

THE DAMASCUS ROAD – SAUL CONVERTED -- ACTS 9:1-9

OBSERVATION

INTERPRETATION

APPLICATION

Monday 7:30pm, H 105 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by the vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell #714 425 9221; email – ptwente@gmail.com For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column. References include commentaries by numbers pastor/teachers.

THE PATTERN OF A MAN’S LIFE WAS TOTALLY CHANGED – Acts 9:1-2

Act 9:1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord,

went to the high priest

Act 9:2 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.

THE POWER OF GOD WAS DISPLAYED IN DRAMATIC FASHION – Acts 9:3-5

Act 9:3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.

Act 9:4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

THE PATTERN OF A MAN’S LIFE WAS TOTALLY CHANGED – Acts 9:1-2

v. 1 “still breathing threats and murder against the disciples” - His reactions toward believers – Used of “wild boars devastating a vineyard; the ravaging of a body by a wild beast” - cf. - Acts 22:3-4, 19, 20; 26:9-11 (exceedingly enraged)

*vs. 1-2 “went to the high priest [2] and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way.” - His request to the high priest – cf. - Acts 26:12; 22:5
Lenski – Paul was converted at age 35. If by 36 AD, High Priest = Caiaphas – 37AD Jonathan, son of Annas, made high priest by Vitellius, governor of Syria at Passover – Theophilus – 38 AD at Pentecost. - “the way” – cf. - Acts 19:9; 22:4; 24:22*

THE POWER OF GOD WAS DISPLAYED IN DRAMATIC FASHION – Acts 9:3-5

v. 3 “suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.” - It came upon him suddenly – cf. - Acts 22:6; 26:13 - Today it is a Christian burial place on the east side of the city

v. 4 “he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"” - It confronted him directly about what he was doing – cf. - Acts 26:14-15

Chrysostom – “What’s wrong, great or small, hast thou suffered from me, that thou dost these things?”

“WHAT HAPPENED ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS?” - Acts 9:1-9

Damascus is 150 miles NE of Jerusalem. It is the oldest city in the world and still a very large city, and was called the gateway to the East. According to Josephus, Nero massacred 10,000 Jews in one hour in Damascus.

Sir Gilbert Hawkins and Baron George Lyttelton set out to disprove Christianity. One took the resurrection of Jesus Christ; the other took the conversion of Saul on the Damascus Road. About one year later they met to discuss their findings. They found out that both of them had come to a saving faith in Christ!

Compare the conversion of Saul as described in the Book of Acts with of a Christian today.

THE DAMASCUS ROAD – SAUL CONVERTED -- ACTS 9:1-9

OBSERVATION

*Act 9:5 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."

*THE PURPOSES OF THIS MAN'S LIFE
WERE NOW IN THE HANDS OF GOD – Acts
9:6-9*

*Act 9:6 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."*

*Act 9:7 And the men who journeyed with him
stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no
one.*

*Act 9:8 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.*

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

INTERPRETATION

*v. 5 "Who are You, Lord?" - It caused him to respond willingly –
cf - Acts 22:10 - "lord" – "kupios" – "sir"?*

*v. 5 "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting" – cf. - Acts 9:17, 27;
22:14; 26:15-16; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:8 Saul/Paul saw Jesus in
bodily form!! Note how critical this is!! This very question is
why so many atheists choose this Scripture to question!*

*v. 5 "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." KJV – "it is hard
for thee to kick against the pricks" (goads) – cf. - Acts 26:14
↓*

*THE PURPOSES OF THIS MAN'S LIFE WERE NOW IN THE
HANDS OF GOD – Acts 9:6-9*

*v. 6 "Lord, what do You want me to do?– Acts 22:10
Early evidence, but no Greek MMS contains all these words*

*v. 6 "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must
do." - As to Paul's future direction – cf. - Acts 26:16-19*

*v. 7 "men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a
voice but seeing no one. - As to Paul's present dilemma - The
confusion of the men travelling with him – cf. - Acts 22:9
"stood speechless" – cf. - Acts 26:14, John 12:29*

*Vs. 8-9 "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. [9] And he was three days without sight, and
neither ate nor drank. - The condition of Saul – cf. - Acts 22:11*

APPLICATION

Whenever we criticize or put down another person, we are touching the Lord Jesus Himself!

Lenski – "He is in a depressed and wretched condition. His fearful sin lay heavily upon him and the Lord permitted it to crush him for three days. A good deal was required to grind down this mighty Pharisee and implacable foe of the gospel. Shut off from the world, blind, abstaining from food, with no one to help his soul's distress, his proud self-righteousness was conquered, and there remained only a sinner in the dust who ever after felt himself chief of all sinners."

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		<p><u><i>Eph. 2:4-9 “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, [5] even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), [6] and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, [7] that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. [8] For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, [9] not of works, lest anyone should boast.”</i></u></p>
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Grace – Michael W. Smith, Martin Smith (Ephesians 2:4-9)

*I was lost when You found me here
You pulled me close and held me near
And I'm a fool but still You love
I'll be a fool for the King of love
You gave me wings so I could fly
Gave me a song to color the sky
And all I have is all from You
And all I want is all of You*

*It's grace, Your grace, I'm nothing without You
Your grace, Your grace shines on me*

*And there've been days when I've walked away
Too much to carry, nothing left to say
Forgive me, Lord, when I'm weak and lost
For you traded Heaven for a wooden cross
And all these years You've carried me
You've been my eyes when I could not see
And beauty grows in the driving rain
Your oil of gladness in the times of pain*

*Your grace, Your grace, I'm nothing without You
Your grace, Your grace shines on me (2x)*

*Shines on me, shines on me
Your grace, it shines on me
Shines on me, shines on me
It's Your grace (2x)*

Questions:

1. What is the most famous conversion in church history?
2. What are the two notable conversions given in the Book of Acts in chapters 9 & 10? Is there a common term with them both?
3. Why do you think that bible critics have often tried to attack the veracity of this account of Paul's conversion on his way to Damascus?
4. Compare the conversion of Saul as described in the Book of Acts with of a Christian today. What was the cause of his conversion?
5. How would you describe Saul's emotions to ward believers prior to his conversion.
6. Whenever you look into the eyes of those who presently are the most hostile toward Jesus Christ, do you or will you remember this passage of Scripture and the conversion of Paul, as an example of such a person?
7. Who do you think is "the high priest" referred to in verse one? Could it have been the same High Priest that presided over the trial of Jesus and that of the stoning of Stephen?
8. At what point of the Damascus Road experience do you think that Saul was actually saved?
9. How sudden was Saul's conversion – the sovereign grace of God?
10. What language was spoken by the Lord as He apprehended Saul?
11. What might have been some of the goads referred to?
12. What was the experience of those people who were with Saul?
13. Do you think that Saul saw Jesus Christ in bodily form on the Damascus Road? How important is this? Is this spoken of in more than one place in the Bible?