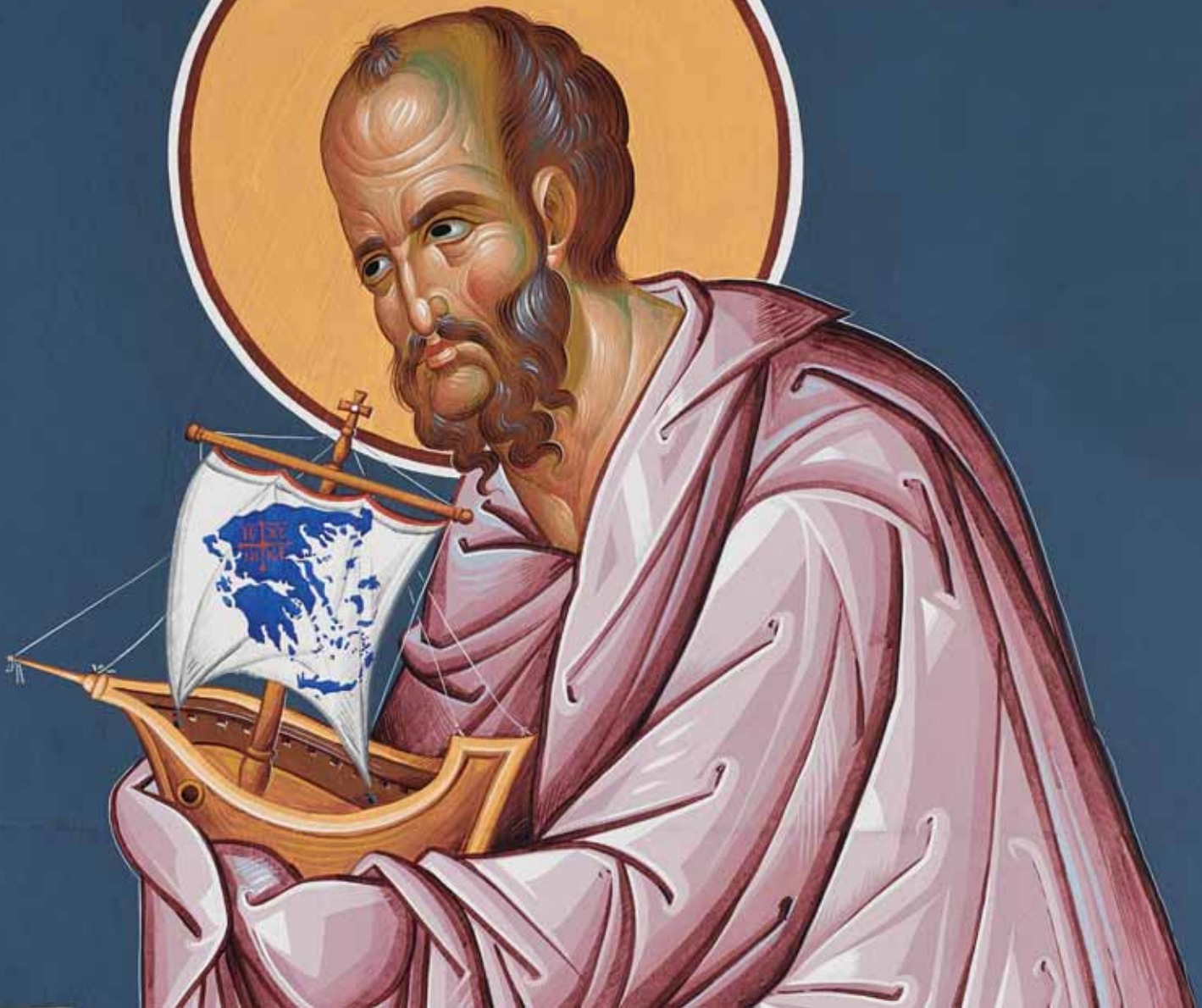


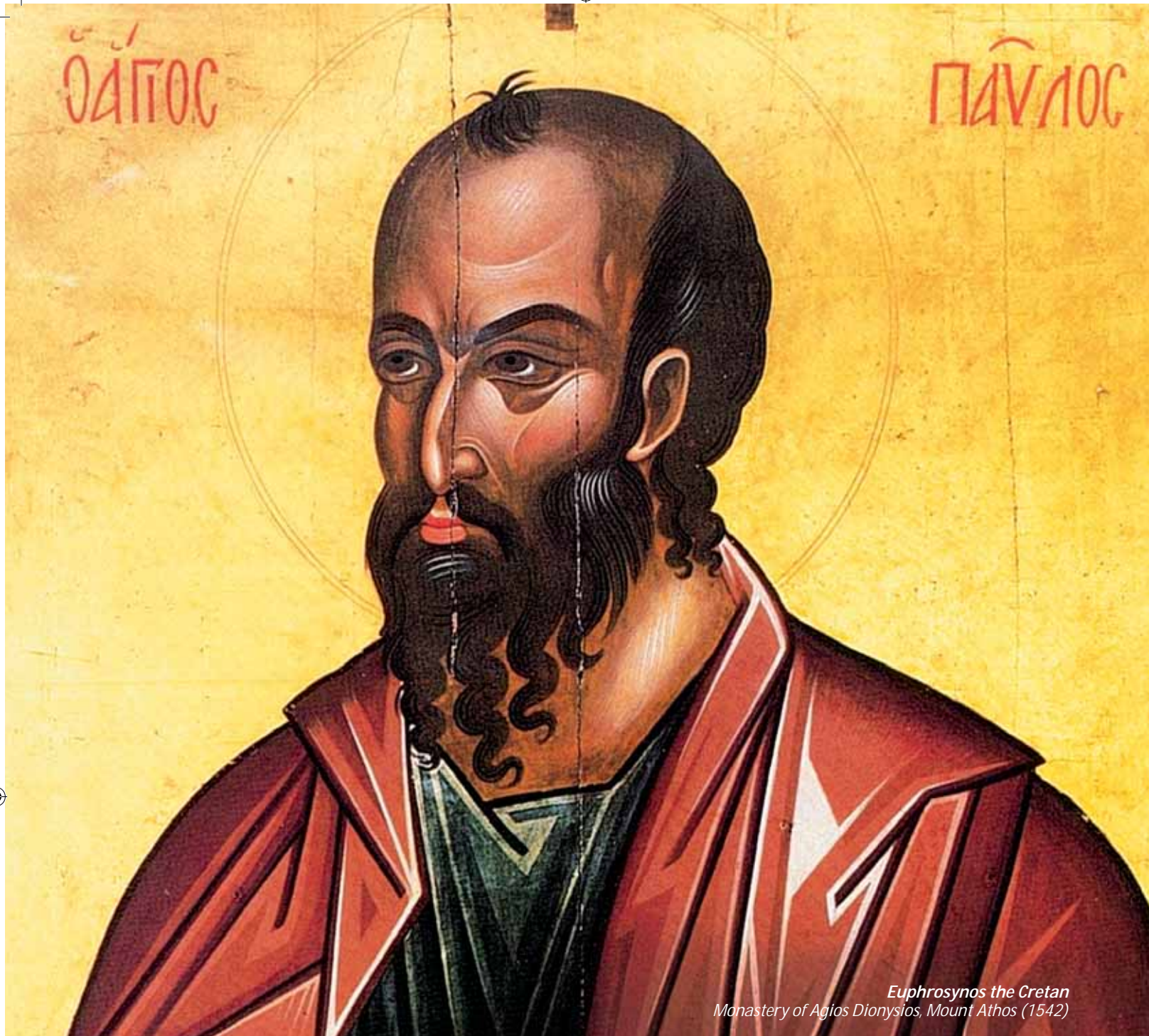
ἍΓΙΟΣ

ΠΑΥΛΟΣ



## In the Footsteps of St. Paul the Apostle in Greece

GREEK NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION



*Euphrosynos the Cretan  
Monastery of Agios Dionysios, Mount Athos (1542)*

## St. Paul the Apostle

The Apostle Paul went to Greece within the framework of his second and third missionary journeys. It was during a night around 49 A.D., when Paul, while at Troas of Asia Minor, had a vision in which he saw a man of Macedonia who called him to carry on with his missionary work in this man's homeland:

*Come over into Macedonia, and help us.*

It is worth noting that this divine intervention, which Paul with his fellow labourers Silas, Titus and Timothy took as an invitation from the Lord to make the message of His Gospel known to that area, was not the first. Their arrival at Troas and, as a consequence, their turn westwards and more specifically to Greece had become manifest on two further occasions during this second missionary journey of the Apostle Paul. On

the first occasion, when they left Iconium, they were prevented by the Holy Ghost from turning eastwards, to Asia, and as a result they finally headed for the regions of Phrygia and central Galatia. As they reached the borders of Mysia wishing to carry on northwards, to the region of Bithynia, the Holy Ghost again did not let them, and as a result they reached the town of Troas passing by the region of Mysia.

*"Therefore loosing from Troas, we came  
with a straight course to Samothracia,*

*and the next day to Neapolis;  
And from thence to Philippi [...]"*

*(Acts 16:11 - 12)*

*Cover photo:  
The Apostle Paul, mural in the Synodal Palace of the Church of Greece, work of Michael Kardamakis*

## Samothraki

Immediately and without delay Paul and his co-workers embarked on a ship heading for the city of Neapolis, present-day Kavala, with the island of Samothracia (Samothrace, present-day Samothraki) as first stop of their voyage. The narrative of the Book of Acts states nothing further. Obviously this overnight stay of Paul at Samothraki must have been due to the increased risk of having to sail in the night and not to any other reason. Although there does not seem to have been any safe haven on the island, nonetheless near the settlement of present-day Palaeopolis, on the northern coast of the island, there were moorings for this kind of journey, such as Demetrium, which today is identified by many with the bay of Kamariotissa.

Until very recently the only trace of the Apostle Paul's overnight stay on Samothraki was the remains of an Early Christian church at Palaeopolis. However, in 2008, following actions taken by the local Church, a pilgrimage monument, Apostle Paul's Sedile, was constructed at that point where Paul the Apostle is said to have walked and spent the night on the island. In fact, it is a building of austere architecture, constructed of wood and stone, in accordance with the standards of the local architectural culture, in which a set of mosaics is also exhibited, on subjects inspired by moments of Paul's short missionary action on Samothrace during his overnight sojourn there.

## Neapolis (present-day Kavala)

Next day, Paul and his fellow labourers, coasting by the island of Thassos, disembarked at Neapolis, today's Kavala, which in those times was the nearest haven of the city of Philippi.

The history of the city is long; it seems to have been founded as early as the 7th c. B.C. by Thassian colonists. The name Christoupolis also attributed to it, i.e. the city of Christ par excellence, is due to the fact that it was the first city visited by Paul and it was under that name that it was known in Byzantine times. Its current name is said to have come either from the Crusaders, because of its resemblance to the saddle of a horse (cavallo), when seen from the sea, or from the fact that it was an important post station, which, in those times, was served by horses, or else from Skabala, the adjacent older colony of the Eretrians, which has been located in the area where today's village Palia Kavala is found.

The name Neapolis for the city of Kavala in Roman times has been preserved on two milestones from that period,

namely numbered markers placed along the most important roads of the time at intervals of one mile to indicate distances. One of these comes from the reign of Trajan and is a milestone found on the Roman Via Egnatia, while the second was found in the town itself and dates from the 2nd century A.D.

Although no relevant reference is made in the Books of the New Testament, according to an old local tradition the Apostle Paul with his fellow labourers disembarked in the area where the church of St. Nicholas is found today, near the present-day seaport of the city. In commemoration of the event there is a modern monument at that point today, called the Apostle Paul's Tribune, in which two representations are most conspicuous and depict the vision of Paul at Troas and his disembarkation at Neapolis. In the area of the monument there has been preserved the base of a column indicating the exact point where Paul disembarked.

## Philippi

Leaving Neapolis, taking the Via Egnatia through the meadow of asphodel and covering a distance of ca. 12 km in the northwest direction, Paul and his companions arrived at the city of Philippi.

In this connection, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles states that Philippi was "the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony" (Acts, 16:12). Established, as its name implies, by Philip II of Macedon in 358/7 B.C. on the site of the ancient Crenides, the city of Philippi constituted that point where in 42 B.C. an epochal event for those times took place – the battle between the joined forces of Octavian and Antony, on the one side, and the forces of Cassius and Brutus, on the other. Its strategic position, since it was the entry city to Europe (from Asia, and vice versa), the fact that it was on the Via Egnatia, its very short distance from the port of Neapolis, its rich water sources, to which the pre-existing small town of Crenides (i.e. fountains) in the same area owed its name, the fertile plain of Datus surrounding the city and the fact that it was at the foot of Mount Pangaion, which was already known from older times for its gold mines, all these factors made Philippi the

most important city of the region indeed, at the time when Paul visited it.

Paul and his co-workers first arrived at this city around 50 A.D., within the framework of his second missionary journey, which was to be marked by three key events that have been preserved for us in the Book of Acts: (a) the Baptism of Lydia, the first woman converted to Christianity not only in Greece but in Europe, (b) the removal of the python spirit from a damsel (a maiden), and (c) the prosecution, imprisonment and departure of Paul and his companions from the city. Paul was to drop by Philippi again during his third and fourth missionary journeys, while, as he states in his Epistle to the Philippians, the local Church at Philippi constituted the only one with which he maintained such a close communication and which steadfastly remained a succourer throughout his missionary activity (Philipp. 4:15).

Today at Philippi the archaeological pickaxe has brought to light a large number of important monuments and findings, the great majority of which can be dated back to the Hellenistic



*Philippi, part of a basilica*

and, mainly, to Roman times. Among these there stand out the sections of the Via Egnatia that have been preserved on the northern side of the Agora, remains of the once mighty walls of the city, as well as of three gates, the Crenides gate, the Marsh gate and the Neapolis gate, through which Paul seems to have entered Philippi, as he came precisely from Neapolis. Within the city, remains of various public buildings are preserved, although in their majority they should be regarded as later than Paul's time. Nonetheless, among the monuments which must have been there at the time of St. Paul, we may pick out:

- the ancient Agora, where one of the remains of its shops is indicated according to tradition as being that of Lydia, seller of purple;
- the remains of Basilicas A, B and C;

- the Octagonal church, i.e. an early Christian house of prayer dedicated to the memory of the Apostle Paul;
- the building which purportedly served as a prison of the Apostle;
- the ancient theatre, etc.

At a distance of 1 km from the archaeological site, the visitor can also see the impressive octagonal church-baptistery constructed by the local Church after the models of early Christian times, as well as the open-air baptistery near the Zygaktis river, where group baptisms of adults are performed to this day.

*Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1).*

## Amphipolis and Apollonia

On the way to Thessaloniki, next stop of his missionary journey, Paul will go through the towns of Amphipolis and Apollonia. The Book of Acts does not preserve anything extraordinary regarding these towns. Yet they both enjoyed a highly significant strategic and commercial position right on the road axis of the Via Egnatia.

More specifically, Amphipolis, the first town through which Paul passed on his way from Philippi to Thessaloniki, constituted the capital of the first administrative unit of Macedonia in those times. It owes its name to the fact that the river Strymon flowed around the city on both sides of it. Archaeologists have discovered many milestones with the

name of that town inscribed upon them; this implies that during Roman Antiquity it must have been a significant stopping place along the Via Egnatia. This is obviously the reason why it is also mentioned in the Book of Acts. Today the famous lion of Amphipolis dominates the area of ancient Amphipolis and more specifically the western bank of the river Strymon: dating back to the 4th century A.D., it seems to have been erected on that particular spot either to commemorate an unidentified military victory or as a funerary monument decorating the tomb of some prominent dead person. Other important findings include the five Christian Basilicas (5th-6th centuries A.D.) and what is said to have been the bishop's residence (4th century A.D.), which proves that Amphipolis must have constituted

a significant Christian centre during early Christian times.

On the other hand, there is no further relevant information regarding the town of Apollonia, apart from the facts that its history begins in 432 B.C., when it was founded by king Philip I of Macedon and that it constituted one of the most important towns of the wider territory of Mygdonia. It is south of the lake Volvi and at a distance of ca. 30 km from the Strymonic Gulf, very close to Olynthus, another important town of Macedonia. Today, on the outskirts of the village of Apollonia (Pollina) a simple rock is shown, which, according to the oral local tradition, marked the point from which Paul preached the Gospel to the inhabitants of the town, when he and his fellow labourers passed through on their way to Thessaloniki.

## Thessaloniki

Fifty kilometers from Apollonia, the same distance as today, the city of Thessaloniki (Thessalonica) was found, multitudinous already by the standards of those times: with a population of 20-40,000 it was the metropolis of Macedonia. Even though Thessaloniki did not boast the past or the history of other cities of Greece such as Athens or Corinth, when Paul visited it, it was one of the fastest growing Greek cities with regard not only to its extent and population but also to its economy and trade. By means of its port, it was connected commercially with almost all cities of the time, since its position half way on the Via Egnatia and the possibility of direct access to the Danubian lands through the valleys of the Axios and the Morava rivers lent a particularly strategic significance to its position in the area.

The history of Thessaloniki dates back to 316-315 B.C., when king Cassander of Macedon consolidated twenty-six smaller towns on the site of the ancient town of Therma (present-day Ano Toumba) and named the new city after his wife Thessaloniki, Alexander the Great's half-sister.

The Book of Acts states that when Paul arrived at Thessaloniki, "as his manner was", he went to the local Synagogue, where "three sabbath days he reasoned" with both Jews and Gentile (Greek) converts on the issue that "Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead and that this Jesus, [...] is Christ". The existence of a Synagogue in Thessaloniki, and apparently neither in Philippi, with regard to which a mere mention of "prayer" is made, nor in Apollonia, indicates a strong Jewish presence in this city. This assumption is confirmed by a set of historic events, such as the arrival of a large number of exiled Jews from Alexandria at Thessaloniki in 145 B.C., etc. Jews were seen as strangers in Thessaloniki, although they had the right to settle there (domicilium) and were active mainly in trade and the craft industry.

Paul seems to have entered the city from the West, where Langada Road is found today and where the Via Egnatia also used to run through, to arrive at the so-called Letaia gate (Yeni Kapu) and the road which was in the same area as Aghiou Dimitriou Street today. Indeed, according to tradition, six different points are indicated as possible places in which the Synagogue where Paul preached may have stood: (a) the

south chapel of the Vlatadon Monastery, which is tellingly dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul and near which another spot is shown where the house of Jason, Paul's host, is said to have been; (b) a second church below that of Saint Demetrius; (c) the Saint George Rotunda; (d) the quarter on the west side of the Roman Agora, north of the Church of Panaghia Chalkeon ("the Virgin of the Coppersmiths"); (e) the area north of where the former Governor's House stands today, near the temple of Dionysus; or (f) the area of the Letaia gate, near Aghios Dimitrios Street. Indeed, in this connection, it is worth taking into account the witness of 19th-century travelers that the Ambon of the Church of Saint Sophia was the tribune from which the Apostle Paul spoke to the Thessalonians and which was brought there from another point near the Church of the Holy Apostles, in the vicinity of the Church of Saint Demetrius and the Letaia gate.

Paul's sojourn in Thessaloniki for about three weeks led to the establishment of a small local church there, since, as is stated in the text of Acts [17:4ff.], some of the Jews believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. This success of Paul's preaching at Thessaloniki caused a reaction of the part of the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar against Paul and his fellow labourers, to cause turmoil. In fact, they succeeded in bringing Jason and some others of the newly converted Christians before the general assembly of the city, instead of Paul and his companions whom they were unable to find. They accused Jason and his brethren of breaking Caesar's laws by supposedly claiming that the true king was only Jesus and not the emperor. These developments must have been so intense that Paul was forced to flee the city. However, his contact with it and with its Christian community did not end here, since, as we know, he later addressed to it two of his Epistles, i.e. the First and the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.

*And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea (Acts 17:10).*

## Veria

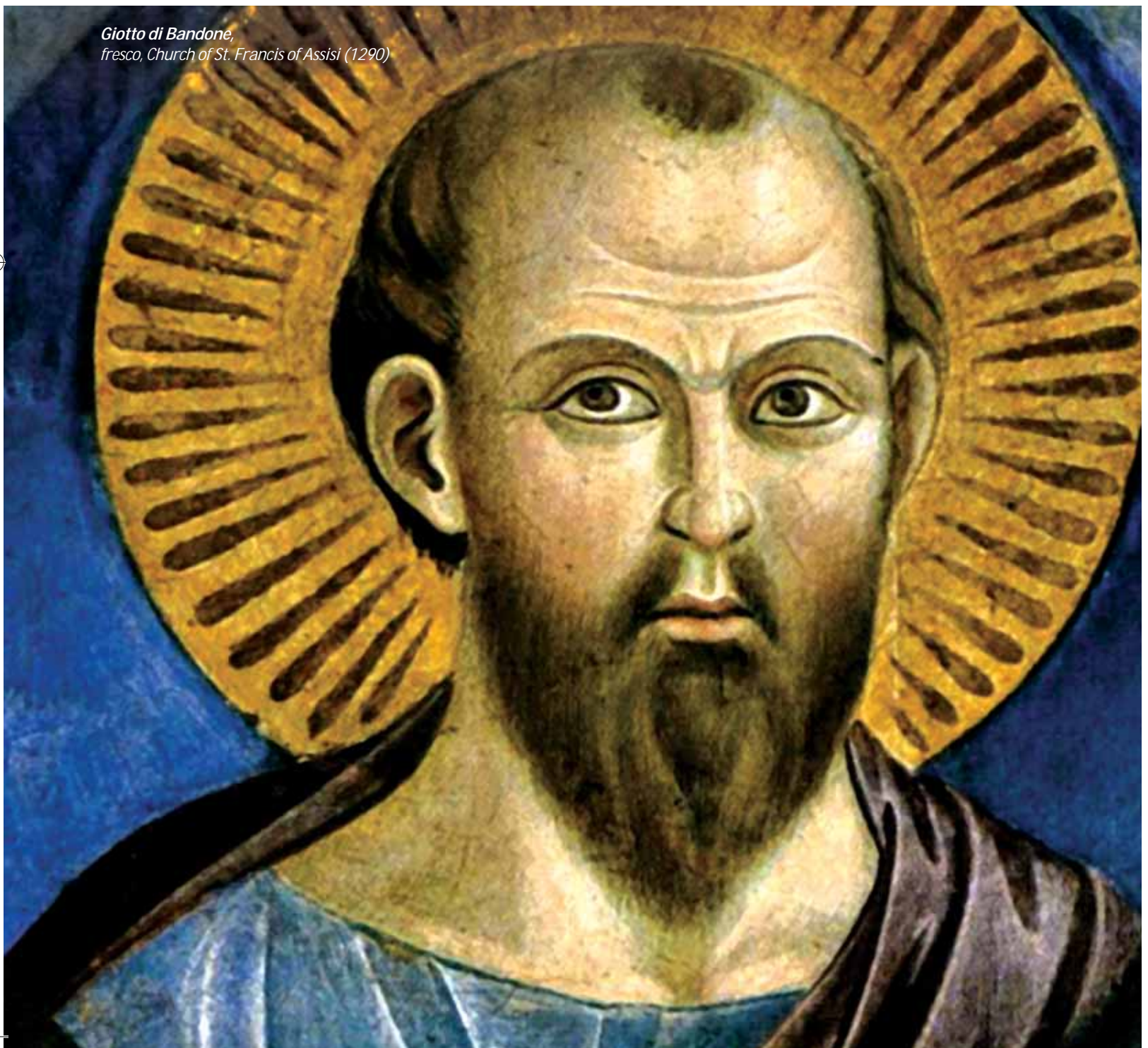
Paul's next stop was the city of Veria [historically also spelled Beroea or Berea, as in the Bible]. At a distance of 70-80 km from Thessaloniki, Veria is on the fertile Haliacmon plain, on the eastern foot of Vermion Mountains, near the Pierian Mountains. As the Via Egnatia does not go through these, Paul seems to have arrived at that city initially taking the Via Egnatia down to ancient Pella, in other words covering a distance of 30 Roman miles (ca. 44.5km) and from there through some other detour and covering another 27 Roman miles (40 km) to Veria after a journey that lasted almost two days.

In ancient times, Veria was the second most important city of Macedonia after Thessaloniki. The first information regarding this city dates back to the time of Alexander the Great, whereas the period of its great brilliance was that

of the Antigonid dynasty. Following the Roman conquest, Veria became the capital of the third administrative unit of Macedonia, while its strategic position, as it was constructed right on the main road linking Macedonia to Thessaly, and the fact that it surrendered to the Romans without resistance, played a decisive part in its economic growth and prosperity during Roman times.

According to the Book of Acts, upon arriving at Veria, Paul immediately headed for the local Synagogue. The fact that there was a Synagogue in Veria suggests, as in the aforementioned case of Thessaloniki, the existence of a large and thriving Jewish community in the city, indeed for the same reasons as in Thessaloniki, while its members too are thought to have been active in trade. Still, the Book of the Acts of the Apostles describes the Jews of Veria as "more noble

*Giotto di Bondone,  
fresco, Church of St. Francis of Assisi (1290)*





*Areopagus, commemorative plaque for the speech the Apostle Paul delivered to the Athenians*

than those in Thessalonica”, which is undoubtedly connected not only with the behaviour they displayed to Paul, perceived to have been better than that displayed to him by the Jews of Thessaloniki, but also, at the same time, with the higher cultural and living standards of the inhabitants of Veria.

Paul’s preaching in Veria was more successful than in Thessaloniki. Acts state that the Jews in the former “received the word with all readiness of mind”, that those of them who believed were many, as well as “not a few” of the Greek men and women of the higher (“honourable”) social strata of the city.

Even so, Paul’s preaching in Veria was soon to be interrupted, since, as is stated in Acts, the Jews of Thessaloniki found out that Paul was at Veria preaching and teaching the word of God and came to stir up the people there. Paul was to be sent away again

with the help of local Christians, who indeed accompanied him to the next stop of his journey, Athens.

No monuments have been preserved in Veria from the time of Paul’s visit, except for remains of the ancient walls of the city and other public and private buildings. Thus on Mitropoleos Street the visitor may see paving stones from Roman roads, transferred there from different points in the city. Yet, in commemoration of the important event of Paul’s visit to Veria and of his preaching there, at a short distance outside the city a modern monument has been erected, the so-called Tribune of the Apostle Paul, which bears mosaics inspired by Paul’s missionary activity in Macedonia (the vision at Troas and preaching at the city of Veria).

*... and they that conducted Paul brought him unto Athens (Acts 17:15).*

## Athens

Paul arrived at Athens by sea. According to the Book of Acts, the Christians from Veria who smuggled Paul out of their city obviously led him to one of the closest ports either at Methoni, which is considered to have been the most likely option, or at Pydna or even at Dion. Respectively, we are not certain about the exact point of Paul’s disembarkation either. The port of Piraeus presents itself as the most reasonable possibility, although it has also been argued, and indeed quite strongly, that the ship which brought Paul to Athens put in at Phaliron, near the point where the small church of Saint George of Palaio Phaliro is found today and where a related monument has also been constructed.

At the time when Paul visited it, Athens lived in the shadow of its past glory, as there was barely anything left to remind of its former glamour. Its destruction in 86 B.C. by Silas had led to its decline. Cities such as the capital of the empire, Rome, or Alexandria or even Tarsus, Paul’s own birthplace, were more significant centres of learning and philosophy than Athens. Nonetheless, the once powerful city of Pericles still exerted a certain charm over the entire world and many prominent Romans thought it an honour to live in Athens even for a short

while. Therefore, many were those who used to send their children to study in that city. On the administrative score, Athens enjoyed the status of tax-free city, as it was exempted from paying taxes to Rome, while it was been granted the right to exert the judicial power over its citizens.

The Book of Acts mentions the existence of a Jewish Synagogue as well as of a number of converts. Yet the interest here is for the first time not focused on Paul’s preaching to the Jews and the converts of the city as much as on the Gentile population. Paul is presented as innerly upset (“his spirit was stirred in him”) at seeing the city of Athens wholly given to idolatry, something which seems to have monopolized his discussions both at the Synagogue and in the Agora of the city with those he met with, among whom, as is stated, were also certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics, in other terms la crème de la crème of the city’s intelligentsia. These discussions on the subjects of Jesus and Resurrection were precisely what eventually brought him to the Areopagus as an alleged “babbler”, namely as a “setter forth” of novel religious ideas and perceptions, in order to explain what this new doctrine that he preached was.



It is not clear whether Paul's referral to the Areopagus led to a trial or was just an invitation to a debate with the sages of Athens so that further insights or some kind of an elaboration might be provided into what Paul "disputed" in the Agora. At any rate, the fact remains that the jurisdiction of the Areopagus, as administrative and judicial institution in those times, also included the scrutiny of foreign cults, while the term "babbling" used in Acts regarding Paul's designation by the Athenians seems to be in favour of the scenario that the famous sermon of Paul on the Areopagus was some kind of plea in response to such a kind of scrutiny. Undoubtedly, Paul's sermon about the resurrection of the dead must have aroused the interest of the Athenians, since it went one step beyond their familiar Platonic teaching of the immortality of the soul. Nonetheless, what is impressive about the Apostle Paul's preaching in Athens and marks it out compared to that in other Greek cities is, on the one hand, the tolerant, investigatory and academic treatment of Paul by the Athenians and, on the other, their clearly more courteous behaviour to him. As quite a few researchers rightly point out, the picture given by Paul's sermon in Athens is one of "intellectual arrogance" on the part of the Athenians, an experience which obviously led Paul to note in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, later, that, because the Greeks seek after wisdom, what we preach, Christ Crucified and Risen, is "foolishness" to them by virtue of philosophy and reason (1 Cor. 1:22-23 : "For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness;").

According to the narrative in Acts, Paul started his famous sermon to the Athenians by using as a springboard the existence of an altar devoted "to the unknown god" in the

city. Apart from relevant references in works of the ancient literature (such as Philostratus and Pausanias), it is a fact that the archaeological pickaxe too has confirmed this piety and religiosity of the Athenians, having brought to light many such inscriptions, with the difference, though, that they all refer to unknown god (in plural) and not to one god, as is stated in the text of Acts. Although the possibility of a new, different finding cannot be excluded in the future, this slight departure from the text of Acts can be justified easily, on the one hand, by the fact that all pagan religions in those times were exclusively polytheistic and, on the other, by the edge that Paul wished to give to his preaching, since it was bound to have a clearly monotheistic content.

Acts simply mention the Areios Pagos as the place where Paul's sermon was delivered. In other terms, it is not clear whether it took place on the hill of the same name opposite the Acropolis or before the body of the Assembly, which, as is known, convened in the so-called Basileios (i.e. Royal) Stoa, next to the Agora. Whether on top of the hill, though, or in the Basileios Stoa, Paul's preaching does not seem to have convinced the Athenians. Acts tellingly state that, when they heard Paul's preaching of the resurrection of the dead, "some mocked: and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter", in a demeaning manner. Nonetheless, Paul's endeavour does not seem to have been totally fruitless: "howbeit certain men claved unto him, and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, [...]". Saint Dionysius the Areopagite became the first Bishop of Athens and patron saint of the city.

*... Paul departed from Athens,  
and came to Corinth; (Acts 18:1).*



## Corinth

Paul's next stop after Athens was Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, which comprised the Peloponnese and Central Greece (Sterea Hellas). At the time when Paul visited it, Corinth was the largest city of Greece and one of the largest in the Eastern Mediterranean, with a population reaching 200,000 free citizens and 400,000 servants. However, it should be made clear that the Corinth visited by Paul was not the ancient Greek city but the Roman colony founded in 44 B.C. by Julius Caesar on the ruins which another descendant of Aeneas, the Roman consul Lucius Mummius, left behind him in 146 B.C. thus avenging the sack of Troy by razing the city which at the time of the Trojan War was the seat of the Achaean League.

The strategic position of the city, as all the roads to and from the Peloponnese brought to it, its two closest seaports, Lechaion in the Corinthian Gulf and Cenchreai in the Saronic Gulf, through which it essentially controlled the whole of the trade between Italy and Asia Minor (West-East), as well as, finally, Isthmus and the fortress of Acrocorinth, from which it oversaw the North-South axis soon brought the city back to its former glory. As a result, at the time when Paul visited it, it was already the most important trade centre of Greece again.

Although no specific mention is made in the Book of Acts, Paul must have reached Corinth from Athens by sea. The sea journey was clearly easier than the laborious journey by land, which was also more dangerous because of robbers. So Paul must have boarded a ship in the port of Piraeus, and from there must have proceeded to Cenchreai, the nearest port of Corinth in the Saronic Gulf, ca. 7 km southeast of the city.

Acts states that upon arriving at Corinth Paul did not address himself to the Gentile population, as he had done in Athens, but found refuge among his fellow Jews of the city. Among them there was Aquila, a Jew from Pontus, who, together with his wife Priscilla, had recently come to Corinth from Rome. Paul "abode with them" and, as they were of the same craft, tentmakers, he worked with them. Tent-making in Corinth must have been quite a lucrative business, given that tents were an essential part of the travelling gear in those times and that Corinth was an important travel stop.

Paul is presented as preaching in the Synagogue every Sabbath, trying to persuade both the Jews and the Greeks (obviously converts). The arrival of his companions Silas and Timothy from Veria gave new impetus to his kerygmatic activity, as the Athens experience seems to have disappointed and worn him down. Moreover, here too there was little response on the part of the Jews in the Synagogue, as most of them set themselves against him, insulting him. This behaviour of the Jews caused Paul's indignation, so he symbolically "shook his raiment" to show that he wanted nothing to do with them anymore and turned to the Gentile converts. He preached from new headquarters now, the house of Titius Justus, which indeed was right next to the Synagogue, "and Crispus, the chief ruler of the Synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house" among the first. According to Acts, "many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized". Indeed, in Corinth Paul was to be strengthened in his work by a vision, in which the Lord urged him not to be afraid but to continue preaching the Gospel to the city and said to him that He was with him and that no man

would attack him and hurt him, since those who expected his preaching were numerous. In effect, when the Jews of the city rose against him and brought him before Gallio, proconsul of Achaia who had his seat in Corinth, accusing him that he tried to persuade men to worship God in a manner which was contrary to the Mosaic Law, before even Paul had a chance to open his mouth to defend himself, Gallio dismissed him by declaring that the resolution of such matters was outside his remit.

Paul remained in Corinth teaching the word of God for one and a half years, the longest time span than in any other city in Greece. Moreover, he seems to have loved Corinth and the members of the local Church there, with whom he kept in touch also during his subsequent missionary activity. Later on, he sent out four or more Epistles, two of which are part of the Canon of the New Testament (the 1st and 2nd Corinthians), while it was in Corinth that he also wrote four of his other Epistles, those to the Romans, to the Galatians, and the two to the Thessalonians. Paul was to visit Corinth again within the framework of his third missionary journey to stay there for almost three months, as well as during what is said to have been his fourth missionary journey.

Today the archaeological site of ancient Corinth constitutes one of the largest and most significant ones in Greece, while several important findings are kept in the local archaeological museum. Indeed, it is worth noting that many of the buildings and other monuments preserved today within the main archaeological site were either already standing or under construction at the time of Paul's first visit to the city, such as the archaic temple, the Sacred Spring, the Fountain of Glauke, the temple of Hera Akraia, the so-called Northern Roman Agora, the Theatre, the Lechaion Road, the famous Tribune etc. The building of the famous Synagogue has not been found. However, the Jewish presence in the city is confirmed by archaeological evidence, namely the remains of two steles, on the first of which the following inscription has been preserved fragmentarily: [ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗ ΕΒΡΑΙΩΝ] (:Synagogue of the Hebrews), while on the second one can see a ritual decoration with three seven-lamp menorahs, palm and etrog branches, although this latter dates to the 4th-5th centuries A.D., in other terms to a time later than Paul's visit to the city.

Finally, a highly significant finding in the archaeological site of Corinth is a Latin inscription found on the small square east of the theatre, dated to the first half of the 1st century A.D. This inscription was placed there in honour of a certain Erastus, steward of the city of Corinth, who sponsored the paving of the square in return for his appointment to this post. The significance of this finding consists in the fact that it must be the same Erastus mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans (16:23) as chamberlain of the city of Corinth and possibly the Erastus of Acts 19:22 and of the Second Epistle to Timothy (4:20), given the rarity of the name and its appearance again in relation to Paul (as in Acts 19:22) and the city of Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20). Another finding of similar significance, though not from the archaeological site of Corinth but from that of Delphi is the so-called inscription of Gallio, which constitutes the archaeological documentation of Paul's reference to the Roman proconsul of the same name during the Apostle's first visit to Corinth.



## Other cities where the Apostle Paul stopped in Greece:

Mytilene, Chios, Samos, Kos, Rhodes, Crete (Kaloi Limenes), Melite (i.e. Cephalonia?), Nicopolis.

Within the framework of his third missionary journey the Book of Acts also mentions some cities as short stops of the Apostle Paul's journeys in Greece. The first of these cities is Mytilini (Acts 20:14), the island on which Paul and his fellow labourers Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessaloniki, Gaius of Derbe, Timotheus, Tychicus and Trophimus [of Asia] remained for one night on their way back from Macedonia to Jerusalem. From there they sailed next day and reached the shores of Asia Minor opposite Chios, whence, after an overnight stay, they continued for Samos. There they spent the night at Trogyllium, whereas on the following day they ended up at Miletus, where Paul called and spoke to the elders of the local Church of Ephesus (Ch. 20). From there Paul and his entourage proceeded by ship to Kos, the following day to Rhodes, and more specifically to the port of Lindos, according to a local tradition, and from there to Tyre, whence they arrived at Jerusalem by road.

Another stop of the Apostle Paul in Greece was the island of Crete and more specifically the location which in the Book of Acts is referred to as Kaloi Limenes (i.e. good harbours, fair havens), near the town of Lassaia, where the ship carrying Paul in chains as a prisoner of the Romans took refuge from an adverse northwest wind. Kaloi Limenes is within the Heraklion regional unit, southern Crete, almost 80 km south of the city of Heraklion and 25 km from Moires. Opposite the present-day port the islet of Mikro Nissi is found, called "Apostle Paul" by the locals. On a nearby hill there is a small church dedicated to the Apostle Paul: though a building of 1911, it is likely to have been constructed on the site of an older church which appears on Venetian maps of 1770. Next to that church there is a small cave which, according to a local tradition, is indicated as the place where St. Paul spent the night.

Moreover, a modern theory wants the Meliti of Acts to be identified not with Malta, as has prevailed, but with the island of Cephalonia. The theory is founded upon the reasonable hypothesis that the ship carrying Paul from Crete, with Italy as its destination, though adrift because of the storm, could not possibly have been carried away as far to the west as Malta. However, because of strong south winds it is more likely to have drifted northwest, deep in the Ionian Sea, and finally to the island of Cephalonia. According to the same theory, the name Melite, by which the inhabitants of the island call it, was the name under which the Lassi peninsula of Argostoli (on Cephalonia) was known.

Finally, although Nicopolis is mentioned nowhere in the Book of the Acts of the Apostles, it was undoubtedly one of Paul's stops in Greece, since in his Epistle to Titus Paul asks Titus to come and join him there, as he had decided to spend the winter of 65-66 A.D. in that city during his fourth Apostolic journey. Although there has been much talk in modern research about the identity of the Nicopolis in question, given that in that period there were seven cities of the same name, the Nicopolis of Acts is generally considered to have been that of Epirus, which is geographically located in the Ambracian Gulf, near Actium. It was relatively new as a city (hence, obviously, its name, too), since it was founded as late as 31 B.C. by the Roman emperor Octavian Augustus in commemoration of his victory over Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the naval Battle of Actium. The city enjoyed prerogatives and tax exemption, a fact which, combined with the devastation of most towns of Epirus brought about by the Roman general Aemilius Paullus a few years earlier, contributed to an influx of a large number of people to it and resulted in its becoming rapidly one of the most populated cities of the Empire.

**Texts:** Dr. Vasileios D. Tzerpos, Collaborator of Apostoliki Diakonia  
**Translation into English:** Dr Nikolaos C. Petropoulos, M.St., D.Phil. {Oxon.}



**IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF APOSTLE PAUL IN GREECE**

- Second Journey
- Third Journey
- Fourth Journey

# FOLLOW GREECE EVERYWHERE

**[www.visitgreece.gr](http://www.visitgreece.gr)**

Discover the fascination of Greece through our website!

**[www.my-greece.gr](http://www.my-greece.gr)**

Explore experiences, upload your own!

**<http://eepurl.com/WvnY>**

Sign up to our NEWSLETTER and uncover our hidden treasures!



**[www.facebook.com/visitgreecegr](http://www.facebook.com/visitgreecegr)**

Let's talk about Greece!



**[www.twitter.com/visitgreecegr](http://www.twitter.com/visitgreecegr)**

Follow us on Twitter!



**[www.youtube.com/visitgreecegr](http://www.youtube.com/visitgreecegr)**

Watch our latest videos!

**flickr**

**[www.flickr.com/visitgreecegr](http://www.flickr.com/visitgreecegr)**

Can you see me? I was in Greece too!



**[www.foursquare.com/visitgreecegr](http://www.foursquare.com/visitgreecegr)**

Follow our tips!



**<https://plus.google.com/+greece>**

Find out what Greece is all about!



**<http://pinterest.com/visitgreecegr>**

Let's pin the beauties of Greece!



**<http://instagram.com/visitgreecegr>**

Capture & Share your moments in Greece!



**[www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr](http://www.apostoliki-diakonia.gr)**

*Apostoliki Diakonia of the Orthodox Church of Greece*

**[www.justinian.gr](http://www.justinian.gr)**

*GREECE - "JUSTINIAN" Ecclesiastical Cultural Heritage*

**<http://www.ecclesia.gr/greek/holysynod/committees/tourism/tourism.htm>**

*Synodical Office of Pilgrimage Tours (Religious Tourism) of the Church of Greece*



Ministry of Tourism  
Greek National Tourism Organisation  
**[www.visitgreece.gr](http://www.visitgreece.gr)**