



During construction a trench was dug six to nine feet deep to form the road bed. Lime or sand was placed in this trench to create a level base. Four to five inch diameter stones were laid twelve to twenty-four inches deep. Then came nine to twelve inches of concrete. Several layers of rolled concrete covered this at the depth of twelve inches on the sides and eighteen inches in the middle to crown the road for drainage. The final layer was made up of blocks of stone six inches or more, fitted together in the final layer of wet concrete.



Roman Road Construction



Roman Road in Sephoris in Israel

BELOW: Two Photos of Via Egnatia by Carl Rasmussen, HolyLandPhotos.org

1) outside Philippi in Macedonia; 2) Via Egnatia passing through Philippi north of the forum



Authenticity of the text in Acts, a historical document by Luke in the mid-first century:

Acts was written before 70 AD and probably around 61 AD. There is much evidence in the book of Acts that indicates it was written before 70 AD or tampered with by the church in the first few centuries since none of these significant events and none of these minute details are in the text explicitly or implicitly.

1. No mention of the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
2. No mention of the burning of Rome in 64 AD.
3. No hint of the deterioration of Roman/Jewish relationships that resulted from the Jewish war with Rome 66-72 AD.
4. No hint of the deterioration of relationships between the Romans and Christians due to Nero's persecution in 65-67 AD.
5. Gallio's judgment (Acts 18:14-17) set a precedent that legitimized Christianity during this time period.
6. No hint of James' martyrdom by the Sanhedrin around 67 AD.
7. The Sadducees are portrayed as still having authority, reflecting a pre-70 AD date.
8. Acts never mentions Peter in Rome.
9. Peter (died 65 AD) and John (died after 96 AD) seem to be alive in Acts.
10. No details are given about any of the disciples' deaths except James (died 44 AD).
11. There were still Gentiles in the synagogues. Few would be looking into Judaism after 70 AD.
12. The temple is still standing with no hint of attack or destruction.
13. There is a confident tone of normal life continuing, unlike life after 65 and 70 AD.
14. Acts ends as if the events at the end of the book were still occurring with Paul alive with no hint of his martyrdom.
15. Nowhere in the book does the author try to predict any of these key events or have Paul prophecy these events.

Acts 15:36-41

The report from Jerusalem Council provided direction to the Antioch church and confirmed release from Jewish law Judas and Silas, leaders from Jerusalem Church, encouraged Antioch with their prophetic gift (Acts 15:22 and 32) Paul and Barnabas' dispute concerning John Mark is not resolved by Luke, but simply recorded.

Barnabas, the son of encouragement, saw Mark's potential and promising qualities (Acts 4:36-37, "son of Encouragement, sold field to give money away; Acts 9:27, introduced Paul to disciples he had been persecuting)

Paul was chased, threatened, stoned last time in Galatia. Plus, Barnabas had been led astray by Judaizers (Gal. 2:13), so Paul's confidence in Mark and trust in Barnabas had been shaken.

- Col. 4:10, "My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings, as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. (You have received instructions about him; if he comes to you, welcome him.)"
- Philemon 23-24, "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. And so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers."
- 2 Timothy 4:11, "Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry."

Paul travels with Silas who was:

- a Jew, a leader from the Jerusalem church,
- the carrier/representative of the letter from the Jerusalem Council
- a first-hand witness the Galatian churches of the views of Jewish Christians of Jerusalem concerning the issue of the Law of Moses.
- Silas was also a Roman citizen like Paul, which will be used in Acts 16:37-38, so Silas must have some family connections with the Gentile world like Paul

Acts 16:1-12

Paul and Silas traveled through Cilicia and through the Cilician Gates to cross the Taurus Mountain range Paul and Silas entered south-east Galatia. They visited the cities which Paul and Barnabas had started between 24-36 months

earlier in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Pisidian Antioch.

In Lystra Paul is reunited with a family of converts he had led to the Lord during his first journey through Galatia: A woman named Lois, her daughter Eunice and her grandson Timothy. (2 Timothy 1:3-6)

Timothy had made significant spiritual growth since Paul had last seen him and the elders of the church of Lystra highly recommended Timothy. In fact, there had been some spiritual utterances concerning Timothy's future and the Lord's plan for him as referenced in 1 Timothy 4:11-16.

Paul circumcised Timothy within a few weeks/a couple of months of writing these same churches the letter of Galatians. Timothy's mother was Jewish but his father was Greek (the tense of the verb in 16:1 suggests that the father had died). This was an illegal marriage in Jewish law but according to the rabbinic texts the descent of the child is based on the mother's line, so, Timothy was considered a Jew by the Jewish community.

Important to note on a couple of levels:

1. Paul's rejection of circumcision by Gentiles was considered a lapse in faith when they believed it necessary for salvation Galatians 5:3-4, "Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace."
2. Paul was indifferent to the practice of circumcision. The act in itself was nothing. But, in order to work with the Jewish culture and minister in Jewish synagogues Paul would have to honor Jewish culture and laws
 - a. Galatians 5:6, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."
 - b. Galatians 6:15, "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the new creation."
 - c. 1 Corinthians 7:19, "Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts."
 - d. 1 Corinthians 9:19-20, "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. 20 To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law."

16:4

Paul and Silas relay the decision and distribute copies of the Jerusalem Council's letter to the churches concerning Law. Between 15:40-16:4 the verbs have been singular with Paul as the subject.

In 16:4 the plural verb and pronouns are used such as "they traveled" and "they delivered the decisions..." which indicates the very active role of somebody along with Paul. This additional authoritative person would be Silas, the representative from the Jerusalem Council

16:1-12 Paul, Silas and Timothy combine strategy with spiritual guidance as they move from Pisidia through Phrygia (Asia) "kept by the Holy Spirit" might be a prophetic utterance in one of the Pisidian (Galatian) churches because Paul was headed to Ephesus. So, they moved north at Pisidia Antioch towards Mysia and the highly cultured area of Bithynia with the cities of Nicomedia and Nicaea along with Jewish settlements. But, "the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to" enter Mysia so they moved on into Troas. If for no other reason, to pick up Luke.

6:10, it is clear that the author/narrator of the book of Acts joins Paul, Silas and Timothy because the pronouns switch to "we." The author, Luke, now continues with great and specific details historically accurate to an eyewitness of ports, etc.