

2019

School of the Word



Exploring St Paul

Part I
St Paul—a (re)introduction

Kieran O'Mahony, OSA

Overall Plan

- (1) St Paul - a (re)introduction
- (2) Reading the Letters
- (3) 1 Thessalonians (a)
- (4) 1 Thessalonians (b)
- (5) Women in the Pauline churches
- (6) Romans - a overview



Sequence

- (1) Welcome
- (2) The Second Reading
- (3) Introducing St Paul

The Second Reading

- (1) In “ordinary time”: Not linked to the OT reading
- (2) In “ordinary time”: Not linked to the Gospel
- (3) In the seasons: all three readings often share themes
- (4) Continuous reading: usual from a letter (Paul, John, Hebrew, Peter and James) or the Acts or—less often—
from the book of Revelation.

2018/19—Advent (C)

Advent 1

1 Thess 3:12-4:2

Advent 2

Philippians 1:4-6, 8-10

Advent 3

Phil 4:4-7

Advent 4

Hebrews 10:5-10

2018/19—Christmas (C)

Christmas Vigil	<i>Acts 13:16-17, 22-25</i>
Christmas Midnight	<i>Titus 2:11-14</i>
Christmas Dawn	<i>Titus 3:4-7</i>
Christmas Day	<i>Hebrews 1:1-6</i>
Holy Family	<i>Colossians 3:12-21</i>
Second Sunday	<i>Ephesians 1:3-6, 15-18</i>
Epiphany	<i>Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6</i>

2019—Lent (C)

Lent 1	Romans 10:8-13
Lent 2	Philippians 3:17-4:1
Lent 3	1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Lent 4	2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Lent 5	Philippians 3:8-14

2019—Holy Week (ABC)

Palm Sunday	Philippians 2:6-11
Holy Thursday	1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Good Friday	<i>Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9</i>
Easter Vigil	Romans 6:3-11
Easter Sunday	<i>Col 3:1-4</i> or 1 Cor 5:6-8

2019 Through the year (C)

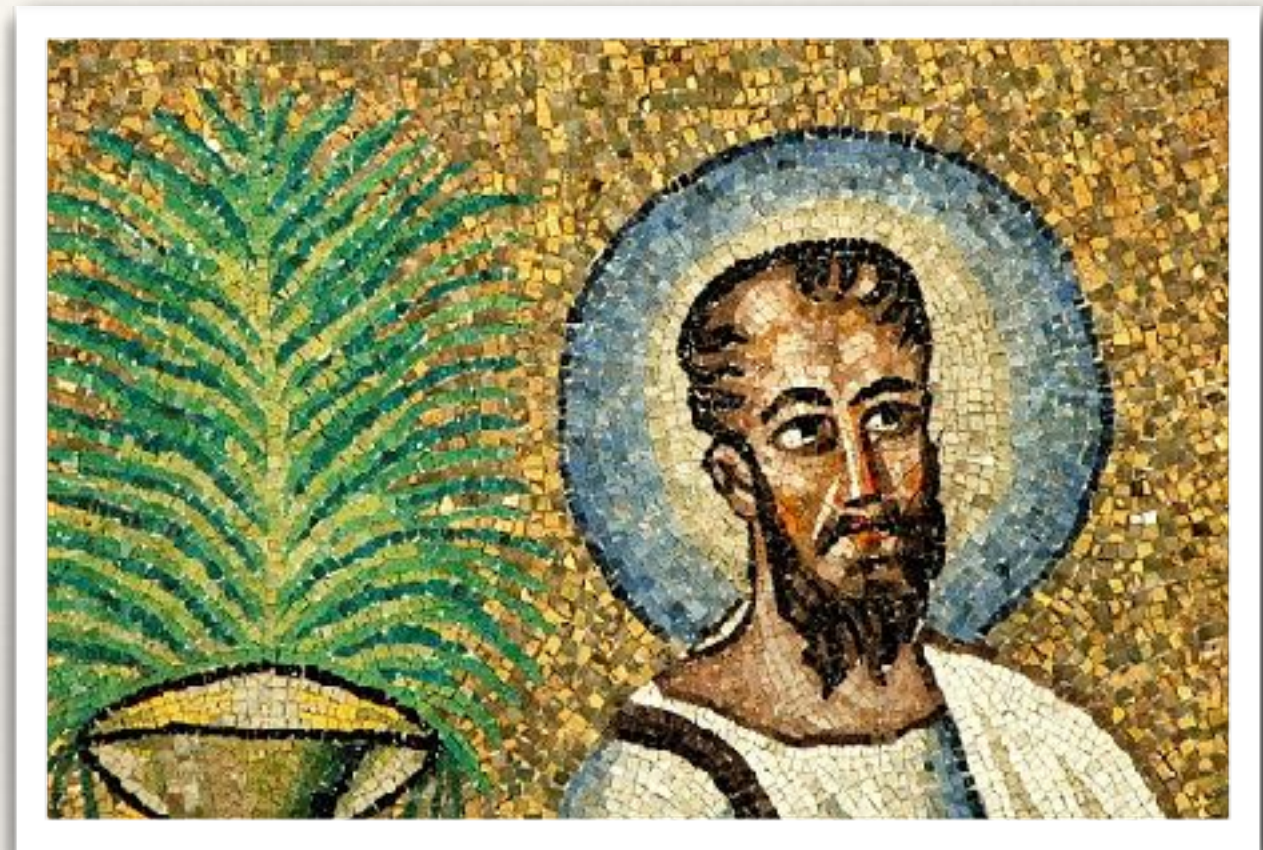
Sunday 2-8	1 Corinthians
Sunday 9-14	Galatians
Sunday 15-18	<i>Colossians</i>
Sunday 19-22	<i>Hebrews</i>
Sunday 23	Philemon
Sunday 24-30	<i>1 and 2 Timothy</i>
Sunday 31-33	2 Thessalonians
Christ the King	<i>Colossians 1:12-20</i>

St Paul

- (1) Physical appearance
- (2) Religious background
- (3) Cultural context
- (4) “Conversion”
- (5) The two ministries
- (6) Which letters?
- (7) Importance

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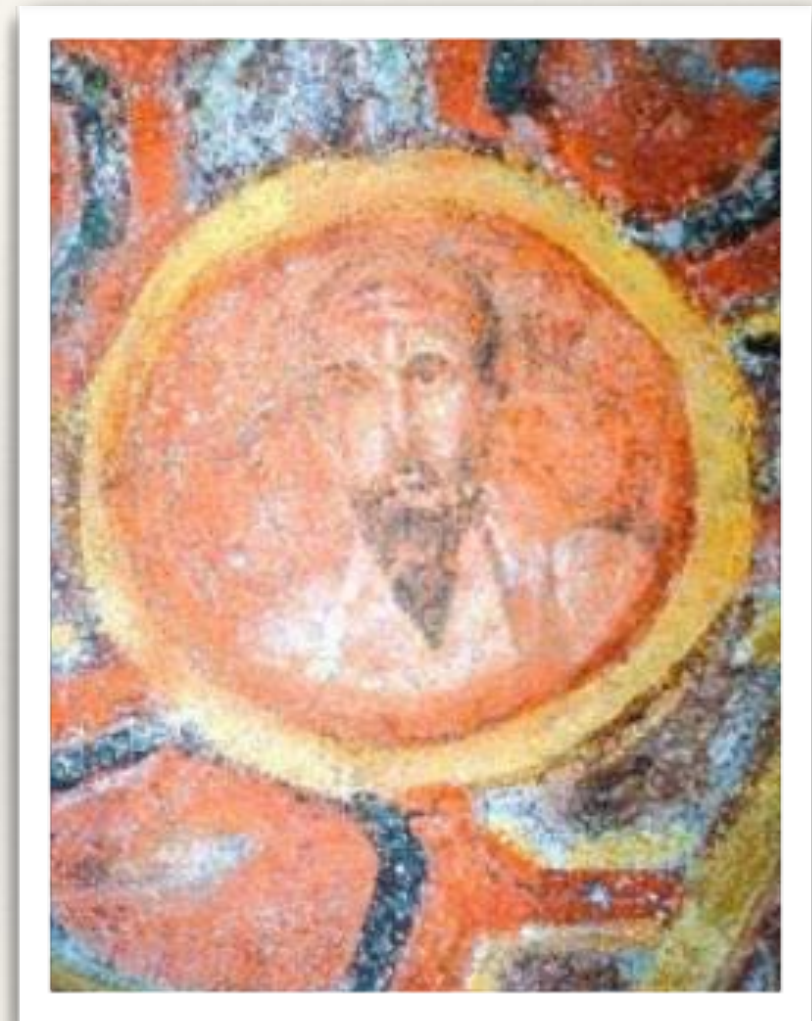


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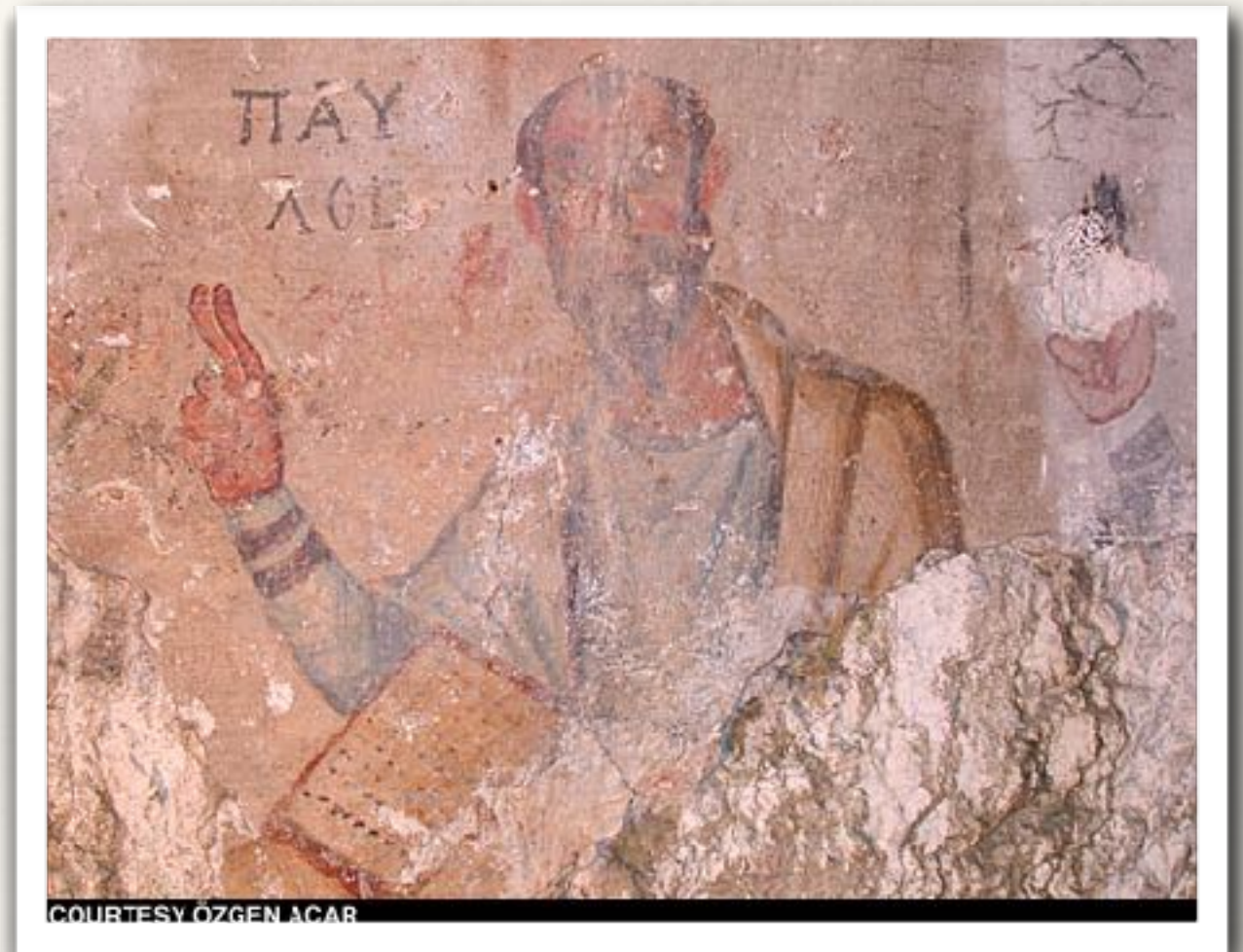


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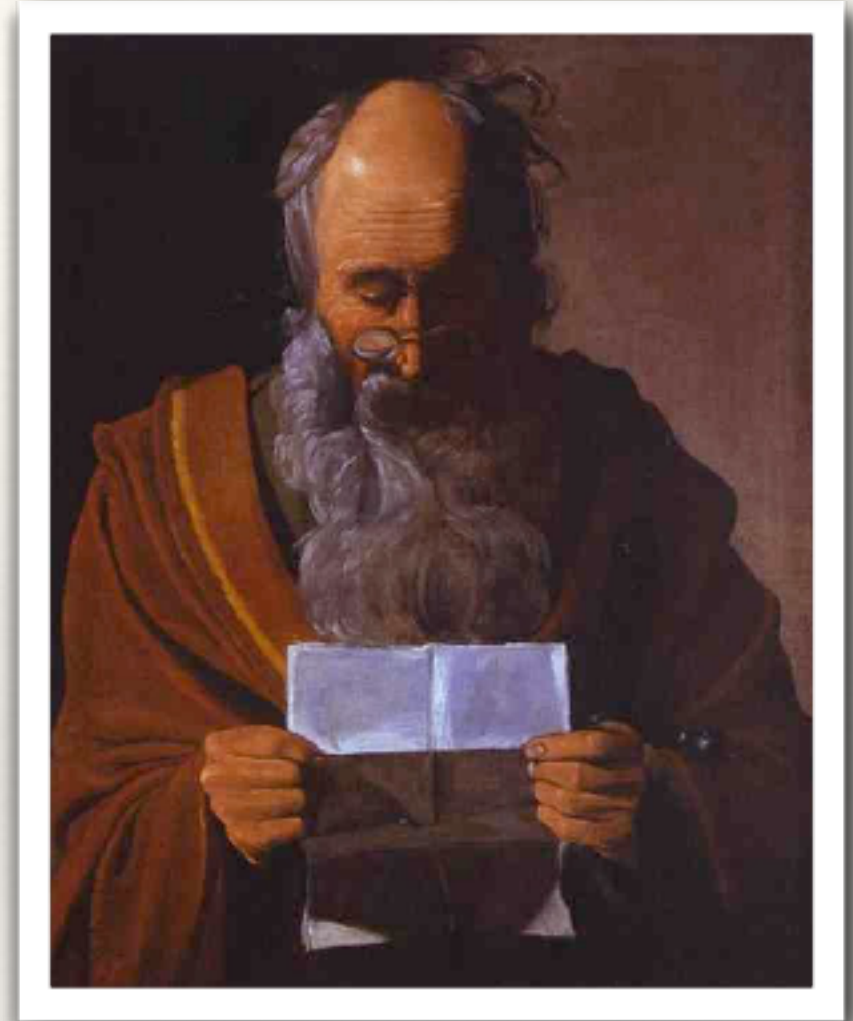


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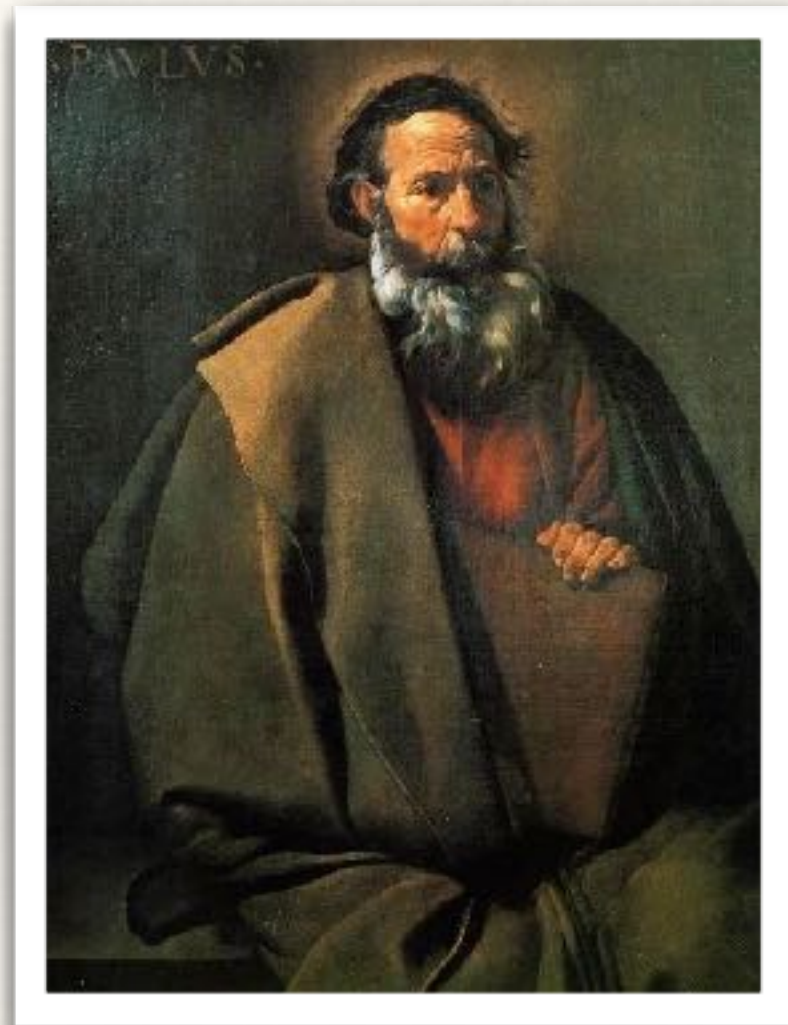


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Physical Appearance

- (1) Perhaps the least important question
- (2) Earliest traditions
- (3) Interpretation
- (4) Earliest likenesses

Physical Appearance

A certain man, by name Onesiphorus, hearing that Paul had come to Iconium, went out to meet him with his children Silas and Zeno, and his wife Lectra, in order that he might entertain him: for Titus had informed him what Paul was like in appearance: for he had not seen him in the flesh, but only in the spirit. He went along the road to Lystra, and stood waiting for him, and kept looking at the passers by according to the description of Titus. **He saw Paul coming, a man small in size, bald-headed, bandy-legged, well-built, with eyebrows meeting, rather long-nosed, full of grace.** For sometimes he seemed like a man, and sometimes he had the countenance of an angel.

Acts of Paul and Thecla 1:3

Physical Appearance

- (1) Perhaps the least important question
- (2) Earliest traditions
- (3) Interpretation
- (4) Earliest likenesses

When the **forehead** is large it indicates that the mind beneath it is sluggish; people with a small **forehead** have a nimble mind, those with a round forehead an irascible mind ...

When people's **eyebrows** are level this signifies that they are gentle, when they are curved at the side of the nose, that they are stern, when bend down at the temples that they are mockers, when entirely drooping, that they are malevolent and spiteful.

If people's **eyes** are narrow on both sides, this show them to be malicious in character; eyes that have fleshy corners on the side of the nostrils show a mark of maliciousness; when the white part of the eyes is extensive, it conveys an indication of impudence; eyes that have a habit of repeatedly closing indicate unreliability.

Large **ears** are a sign of talkativeness and silliness.

**Pliny *Natural History*
11.275-6**

Physical Appearance

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Religious Background

- (1) From his own writings Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:22; Phil 3:5-6
- (2) Jew - always and never not
 - “St Paul was not a Christian” by Pamela Eisenbaum
- (3) Pharisee - the Gospels? Rabbinic Judaism? the Law?
- (4) Apocalyptic - Daniel, God’s final justice, resurrection

Religious Background

Rom 11:1 I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an **Israelite**, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

2 Cor 11:22 Are they **Hebrews**? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of **Abraham**? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman—I am a better one: with far greater labours, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death.

Phil 3:5 **Circumcised** on the eighth day, a member of the people of **Israel**, of the tribe of **Benjamin**, a **Hebrew** born of **Hebrews**; as to the law, a **Pharisee**; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

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Cultural Context

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Conversion

- (1) “Conversion” or “transformation”? Gal 1:13-17; 1 Cor 15:8
- (2) Persecution: Deuteronomy 21:23
- (3) Encounter
- (4) Appropriation of the encounter

Conversion

Deut 21:22 When someone is convicted of a crime punishable by death and is executed, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his corpse must not remain all night upon the tree; you shall bury him that same day, **for anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse.** You must not defile the land that the LORD your God is giving you for possession.

Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “**Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree**”— 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

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Conversion

Gal 1:13 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. 14 I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors. 15 **But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles,** I did not confer with any human being, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

1 Cor 15:8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, **he appeared also to me.**

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The two ministries

- (1) Birth c. 6 bc - conversion c. 35 - death c. 64 / 67
- (2) The early Paul, with Antioch as his base 35-48?
- (3) The later Paul, with Ephesus as his base 48-64?
- (4) The martyrdom of Paul at Rome?



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Thus, then, was this man heralded as above all the first fighter against God, and was raised up to slaughter the Apostles. **It is recorded that Paul was beheaded in Rome** itself and that Peter also was crucified in Nero's time, and the title of 'Peter and Paul' over the cemeteries there, which has prevailed to the present day, confirms the story, and no less also does a man of the Church, named Caius, who lived in the time of Zefyrinus, Bishop of Rome.

This Caius, in a written disputation with Proclus, leader of the Phrygian heresy, has the following to say about the places where the sacred corpus of the afore-mentioned Apostles were deposited: 'But I can point out the trophies of the Apostles. For, if you are willing to go to the Vatican or **to the Ostian**

Way, you will find the trophies of those who founded this Church.'

And that they both suffered martyrdom at the same time, Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, affirms as follows, when communicating with the Romans in writing: 'Thus, by so great an admonition, you have brought together the planting that was made by Peter and Paul at Rome and at Corinth, for both of them alike planted in our Corinth and taught us, and both alike also taught in Italy in the same place and **suffered martyrdom at the same time.**' I have quoted this, also, that the facts narrated may be confirmed still further.

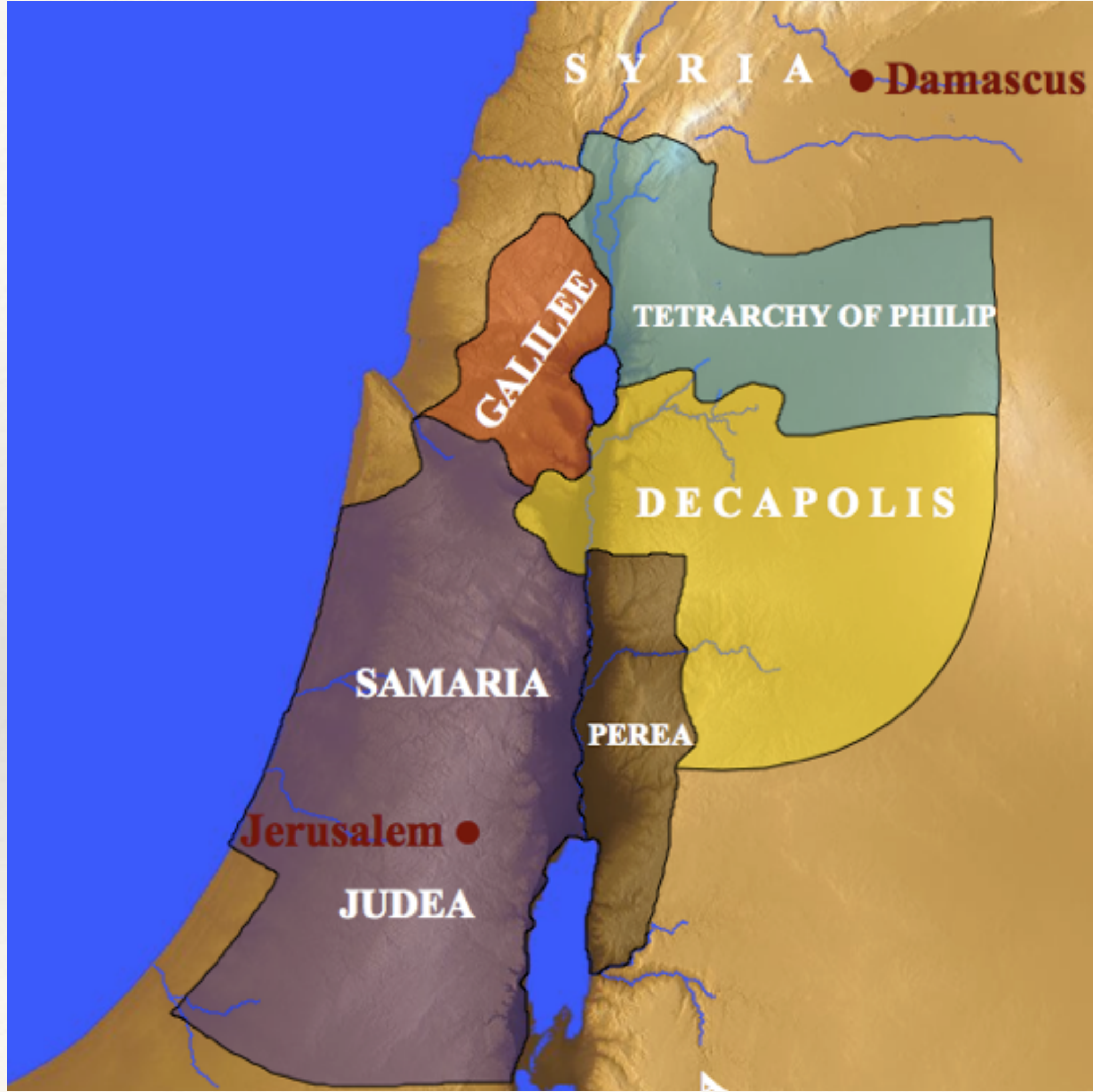
**Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*
II.25**

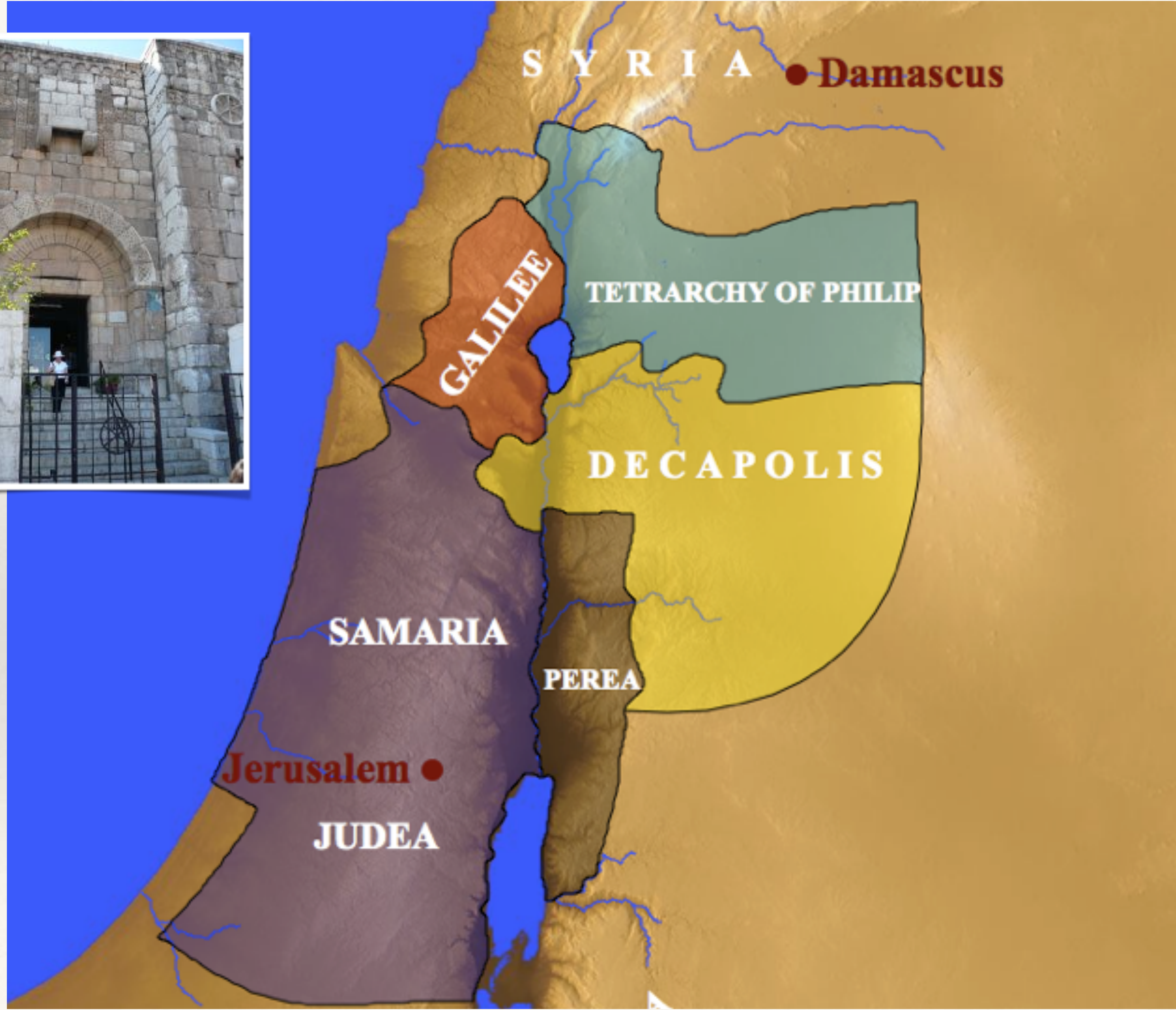
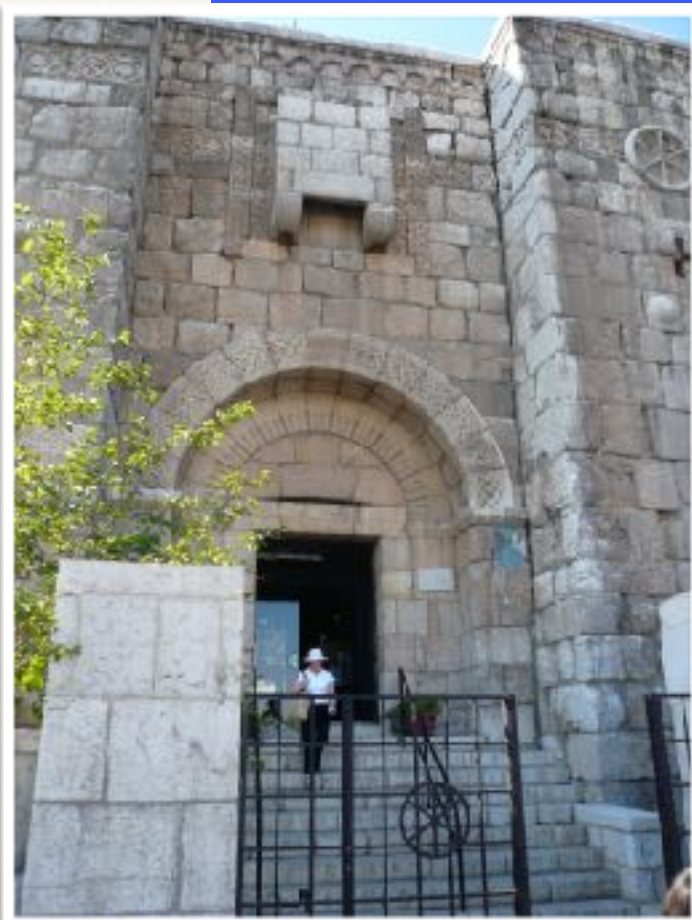
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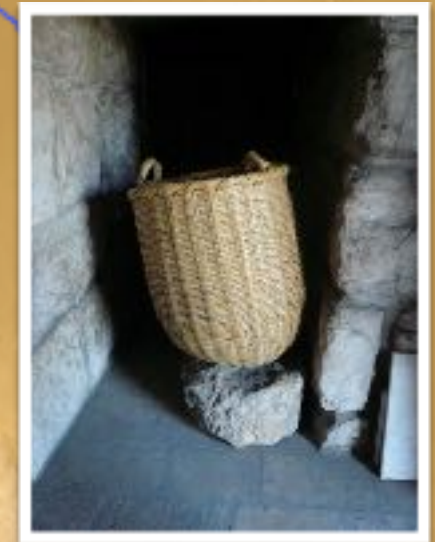
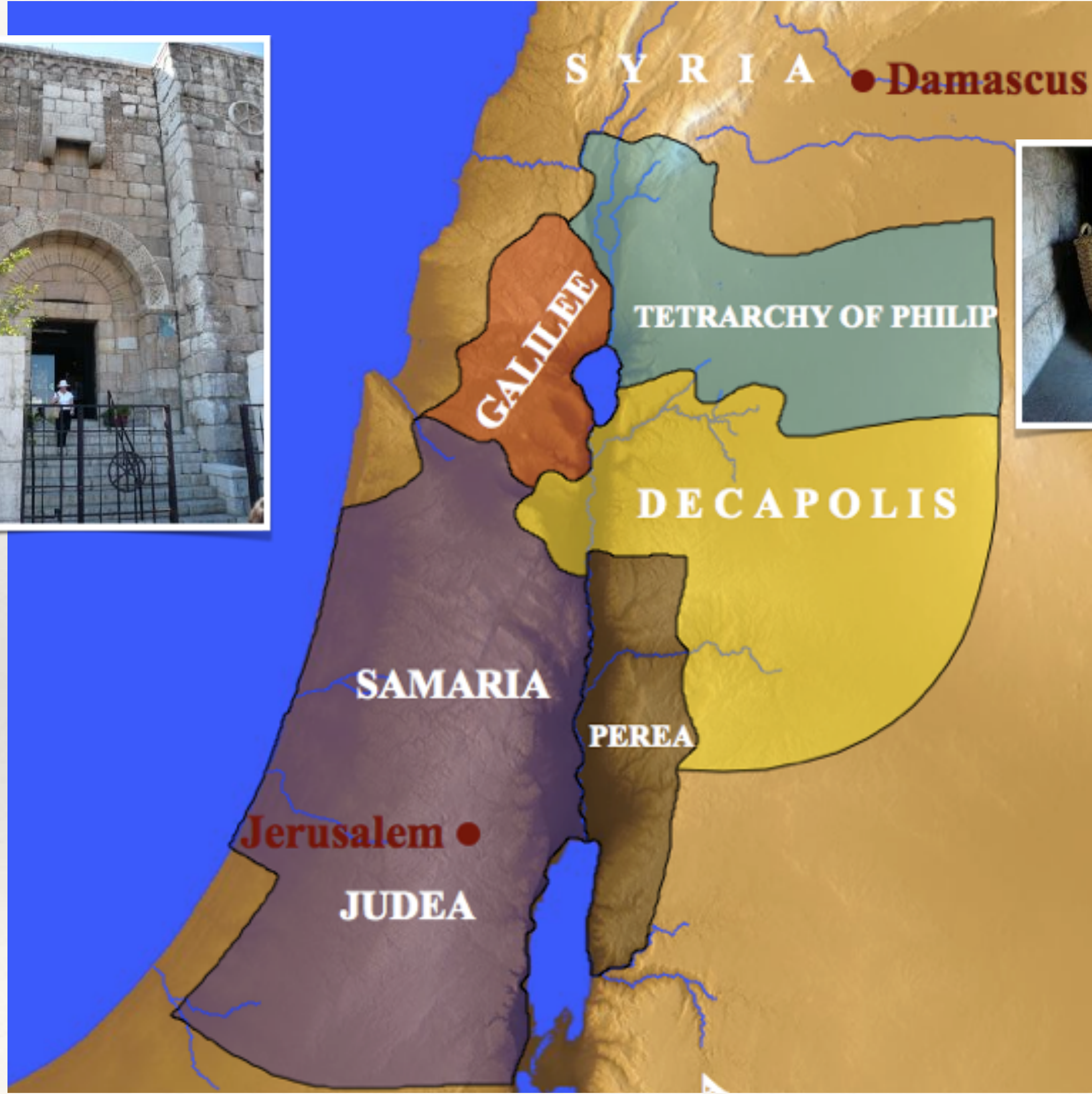
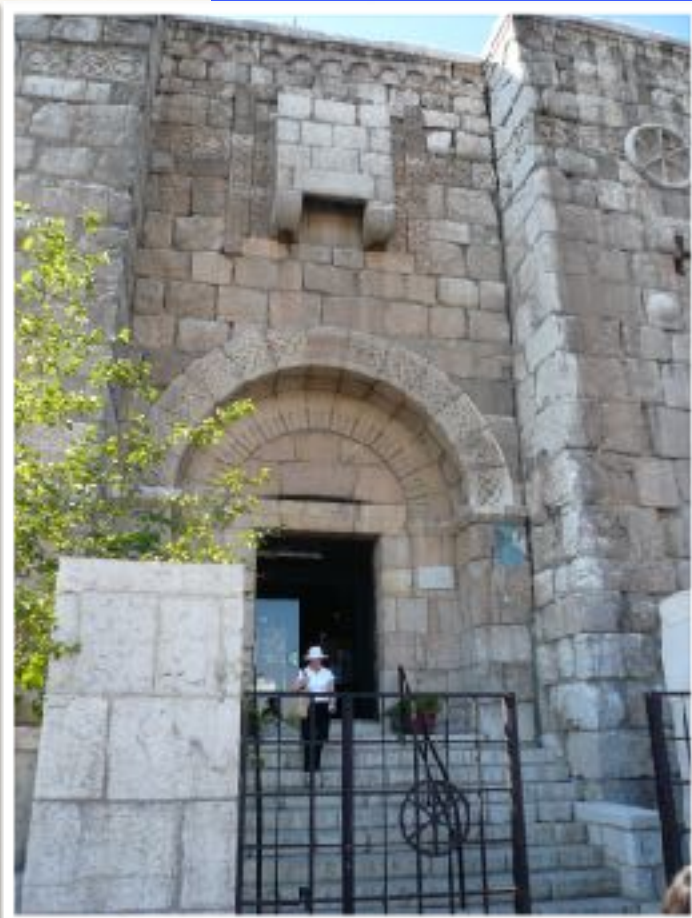
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Dating St Paul

- (1) How would you know when something happened?
- (2) NB They did not (of course) use BC and AD!!!
- (3) The Conversion of Paul can be dated to a three-year period
- (4) Paul's first time in Corinth can be dated
- (5) Everything else is calculated from those two dates







SYRIA ● **Damascus**

GALILEE

TETRARCHY OF PHILIP

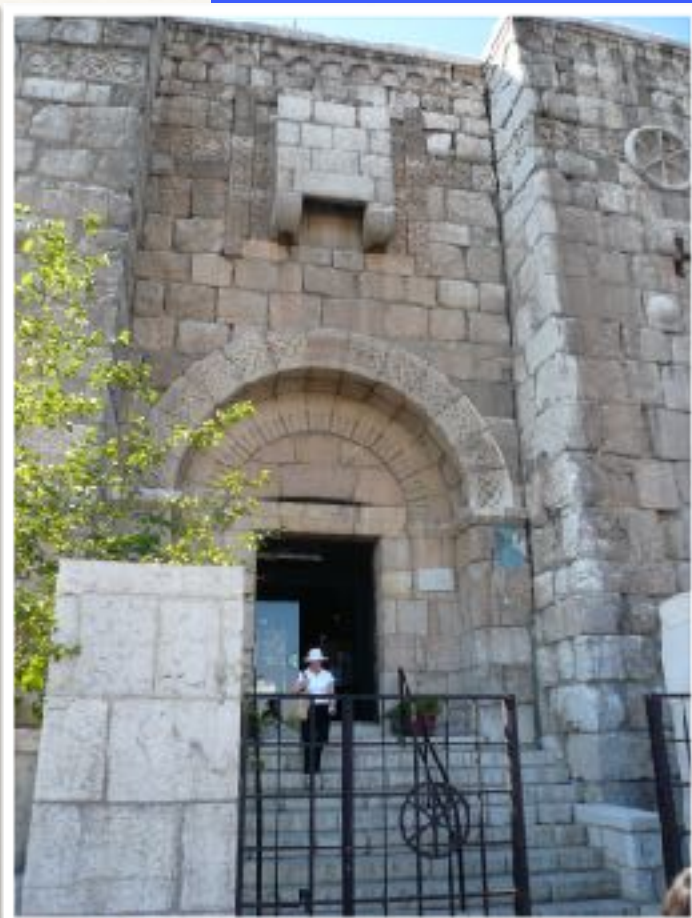
DECAPOLIS

SAMARIA

PEREA

Jerusalem ●

JUDEA



Dating St Paul

- (1) 2Cor. 11:32 In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.
- (2) Acts 9:24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him; 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.
- (3) Gal. 1:17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.
- (4) Gal. 1:18 ¶ Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days.

Dating St Paul

- (1) 2Cor. 11Damascus was under Roman rule until the death of Tiberius, which occurred on March 16, AD 37.
- (2) The Nabatean Aretas IV Philopatriss (who lived from 9 BC to 40 AD) was then given control over it by Caligula.
- (3) This means that Paul's escape occurred between 37 and 39 AD.
- (4) If we date the escape to later in the period, then Paul's conversion, occurring three years before, may be dated to some time between 34 and 36 AD.

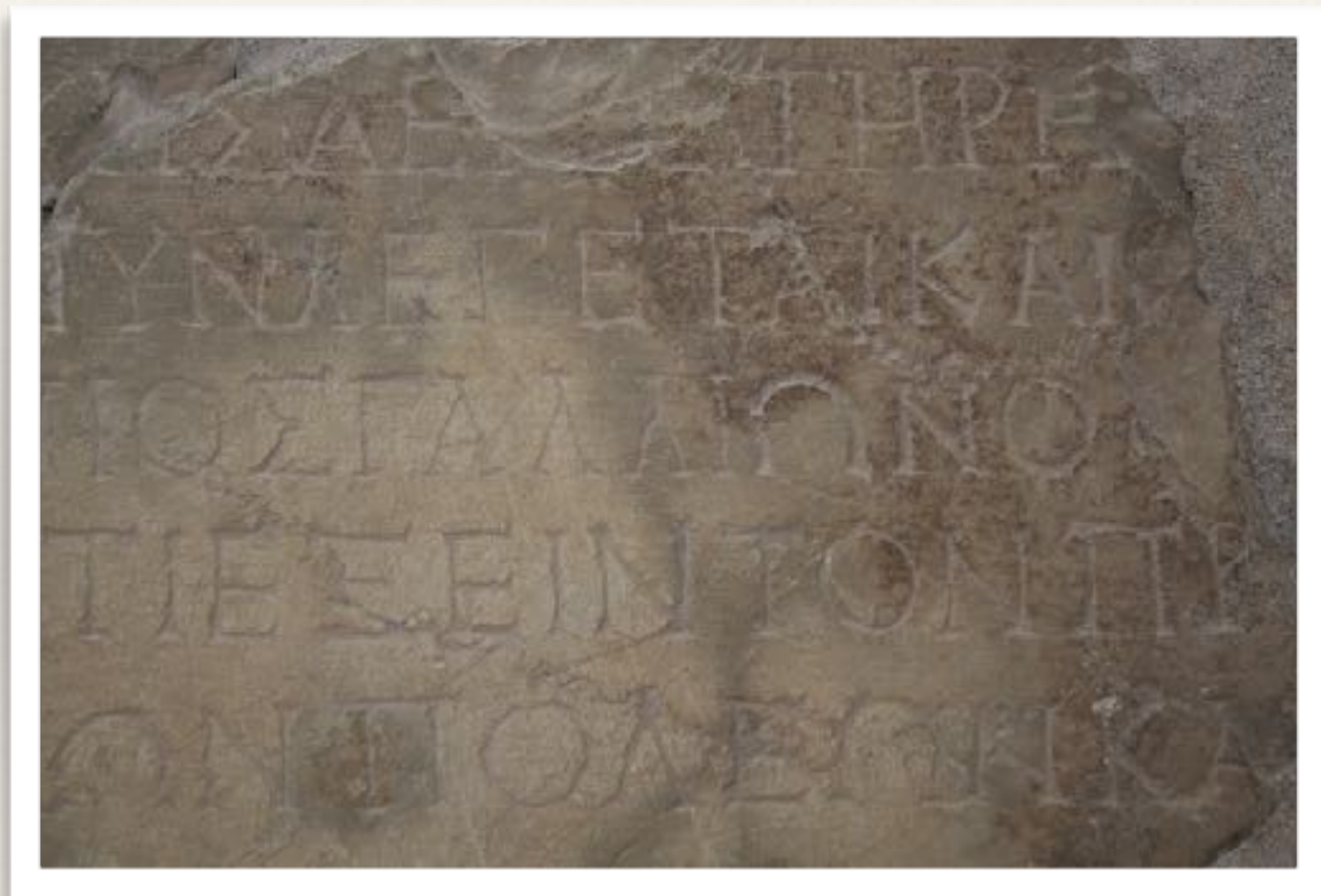
Dating St Paul

- (1) 2Cor 11 The proconsulate of L. Junius Gallio Annaeus in Achaia - cf. 18:12
- (2) Acts 18:12 ¶ But when Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack on Paul and brought him before the tribunal.
- (3) This proconsulate is mentioned in an inscription in a temple to Apollo at Delphi. The text reads as on the next slide.

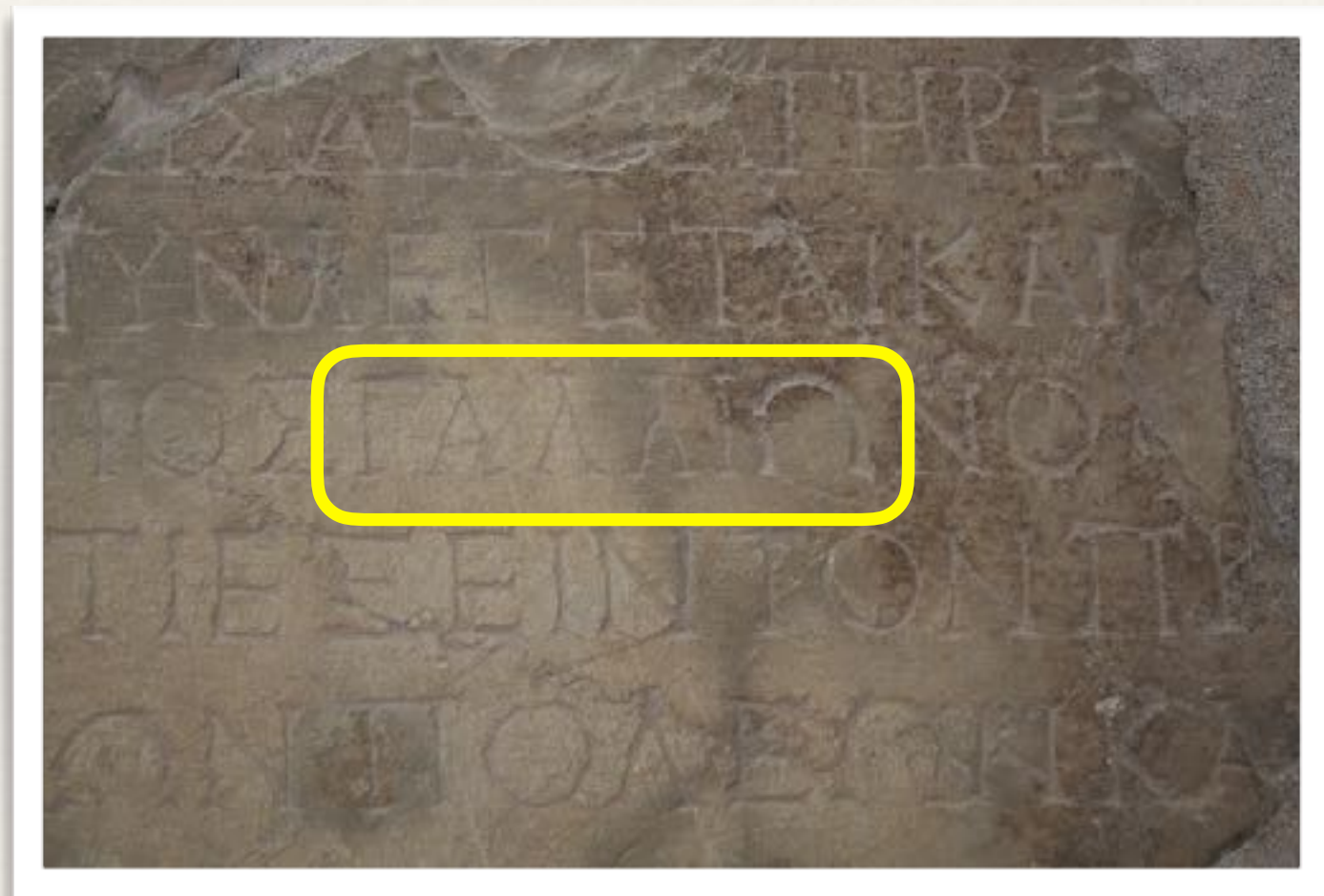
Delphi Inscription

(1) 1Tiber[ius Claudius Caes]ar Au[gust]us Ge[rmanicus, invested with tribunician po]wer 2[for the 12th time, acclaimed Imperator for t]he 26th time, F[ather of the Fa]ther[land ... sends greetings to ...]. 3For a l[ong time I have been not only] [well disposed toward t]he ci[ty] of Delph[i, but also solicitous for its 4pro]persity, and I have always guar[ded th]e cul[t of t]he [Pythian] Apol[lo. But] 5now [since] it is said to be desti[tu]te of [citi]zens, as [L. Jun]ius 6Gallio, my fri[end] an[d procon]sul, [recently reported to me, and being desirous that Dephi] 7should continue to retain [inta]ct its for[mer rank, I] orde[er you (pl.) to in]vite [well born people also from 8oth]her cities [to Delphi as new inhabitants and to] 9all[ow] them [and their children to have all the] privi[leges of Del]phi 10as being citi[zens on equal and like (basis)]. For i[f] so[me ...] 11were to trans[fer as citi]zens [to these regions, ...]

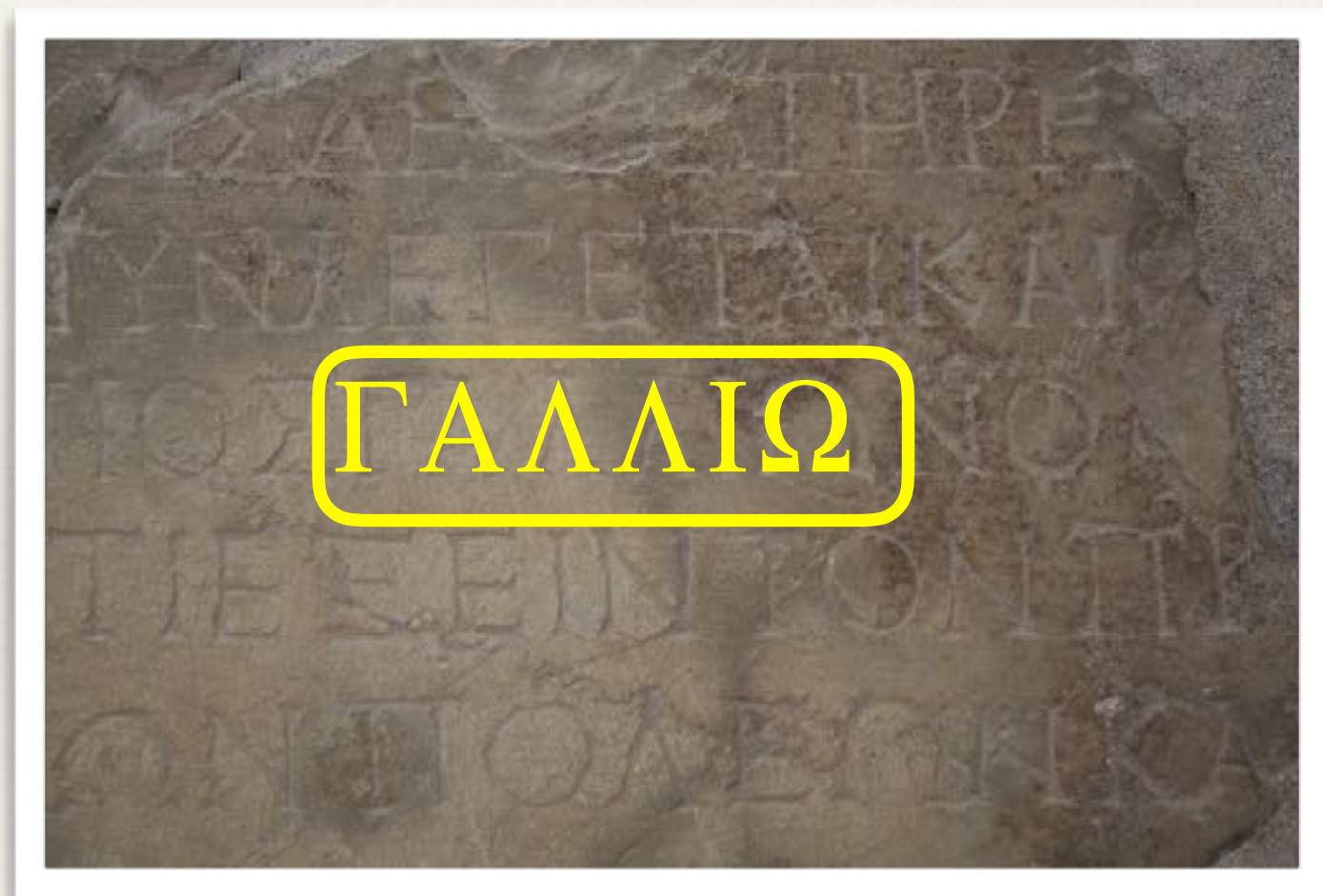
Delphi Inscription



Delphi Inscription



Delphi Inscription



Delphi Inscription

- (1) Gallio was Consul in Achaia in the 12th year of the reign of Claudius, after the latter's 26th acclamation as emperor.
- (2) When was the 26th acclamation? The 22nd to the 25th acclamation took place in Claudius' 11th regnal year and the 27th took place in his 12th before August 1, 52 ad.
- (3) Therefore the 26th acclamation could have occurred before the winter in ad 51 or in the spring of 52 ad.
- (4) So, we know when Paul was in Corinth.

Which letters?

- (1) Rom, 1 + 2 Cor, Gal, Phil, 1 Thess, Philemon
- (2) Ephesians and Colossians (2 Thess)
- (3) 1 + 2 Timothy, Titus
- (4) (Hebrews)

Which letters?

(1) Rom, 1

(2) Ephesi

(3) 1 + 2 T

(4) (Hebre



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Importance

- (1) Earliest Christian writer to survive
- (2) Personal voice, in his own words
- (3) Intellectual, trans-cultural
- (4) Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Vatican II
- (5) Jewish-Christian dialogue
- (6) Ecumenical dialogue

Conclusion

- (1) Tremendous energy
- (2) Capacity to attract others to work with him
- (3) The big picture (the “coherent”)
- (4) The local reality (the “contingent”)
- (5) A prism refracting Christ then and now





