

Chapter 4

Paul's Life from His Conversion to the 1st Missionary Journey

A. PAUL PREACHES IN DAMASCUS (SYRIA)

1. Damascus references

- a. **Acts 9:20-25** – “Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

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.”

- b. **Acts 26:19-20** –“Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

20 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.

2. The first place Saul preached was in Damascus of Syria.

3. Paul preached Christ in the Jewish synagogues. Acts 9:20

a. His message was: “. . . He is the Son of God.” **Acts 9:20**

b. He was proving that “Jesus is the Christ.” **Acts 9:22**

c. The reaction was: “But all that heard him were amazed . . .” **Acts 9:21**

d. The Jews plotted to kill Saul for turning to Christianity. Acts 9:23

e. The Jews watched the gates so as to prevent his escaping the city. Acts 9:24

f. The brethren let him down the wall in a large basket. Acts 9:25

4. It would be approximately ten to twelve years before Paul's first missionary journey.

B. PAUL TRAVELS TO ARABIA THEN RETURNS TO DAMASCUS

1. **Galatians 1:15-17** – “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.”
2. **Acts 9:23-25** – “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.”
3. **2 Corinthians 11:32-33** – “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.”
4. Saul traveled from Damascus to Arabia, southeast of Syria, where for three
 years the Lord taught Him as He had taught the other apostles.

C. PAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM AFTER HIS CONVERSION

1. Saul's first visit to Jerusalem takes place after the three years in Arabia and
 a return visit to Damascus.
 - a. Between Acts 9 15 and verse 26, three plus years elapse.
 - b. During that time:
 1. Paul leave Damascus for Arabia.
 2. Is taught by the Lord some three years in Arabia. Corresponds to
 approximately the same amount of time the Lord taught the original
 twelve apostles.
 3. Returns to Damascus.
 4. Visits Jerusalem for the first time since his conversion.
2. **Acts 9:26-29** – “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.
 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.”

3. **Acts 22:17-21** – “Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, that I was in a trance
 18 and saw Him saying to me, ‘Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.’
 19 So I said, ‘Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You.
 20 And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.’
 21 Then He said to me, ‘Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.’”
4. **Galatians 1:17-20** – “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.
 20 (Now concerning the things which I write to you, indeed, before God, I do not lie.”

D. PAUL TRAVELS TO CAESAREA THEN TO TARSUS

1. **Acts 9:29-30** – “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.”
2. **Galatians 1:21-24** – “Afterward I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.
 22 And I was unknown by face to the churches of Judea which were in Christ.
 23 But they were hearing only, ‘He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy.’
 24 And they glorified God in me.”

E. PAUL & BARNABAS IN TARSUS AND ANTIOCH

1. Barnabas seeks Saul. Tarsus was located approximately 80 miles from Antioch. **Acts 11:19-25** – “Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only.
 20 But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus.
 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.

22 Then news of these things came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent out Barnabas to go as far as Antioch.

23 When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.

24 For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.”

2. Paul & Barnabas worked in Antioch for one year. During that time the followers of Christ were called “**CHRISTIANS**” for the first time. **Acts 11:25-26** – “Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul.

26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

- a. Barnabas introduced Saul to the church in Jerusalem. **Acts 9:26-28** – “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.

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

- b. Barnabas introduced Saul to the church at Antioch. **Acts 11:26** – “And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

3. Antioch was the third largest city of the Roman Empire.

- a. By way of size:

1. Largest city—Rome (Italy)
2. Second largest city—Alexandria (Egypt)
3. Third Largest city—Antioch (Syria)

- b. Antioch

1. Capital of Syria
2. In many ways the most impressive city of the Middle East.
 - a. A royal palace.
 - b. A marble paved street four miles long with colonnades on either side.
 - c. Aqueducts
 - d. Baths
 - e. Lamp-lighted streets and buildings
 - f. Immoral pagan temples of Jupiter and Daphne with ornate gardens which were 10 miles in circumference.

- g. Amphitheaters
- h. Running water

F. Paul's Second Visit to Jerusalem after His Conversion

1. **Acts 11:27-30** - "And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar.

29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.

30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."

2. Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch, taking John Mark, Barnabas's cousin with them. **Acts 12:25** – "And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry, and they also took with them John whose surname was Mark.