

¹ Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

Saul/Paul

Philippians 3:5 (NKJV) circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;

Acts 22:3 (NKJV) "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.

Acts 18:3 (NKJV) So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

Acts 22:26-28 (NKJV) When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman." Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen."

Galatians 1:13-14 (NKJV) For you have heard of my former conduct in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it. And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.

² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

Damascus, located about 150 miles northeast of Jerusalem, had been the ancient capital of the nation of Syria. Having a large Jewish population, Damascus was the home of many synagogues. The high priest's letters to the synagogues would have been written in his capacity as head of the Sanhedrin. Hence, bearing the weight of the Sanhedrin's authority, the letters would secure the cooperation of the Jews in arresting the Christians among them.

- - - **Acts** By: Johnny Stringer (pg. 185)

³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.

⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

Acts 22:9 (NKJV) And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me.

Acts 22:9 (ESV) Now those who were with me saw the light but did not understand the voice of the one who was speaking to me.

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

Acts 9:5 (ESV) And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

N.A.S.V. and N.I.V. also leave out the phrase "It is hard for you to kick against the goads"

⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

⁷ And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one.

See text box under [verse 4](#)

⁸ Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought *him* into Damascus.

Acts 22:11 (NKJV) And since **I could not see for the glory of that light**, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus.

Acts 22:11 (NIV) My companions led me by the hand into Damascus, because the **brilliance of the light had blinded me**.

⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

¹⁰ Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named **Ananias**; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

Acts 22:12 (NKJV) Then a certain Ananias, a **devout** man according to the law, having a **good testimony with all the Jews** who dwelt *there*,

¹¹ So the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying.

¹² And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

¹³ Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your **saints** in Jerusalem.

It should be noted that this is the **first time the term saints is used in the New Testament**. It was a term used to refer to all Christians. From the word *hagios*, which "fundamentally signifies separated" (Vine 2:226), the term saint denotes one who is spiritually and morally separated from the world and devoted to the service of God. Such had been the objects of Saul's ruthless persecution.

Truth Commentaries --- Acts by Johnny Stringer pg. 190

¹⁴ And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

¹⁷ And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

¹⁸ Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

Acts 22:12-16 (NKJV) ¹² Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt *there*, ¹³ came to me; and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. ¹⁴ Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. ¹⁵ For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. ¹⁶ **And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'**

¹⁹ So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

²⁰ Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

Acts 26:20 (NKJV) but declared **first to those in Damascus** and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should **repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.**

²¹ Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?"

²² But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ.

²³ Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him.

²⁴ But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him.

²⁵ Then the disciples took him by night and let *him* down through the wall in a large basket.

2 Corinthians 11:32-33 (NKJV) ³² In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; ³³ but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

²⁶ And when **Saul had come to Jerusalem**, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.

²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought *him* to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

Galatians 1:15-19 (NKJV) ¹⁵ But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb and called *me* through His grace, ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those *who were* apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

²⁸ So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.

²⁹ And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him.

³⁰ When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.



SAUL'S RETURN TO TARSUS

At least three years elapsed between Acts 9:22 and 9:26. After time alone in Arabia (see Galatians 1:16-18), Saul (Paul) returned to Damascus and then to Jerusalem. The apostles were reluctant to believe that this former persecutor could have become one of them. He escaped to Caesarea, where he caught a ship and returned to Tarsus.

* This map & information from **Tyndale Handbook Of Bible Charts & Maps** (pg. 369)

³¹ Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

³² Now it came to pass, as Peter went through all *parts of the country*, that he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda.

³³ There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed.

³⁴ And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately.

³⁵ So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

³⁶ At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.

³⁷ But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid *her* in an upper room.

³⁸ And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring *him* not to delay in coming to them.

³⁹ Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought *him* to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.

⁴⁰ But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.

⁴¹ Then he gave her *his* hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

⁴² And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

⁴³ So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.

Questions Acts 9

1. Explain the reason that Saul desired to go to Damascus.
2. How was Saul persecuting Christ?
3. What do we know about the background of Saul /Paul?

Questions Acts 9

4. How did Saul respond to Jesus?

5. Who was Ananias?
 - a. What was he instructed to do?

6. Define the word “saints” as used in the phrase “Your saints in Jerusalem”

7. Why might you use Acts 22:12-16 with Acts 9:10-18 as you explain Saul’s conversion?

8. What reaction occurred as Saul preached Christ?

9. How was Barnabas involved with Saul as Saul returned to Jerusalem?

10. How are the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria described?

11. What do we know about the individuals that Peter healed at Lydda and Joppa?

12. How will you summarize this chapter?