

What is a “politarch”?

“But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials [Greek, *politarches*], shouting: ‘These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus.’ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials [Greek, *politarches*] were thrown into turmoil”—Acts 17:6-8 NIV



What is the significance of the Thessalonian politarch inscription?

The Greek term ***politarches*** in verses 6 and 8 above, is not found anywhere else in ancient Greek literature. For a long time, it seemed to critics that the Bible wasn’t accurate, especially because the Bible writer of Acts, Luke, used this until then unheard of term, ***politarches***, rather than the usual ***poliarches***.

The critics’ view was silenced in 1835 when the term was discovered by an archaeological discovery, in a Greek inscription on a Roman arch, called the ***Vardar Arch***, dating to the 2nd century CE, that had spanned the Egnatian Way on the western side of Thessalonica. This arch was destroyed in 1867, but the block with the inscription was saved, and is now in the British Museum in London, and can be seen by special appointment.

Since the discovery of this arch with ***politarch*** in it, the term ***politarch*** has also been found in 19 other inscriptions. Five of these were found in Thessalonica and 14 were found in

surrounding towns of Macedonia.

“You received not a human word but, as it truly is, the word of God”—1

Thessalonians 2:13 NAB

This is simply one of the many thousands of proofs where the Bible has been authenticated by time and further discoveries, and its critics have been silenced.

“Although everyone else is a liar, let God be proved true”—Romans 3:4 NRSV