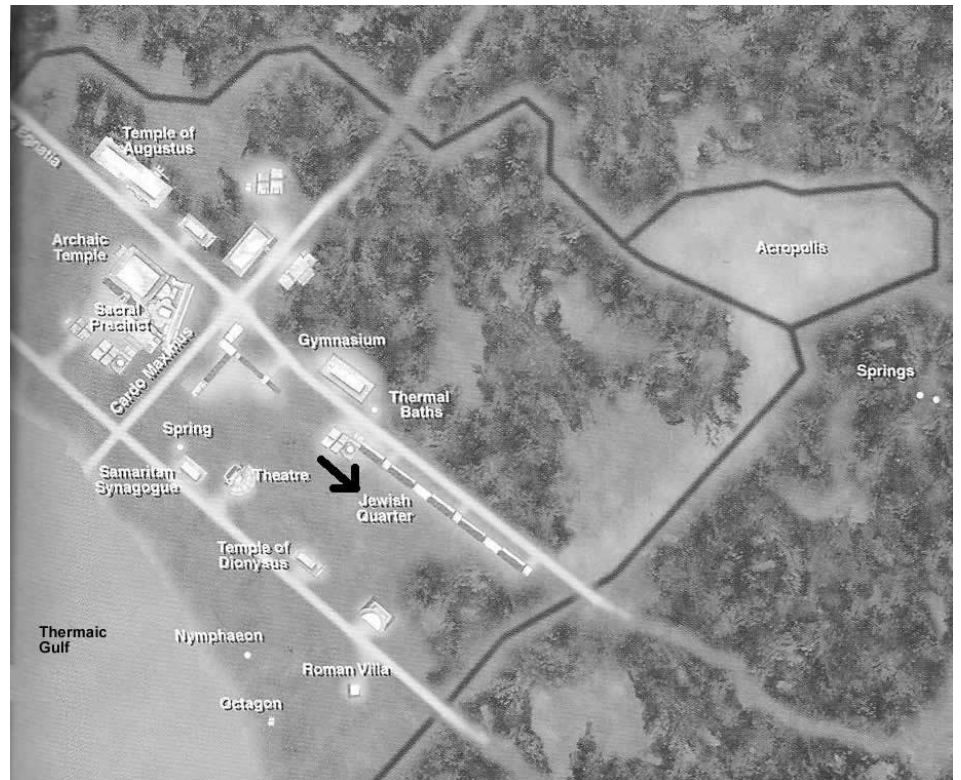


Acts 17:1-9 – Paul In Thessalonica

- Thessalonica is 187 miles north of Athens.
- Thessalonica was the capital of the province of Macedonia.
- Today's modern city of Thessalonica has covered or destroyed most of the ancient city.
- The ancient forum or agora has been excavated.



Odeum or Theater located east of the forum.



Forum or Agora of Thessalonica



An inscription from 125 AD found in Thessalonica lists six "Politarchs" (or, "Rulers of the Citizens"). This term "politarch" is used by Luke in Acts 17:6 and 8 to refer to officials in Thessalonica. Before the discovery of this inscription critics claimed the writer of Acts was making up information and had many false claims and incorrect statements. This along with other discoveries has validated the authenticity of the Book of Acts, and at the same time, has refuted the critics as ignorant and anti-scripture.



24 bathtubs at the southeast end of the Forum.
Each tub has an upper and lower level.

17:5 – It appears that Jason may have hid Paul and Silas or helped them escape to avoid the mob.

The word “crowd” is “demos” (δῆμος) and refers to the civic assembly of citizens who formed the body of a group assembled for judicial purposes. This “crowd” would often be gathered together by reports from other citizens just like what happened here.

17:6 – “politarchai” is translated “officials”. Critics had said this word does not appear until around 150 AD showing that Acts was not a first century document. This word now appears in seventy inscriptions and forty of these are found in Macedonia and 30+ are found in Thessalonica! Some date to 100 BC

17:7 – “decrees” (dogma) warned of predicting a change of rulership was issued in 11 AD by Caesar Augustus. This decree forbid the use of astrology to predict the emperor’s death. Emperor Tiberius reaffirmed this decree and executed those who ignored it. Many cities would show their support by taking oaths to the emperor.

Paul’s use of these terms were very concerning:

- “Lord”
- “kingdom”
- “parousia” or “return” refers to the visit of an emperor.

17:8 – Jason and his household face legal problems due to their support of Paul and Silas. Christians and Paul are all now suspect and Paul cannot stay in the city.

17:9 – Jason was released on bond with the understanding that there would be no more trouble. This meant Paul and Silas would have to disappear. The best way for that to happen was for them to leave.

17:10 – Leave the Via Egnatia (which continued west) Paul is taken 47 miles southwest to Berea which was on the road to Athens.



Modern Bay of Thessaloniki

(Photos from Carl Rasmussen’s www.holylandphotos.org)