

Acts 9 Into Damascus

- Barclay: “Most famous conversion story in history.”
- Roberts: “One of the most important events in human history.”
- Paul retells in chapters 22 and 26.

1. Conversion – v. 1-19

- 1: Saul born to Jewish parents in Tarsus, capitol of Cilicia, of tiny Benjamin; named for king, “called of God.” Roman citizenship and wealth; Pharisee: very strict. Raised on OT, writings include over 200 ref. from almost all OT books. Occupation: tentmaker. May have been a member of the Sanhedrin council.
- 2: Damascus had a large Jewish pop. and many synagogues, 140 mi NNE of Jerusalem, 1 week trip by foot.
- 1st time “the way” refers to Christianity, a fav. expression of Luke; Sanhedrin could punish, all Jews worldwide subject to HP, under Roman Law all Chr. were Jews
- 3: noon (22:6), last day of journey, Saul’s world turned upside down
- 4: no room for doubt; heard Heb. dialect, in Luke’s writings, double name means someone is in trouble (Lk. 10:41, 13:34, 22:31). Pricks: goads, long pointed stick tipped with iron used to prod animals
- 5: followers claimed Jesus was alive – right!
- 6: must: strong word, not optional. God’s plan is for people to tell people how to be saved, not Jesus.
- 7: companions heard, did not understand
- 8: led into the city as a sorrowing sinner
- 9: Day 1: Lord appeared to Saul; D2: day after appearance; D3: Ananias came to Saul
- Fasted as a sign of penitence: Jonah 3:7; Saul was left in the dark (literally, spiritually, intellectually) for 3 days.
- 10: Ananias: “Jehovah is gracious”
- 11: Straight St. still exists in Damascus, 1mi.; Judas’ home: where Saul was probably going
- 12: Ananias told in a vision about a vision
- 13: reluctance; 1st use of saints for Christians
- 14: Ananias had received word of Saul’s auth.

- 15: For the Lord, “*no is not an answer.*” Vessel: instrument, valuable container filled w/ precious contents. 1st mention Gentiles in plan.
- 16: agony: not a false picture. “When the Lord calls us to serve, He calls us to suffer.” Roper; 2 Tim. 3:12
- 17: brother: Jewish designation, not Chr.
- 18: immediately regained sight; commanded to be baptized, 22:16, and immediately was!
- 19: regained strength; Saul spent rest of his life spreading the faith he had once tried to destroy.

2. Labors – v. 20-31

- 20: next Sabbath day Saul in synagogue; 1st time preached as “Son of God”
- 21: amazed at the message
- 22: moved from milk to meat; baffled Jews by proving Jesus is the Christ
- 23: returned from Arabia (Gal. 1:17), former allies now sought to put him out.
- 24: word of execution plan reached Saul; see his notes on this in 2 Cor. 11:32
- 25: escaped through a window, 2 Cor. 11:33
- 26: passing the place where the Lord appeared to him 3 years earlier (Gal. 1:18) (year appeared, last year, this year), desired to be with fellow Chr., a man without a friend in Jerusalem.
- 27: Barnabas takes up for Saul; last mention of apostles alone as leaders of Jer. Church
- 28: stayed w/ Peter, Gal. 1:18
- 29: Hellenistic synagogue the most dangerous place Saul could be
- 30: providentially plot known again; back home
- 31: progress report: church existed, enjoyed peace, grew, encouraged

3. Journeys – v. 32-43

- Early church glimpse here; “The Acts of Peter, Ac. 9:32-11:18” nothing on him since ch. 5 save going to Samaria
- 32: regions: Judea, Samaria, Galilee; Lydda: 26mi NW of Jerusalem, OT: Lod
- 33: Aeneas GK name, possibly Hellenistic Jew, don’t know if Chr. or not; Dr. Luke: paralyzed for 8 years
- 34: “Get up and make your bed!” immediate healing
- 35: entire area took notice of the healing, and they obeyed the Lord
- 36: 12mi W, seacoast town of Joppa, Jaffa today, a suburb of Tel Aviv; Tabitha: 2nd named woman since Pentecost (Sapphira), means gazelle; serving others

- 37: 1st mention of member dying naturally; code: burial had to be the same day
- 38: word quickly got to Peter; no mention of raising from the dead yet
- 39: wearing what she had made for them
- 40: 1st recorded apostle raising from dead; Peter may have remembered how Jesus raised: Mk. 5:40, Lk. 8:51; immediate, complete, convincing
- 41: Peter shows her alive to all; logic:
1. healing Tabitha no harder than healing Aeneas; 2. Dorcas had no faith to be healed; 3. raising not the climax of the story
- 42: end result: many believed
- 43: Simon Peter stayed with Simon the Tanner and sets up ch. 10

Lessons:

- The “chief of all sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15) became a Christian. God was willing to forgive him, and He is willing to forgive you, too!
- Immediately after Saul was baptized, he went to work for the Lord. We need to begin laboring for Him and keep going until our last breath.
- Although there is no miraculous healing today, we can read those recorded and believe just like the crowd did!
- Bonus: Tabitha’s works were remembered in her death. Our works for the Lord will be remembered as well, Rv. 14:13.

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