

# All Roads Lead to Rome

The Roman Road System

## Roman Road System

"All roads lead to Rome"

- The extension of the Roman empire, the *Pax Romana*, and the development of a transportation system provided a unique setting for the spread of the gospel during the first century.
- Roman roads (Latin singular: *via*) were physical infrastructure vital to the maintenance and development of the Roman state, and were built from about 500 BCE through the expansion and consolidation of the Roman Republic and the Roman Empire. They provided efficient means for the overland movement of armies, officials, and civilians, and the inland carriage of official communications and trade goods.

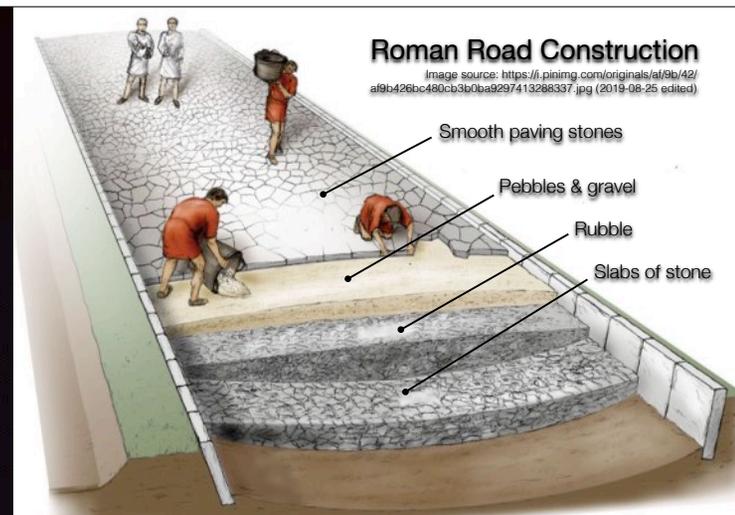
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_roads](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_roads) [2015-05-24]

## Roman Road System

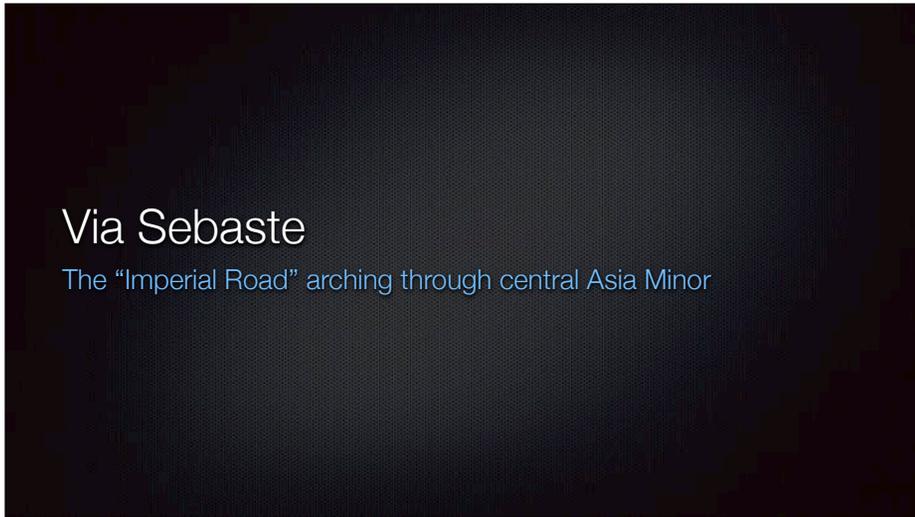
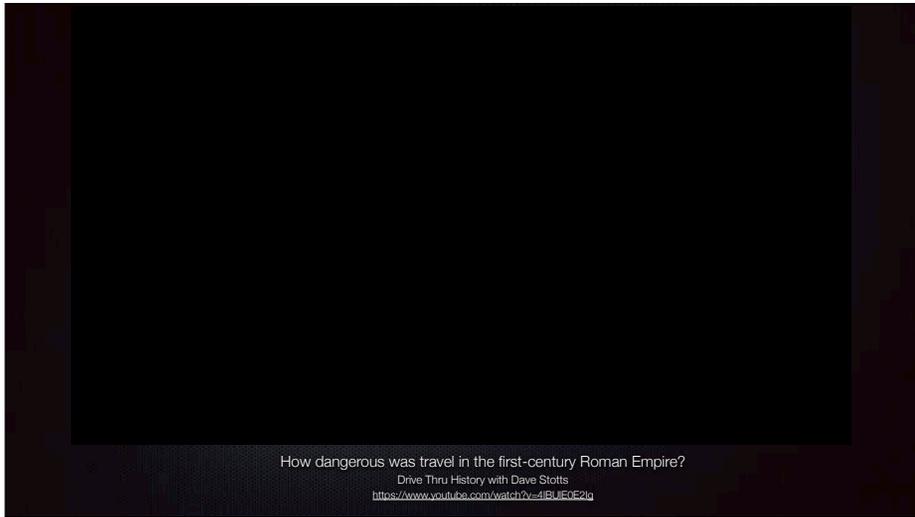
"All roads lead to Rome"

- Roman roads were of several kinds, ranging from small local roads to broad, long-distance highways built to connect cities, major towns and military bases.
- These major roads were often stone-paved and metaled, cambered for drainage, and were flanked by footpaths, bridleways and drainage ditches. They were laid along accurately surveyed courses, and some were cut through hills, or conducted over rivers and ravines on bridgework. Sections could be supported over marshy ground on rafted or piled foundations.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman\\_roads](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_roads) [2015-05-24]







## Via Sebaste

The "Imperial Road" arching through central Asia Minor

- The Via Sebaste, also known as the "Imperial Road", was built by command of the Roman emperor Augustus beginning in 6 BC. The road formed a great arc, beginning along the Mediterranean at [Perge](#), or perhaps Anatolia. It then ran northwest to Comama, looping past Lake Burdur to [Pisidian Antioch](#) before looping to the west and southwest through [Iconium](#), [Lystra](#) and [Derbe](#).
- The road initially was built to allow Roman military units to quickly move throughout the region, enabling a quick response to the ongoing depredations by mountain tribes such as the Homonadenses.

The Anatolian Roads Project, <https://www.anatolianroads.org/via-sebaste/> [2020-07-24]

## Via Sebaste

The "Imperial Road" arching through central Asia Minor

- While its exact path was determined by the topographical realities of the landscape, its general path was conceived to hem in the mountain tribes and connect those newly-established Roman colonies in Asia Minor which were founded, at least in part, for the same reason. These included Comama, Pisidian Antioch, and Lystra. In addition, the road then connected those colonies and other major cities of the region to Mediterranean ports.
- Thus the Via Sebaste and its tributary roads served both as an important inter-regional transportation and communication network and an important link to the wider Roman world.

The Anatolian Roads Project, <https://www.anatolianroads.org/via-sebaste/> [2020-07-24]

## Paul on the Via Sebaste

The "Imperial Road" arching through central Asia Minor

- The cities on the Via Sebaste mentioned on Paul's first missionary journey are:  
[Perga](#)   [Antioch](#)   [Iconium](#)   [Lystra](#)   [Derbe](#)

## Paul on the Via Sebaste

The "Imperial Road" arching through central Asia Minor

- *Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to [Perga](#) in Pamphylia. And John left them and returned to Jerusalem, but they went on from Perga and came to [Antioch in Pisidia](#). And on the Sabbath day they went into the synagogue and sat down. (Acts 13:13-14 ESV)*
- *Now at [Iconium](#) they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. (Acts 14:1 ESV)*
- *When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, they learned of it and fled to [Lystra](#) and [Derbe](#), cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, (Acts 14:5-6 ESV)*



## Via Egnatia

Linking Asia to Italy through Macedonia



## Via Egnatia

Linking Asia to Italy through Macedonia

- The **Via Egnatia** was a road constructed by the Romans in the 2nd century BCE. It crossed the Roman provinces of Illyricum, Macedonia, and Thrace, running through territory that is now part of modern Albania, the Republic of Macedonia, Greece, and European Turkey.

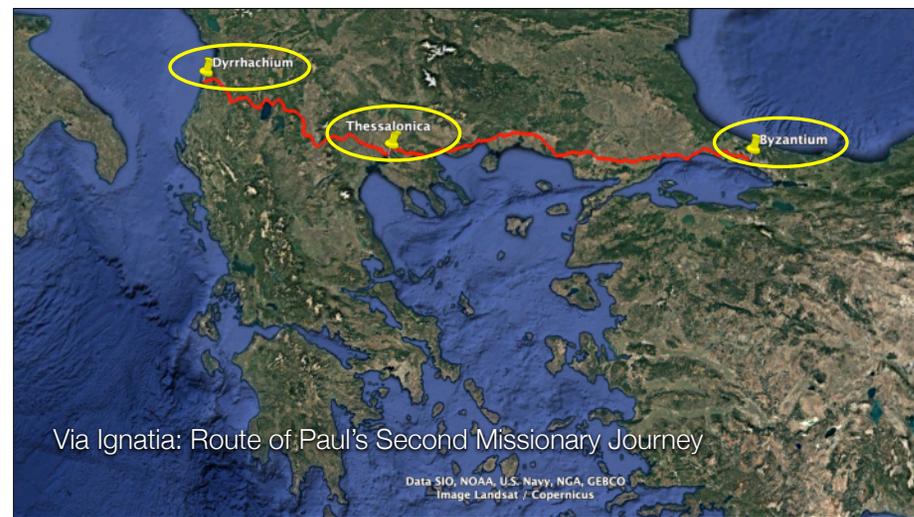
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Via\\_Egnatia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Via_Egnatia) [2015-05-24]

## Via Egnatia

Linking Asia to Italy through Macedonia

- (West to east) Starting at Dyrrachium (now Durrës) on the Adriatic Sea, the road followed a difficult route along the river Genusus (Shkumbin), over the Candaviae (Jablanica) mountains and thence to the highlands around Lake Ohrid. It then turned south, following several high mountain passes to reach the northern coastline of the Aegean Sea at **Thessalonica**. From there it ran through Thrace to the city of Byzantium (later Constantinople, now Istanbul).
- It covered a total distance of about 696 miles. Like other major Roman roads, it was about just under 20 feet wide, paved with large polygonal stone slabs or covered with a hard layer of sand.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Via\\_Egnatia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Via_Egnatia) [2015-05-24]



## Paul on the Via Egnatia

Linking Asia to Italy through Macedonia

- The New Testament mentions five cities along the Via Egnatia:  
**Neapolis** **Philippi** **Amphipolis** **Apollonia** **Thessaloniki**
- *So, setting sail from Troas, we made a direct voyage to Samothrace, and the following day to **Neapolis**, and from there to **Philippi**, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman colony. We remained in this city some days. (Acts 16:11-12 ESV)*
- *Now when they had passed through **Amphipolis** and **Apollonia**, they came to **Thessalonica**, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. (Acts 17:1 ESV)*

## Paul on the Via Egnatia

Linking Asia to Italy through Macedonia

- Though it is not on the Via Egnatia, Paul had to take the route to get to Berea  
*The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to **Berea**, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. (Acts 17:10 ESV)*



# Thessaloniki Metro

The Modern Via Egnatia

- The Thessaloniki Metro (Μετρό Θεσσαλονίκης) is an underground rapid-transit system under construction in Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city.
- Proposed during the 1910s and first seriously planned in the 1980s, construction of the main line began in 2006 and on the Kalamaria extension in 2013.
- After years of delays, **due mainly to archaeological discoveries** during construction and in part to the Greek financial crisis, most of the main line is scheduled to open in November 2024.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki\\_Metro](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thessaloniki_Metro) [2020-05-05]



Via Egnatia in Thessaloniki

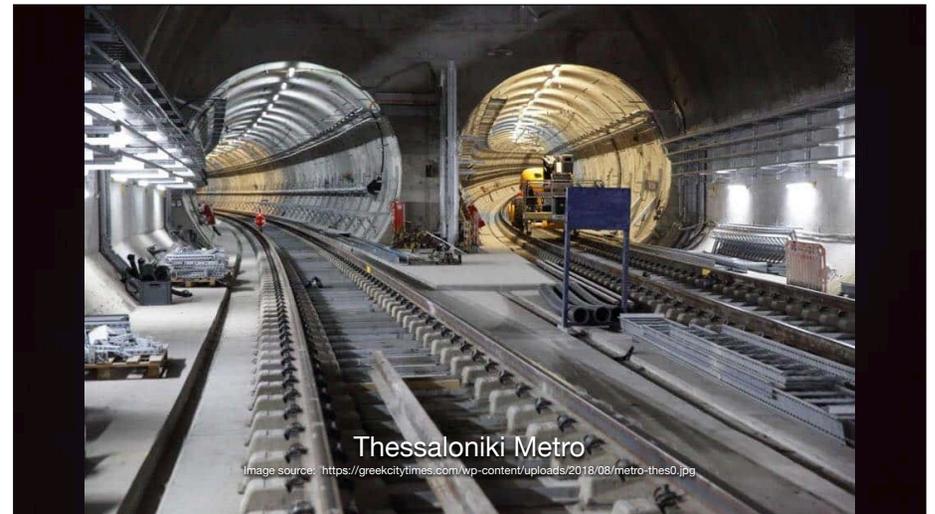
Image source: <https://moco.choco.com/2014/05/18/a-city-underneath-a-city-thessaloniki-greece> [2020-05-05]



Via Egnatia in Thessaloniki

Image source: <https://moco.choco.com/2014/05/18/a-city-underneath-a-city-thessaloniki-greece> [2020-05-05]

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Thessaloniki Metro

Image source: <https://greekcitytimes.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/metro-thes0.jpg>

# Via Appia

Connecting Macedonia to Rome through Italy



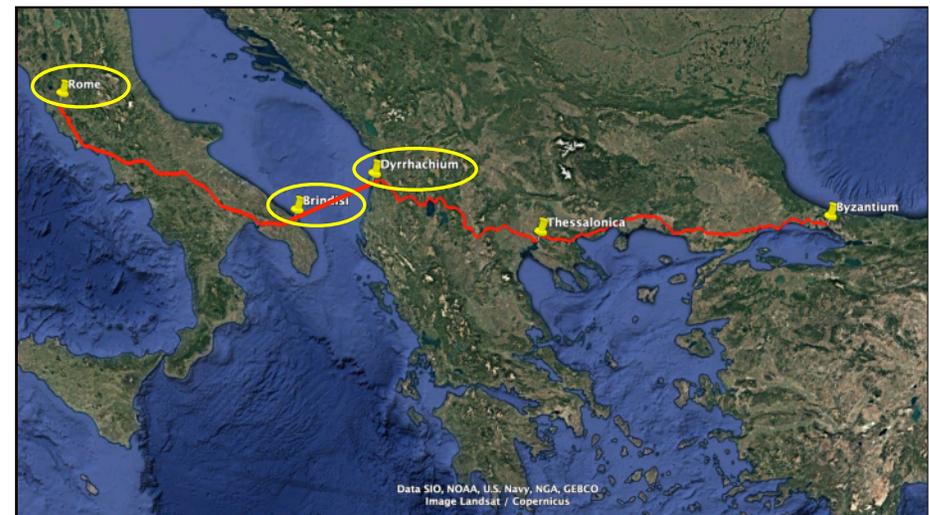
Image source: <http://persweb.wabash.edu/facstaff/royaltyr/AncientCities/web/bradley/Project%201/roadmap.html> [20]Image source: <http://persweb.wabash.edu/facstaff/royaltyr/AncientCities/web/bradley/Project%201/roadmap.html> [2015-05-24]15-05-24]

# Via Appia

Connecting Macedonia to Rome through Italy

- The Via Appia (*Appian Way*) was the first strategic Roman road.
- It was named for its builder Appius Claudius Caecus, who, in 312 BCE during the Samnite Wars, completed the first section as a military road.
- The Via Egnatia through Macedonia connected to Via Appia through the ports of Dyrrachium and Brindisi. From Brindisi, Via Appia led to Rome.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appian\\_Way](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appian_Way)





## Paul on the Via Appia

Connecting Macedonia to Rome through Italy

- Paul, having arrived at the port of *Puteoli*, probably connected to the Via Appia somewhere south of Terracina (milestone 66).

*And from there we made a circuit and arrived at Rhegium. And after one day a south wind sprang up, and on the second day we came to Puteoli. (Acts 28:13 ESV)*

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appian\\_Way](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Appian_Way)



The Via Appia near the Villa dei Quintili

Image source: Following Hadrian, © Carole Raddato  
<https://followinghadrian.com/2013/06/21/wandering-along-the-appian-way-images-from-milestone-4-to-17/>



## Roman Milestones

Roman roads had distance markers called "milestones."

A Roman mile is slightly shorter than an English mile, at 4860 feet compared to our 5280 feet, or about 0.92 English mile.

Roman Milestone (replied)

Primo Colonna Miliaris (replied), a milestone on the Via Appia, Via Appia  
© Carlo Ruffini

<https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/stock-photo/roman-milestone-on-the-appia-via-photos.com/1000000000>

## Paul on the Via Appia

Connecting Macedonia to Rome through Italy

- In Acts, Luke mentions two locations along the Via Appia. First is the [Forum Appii](#) at milestone 43. From Rome it was the rest stop at the end of the first day's journey. To Rome, it was the start of a road through the Pontine Marshes along which mules would draw canal boats. Horace said it was full of boatmen, cheating innkeepers, intolerable drinking water, gnats and frogs.
- Second Luke mentions [Three Taverns](#) at milestone 33 south of the city. About 6 miles north of the Pontine Marshes, it was at the crossing of a road from Antium to Norba. It originally had three main shops designed for travelers: the general store, the blacksmith, and the so-called, "refreshment house."

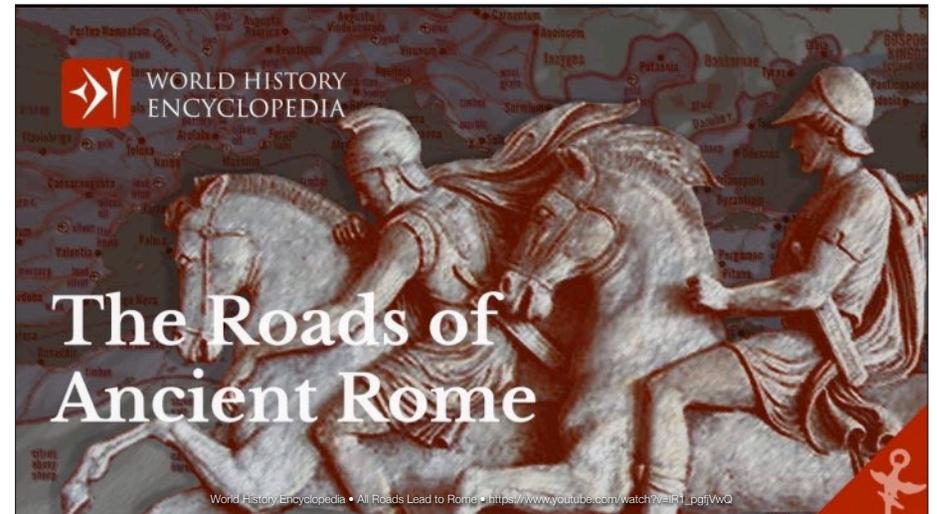
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forum\\_Appii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forum_Appii) • [https://bibelbas.org/forum\\_of\\_appius.htm](https://bibelbas.org/forum_of_appius.htm)

## Paul on the Via Appia

Connecting Macedonia to Rome through Italy

- Roman believers met Paul at the Forum of Appius and Three Taverns.

*And the brothers there, when they heard about us, came as far as the [Forum of Appius](#) and [Three Taverns](#) to meet us. On seeing them, Paul thanked God and took courage. And when we came into [Rome](#), Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him. (Acts 28:15-16 ESV)*



## The Roads of Ancient Rome

World History Encyclopedia • All Roads Lead to Rome • [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR1\\_pgfVwQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IR1_pgfVwQ)

