

Acts 9:1-31; PERSECUTOR TO PERSECUTED!

Acts 9:1-31; Introduction!

**In our study of Acts 8;
we saw five important events:-**

**Persecution led to the scattering
of the saints in Jerusalem.**

**Multitudes in the city of Samaria believed and
were baptized. There was great joy in the city.**

**Simon the sorcerer was converted to the truth.
He then put his soul in jeopardy by sinning.
Simon later repented of his sin.**

**Philip taught the man of Ethiopia beginning
with an Old Testament prophecy concerning Jesus.
The man of Ethiopia was baptized into Christ.**

Bible Study

“Paul’s Conversion”

Acts 9:1-31;

Acts 22;

Acts 26;

Galatians 1;





Acts 9:1-31; Introduction!

In this chapter a leader in the persecution of the disciples of Jesus has a life-changing experience that transforms him from a persecutor to one who is persecuted.

We met him in Jerusalem as the leader in the stoning of Stephen, the first martyr for Christ.

As he travels to Damascus to arrest disciples, he has an encounter with Jesus on the road.

Acts 9:1-31; God recruits a new radical!

Saul:- Scholarly, Trained by Gamaliel,
Sitting on the Sanhedrin,
a Pharisee, Wealthy, Zealous.

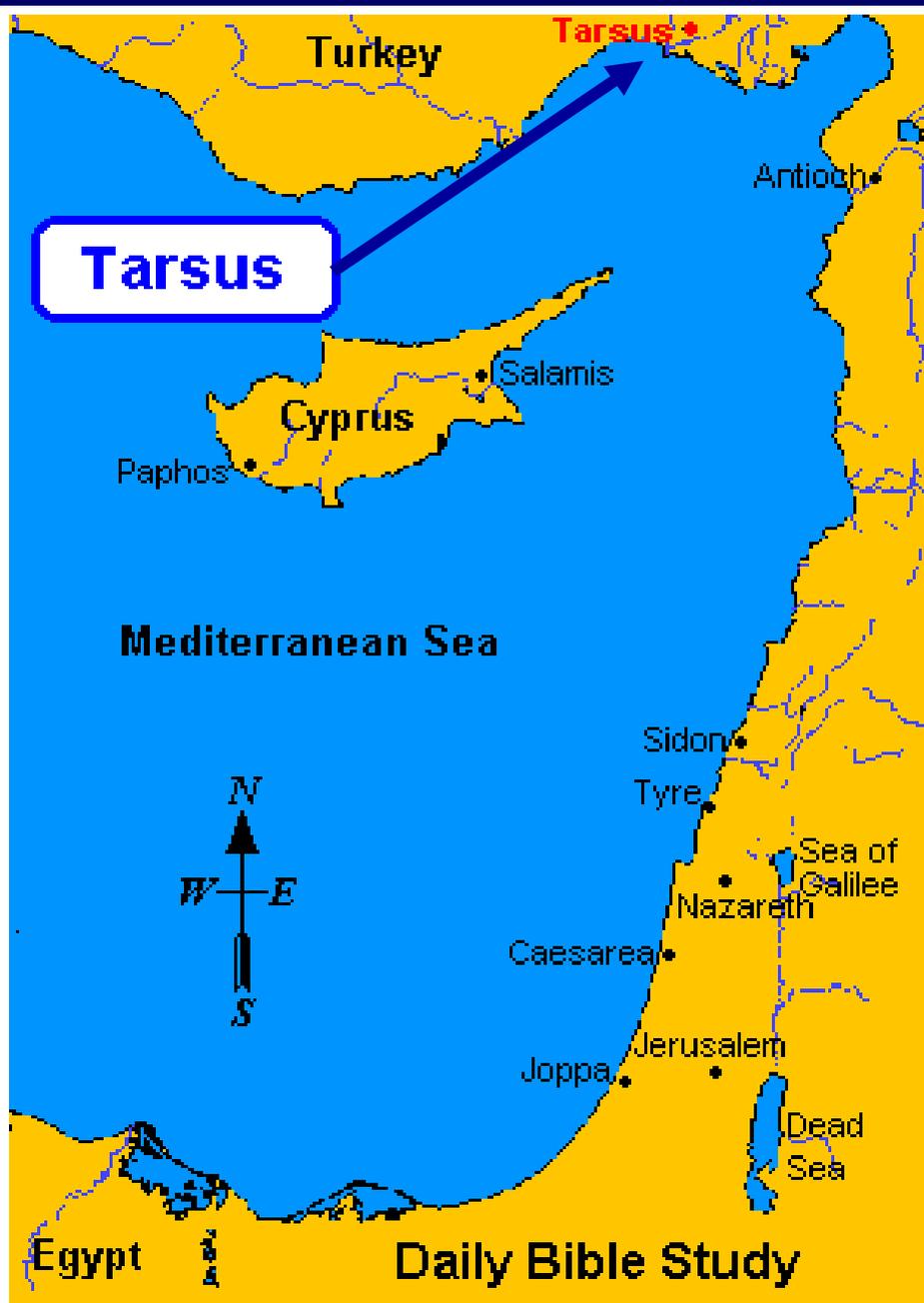


He was from the City of Tarsus
in what is now Turkey. (Acts 21:39;)

Acts 9:1-30; 22:3-21; 26:4-20 Early life of Paul!

**Paul was a Jew,
born of descendants of Benjamin.**

**In Philippians 3:5; he writes of himself:-
Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel,
of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews;
as to the Law, a Pharisee.**



Tarsus was located at the North Eastern corner of the Mediterranean Sea, about 9.5 miles inland along the Cydnus River.

In Paul's day the city was one of the top five intellectual centre's of the Roman world.

A centre for the Stoics. Somewhere between 100,000 to 500,000 people lived there.

- **He was a Jew. (Acts 21:39;)**
- **His father was a Pharisee. (Acts 23:6;)**
- **He was of the tribe of Benjamin. (Phil 3:5;)**
- **He was a Roman Citizen.**
- **He had learned the trade of Tent-maker.**
- **He was a city kid unlike Jesus or most of the Apostles who came from small towns.**
- **He was possibly born around 2 A.D.**
- **Most likely at the age of 13 went to Jerusalem to study under the great Pharisee Gamaliel. (Acts 22:3;)**
- **He would have become a Rabbi at 30.**
- **So was around 30-35 years old at the time of the persecution.**



Acts 9:1-3; Saul, the Relentless Hunter!

Acts 9:1-31; Saul the Radical Jew!

He was zealous for God, (Acts 22:3;)

"I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and putting both men and women into prisons, as also the high priest and all the Council of the elders can testify. (Acts 22:4-5;)

9:1 "Meanwhile, **Saul** was still **breathing out murderous threats** against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest,"

2 "and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to **the Way**, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem."

**Acts 9:2; “and asked him for letters
o the synagogues in Damascus.”**

Sanhedrin had jurisdiction beyond Jerusalem.

Damascus was the capital of Syria.

**In every country where there
were Jews and synagogues,
the power and authority
of the Sanhedrin and high
priest were acknowledged:**

“whether men or women”

Three times **women are specified
as objects of his cruelty,
as an aggravated feature of it.**

(Ac 8:3; 9:2; 22:4;).



Acts 9:1-31; Saul the Radical Jew!

Saul set out to arrest Christians, those who were of the Way. (Acts 9:1-2;)

The Lord spoke to Saul while Saul was travelling to Damascus. (Acts 9:3-6;)

While Saul was travelling to Damascus, a light shone from heaven and he fell to the ground and heard the Lord. (vs 3-4;)

The Lord told Saul that He was **Jesus “whom you are persecuting.” The Lord told Saul to go to the city and **he would receive instructions.** (vs 5-6;)**

Acts 9:2; Comment!

It is interesting to note that the NIV, RSV and ASV interprets the description **“the Way”** to be a name and thus capitalize it.



Modern Damascus.



Acts 9:1; Saul, the Relentless Hunter!

Saul instigated and **led** the first serious effort **to wipe out the new faith** wherever it existed.

Damascus was the **capital of Syria**.

It is called the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world.

Many Jews had migrated there after the Roman General Pompey overthrew the Greek rulers in the early sixties BC.

Saul is going there **to arrest** as many **disciples** of Jesus he can find and **bring them to Jerusalem** to be disposed of by the Sanhedrin.

Acts 9:3; Saul saw the light!

**“As he neared Damascus on his journey,
Suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.”**



**Damascus was 135 miles (217 km)
northeast of Jerusalem, a six-day journey by foot.**

Acts 9:4; “He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, **"Saul, Saul,** why do you persecute me?"

1. **Abraham, Abraham** (Genesis 22:11;)
2. **Jacob, Jacob** (Genesis 46:2;)
3. **Moses, Moses** (Exodus 3:4;)
4. **Samuel, Samuel** (1 Samuel 3:10;)
5. **Lord, Lord** (Matthew 7:21-22;)
6. **Jerusalem, Jerusalem** (Matthew 23:37;)
7. **My God, My God** (Mark 15:34;)
8. **Martha, Martha** (Luke 10:41;)
9. **Simon, Simon** (Luke 22:31;)
10. **Saul, Saul** (Acts 9:4;)

In the Bible names are often repeated when God calls to someone, **drawing special attention** to what is being said.

Acts 9:4-6; Saul the Radical Jew!

**4 He fell to the ground
and heard a voice say to him,
"Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"**

**5 "And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And the Lord
said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.
It is hard for you to kick against the goads."**

**6 "Now get up and go into the city,
and you will be told what you must do."**

Acts 9:5; Kick against the goads!

“it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks/goads...” Strong's Greek Number 2759

1) “A sting, as that of bees, scorpions, locusts. Since animals wound by their sting and even cause death, Paul attributes death, personified as a sting, i.e. a deadly weapon.”

2) “An **iron goad**, for urging on oxen, horses and other beasts of burden. 2a) hence the proverb, “**to kick against the goad**”, i.e. ‘to offer vain and perilous or ruinous resistance.’”



Acts 9:6; Saul Heard Jesus' Voice!



Acts 9:5; Paul hears Jesus voice!

When Saul saw the light and heard the voice he knew it was a message from God.

Jesus identified Himself

as the One Saul had been persecuting.

Jesus had stated the principle that whatever anyone does to one of His disciples he is doing to Him.

(Matthew 25:40-45;).

Jesus tells Saul to enter the city and there
Someone would **tell him, not what he COULD do,**
but what he MUST do.

ΤΡΕΜΩΝ	ΤΕ	ΚΑΙ	ΘΑΜΒΩΝ	ΕΙΠΕΝ	ΚΥΡΙΕ	ΤΙ	ΜΕ	ΘΕΛΕΙΣ	ΠΟΙΗCΑΙ	ΚΑΙ	Ο	ΚΥΡΙΟΣ	ΠΡΟΣ	ΑΥΤΟΝ
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TREMBLING	BESIDES	AND	beING-AWED	he-said	Master!	ANY	ME	YOU-ARE-WILLING	TO-DO	AND	THE	Master	TOWARD	him
					Lord!	what?						Lord		

ΑΝΑCΤΗΘΙ	ΚΑΙ	ΕΙCΕΛΘΕ	ΕΙC	ΤΗΝ	ΠΟΛΙΝ	ΚΑΙ	ΛΑΛΗΘΗCΕΤΑΙ	CΟΙ	ΤΙ	CΕ	ΔΕΙ	ΠΟΙΕΙΝ
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BE-UP-STANDING	AND	BE-INTO-COMING	INTO	THE	city	AND	it-SHALL-BE-BEING-TALKED	to-YOU	ANY	YOU	IS-BINDING	TO-BE-DOING
be-you-rising!		be-you-entering!					it-shall-be-being-spoken		what		must	

Acts 9:2-6; Paul's Conversion!

Gal 1:11-12; Paul says his "gospel" is neither

KATA ANTHROPON, (from human beings,) nor **PARA ANTHROPON**. (of human origin.)

ΓΝΩΡΙΖΩ	ΔΕ	ΥΜΙΝ	ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ	ΤΟ	ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ	ΤΟ	ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΣΘΕΝ	ΥΠ	ΕΜΟΥ	ΟΤΙ	ΟΥΚ	ΕΣΤΙΝ
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I-am-making-known		to-ye	brethren!				being-brought-the-well-message					

ΚΑΤΑ	ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΝ
kata	anthrOpon
according-to	human
in accord with	

ΟΥΔΕ	ΓΑΡ	ΕΓΩ	ΠΑΡΑ	ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΥ	ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΟΝ	ΑΥΤΟ	ΟΥΤΕ	ΕΔΙΔΑΧΘΗΝ	ΑΛΛΑ	ΔΙ	ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΩΣ
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NOT-YET	for	I	BESIDE	human	BESIDE-GOT	it	NOT-BESIDES	I-WAS-TAUGHT	but	THRU	FROM-COVERing
neither					accepted		nor	I-was-taught-it		through	revelation

ΙΗΣΟΥ	ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ
iEsou	christou
OF-JESUS	ANOINTED
	Christ

Yet, according to Luke,
Paul received instruction from Ananias?

Acts 9:6; What Must Saul Do?

Jesus did not mean that someone in the city would tell Saul what his mission for the rest of his life would be.

Jesus would be appearing to him many times over a three-year period to teach Saul all the things He had taught the other Apostles.

Which is one of the reasons that Paul could **truly claim to be an Apostle and witness for Christ.**

Jesus was telling Saul that some **human person** in the city would **tell him** what **he had to do** in order **to be SAVED.** This is indeed what happened.

Acts 9:7-19; The Conversion of Saul

Saul, being blind, was lead to Damascus as the Lord had instructed him. (Acts 9:7-9;)

The Lord told Ananias to go to Saul.
(Acts 9:10-16;)

The Lord told Ananias to go and inquire about Saul of Tarsus. (v 10-12;)
Ananias was reluctant because of Saul's reputation. (vs 13-16;)

Ananias went to Saul and spoke with him.
Ananias restored Saul's sight
and **Saul was born again.**
(Acts 9:17-19;)

Acts 9:7-9; Saul was not Saved Yet!

7 “The men travelling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.

8 Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus.

9 For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.”

Acts 9:9; Blind Saul is Led into the City.



Acts 9:9; Saul blind and fasting!

For three days Saul sat in the darkness of the blind man, eating nothing.

His sorrow must have been unbearable.

He had been **murdering innocent people whose only “crime” was faithful service to God.** Saul understood that now.

How could he make amends.

What could he do to be forgiven and have a good relationship with God?

He had not been saved on the Damascus Road.

He was waiting for the information in the form of instructions that would save him.



**Acts 9:9; For three days he was blind,
and did not eat or drink anything.”
Acts 9:11; “he is praying.”**

Acts 9:10-12; Ananias gets the call!

In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, **"Ananias!"** **"Yes, Lord,"** he answered.

11 "The Lord told him, **"Go** to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named **Saul,** **for he is praying."**

12 "In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and **place his hands** **on him to restore his sight."**

Straight Street in Damascus.



Acts 9:10-12; Ananias gets the call!

Jesus speaks to a disciple in Damascus named Ananias and sends him to restore Saul's sight and tell him what he had to do in order to be saved.

Here again we have the principle illustrated that no angel, not the Holy Spirit nor the Lord Himself will tell any man what to do to be saved.

An angel or the Spirit will speak to a prophet and send him to preach the gospel to the unsaved person. Or, as in the case of Cornelius, will tell the subject to send for the preacher.



Ananias House – It is now a chapel.

Acts 9:13-14; Ananias does not like it!

13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem."

14 "he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

Ananias knew all about Saul and didn't want any part of him.

Acts 9:15-16; The Lord Persuades Him!

**15 “But the Lord said to Ananias,
“Go! This man is my chosen instrument
to carry my name before the Gentiles and
their kings and before the people of Israel.”**

**16 “I will show him how much
he must suffer for my name.”**

**“I will show him.” –
Jesus would be teaching Saul many things.**

Acts 9:17; "Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here- has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."



Acts 9:17-18; Saul is born again!

17 “Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord-Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

18 “Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized,”

19 “and after taking some food, he regained his strength.”

Palestinian Meal.



Three Versions of the Same Story!



Paul before King Agrippa.

Three Versions of the Same Story!

Paul himself tells the story of his conversion to a crowd in Jerusalem. (Acts 22;)

And to King Agrippa. (Acts 26;)

In Acts 22:14-16; “Saul, now Paul, says that Ananias had said to him, “The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth.”

“You will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.”

“Now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name.”

Chapter 9

³ As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. ⁴ He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"

AC 9:5 "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked.

"I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

AC 9:7 The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸ Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹ For three days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.

AC 9:10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, "Ananias!"

"Yes, Lord," he answered.

AC 9:11 The Lord told him, "Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. ¹² In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight."

AC 9:13 "Lord," Ananias answered, "I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name."

AC 9:15 But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

AC 9:17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord--Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here--has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, ¹⁹ and after taking some food, he regained his strength.

Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. ²⁰ At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. ²¹

Chapter 22

AC 22:6 "About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me. ⁷ I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul! Saul! Why do you persecute me?'

AC 22:8 " 'Who are you, Lord?' I asked.

" 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting,' he replied. ⁹ My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him who was speaking to me.

AC 22:10 " 'What shall I do, Lord?' I asked.

" 'Get up,' the Lord said, 'and go into Damascus. There you will be told all that you have been assigned to do.' ¹¹ My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the brilliance of the light had blinded me.

AC 22:12 "A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there. ¹³ He stood beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight!' And at that very moment I was able to see him.

AC 22:14 "Then he said: 'The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. ¹⁵ You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'

Chapter 26

AC 26:12 "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³ About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴ We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

AC 26:15 "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?'

" 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. ¹⁶ 'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

AC 26:19 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰ First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds. ²¹

**Study of Acts (Revised 2007)
by Graeme Offer. All Quotes NIV.**

Ananias Told Saul What He Must Do!



Acts 9:17-18; Ananias had Told Him What He Must Do!

Jesus had said that someone in the city would tell Saul **what he must do**. **Jesus** means **what Saul must do in order to be saved!**

To have his sins forgiven!

And to receive the indwelling Holy Spirit!

That is what **Ananias** told him. **The act of baptism** got rid of **Saul's sins** as if they had been washed away, **they are washed away by the blood of Jesus.**

Saul, thought he would always regret what he had done to the innocents he had killed, now knew **he was saved and that Jesus had forgiven him.**

Compare these texts and results.

Matt 28:19; “Therefore, after you've gone out, **make followers** from all nations. **Immerse them** by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38; Then Peter answered, “**Change your hearts** and each one of you must **be immersed** by the authority of Jesus the Messiah, **so that your sins may be forgiven.** Then you will **receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”

Acts 3:19; “So, **change your hearts!** Come back to God, **so that He may wipe out your sins.**”

Acts 9:17-19; Saul was **baptised** and **received the Holy Spirit.**

Acts 22:16; “don't wait any longer. Rise up, **get yourself immersed get your sins washed away,** trusting in His name.”

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

Ananias told Paul **What He Must Do!**

There are many today who teach
“there is nothing you can do.”

They says things like!

Saved by **GRACE ALONE!** Or

Saved by **FAITH ALONE!** Or

ONLY BELIEVE! or

ALL of God nothing YOU can DO!

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

If we were to ask the question at what point was Paul or the 3000 on Pentecost?

Saved, born again, had there sins forgiven, come into a right relationship with God, become a child of God, were added to the church, the family of God?

How would they respond about Paul for example when was he saved according to these faith alone teachers?

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

Usually they would say **Paul was saved on the Damascus road** when he saw the light and asked who is it Lord.

Is this true? What are the facts?

Paul is blinded by the light.

He is told to **Go to Damascus** to be told what he must do!

For three days on that journey **he is blind** and **does not eat or drink.** Acts 9:3-9;
Paul **spends his time in prayer.** Acts 9:11;

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

According to Paul himself in Acts 22:13-16; Ananias restored his sight and **Told Paul What He Must Do! To Receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit!**

Acts 22:16; “Acts 22:16; Now, don't wait any longer. Rise up, **get yourself immersed and get your sins washed away, trusting in his name.**”

ΚΑΙ	ΝΥΝ	ΤΙ	ΜΕΛΛΕΙΣ	ΑΝΑΤΑΣ	ΒΑΠΤΙΣΑΙ	ΚΑΙ	ΑΠΟΛΟΥΣΑΙ	ΤΑΣ	ΑΜΑΡΤΙΑΣ	ΣΟΥ
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AND	NOW	ANY	YOU-ARE-beING-ABOUT	UP-STANDING	be-DIPized	AND	be-FROM-BATHED	THE	misses	OF-YOU
_____	_____	why?	you-are-defering	rising	be-you-baptized!	_____	be-you-bathed-off!	_____	sins	_____

ΕΠΙΚΑΛΕΣΑΜΕΝΟΣ	ΤΟ	ΟΝΟΜΑ	ΤΟΥ	ΚΥΡΙΟΥ
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ON-CALLing	THE	NAME	OF-THE	Master
invoking	_____	_____	_____	Lord

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

**If Paul was saved, born again and had his sins forgiven on the Damascus road!
He did not know about it.**

If he was saved and had his sins forgiven on the Damascus road? **What sins did he accumulate in the three days that he was blind, did not eat or drink and spent his time in prayer.**

Because according to Paul it was **three days later when he was **immersed** that he **received the forgiveness of his sins** and the **gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit.****

Summary of Saul's Conversion.

He experiences Miracles of Light
and Jesus speaking. (9:3-5;)

He is Struck Blind. (9:8;)

He calls Jesus Lord. (22:10;)

He Fasts and Prays for three days. (9:9-11;)



He Sees a Vision. (9:12;)

Ananias lays Hands on and heals. (9:18;)

Saul is Obedient! **(Repents!)** (26:19;)

Is Baptized to wash away his sins,
calling on Name of the Lord. (22:16;)

Receives the indwelling Holy Spirit. (9:17;)

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

What about the 3000 in Acts 2:38;

If they were saved, born again, had forgiveness of sins when they believed!

As some teach what does the text say.

Peter says "36. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ- this Jesus whom you crucified."

Although the text does not mention that they believed Peter!

They must have done because we can see by their response they asked What must we DO!

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

If Peter had been one of the Faith only teachers he would have said **Do there is NOTHING to DO it is all of God, you are saved by Gods Grace Alone By your Faith Alone!**

Unfortunately for them Peter does not respond that way. **In response to their question what must we do? Peter replied:-**

International English. Acts 2:38; “Then Peter answered, ``**Change your hearts** and each one of you must **be immersed** by the authority of Jesus the Messiah, **so that your sins may be forgiven.** Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Compare Acts 2:38 and 22:16; results.

So Peter's response is that:-

they must **REPENT** and

be **IMMERSED** to be **FORGIVEN** of their sins
and to **RECEIVE** the indwelling Holy Spirit

Those who teach saved by Grace alone or Faith alone ignore the fact that **Jesus** told Paul that he would be **told by Ananias** what Paul must **DO**

Also in Acts 2:38; Peter responds to the question "**what must we do**" by telling the 3000 to **DO something**.

Compare Acts 2:38; and 22:16; results.

**So in conclusion we see that we are not saved
or we do not receive forgiveness of our sins
by Grace Alone or Faith Alone!**

**Even this is a false concept
if salvation requires
BOTH Grace and Faith then neither are alone!**

**Grace is salvation from God's side.
(what God has done for us!)**

**Faith, Repentance, Confession and Baptism
is salvation from our side Our response
to Gods Grace! WHAT WE NEED TO DO!**

Acts 9:1-19; The conversion of Saul.
Jesus turned one of the greatest enemies
of the church into
one of its greatest missionaries.

Saul's conversion speaks volumes
regarding the **power of the Gospel to save**
and **God's willingness to forgive.**

(Rom 1:16-17; 1 Pet 3:8-9;)



Things Paul would now have understood based on his experience of conversion!

Jesus was alive:-Therefore, He must have been raised from the dead. (Rom 1:4;)

Therefore, He was the Messiah after all.

Jesus was cursed to die on a “tree.”

(Deut 21:23; Gal 3:10;)

But must **NOT** have been **for His own sins.**

Therefore he was cursed for us. (Probably had heard Is. 53, etc. from those he persecuted.)

Paul's entire existing belief system was wrong!

**Things Paul would now have understood
based on his experience of conversion!**

**He had been killing true followers of God!
Yet Jesus was willing to accept him
as a follower!**

**Therefore, salvation was now possible
for even the worst sinner.**

Things Paul would now have understood based on his experience of conversion!

Therefore, salvation must NOT be based on mans own merit or on our good works.

Paul's view of the Old Testament had to be completely reassessed. . .the role of the law must be changed. (Rom 6:14;)

“We are no more under law, but under grace.”

Things Paul would now have understood based on his experience of conversion!

If people are saved apart from the law, even Gentiles can be saved! (Eph 2:14-15;)

The whole basis for excluding Gentiles was the law.

Jesus said, “Why do you persecute Me?”

Therefore, the people Paul was persecuting are identified with Christ.

This mystical union is the basis for:-

- a. the Body of Christ. (Rom 12:5;)**
- b. our new identity in Christ. (Rom 6:6;)**



Saul Begins Working for the Lord. Acts 9:20-22;

“Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.”

21 “All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn't he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name?”

“And hasn't he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?”

22 “Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.”

Acts 9:22; Paul's message and changed life!



It is important to know what the Bible teaches and how to defend the faith, but our words should be backed up with a changed life.

Saul Begins Working for the Lord. Acts 9:20-22;

Paul was a powerful preacher not only because he had the inspiration and the miraculous power to do signs and wonders that came with being an Apostle of Christ,

But he now knew the correct interpretation of all the messianic prophecies in the Old Testament.

Not only this but he must have known the story of Jesus and all His teachings. He also knew the teachings of the Greek philosophers and spoke their language.

He was a perfect candidate to be an Apostle, whether to the Jews or to the Gentiles.

Saul Begins Working for the Lord. Acts 9:20-22;

**Saul, a converted Jewish leader,
preached Jesus Christ.**

**Saul obeyed Jesus' command to go and teach.
(Matt 28:18-20;)**

**Saul stood ready to preach the word,
just as he later taught Timothy.
(2 Tim 4:2;)**

**In Paul's example,
we see His zeal and excitement
regarding **the truth of Jesus Christ.****

Saul Spends Three Years in Arabia.



Jebel Al Lawz – the Real Mt. Sinai in Arabia?



Alternate Theories of the Exodus Route.

Saul Spends Three Years in Arabia.

The account in Acts 9 does not mention the three years Saul spent in Arabia.

This addition to the story is found in **Galatians 1:15-18;**

“But when God, who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me so that I might preach him among the Gentiles, I did not consult any man.”

“nor did I go up to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before I was, but I went immediately into Arabia and later returned to Damascus.”

Saul Begins Working for the Lord.

Galatians 4:25;

“This is Hagar; for the name Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, which is in bondage together with her children.”

Rephidim:- Moses brought water from the rock!



Saul Begins Working for the Lord.

“Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days.”

Some think Jesus spent as much time with Paul somewhere in Arabia as He had with the other Apostles during His ministry.

Acts 9:23-25; Saul Escapes His Enemies.

23 “After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him,”

24 “but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him.”

25 “But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.”

Saul Escapes His Enemies.



Saul went to Jerusalem and tried to join himself to the disciples. Acts 9:26-28;

The disciples were afraid of Saul. (v 26;)

Barnabas took Saul to the apostles. Saul told the apostles how the Lord had appeared to him and how he had boldly preached in Damascus. (v 27;)

Saul worked with the saints in Jerusalem. (v 28;)

Bible examples of Christians being a part of the local congregation.

The body has many members.

(1 Cor 12:12-14; Rom 12:3-8;)

Saul's example clearly shows a person going to an area and trying to join with the saints in that area.

Saul's example also shows us what it meant to be a working part or member of the local congregation.



Acts 9:26-28; Barnabas Vouched for Saul.

**26 “When he came to Jerusalem,
he tried to join the disciples,
but they were all afraid of him,
not believing that he really was a disciple.”**

**27 “But Barnabas took him and brought him to the
apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had
seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him,”**

**“how in Damascus he had
preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus.”**

Acts 9:26-28; Barnabas Vouched for Saul.

We do not know how Barnabas knew more than any of the Apostles about Saul and his experiences on the Damascus road and his preaching in Damascus, but somehow he did.

They trusted Barnabas and believed his story, therefore they accepted Saul as a true disciple.

We can understand why Saul and Barnabas became good friends.

28 “So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord.



Barnabas Vouched for Saul.

9:29-31; Saul Begins Working for the Lord.

Saul spoke boldly in the name of Jesus.
He disputed against the Hellenists.



The Hellenists attempted to kill Saul.
The brethren learned of the attempts
and sent Saul to Tarsus. (Acts 9:29-30;)

The congregations had peace
and continued to grow.
(Acts 9:31;)



Ancient Street in Tarsus, Paul's Home Town.

9:29-31; Saul Begins Working for the Lord.

29 “He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him.”

30 “When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.”



St. Paul's Well in Tarsus.

9:29-31; Saul Begins Working for the Lord.

Paul immediately became one of the leaders in the church and **antagonized the same bunch** who had brought about the murder of Stephen.

These Greek-speaking Jews, probably of the Synagogue of the Freedmen to which Saul himself had once belonged. **Now his one-time friends were trying to kill him.**

The brothers send him to his home town of **Tarsus in Cilicia**. We will not hear of him again until the 11th chapter of Acts.

The "Gospel" of the Holy Spirit.



The “Gospel” of the Holy Spirit.

Because the Holy Spirit is such a prominent actor in this book, it has been called the “Gospel of the Holy Spirit.”

The acts of the Apostles might have been emphasized in this book, but the power, guidance and work of encouraging of the Holy Spirit is mentioned over and over.

Without the work of the Holy Spirit in these early days the church could not have survived and grown!

9:31; The Church Grew.

The congregations had peace and were edified. History shows us that this peace did not last forever.

(Rev 2:8-10;)

However, Paul's admonition to Timothy regarding praying for the government should still ring true today. (1 Tim 2:1-4;)

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 1.

We first meet Saul as the leader of the persecution of Jesus' disciples, all those belonging to **"that Way," as it is called in those days.**

He is constantly breathing out threats of slaughter, travelling everywhere he thinks there may be disciples.

He arrests all he finds and brings them bound to Jerusalem to present them to the Sanhedrin. When they are condemned, he oversees their execution by stoning.



Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 1.

**He doesn't know it but Jesus had chosen him from birth to be His Apostle to the Gentiles.
(Acts 9:15; Galatians 1:15-17;).**

As Saul and his entourage were on his way to Damascus to arrest disciples, at about noon, Saul had a vision of Jesus Who spoke to him and told him to go into the city and there he would be told what he must do.

After three days of blindness, praying and fasting, Ananias, a disciple of Jesus came to him, restored his sight and told him to be baptized to “wash away his sins.”

Damascus – Wall of the Old City.



Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 1.

Saul immediately began preaching the gospel of Jesus to the Jews of the city.

When they plotted to catch him at the city gate and kill him, he slipped over the wall and was lowered in a basket to escape.

Whether he went into Arabia, then back to Damascus, or whether he had already gone to Arabia and returned before his escape over the wall, we don't know.

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 1.

After he left Damascus he went to Jerusalem where Barnabas introduced him to the Apostles as a disciple of Jesus.

When the Jews tried to kill him he was shipped off to Tarsus.

We learn that Jesus will not appear to an unsaved person to save him or tell him what he must do to be saved.

Only a disciple of Jesus or His written word can do that.

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 2.

Most of us base our level of commitment on the people around us.

**Not Paul:- Once he saw the truth, he also saw the implications for his life
He wasn't afraid to live those out.**

Saul Lost his wealth.

Lost his position in government.

Lost his honoured position in society.

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 2.

“I consider all these things as **“CRAP” compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ” Phil 3:8;**

“This depressing word means rubbish and muck of many kinds: excrement, rotten food. Nastiness and decay are the constant elements of its meaning:-

**“It is a coarse, ugly, violent word implying worthlessness, uselessness, and repulsiveness.”
(Colin Brown, NIDNTT.)**

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 2.

**Paul's life became a hectic adventure
He forfeited the comfort of apathetic slumber.**

**Paul would rather burn brightly than wither and die
He became an exciting model for ALL of us.**

**1 Cor 11:1-2; "Be imitators of me, just as I also
am of Christ. 2. Now I praise you because you
remember me in everything and hold firmly
to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you."**

WHICH IS BETTER?

Cautious, hesitant commitment?

Or radical, all-out spirituality?

Conclusion of Acts 9; Part 2.

We have learned that God's plans will be carried out on earth by human beings, some of whom are chosen and called according to His foreknowledge.

And that He gives them the direction and power necessary for them to accomplish His will.

How Beautiful are the Feet!

By Ellis Jones.

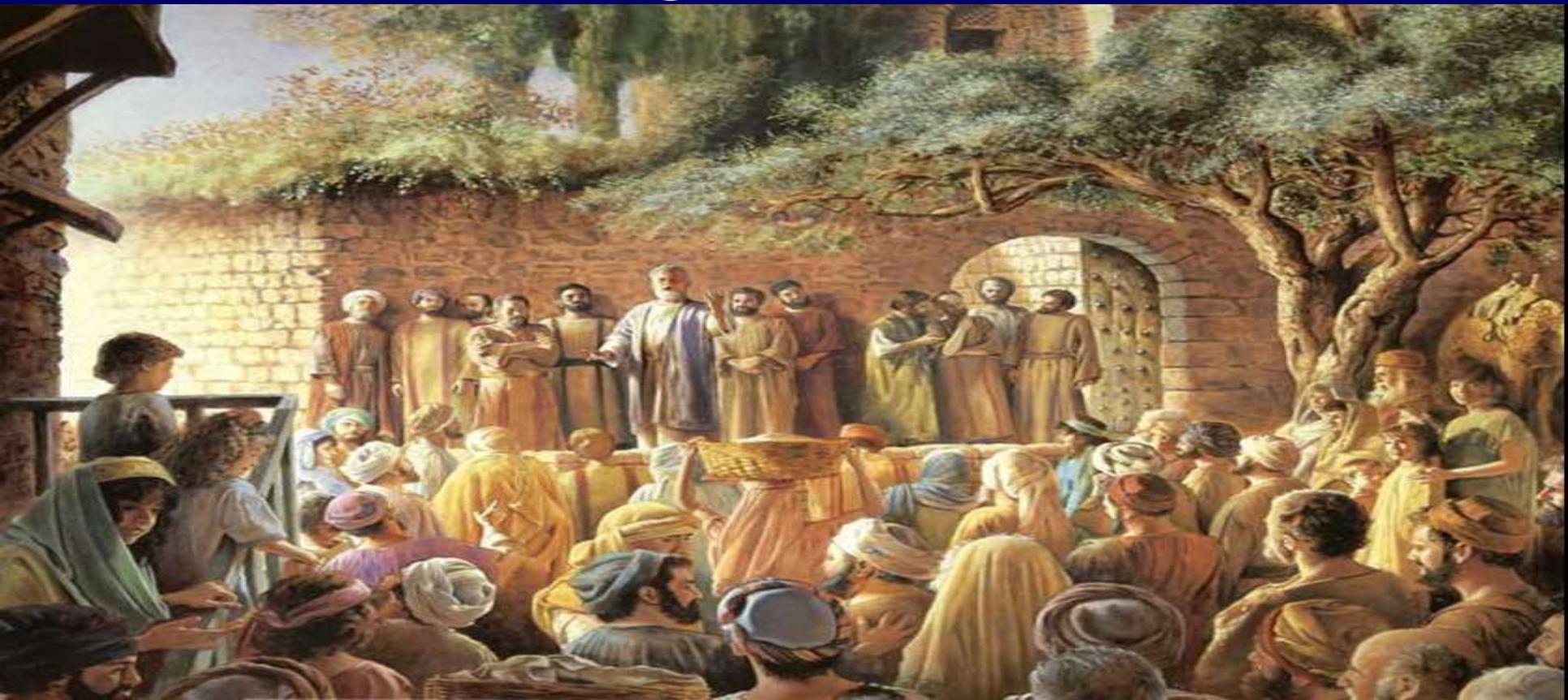
Isaiah 52:7;

“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet
of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion, **"Your God reigns!"** (NIV)

How many of US are showing OUR feet?



**How beautiful are the feet
Of him who brings good news! -
The Gospel that was preached,
First only to the Jews.**



**But now it has gone out
To those of every nation,
The message of hope
And reconciliation.**



**How beautiful are feet
That carry good news!
May I be a vessel
That You, O Lord, can use.**



**O Lord, please let my feet
Be beautiful also,
To carry the gospel
Everywhere I go.**



Acts 9:1 to 9:30; Saul's Conversion.

**Prepared by
Graeme Morrison**

graemestudy@gmail.com

<https://www.graemebibleresources.com>

**Next in the series:-
Acts 9:31; to 10 23; Dorcas.**