

- A Study in Acts -

Chapter Eighteen – Second Journey of Paul Continued

ACTS 18:1:

From Philippi, Paul will travel to **Thessalonica** and preached to the Jews and devout Greeks in the synagogue with much success. The unbelieving Jews would stir up a mob and attempt to bring Paul and his traveling companions out to the people. This would be unsuccessful; however, it forced the brethren to send Paul and Silas away by night to **Berea**. Paul would enter the synagogue and bring the Gospel of Jesus as the Christ to these Jews with a much different universal result. They searched, proved, and readily accepted Paul's evidence and teaching; however, Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea and stirred up trouble there. The brethren sent Paul away by ship to **Athens**. Upon arrival in Athens, and while he is waiting for Silas and Timothy, he begins to speak in the city's synagogue and marketplace (Paul is uniquely moved by the city being given over to idolatry); his preaching soon gains him an audience with the city's philosophers. Paul's sermon to these philosophers finds some limited success and from Athens he will now come to **Corinth**.

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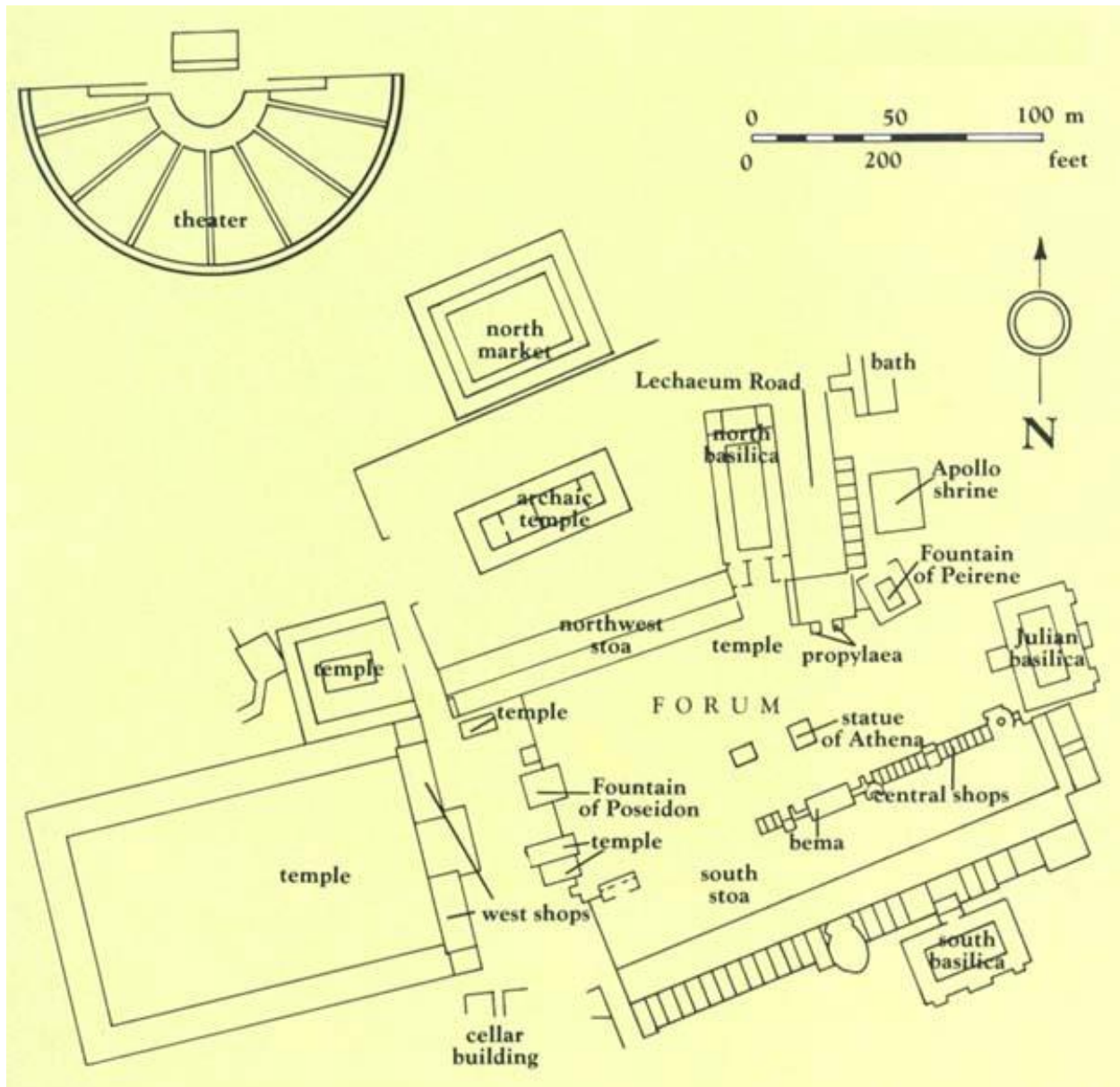
Text #1:

Acts 18:1 "After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth."





Corinth: Greek, “kor'-inth” (from Korinthos, "ornament"). This was the Roman appointed capital of the Greek province of Achaia. It resided just southwest of the Isthmus that joined the Peloponnese to the mainland (the Isthmus averages about four miles across). The city was situated very close to the three best harbors in the region, which in turn made it a trade mecca and economically the jewel of Southern Greece. In addition, there was a type of tramway for cargo to be hauled over-land across the Isthmus to other ships and even smaller ships themselves would be hauled across in order to avoid the often-treacherous sea journey around the Peloponnese (an additional 200 dangerous miles). A canal across the Isthmus was actually installed by French engineers in 1893.



In addition to the riches of the world, the seaports brought with it the culture of the world itself, all converging in this one location. Many Jews flocked to Corinth for the vast ability to trade world-wide from a single location. This would help us understand the large synagogue in this city.

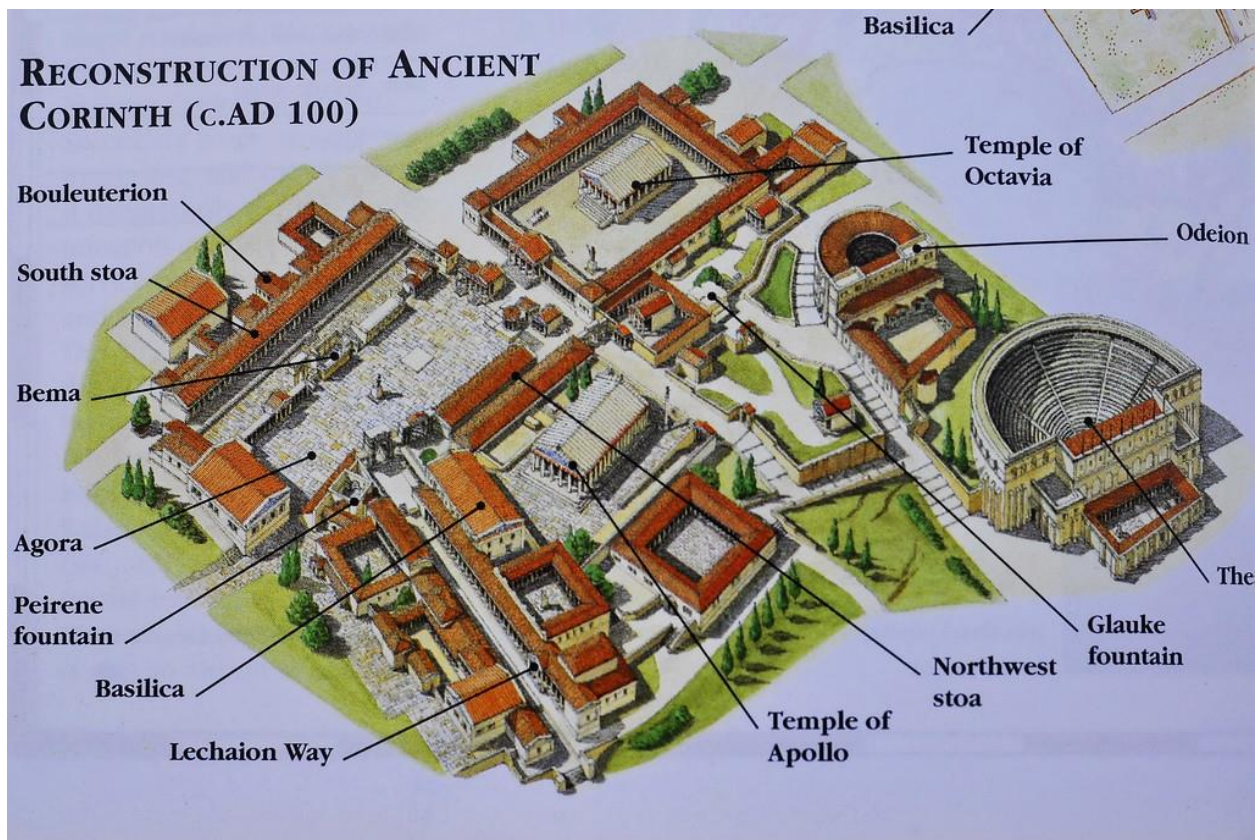
Even though this is a Greek province, being controlled by Rome and the amount of trade in this city would additionally bring a large Roman presence here as well; note these Latin names mentioned in scripture concerning those in Corinth:

Lucius, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, Quartus (**Romans 16:21-23**), Crispus, Titus Justus (**Acts 18:7-8**), Fortunatus, Achaicus (**1 Corinthians 16:17**).

Religiously, Corinth was just as diverse as the people who came there. As we have already mentioned the large number of Jews in the city and their synagogue; additionally, there could be found cults of the Egyptians, Romans, and the Greeks.

The temple of Aphrodite was found and believed to be atop the Acro Corinth. This temple was purported to be served at any given time by one thousand prostitutes, who sought the sailors of the city to practice their profession.

The temple of Poseidon was on equal terms with that of the temple of Aphrodite in fame, due to the vast labor force of mariners who frequented this city's harbors. Numerous other temples dotted the city and it could safely be said that idolatry was prevalent (Apollo, Hermes, Venus, Asklepios, etc.).



Corinth was known world-wide for its lack of moral restraint and non-virtuous nature. As with most seaports, this seems to be a constant association, then throw in the temple of Aphrodite, and the wealth found here and you have a perfect cocktail of moral and traditional decadence. The word, "*Korinthiazesthai*" became a word used in the Greek language to describe drunken immoral debauchery. In addition, to call a woman a, "Corinthian woman or lass", was to impugn her morals (in a far more vulgar application). We will actually speak more about this as we look into Paul's dealings in this city.

The city was additionally famous for a series of athletic games held in honor to Poseidon (the Isthmian Games), these games were secondary only to the Olympics.



Bema

“Paul spent 18 months in the city before the Jews of the city charged him with breaking the law and brought him before Gallio at the city's place of judgment (bema). The mention of Gallio provides an anchor for New Testament chronology as we know from Roman sources that Gallio was proconsul of Achaia from June 51 to May 52. Standing on this platform, the proconsul dismissed the charges against Paul as a dispute of Jewish law and not of a criminal nature.”

<http://www.bibleplaces.com/corinth.htm>

Agora

“In Corinth Paul met Aquila and Priscilla, Jews recently expelled by Emperor Claudius from Rome. The three of these were tentmakers (or leather workers) and may have had their place of business in the city's commercial marketplace (agora). This would have afforded Paul numerous occasions to speak with customers and passers-by of the resurrection of Christ. Acts notes that Paul spent each Shabbat trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.”

<http://www.bibleplaces.com/corinth.htm>

West side of Agora.



North side.



South side.