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## Article Achaia : 1. Achaia in the Bible

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## Acelandama

→ Akeldama

## Acephalians

*Acephalians* (the headless) was a term used by a group of monks in Egypt who rejected the *Henoticon*. This document (482 CE), supported by the emperor Zeno and the Patriarch Acacius, attempted to reconcile Chalcedonian and anti-Chalcedonian, monophysite, Christologies by avoiding the controversial term *nature*. The *acephali* were “headless” because they were not in communion with any patriarch. The term expanded beyond this original context to refer derogatorily to Severus of Antioch and his followers as well as other monophysite groups. John of Maxentius, one of the “Scythian Monks” wrote a treatise *Against the Acephalians*. Similarly, John of Caesarea used the term polemically in his *Seventeen Chapters against the Acephaloi*, which, along with other works of his, provoked systematic responses from Severus. Thus, the term belongs to the complex history of the monophysite movement by which the majority of Egyptian, Syrian, and Armenian Christianity departed from communion with the pro-Chalcedonian churches in the Byzantine heartland and in the West. *Acephalians* were often associated with *aphthartodoxy*, the belief that Jesus’ body was incorrupt even before the resurrection.

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John O’Keefe

## Achaea

→ Achaia

## Achaemenid Dynasty

→ Persians

## Achaia

1. Achaia in the Bible
2. Archaeology
3. History
4. Society
5. Religion
6. Culture and Arts
7. Achaia and the Bible

### 1. Achaia in the Bible

Achaia, the name of the Roman province, occurs ten times in the NT: three times in Acts and seven times in Pauline epistles. Both Luke and Paul use



it for describing the southern part of Greece, with the exception of Acts 20:2 (Hellas). Macedonia and Achaia together (19:21; Rom 15:26; 1 Thess 1:7–8) imply all of Greece, but only the cities Athens and Corinth, the latter with its harbor Cenchreae, are explicitly mentioned. During his first visit in Achaia (Acts 17:14–18:18) Paul stayed 18 months in Corinth (18:11). There he was confronted with Gallio, governor of Achaia (ἀνθύπατος τῆς Ἀχαιῆς), who represented the Roman provincial administration and who resided in Corinth (18:12–17). The apostle planned further stays (19:21; 1 Cor 16:5) and visited his congregations once more (Acts 20:2). Besides Paul, Aquila and Prisca (18:2–3) as well as Apollos (18:27–19:1; 1 Cor 3:4–6) worked in Achaia as Christian missionaries. Their efforts were successful: The first convert of Achaia (ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀχαιῆς) was Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15; but cf. Rom 16:5 v.l.). However, the historical value of the Lukan report about Paul’s stay in Athens is under discussion: Only two converts, Dionysios and Damaris, are mentioned (Acts 17:34), and Paul himself gave no information about missionary activities (1 Thess 3:1). In contrast to Athens, a living congregation grew in Corinth, as the Corinthian correspondence proves. Paul speaks in praise of Achaia’s contribution to the collection (Rom 15:26; 2 Cor 9:2).

**Bibliography:** ■ D. W. J. Gill, “Achaia,” in *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*, vol. 2 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting* (eds. id./C. Gempf; Grand Rapids, Mich. 1994) 433–53

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### 2. Archaeology

Situated on the Northern Coast of the Peloponnese, Achaia has as natural frontiers in the North the Gulf of Corinth and in the South the mountains of Erymanthos and Aroania, which separate it from neighbouring Arcadia; the borders in the West and East are open.

Limestone ridges extending from the mountains to the sea divide Achaia into closed small entities; inland routes are few, the easiest communication in Antiquity was along the coast, which probably fostered the division of Achaia into the 12 μέγη mentioned by Herodotus (1, 145) and Strabo (8, 7, 4), which later developed into πόλεις: Pellene, Aigeira, Aigai, Bura, Helike, Aigion, Rhypes, Patrai, Pharai, Olenos, Dyme, Tritaia (Koerner: 457–60; Morgan/Hall: 472–73).

The Middle Helladic and Mycenaean periods provide the earliest archaeological finds (an extensive Late Helladic necropolis was found at Aigion which was, according to *Ilias* 2, 574, part of Agamemnon's territory), which become much more frequent from the Protogeometric period (1000 BCE) on, above all along the coast (Deger-Jalkotzy: 19–29).

After Mycenaean times, Dorian-speaking people moved into the area, which then received its classical name (it was formerly called Aigialea), and Ionians are thought to have emigrated from it (Prinz: 341–47). As proof of this theory, in Antiquity the cult of Poseidon Helikonios was celebrated at the Panionion in Asia Minor (Herodotus 1, 148), which was thought to originate at Poseidon's sanctuary at Helike.

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### 3. History

In the 8th century BCE, colonists from Achaia founded Metapontion, Sybaris, Kroton and Kaulonia at the gulf of Tarentum. During the Persian Wars, the Achaean κοινόν (with a στρατηγός at its head, Larsen: 80–95) remained neutral, but was forced into the Peloponnesian League by Sparta in 417 BCE. In 367 BCE, Achaia was invaded by the Thebans. In the Third and Fourth Phocian Wars it joined anti-Macedonian alliances. At the end of the 4th century it fell under the sway of Demetrios Poliorketes.

In 281–80 BCE, the κοινόν, which had been disbanded in 324, was refounded. Its power grew beginning in 251 BCE under Arat of Sikyon, but persistent conflicts with Sparta forced Achaia to seek the help of the Macedonian king and hand several cities over to him (Larsen: 215–40).

Due to the reforms of Philopoemen of Megalopolis (who was στρατηγός eight times), from 208 BCE on the κοινόν attained its greatest power and comprised now up to sixty πόλεις, but conflicts with Messene and Sparta and internal disagreements (fostered by Rome) weakened it again. After

Macedonia's defeat at Pydna (168 BCE) Achaia had to deliver one thousand politically suspect persons as hostages to Rome, among them the historian Polybios (Bastini 1987). After the destruction of Corinth by Mummius (146 BCE) Achaia became Roman, and its κοινόν was reduced to sacral (and possibly some administrative) functions (Schwertfeger).

In 27 BCE, the Roman Senate constituted Achaia as a Senatorial province, including the Ionian islands, the Cyclades and Euboia, governed by a *proconsul pro praetore* residing at Corinth. The Romans established new cities at Nikopolis, Dyme, Patrai, Buthroton (Alcock: 93–126, 129–153).

During the 3rd century CE, Thracian tribes and German Heruli ravaged Achaia; in 395 CE, Alaric's Goths, and in 467 and 474 CE, the Vandals, did even more damage.

Since 395 CE, Achaia was part of the Eastern Empire. Some cities like Corinth, Patrai and Sparta continued to flourish, but smaller towns and the countryside had already become very poor by that time.

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### 4. Society

By the 5th century BCE at the latest, the Achaeans were regarded as an ἔθνος (Herodotus 8, 13, 1); though the individual πόλεις were independent, common mythological and cultic traditions (cf. Pausanias *Descr.* 7, 6, 1–2), especially the tribal cult of Zeus Homarios (see below "5. Religion") supplied a sense of identity. The inhabitants of Achaia had double citizenship in their πόλις as well as in the Achean κοινόν.

Achaia's identity suffered a heavy blow by the deportation of its intellectually and politically leading people in 168 BCE (see above "3. History"). Yet as a Roman province it came to embody Greece's glorious past, attracting cultivated Romans for study and sightseeing (Auffarth: 220–24).

Roman soldiers were absent from Achaia (*provincia inermis*); Rome ruled via the local elite which had made its peace with Roman dominion and was responsible for local administration, playing an important role by sponsoring new buildings, games and cultic activities (priesthoods in the imperial cult were coveted posts). Social duties and relations were facilitated by the typically Roman phenomenon of extensive patronage networks.

Pausanias and Plutarch convey a general impression of "depopulation and decline" in Roman Achaia; this was probably caused by the comparison with its past times of independent glory (Alcock:

24–31). Recent archaeological research, however, documents important transformations instead of decline: the extensive and specialized agriculture of the Roman period caused a shift from the numerous small settlements of Classical and Hellenistic times to the imperial latifundia and triggered migration from the countryside (χώροι) to the more thriving πόλεις (Alcock: 34–90, 101–13), where building activities by the Romans and by local ἐνεργέται offered more jobs or at least free food.

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## 5. Religion

The sanctuary of Zeus Homarios (or Hamarios) (Strabo 8, 7, 3) near Helike housed the central cult of the Achaean κοινόν; after 373 BCE the sanctuary belonged to Aigion, but has not yet been located despite finds of inscriptions (Bingen 1953: 616–28; 1954: 402–7).

During the Hellenistic period new cults like those of Isis, Osiris and Sarapis spread mostly in the bigger cities.

Achaia was deeply affected by the Roman Civil Wars: Several times, Roman troops (later sometimes Roman emperors as well) looted temples and took away statues which were (to the Greeks) not merely works of art but sacred objects ensuring their religious and civic identity (Alcock: 175–80). The new rulers also transferred ancient cults to their new-founded colonies (e.g., Artemis Laphria from Kalydon to Patrai).

In Roman Achaia, of course, the imperial cult – maintained by the *Helladarch* and *Archiereus* of the Panachaeen League – played an important role: it provided close connections between public and political life and was usually located at prominent places in the city centres; sometimes the emperor was venerated as an associate in the temple of an ancient god (Auffarth 2007: 76–77). The personification of Roma was also integrated into the Greek pantheon, and the cult of Hadrian’s beloved Antinous was very popular.

The imperial cult was confined to the cities. In the countryside, small rural sanctuaries (mostly of Demeter, Dionysos, Artemis and Apollo, according to Pausanias) had a surprisingly long and tenacious life. Sometimes these ancient cults were “musealized”, that is, they became attractions for sacral tourism and could also profit from imperial attention, if they had the “right” traditions and foundation myths (Alcock: 200–13; Auffarth 1997: 223–25; 2007: 76).

Christianity spread early in Achaia; according to legend, the apostle Andrew suffered martyrdom in

Patrai during the reign of Nero. A Christian community already existed in Corinth in 50/51 CE when Paul visited the city (see above “1. Achaia in the Bible”). In the 2nd century CE, bishops of the city are attested, and in the 4th century CE it became a clerical centre of continental Greece.

In 392 CE the emperor Theodosius closed pagan temples and forbade games, yet recent research shows that in many places these still continued into the 5th century CE, for example the Isthmia near Corinth (Gutsfeld et al.: 233–34). The general economic decline after the 3rd century CE had a greater impact: it brought an end to the tradition of sponsorship by local elites that had been vital for pagan cults.

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## 6. Culture and Arts

Several cities of Achaia are remarkable for their cultural productions. During the Geometric and Archaic periods, Corinthian ceramic dominated Greek markets including colonies overseas (Bäbler: 72–82).

Argos was the home town of the famous poet and flautist Sakadas, who won three times the Pythian agon at Delphi in the early 6th century BCE, and of Polykleitos, one of the most renowned bronze sculptors of the classical period (b. ca. 480 BCE).

Sikyon was the birthplace of the sculptor Lysippos, who was active between 372 and 306 BCE, and who produced many (allegedly about 1,500) bronze statues and numerous official portraits of Alexander the Great.

Damophon of Messene was the most important sculptor of Greece between 210 and 180 BCE: he created at least a dozen cult statues and groups of colossal dimensions.

Achaia lost innumerable works of art to looting Romans (most notoriously the Roman general Mummius in Corinth), who thus acquired a taste for Greek art as part of their lifestyle.

On the other hand, Roman emperors and rich local ἐνεργέται undertook numerous building activities in Achaean cities during the imperial period. In 44 BCE, destroyed Corinth (see above “3. History”) was rebuilt and quickly became one of the most splendid cities of Greece.

An inventory of buildings and works of art in the cities of Achaia as found in the later 2nd century CE is provided by Pausanias *Descr.* (7.17, 5–27, 12).

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## 7. Achaia and the Bible

Corinth, the capital of the Roman province Achaia, was one of Paul’s missionary centers. Because of this fact, Achaia is very important for the NT. The apostle worked for a long time in this area and returned there several times, as his letters and the book of Acts demonstrate (Acts 17:14–18:18; 20:2). Very important writings of the NT are therefore closely associated with Achaia. The letters to the Corinthians are addressed to Christians in Achaia. Paul probably wrote 1 Thessalonians in Achaia (cf. 1:1; Acts 18:5), perhaps Galatians (cf. 20:2) and likely Romans (cf. Rom 16:1–2, 23; 1 Cor 1:14; Acts 20:2–3). These writings deliver very detailed insight into the development of at least one Christian community in Achaia and its activities and problems.

**Bibliography:** ■ D. W. J. Gill, “Achaia,” in *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting*, vol. 2 of *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting* (eds. id./C. Gempf; Grand Rapids, Mich. 1994) 433–53.

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## Achaicus

Achaicus was a Christ-believer from Corinth who traveled with Stephanas and Fortunatus to meet Paul in Ephesus. The three made up for the Corinthian’s absence and refreshed the spirit of Paul and the Corinthians. Paul charged the Corinthians to “give recognition to such ones” (1 Cor 16:17–18). A connection between Paul’s remarks and the content of a letter of recommendation finds support in John Chrysostom who read this section as Paul’s commendation and praise of the three letter-bearing travelers (1 Cor 7:1). Such commendation sought to defuse Corinthian anger against the three for verbally communicating to Paul the conflict in the community (*Hom.* 1 Cor. 44). Achaicus is only mentioned here in the NT and numerous questions remain unanswered about his relationship to the household of Stephanas, social status, and position/role in the assembly of God. Many speculate that our Achaicus was a slave or a freedman based upon the meaning of his name, one from Achaia. This name was used for a slave (CIL 6.06800) and a

freedman (CIL 6.21223). It was, however, also ascribed to Lucius Mummius, who sacked Corinth in 146 BCE. His descendants later adopted the name (e.g., Mummia Achaica; Suetonius *Galb.* 3). It is further attested as the name of an ephebe from Messene (SEG 51.472) and an agonothetes in Argos (SEG 50.362). While a proximate connection with slavery for our Achaicus is possible it cannot be proven.

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## Achan

- I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament
- II. Judaism

### I. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

In the Hebrew Bible this name (MT *‘Akān*) appears only in Josh 7 and 22:20 (a reference to the story in Josh 7). The etymology of the name is not clear. In the Septuagint as well as in 1 Chr 7:2 the same person is named Achar (Αχαα); this reading alludes to the root “to trouble” (Josh 7:25) and fits with the word play on the name of the Valley Achor (v. 26) where the Israelites raised a heap of stones after having burnt Achan. Achan, who transgressed the law of the *herem* and is punished by death after Joshua identified him by using sacred lots, is certainly not a historical figure. His ancestors are listed in v. 1 and all of them have names that allude to prosperity and wellness: Carmi (“vineyard,” see Hos 2:10), Zabdi (“gift”; this name appears in Josh, 1 Chr and Neh) and Zerah (“brightness”). Through his actions, Achan endangers this prosperity and causes Israel’s defeat. The Achan story in Josh 7:1, 10–25 (v. 26 may even be a later insertion), which betrays priestly style and priestly concerns (ordeal), is a post-deuteronomic addition to an older story of the conquest of Ai. The indication (v. 21) that Achan stole a mantle from Shinar (Babylon, see Gen 11:2) may be understood as an allusion to the Babylonian Exile (Auld) and to the danger of becoming overwhelmed by the Babylonian opulence and culture.

The story of Achan provided the background for the New Testament story of Ananias and Sapphira who retained a part of the Church’s treasury and were put to death by God (Acts 5).

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### II. Judaism

In the postbiblical tradition, Achan is presented as an example of a wicked man and as a model of a sinner who comes to terms with the consequences