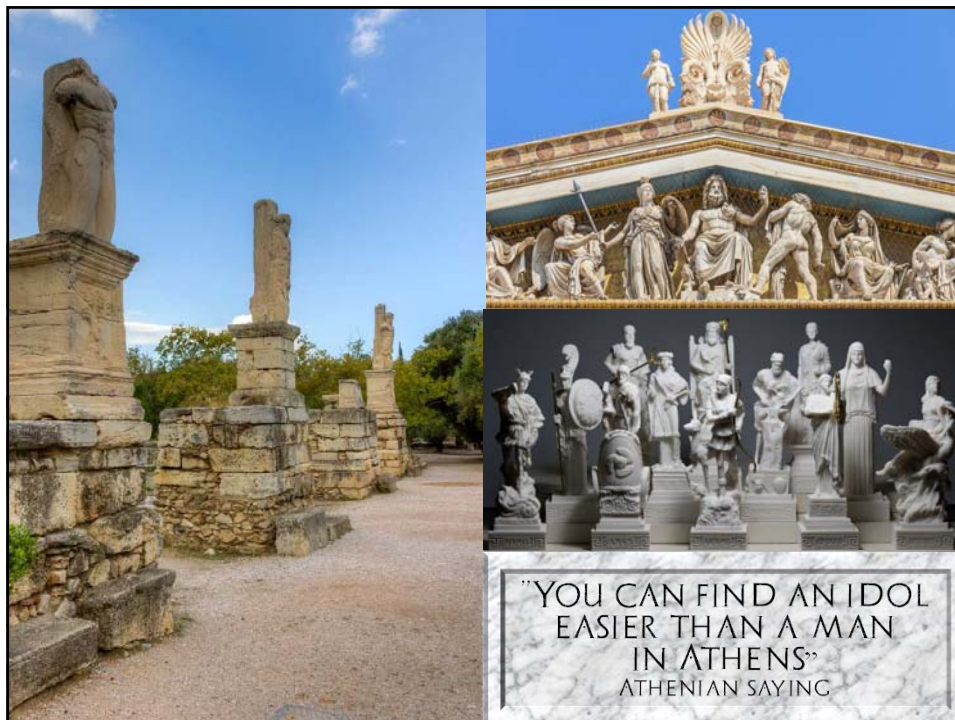
*The word of God is a power
Neither hell nor sin gainsay;
Fruit and blessing abound
In that life where it holds sway.*



¹⁵ So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed. ¹⁶ Now while Paul waited for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him when he saw that the city was given over to idols. [> 30,000 idols in Athens!*







¹⁷ Therefore he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and with the *Gentile* worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.

¹⁸ Then certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers encountered him.

STOICISM

- Founded by Zeno ~300BC
- Everything is god; god is everything. Fatalistic.
- Virtue is to maintain a will in accord with nature.
- Virtue is sufficient for happiness.
- Destructive emotions come from errors in judgement.
- Moral and intellectual perfection rises above emotion.

EPICUREANISM

- Founded by Epicurus ~307BC
- Atheistic materialists. All is the product of chance.
- Pleasure is the greatest virtue (absence of pain)
- Live modestly and know own limits to attain tranquillity
- What we don't experience is illusory (not real)
- The ultimate good is seeking pleasure and achieving harmony of body and mind.

Also Peripatetics (Aristotle), Lyceum; Academicians (Plato), Academy.

Paul at the Areopagus (Mars Hill)

And some said,

“What does this babbler want to say?”

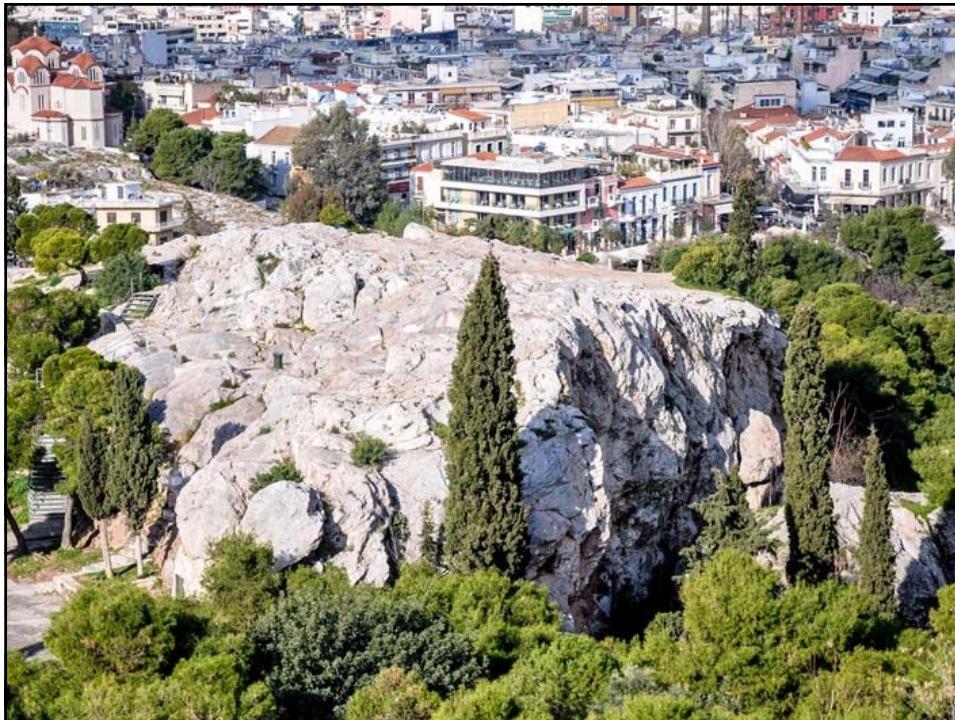
Others said,

“He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign gods,”
because he preached to them Jesus and the resurrection.

¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying,

“May we know what this new doctrine *is* of which you speak? ²⁰ For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.”

²¹ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.





²² Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said,

“Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things **you are very religious**; ²³ for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription:

TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.

Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: ²⁴ God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.



Altare al “dio ignoto”

1st century BC altar to an unknown god from Palatine Hill in Ancient Rome.



- ²⁵ Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.
- ²⁶ And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings,
²⁷ so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, **though He is not far from each one of us**; ²⁸ for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said,
- 'For we are also His offspring.' *
- ²⁹ Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.

* A quote from the fifth line of Aratus' poem Φαινόμενα "Appearances"

³⁰ Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained.

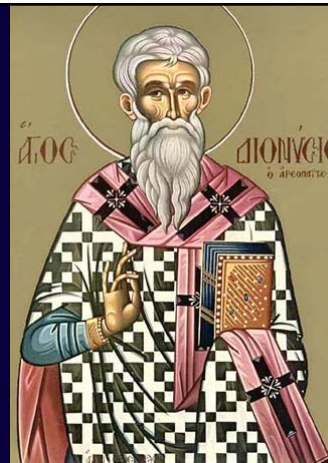
He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”



³² And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some **mocked**, while others said, “We will hear you again on this matter.”

³³ So Paul departed from among them.

³⁴ However, **some** men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius the Areopagite, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.



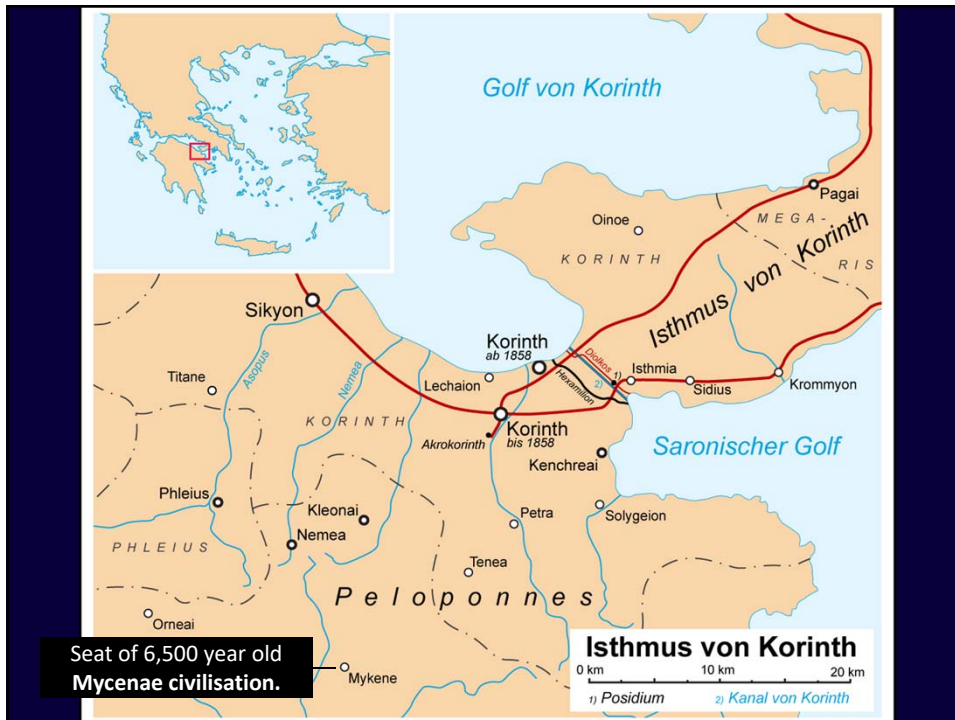
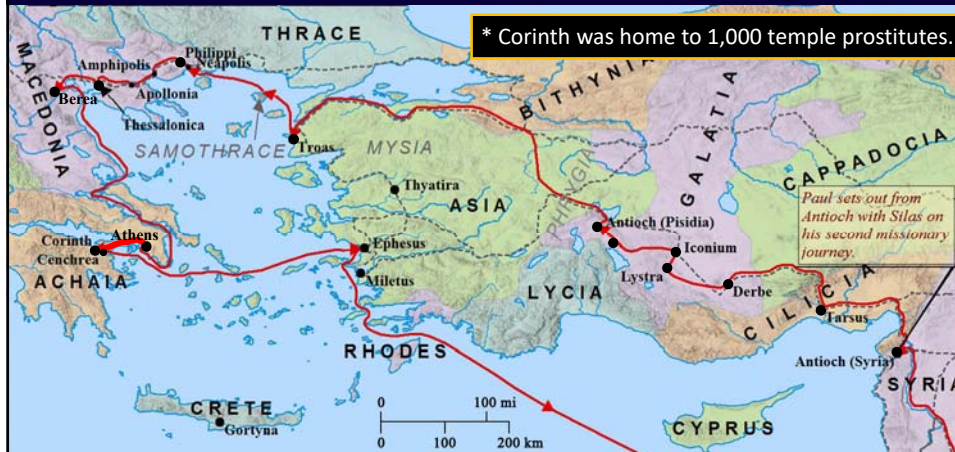
Tradition and numerous non-biblical sources (e.g., Publius, Quadratus, Aristides, Athenagoras, and other 1st century bishops and martyrs and Basil and Gregory of the 4th century) place Dionysus the Areopagite over the flock in Athens, which became the Greek Orthodox Church.

Acts 18

Ministering at Corinth

- 1 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.

[50 miles W of Athens, Corinth was a centre of sensuality. *]





CORINTH

Fifth largest and most important city of the Roman Empire:

I	ROME	Rebuilt 46-44 BC, Corinth was capital of the Roman Colony of Achaia and a centre for arts, commerce and religion.
II	ALEXANDRIA	
III	EPHESUS	
IV	ANTIOCH	
V	CORINTH	

CORINTH

Colonia Laus Julia Corinthiensis, "Corinth the praise of Julius (Caesar)."



Temple of Aphrodite
Acrocorinth



Temple of Apollo
Corinth



Temple of Poseidon
Ithmia

Able equipped to serve worshippers of Corinth's principle gods and visiting sailors from its two ports, excavations uncovered 33 wine shops, where some of her 1,000 temple prostitutes plied their trade. The Greek insult *korinthiazesthai* (to live like a Corinthian) meant to live with drunken and immoral debauchery. "Corinth became not only a synonym for wealth and luxury, drunkenness and debauchery, but also for filth." Corinthians on stage were always shown as drunks.

Greek Proverb

IT IS NOT EVERY
MAN WHO CAN
AFFORD A
JOURNEY TO
CORINTH.

² And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome)*; and he came to them. ³ So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.



⁴ And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

⁵ When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews *that Jesus is the Christ*.

* This occurred in 49 AD.



¹² When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat,
¹³ saying, “This *fellow* persuades men to worship God contrary to the law.”

¹⁴ And when Paul was about to open *his* mouth, Gallio said to the Jews,

“If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you. ¹⁵ But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look *to it* yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such *matters*.”

¹⁶ And he drove them from the judgment seat.

¹⁷ Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.

¹⁸ So Paul still remained a good while.

[1 and ½ years]

Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. ¹⁹ And he came to Ephesus...



¹⁹ And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked *him* to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, ²¹ but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means

keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing."



