

# Corinth

See photos at Carl Rasmussen's site at - <http://holylandphotos.org/browse.asp?s=1.4.11.28.74.239>

## Bema in the Agora



Bema with Acrocorinth in back

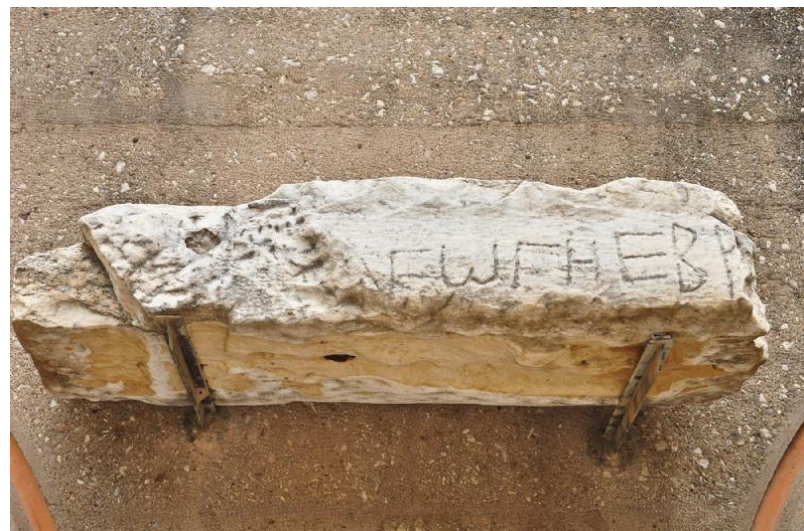


**Erastus Inscription** –(left) According to this inscription Erastus was the aedile of the city in charge of financial matters and was very wealthy. This pavement was laid about 50 AD. In Romans 16:13 Pauls says that “Erastus, the city treasurer greets you....” This inscription says:

***“Erastus in return for his aedileship laid (the pavement) at his own expense.”***



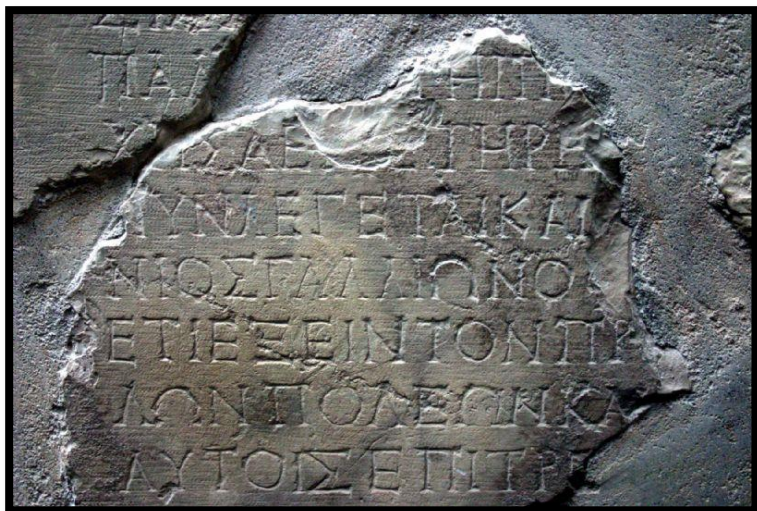
Menorah Relief (above)



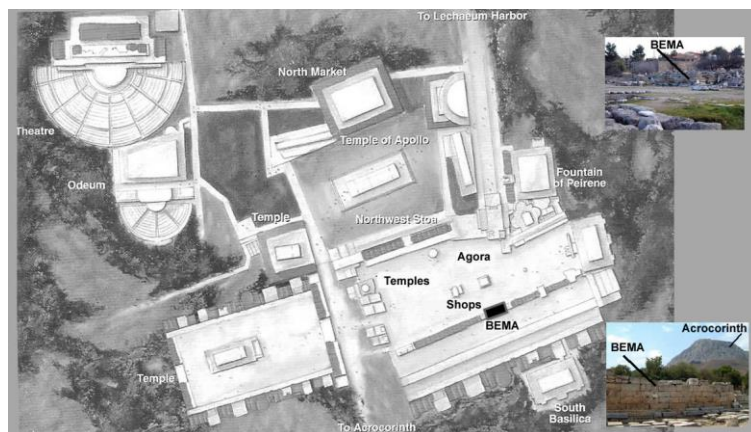
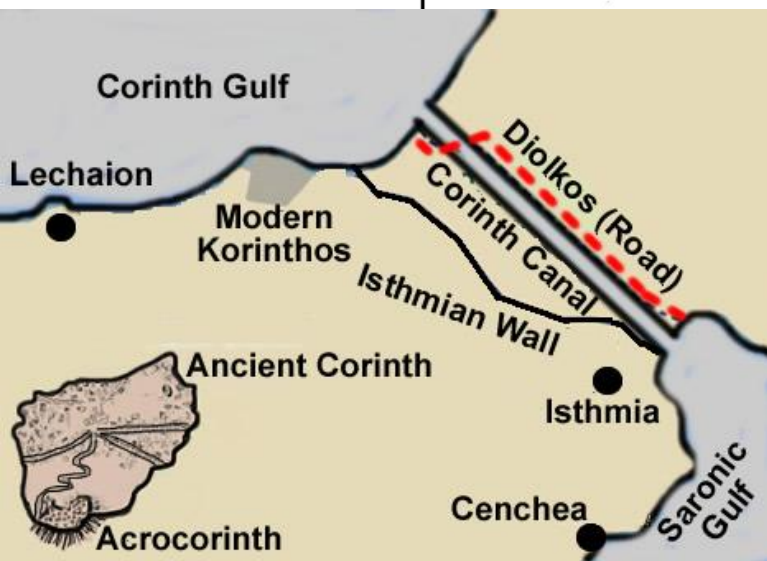
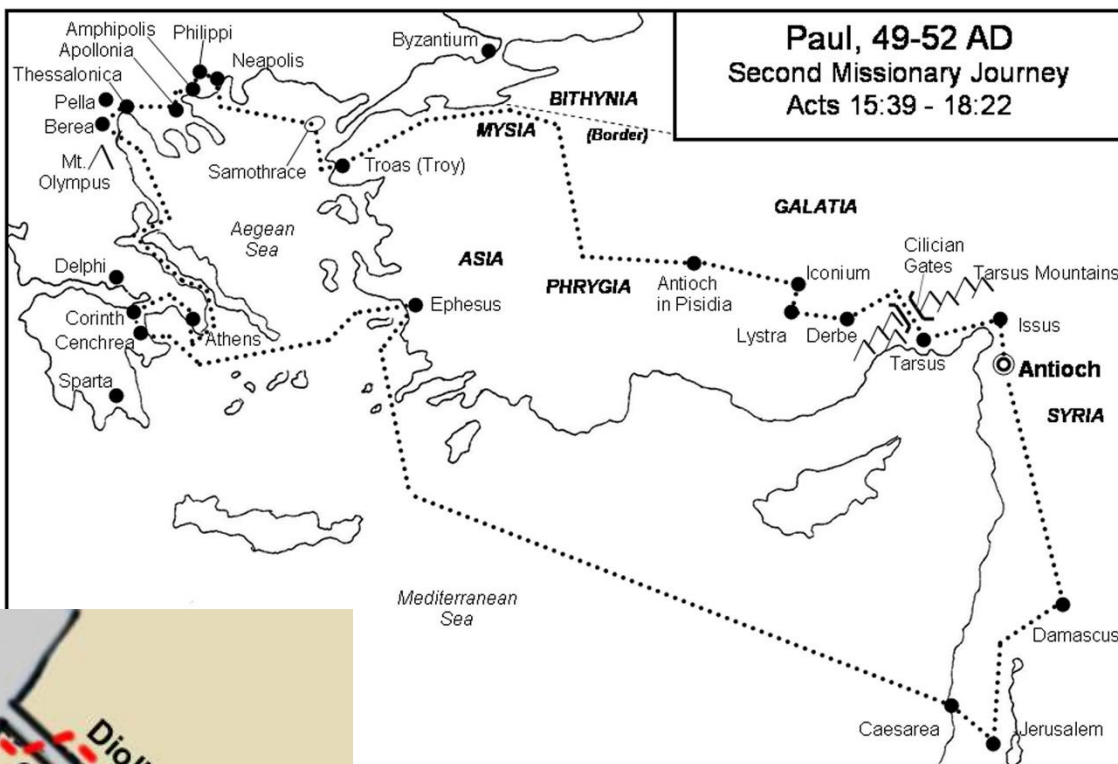
Synagogue Inscription - “The Synagogue of the Hebrews”



**Gallio Inscription** – found in Delphi mentioning Gallio (fourth line ΨΑΛΛΙΩ is GALLIO or γαλλιο). The inscription dates between Jan. 25 – July 31, 52 AD inferring that Gallio was proconsul of Achaia in 51 AD beginning in March of 51 AD. Paul was in Corinth for 18 months from the fall of 50 AD until the spring of 52 AD.



**Acts 18:1-22**



**Corinth** – was the seat of the Roman Government for the Province of Achaia. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth. Corinth and Ephesus (where he spent 3 years) were two cities where Paul spent his most time and energy. Corinth was on the narrow isthmus that divided mainland Greece from the Peloponnesian peninsula. So, Corinth was the center of communication and trade north-south, but also, east-west between the port of Corinth in the west and Cenchreae in the east.

18:1 – Paul arrived in Corinth in the fall of 50 AD (he would leave 18 months later in the spring of 52 AD)

18:2- Aquila (Roman name meaning “eagle”), a man of Jewish birth, from Pontus (a province north of Galatia) and his wife Priscilla (a form of the name “Prisca” as in Rom.16:3, 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19). It appears that Aquila and Priscilla were already believers when Paul met them. This supports the idea that the teaching about Christ (“Chrestus”) had reached Rome and was causing trouble there. Aquila was a Jew, but it is possible that Priscilla (Prisca) was from a Roman noble family called Prisca. Luke refers to her as Priscilla, her familiar name, but Paul always calls her by her formal name, Prisca, in his letters.

The “Chrestus” uprising in Rome referred to by Tacitus in 120 AD when he said:

“As the Jews had again increased in numbers, but could with difficulty be banished from the capital without a tumult because of their number, Claudius did not actually expel them, but forbade them to meet in accordance with their ancestral customs.”

Suetonius (69-122 AD) says of **an edict from 49 AD** by Emperor Claudius ordering all Jews out of Rome:

“As the Jews were making constant disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he (Claudius) expelled them from Rome.”

NOTE: Aquila and Priscilla are taken to Ephesus in the spring of 52 AD, but are back in Rome by 57 AD according to Paul’s greeting to them in Romans 16:3.

18:3 – Tent makers were leather workers. Made military tents, leather worker and display tents for merchants coming in from the sea.

In Judaism it was not proper for a scribe or a rabbi to receive payment for teaching. This kept the teachers pure and on topic. The theory was they were less likely to succumb to the whims of men. Most rabbi’s had a trade in addition to study and teaching. Gamaliel III (220 AD) commended the study of Torah in combination with a secular occupation. He said:

“All study of the Torah which is not combined with work will ultimately be futile and leads to sin.”

Paul’s policy was to work: Acts 20:34; 1 Cor. 9:3-18; 2 Cor. 11:7; 1 Thes. 2:9; 2 Thes. 3:8)

18:5 – After a few weeks Silas and Timothy bring an offering from Macedonia and Paul teaches full time Good news from Thessalonica (**1 Thess. 3:6-10**) lets Paul know his converts are staying strong.

18:6 – Titius Justus name (the nomen and the cognomen) suggest he was a Roman citizen and his family may have been originally placed in Corinth by Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Which would make his family one of the founding members of the city and very wealthy. His praenomen would be Gaius making him the man Paul refers to in **1 Corinthians 1:14** and in **Romans 16:23**. One of the few baptized by Paul. Gaius Titius Justus was wealthy with a large house for the church to meet in.

18:8 – Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, along with Gaius were the only ones baptized by Paul (1 Cor. 1:14)

18:9 – Vision said “no harm” in Corinth unlike Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea. Paul came to Corinthian “fear and trembling” according to 1 Cor. 2:3. Paul may have taken a Nazarite vow at this time **Numbers 6:1-8, 18-19**.

18:12 – There were attacks, but no harm. A decision by civic magistrates such as in Thessalonica would affect only their jurisdiction. But a decision by a Roman governor (like Gallio, proconsul of Achaia) would affect his whole province and be followed by other governors thorough out the empire.

18:13 – The charge brought against Paul was that of propagating a religion not accepted by the Roman Empire. Jewish religion was accepted by Rome due to its antiquity.

18:14-16 – Gallio’s ruling was that Paul’s “new religion” was still under the Jewish “old religion. Gallio said if Paul had been charged with a crime or misdemeanor he would have heard the case. The disputed needed to be handled in the synagogue. Gallio’s tribunal seat (bema) has been excavated.

Gallio was the son of Seneca a famous rhetorician (50 BC-40 AD) and a brother of Seneca the younger (3 BC-65 AD) a Stoic philosopher and a member of the imperial court. Seneca described his brother Gallio with these words: “No mortal is so pleasant to any one person as Gallio is to everybody.” Gallio left Achaia with a fever and took a cruise. He died with the rest of his family by Nero’s execution. Gallio is known from the writings of Tacitus, Pliny, Dio Cassius, and Seneca (his brother.

Gallio was a Roman Proconsul (anthypatos) of the Roman province of Achaia. A proconsuls decision influenced a large circle of Roman courts with much more influence than a local civil official.

18:17 – Anti-jewish demonstrations were obviously common since Rome had expelled them for rowdy synagogue services. **Sosthenes** (the synagogue ruler who replaced Crispus) was beaten in the presence of the proconsul, who simply turned and left the tribunal (bema) bench. Sosthenes may have become a believer if he is the same one with Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:1:

“Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother **Sosthenes**. To the church of God in Corinth...”

Sosthenes was with Paul in Ephesus when Paul wrote the letter of First Corinthians from Ephesus in the spring of 55 AD. Sosthenes most likely was part of the delegation that visited Paul from Corinth.

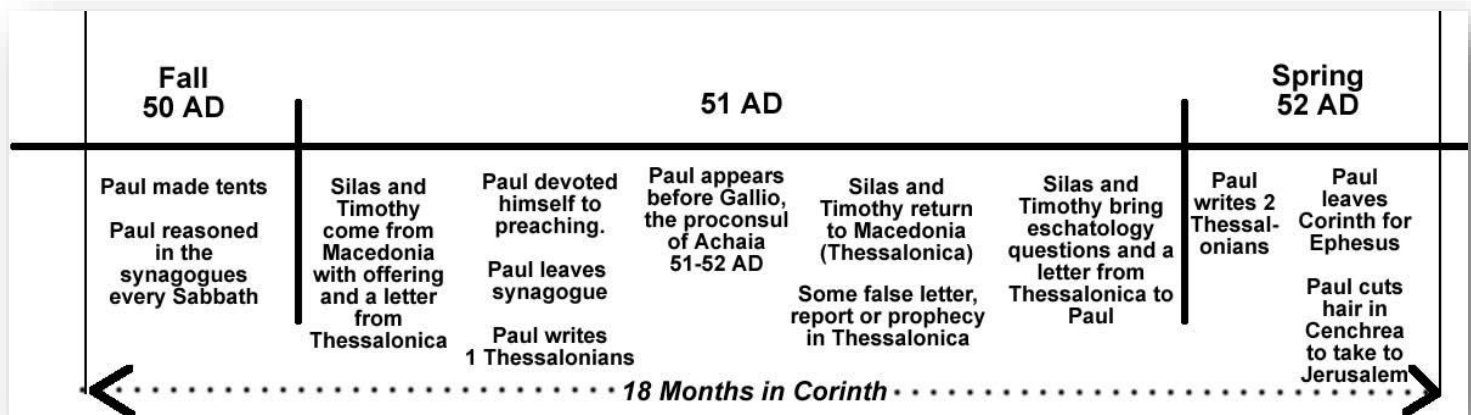
The conversion of Sosthenes means that two synagogue leaders (also Crispus, Acts 18:8) became believers and joined the church of Corinth which was mainly Gentile

Gallio’s ruling was an official judgment by a Roman proconsul stating that Paul’s message (Christianity) and doctrine was Jewish. And, since it was Jewish it was legal and protected under Roman law. This ruling gave Paul, the apostles and the early church a 13 year window (51-64 AD) of legal protection under Roman law in the Roman Empire.

Silas and Timothy remain in Corinth.

18:18 – Hair was cut for a Nazirite vow Paul had taken. Maybe concerning prayer for his safety with a vow. A church was planted in this eastern port city of Cenchrea. Phoebe, a woman who was a deaconess of this church, carried Paul’s letter from Corinth (57 AD) to Rome.

18:19 – Priscilla and Aquila left Corinth with Paul and went into Ephesus



Typical Events from Corinth in 51 AD:

1. Jews took Paul to court is typical of what historians record concerning the Jews constant disturbances from Chrestus.
2. Gallio dismissed the case as is typical of Emperor Claudius' banishment of Jews from Rome
3. Gallio's dismissal made Christianity a Jewish debate and, thus, a "religio licita" (legal religion) in the Roman Empire. This legal standing would continue for 12 years until the days of Nero's persecution beginning in 64 AD. Paul is executed by Nero in fall of 67 or spring of 68 AD which means most of Paul's ministry was during a time when Christianity was legal. (After Jerusalem fell in 70 AD there was no legal protection from Judaism and Christian went through several periods of violent persecution from Rome until 312 AD.)
4. Sosthenes (the leader of the prosecution against Paul and the new synagogue ruler) was beat in court while Gallio ignored it. This is typical of Emperor Claudius' administration.

52 AD Spring – Paul leaves Corinth to go back to Syria

- Paul had taken a vow while in Corinth.
  - Numbers 6:1, 5, 18
  - According to Josephus (Wars of Jews, II, IV, I) it was customary to take a vow after an illness or misfortune. The worshipper would take a 30 day vow to abstain from wine and from cutting their hair. Then after 30 days they would cut the hair, bring it to Jerusalem to be offered as a sacrifice (or, as offering a part of yourself to God) in thankfulness for deliverance. Paul may have been celebrating deliverance from Corinth or his success in Corinth.
- Cencrea - Paul had his hair cut in Cencrea since the 30 days were complete (or, he began a 30 day vow to thank God for deliverance and success in Corinth which means he had to get to Jerusalem in 30 days to finish the vow.
- Ephesus – visits synagogue; leaves Priscilla/Aquila; can't stay; promises to return
- Caesarea – this was a bad time of year for sailing the Mediterranean. Some scholars think this may have been one of Paul's 3 shipwrecks mentioned in 2 Corinthians 11:25.
- Jerusalem – "went up and greeted the church";
  - 52 AD, April, in time to celebrate Passover and Pentecost in Jerusalem
  - Concludes the Nazirite vow by offering his hair at the Temple
- Antioch, Syria – "then went down to Antioch"

## Second Thessalonians

Written spring of 52 AD right before Paul left Corinth for Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem for Passover before he returned to his home church in Antioch, Syria.

**Bible prophecy** includes obvious predictions and the obscure riddles, metaphors, images and word plays.

Bible prophecy leaves the undeniable impression that God knows and God is in control, but is not so scientific that anyone can become a confident fatalist in their own days and predict events and use these prophecies to their own advantage, other than to build their faith, know right from wrong, and live with hope in God.

Thus, Bible prophecy is designed to always be helpful, but challenging.

Bible prophecy builds confidence, but leaves not knowing.

We can only take what we do understand to live godly and wait confidently, yet prophecy still remains a challenge for there is much we will not know.

1:1 – Begins similar to First Thessalonians

1:2 – The source of grace and peace is God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

In this letter the grace of God results in a salvation which gives us peace since by it we have encouragement and hope (See 2:16) –

***"May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word."***

1:3 –

1:4 –

1:5 –

1:6 –

1:7 –

1:8 –

1:9 –

1:10 –

