



### Paul's crazy ride to changing the world

Acts 9:19-31  
Galatians 1:11-24  
Acts 22:17-21

#### CONVERTED PAUL IN DAMASCUS

Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days.<sup>20</sup> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is indeed the Son of God!"<sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus' followers in Jerusalem?" they asked. "And didn't he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?" Acts 9:19-21

#### PAUL GOES INTO ARABIA

<sup>15</sup> But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him <sup>16</sup> to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles. When this happened, I did not rush out to consult with any human being. <sup>17</sup> Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus. Galatians 1:15-17

#### PAUL SPENDS APPROX. THREE YEARS IN ARABIA- Galatians 1:18

**What did Paul do in Arabia?** Answer; It's a pure guess the Bible doesn't say. But Paul does write in Galatians 1:

Dear brothers and sisters, I want you to understand that the gospel message I preach is not based on mere human reasoning. <sup>12</sup> I received my message from no human source, and no one taught me. Instead, I received it by direct revelation from Jesus Christ. Galatians 1:11,12

#### PAUL RETURNS TO DAMASCUS

<sup>22</sup> Saul's preaching became more and more powerful, and the Jews in Damascus couldn't refute his proofs that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

<sup>23</sup> After a while some of the Jews plotted together to kill him. Acts 9:22,23

#### Community Group Questions:

1. What was the biggest surprise to you about Paul's early years as a believer? Arabia, waiting three years to meet Peter and James, or being told to stop preaching in Jerusalem?

It would appear that Paul was set to make amends with the Jewish Christians he had previously harmed, (Acts 22) yet God told him he must leave Judea, because he had other plans for Paul. Yet Paul would wait ten more years before beginning his missionary work to the Gentiles.

2. You're going to counsel Paul in Tarsus what would you tell him?

3. How does your life match up to Paul's progression of humility?

Least of the Apostles 1 Corinthians 15:9

Least of God's people Ephesians 3:8

Worst sinner 1 Timothy 1:15

### **PAUL FLEES DAMASCUS**

<sup>24</sup> They were watching for him day and night at the city gate so they could murder him, but Saul was told about their plot. <sup>25</sup> So during the night, some of the other believers lowered him in a large basket through an opening in the city wall. Acts 9:24,25

### **PAUL GOES UP TO JERUSALEM**

<sup>26</sup> When Saul arrived in Jerusalem, he tried to meet with the believers, but they were all afraid of him. They did not believe he had truly become a believer! <sup>27</sup> Then Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Saul had seen the Lord on the way to Damascus and how the Lord had spoken to Saul. He also told them that Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in Damascus. <sup>28</sup> So Saul stayed with the apostles and went all around Jerusalem with them, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. Acts 9:26-28

### **According to Galatians:**

I did not rush out to consult with any human being. <sup>17</sup> Nor did I go up to Jerusalem to consult with those who were apostles before I was. Instead, I went away into Arabia, and later I returned to the city of Damascus. <sup>18</sup> *Then three years later* I went to Jerusalem to get to know Peter, and I stayed with him for fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> The only other apostle I met at that time was James, the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> I declare before God that what I am writing to you is not a lie. Galatians 1:16-20

So Saul stayed with the apostles and went all around Jerusalem with them, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord. <sup>29</sup> He debated with some Greek-speaking Jews, *but they tried to murder him.* Acts 9:28,29

### **Years later in Acts 22 Paul recalls this time in Jerusalem**

"When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. 'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.'" 'But Lord,' I argued, 'they certainly know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. <sup>20</sup> And I was in complete agreement when your witness Stephen was killed. I stood by and kept the coats they took off when they stoned him.' <sup>21</sup> 'Go! For I will send you far away to the Gentiles.'" Acts 22:17-21

### **PAUL HEADS BACK NORTH AWAY FROM JERUSALEM**

<sup>21</sup> After that visit I went north into the provinces of Syria and Cilicia. <sup>22</sup> And still the churches in Christ that are in Judea didn't know me personally. <sup>23</sup> All they knew was that people were saying, "*The one who used to persecute us is now preaching the very faith he tried to destroy!*" <sup>24</sup> And they praised God because of me. Galatians 1:21-24

### **AND THEN PAUL GOES BACK TO TARSUS.**

<sup>29</sup> (Remember) they tried to murder him. <sup>30</sup> When the believers heard about this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus, his hometown. Acts 9:30

### **AFTER PAUL WAS SENT AWAY THERE WAS PEACE IN ISRAEL**

<sup>31</sup> The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers. Acts 9:31

### **25 years later Paul begins to share his journey of humility as a believer.**

*For I am the least of all the apostles.* In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church. 1 Corinthians 15:9 (57AD)

Although *I am less than the least of all the Lord's people*, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, Ephesians 3:8 (63AD)

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. 1 Timothy 1:15 (65AD)

Something prepared Paul for humility while he was in Tarsus.

What? We do not know. All we know is Gentiles began converting in Joppa and Antioch. As a result, after many years...

Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, <sup>26</sup> and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. Acts 11:25, 26 (And then everything changed)