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## SERGIUS PAULUS

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When the apostle Paul went on his first missionary journey to Cyprus along with his faithful companions Barnabas and John Mark, he came face to face with the Roman governor of the Island whom he led to Christ. His name was Sergius Paulus.

A number of possible references to him have been found outside of the Bible.

Two of these discoveries are from the Island of Cyprus and were found by a veteran of the Civil war by the name of General Louis di Cesnola. He would later be named the first curator of the Metropolitan Museum in New York.

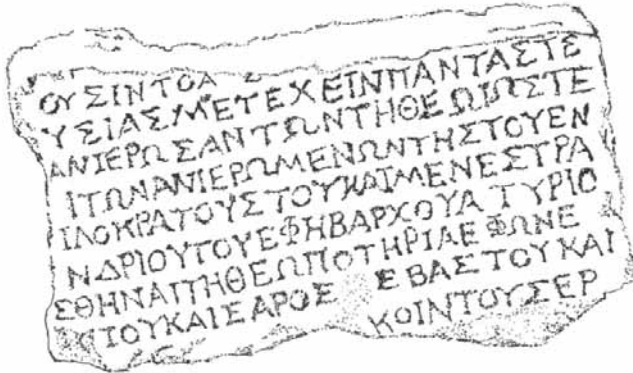
The first of these inscriptions was found at the city of Silo in 1877 just a short distance north of Paphos mentioned by Luke in the book of Acts just before Paul's encounter with Sergius Paulus. The inscription mentions "the proconsul Paulus" and dates to around 54 A.D. during the reign of Claudius. It reads as follows

"Apollonius to his father ... consecrated this enclosure and monument according to his family's wishes ... having filled the offices of clerk of the market, prefect, town-clerk, high priest, and having been in charge as manager of the records office. Erected on the 25th of the month Demarchexusius in the 13th year (of the reign of Claudius - 54 A.D.). He also altered the senate by means of assessors during the time of **the proconsul Paulus.**"

The second inscription is from Kythraia (Chytri), located in northern Cyprus, and makes reference to a "Quintus Sergius" whose last name is missing from the inscription but could possibly refer to Paulus. The inscription, found on a blue

marble slab indicates that this man must have lived during the reign of either Claudius, Gaius, or Tiberius Caesar. One translation of the inscription which is located in the Metropolitan Museum reads:

"[CLAUD]IUS CAESAR SABASTOA  
....[Q]UINTUS SER[GIUS PAULUS]"



Quintus Sergius Paulus Inscription

Another artifact, a boundary stone set up by the Emperor Claudius Caesar was discovered in Rome during 1887 with the inscription "L. Sergius Paulus." His name was listed along with several others as being in charge of maintaining the banks and channels of the Tiber river. The inscription reads:

"...L. Sergius Paulus ... curators of the river Tiberis ... Claudius Caesar..."

The name L. Sergius Paulus was also found in 1912 on an inscription from Pisidian Antioch, a major military and administration base for the Romans in present day Turkey.



L. Sergius Paulus Inscription  
Yalvac Museum, Pisidian, Antioch

The Roman writer Pliny the Elder also makes reference to a "Sergius Paulus" whom he used as a source along with others in Book 2 and 18 of his work on "Natural History." It is also interesting to note that Pliny mentions that the island of Cyprus was overrun with those who practiced sorcery just like Elymas who the Bible says tried to deceive Sergius Paulus. Pliny writes: "There existed different groups of magicians from the time of Moses such as Jannes and Lotape, of whom the Jews had spoken of. And in fact many thousands yearly follow after Zoroastrian ways especially during recent times on the Island of Cyprus."

The story of Paul's first encounter with Sergius Paulus is found in Acts 13:6-12:

"Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.

But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil,

you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? "And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord."

**Next Chapter >>**