

# AN ENEMY CONVERTS

Saul

Acts 9:1–31

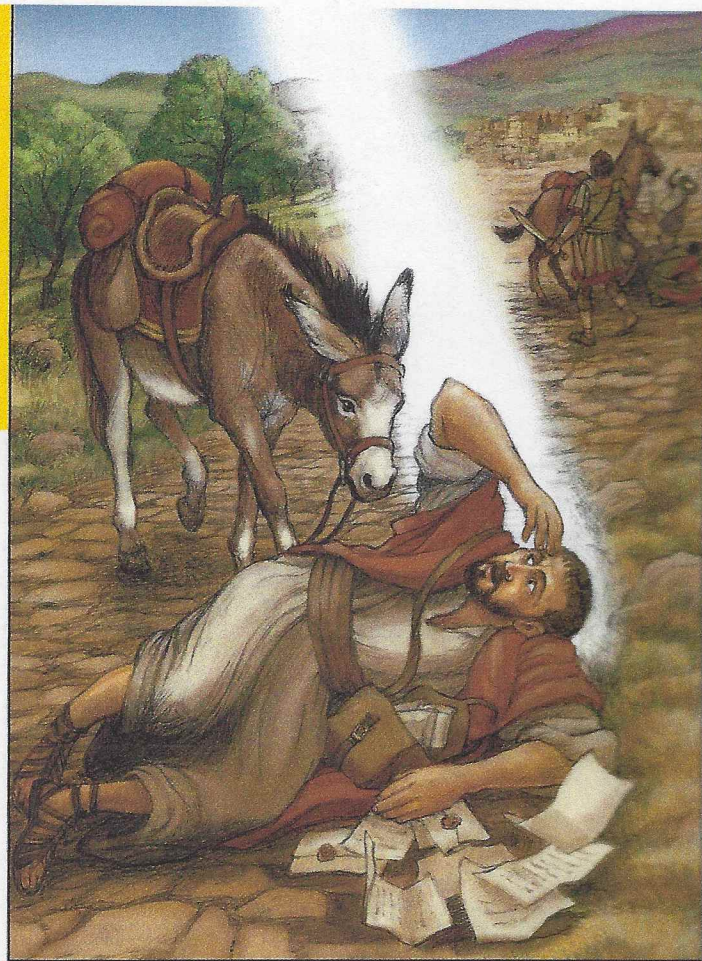
**S**aul believed Jesus was a false teacher who taught lies about God and pretended to be God's Son. He wanted to stop the Christians from telling other people about Jesus, so he went from house to house through Jerusalem, dragging off the people who believed in Jesus and putting them in prison.

Saul wanted to attack the Christians in Damascus, so the high priest wrote letters for him so that if he found any believers in Jesus, he could tie them up and bring them back to Jerusalem.

When Saul came near Damascus, **suddenly a light from heaven shone around him.** He fell to the ground and heard **a voice calling, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"** Saul asked, "Who are You, Lord?" **The voice answered, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But rise and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do."**

The men traveling with Saul heard the voice, but they didn't see anyone. **Saul got up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he couldn't see anything.** The men took his hand and led him into Damascus. For three days, Saul was unable to see. He didn't eat or drink anything during this time.

Then, **Jesus told a Christian in Damascus named Ananias to go and lay his hands on Saul so he could see again.** Ananias was scared of Saul, but he obeyed Jesus. He went and laid his hands on Saul, and **Jesus gave Saul back his sight. Ananias baptized him.**



**Right there in Damascus, Saul began teaching that Jesus was the Christ, the Savior of the world.** Some Jews got angry and made plans to kill Saul. **But Saul found out and had his disciples lower him down in a basket through an opening in the wall.**

Saul returned to Jerusalem, but the Christians there were afraid of him. A devout Christian named Barnabas took Saul to the apostles and described how Jesus had appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus. **The apostles welcomed Saul, and he became known as Paul.**

## Saul/Paul

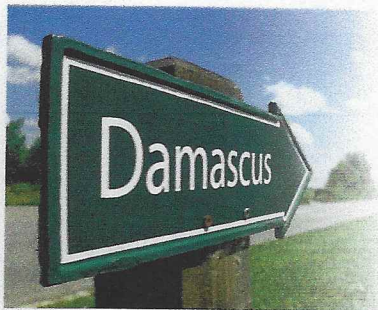
Saul was his Jewish name. Paul was his Roman name. He went by both names, but when his ministry began to focus more on Gentiles, the name *Paul* was used all the time.

Paul was a Pharisee, but because all pharisees were laypeople with other jobs, he was also a tentmaker.



Paul faced great difficulties for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel: he was whipped by the Jews five times, beaten with rods three times, stoned once, and shipwrecked three times, including being adrift at sea for a day and a night.



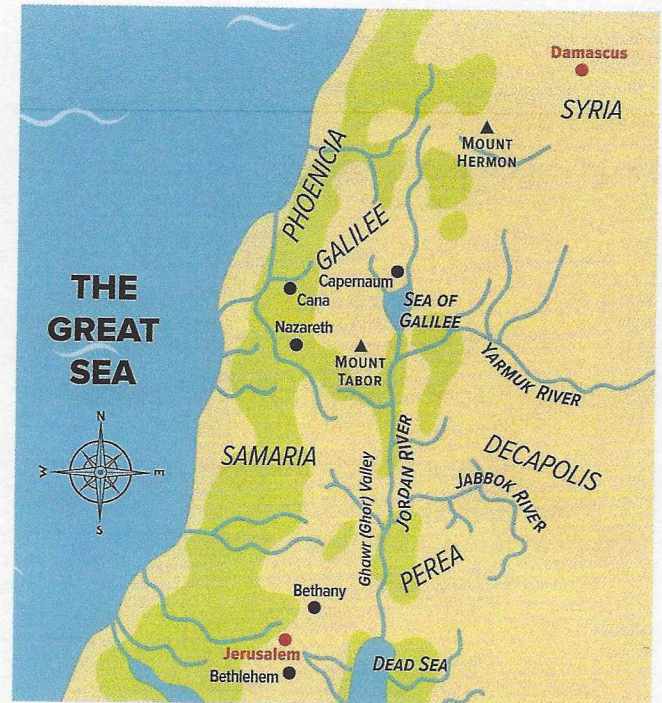


## The Road to Damascus

The road from Jerusalem to Damascus is

about 135–150 miles long. It would have taken Saul a long time to make this trip.

Today, Damascus is the largest city in Syria and its national capital.



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## The Street Called Straight (Acts 9:11)

This was the actual name of a street in Damascus. Even though the buildings on this street have changed and the width of the road has changed, this street still exists in Damascus today.

Below is a photograph of Straight Street in Damascus from more than one hundred years ago, before there were cars. Maybe it looked similar to this when Paul was there.

Why would this detail be included in this Scripture account? To help us understand that this event happened in a real place and at a real time with real people. God cares about the details.

What is the name of the street that you live on?

## The City Wall and Paul (Acts 9:25)

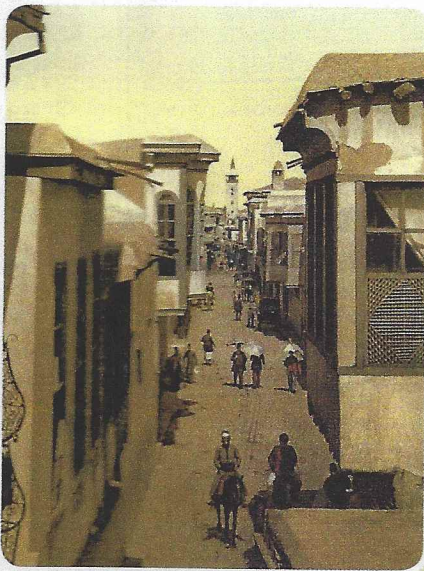
What was a city wall like? Look at the picture below of the Damascus Wall more than one hundred years ago.

How could he be rescued in a basket?

Ancient cities often had large walls built around them for protection. People could only get in and out of the city through the gate.

The walls did, however, have small openings, like windows.

Paul's friends lowered him to safety in a basket through one of those openings—not your average escape route!



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Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-jpmssc-02671



## Bible Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17

If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

## Scripture Connections

Read the passage below for another version of this account from Paul's own writing.

► Galatians 1:11–24



# AN ENEMY CONVERTS—SAUL

## Unit 3, Lesson 12

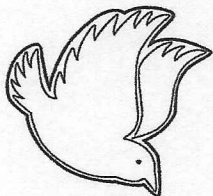
### Baptism Changes Us

**Directions:** Through Holy Baptism, God changes us. As you review the Bible account of Saul and as you think about your own Baptism, fill in the chart below with the ways that God changes us through water and His Word.

#### OLD ME

#### NEW ME

Enemy of God →



→

Sin-filled heart →

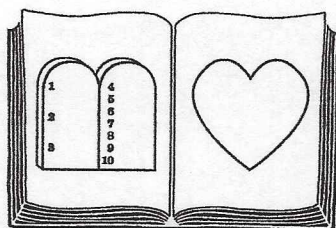
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Holy Spirit-less →



→

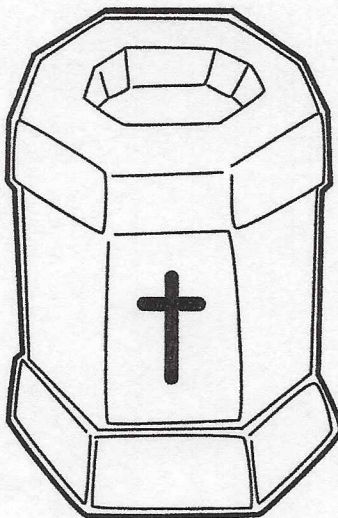
Without faith in  
the triune God →



→

Eternally dead →

→



**If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. (2 Corinthians 5:17)**