



Rice Memorial MBC

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A Dynamic New Witness

Definitions in **bold** letters are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 /1913 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **October 11, 2015**

***Worship with us** at **3201 Mary St** until we rebuild our sanctuary at 802 W. 15th,
... We're just behind Kaufman's Lumber Company in Little Rock Arkansas...*

Acts 9:18-31

Introduction: This chapter, Acts 9, commences a very important part of the Acts of the Apostles the conversion and labors of **Saul of Tarsus**. The remainder of the book is chiefly occupied with an account of his labors and trials in the establishment of churches, and in spreading the gospel through the Gentile world. As the fact that the gospel was to be thus preached to the Gentiles was a very important fact, and as the toils of the **apostle Paul** and his **fellow-laborers** for this purpose were of an exceedingly interesting character, it was desirable to preserve authentic record of those labors; and that record we have in the remainder of this book.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/bnb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 9:10-14, And there was a **certain disciple** at **Damascus**, named **Ananias**; and to him said the Lord in a **vision**, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called **Saul**, of **Tarsus**: for, behold, he prayeth, And hath **seen** in a **vision** a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have **heard** by many of this man, **how much evil** he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath **authority** from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

Thought 1. Isn't it amazing that Ananias is telling the person to whom God has given "ALL authority" about the authority given to Saul by the high priest?

Acts 9:15-16, But **the Lord SAID** unto him, **Go thy way:** for he is a **CHOSEN vessel** unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how **great things** he **must (should) SUFFER** for **my name's sake**.

Should, it declares simply that an event would take place, on some condition or under circumstances.

Thought 1. In the light of this definition and other scriptures, we understand that Jesus was saying about Saul the same things he told the disciples before he was crucified.

John 15:20, Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If (since) they have **persecuted** me, they **WILL** also **PERSECUTE** you...

2 Timothy 3:10-12, But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose,

faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, **Persecutions, afflictions**, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what **persecutions** I endured: but out of them ALL the Lord delivered me. Yea, and ALL that **will (desire)** live **godly** IN Christ Jesus **SHALL (NOT MUST)** suffer persecution.

Acts 9:17, *And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, **Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus**, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and **be FILLED** with the Holy Ghost.*

Filled defined 4130, influence (a flowing forth of spiritual STRENGTH or ENERGY, active **POWER**).

Thought 1. This verse clearly proves there are TWO experiences with God's Spirit. Saul was "BORN" of the Spirit and baptized (WASHED by) the Spirit on the Damascus road, which is why Ananias called him "Brother Saul." This is the ONE baptism that SAVES. Jesus commanded believers to be baptized in WATER because they are "baptized" by the Holy Spirit and placed IN his body when they believed on him.

Acts 1:5 ...John truly **baptized (WASH)** with water **but** ye shall be **baptized (WASH)** with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Ephesians 4:4-5, There IS one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, **ONE baptism** (holy water)...

Thought 2. Three days after being BORN again, Saul was FILLED by the Spirit for WORK as a witness and minister. Even Jesus' life confirms TWO experiences. He was conceived in the womb of Mary when the Holy Ghost came upon her. At about age 30, when he was baptized by John, he was FILLED by the Spirit for power to WORK as "the Prophet" (Deut. 18:18), who would also to be called the Christ (Anointed) of God.

Luke 4:17-18, And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is **UPON** me, because **HE** hath **ANOINTED** me to **PREACH** the gospel to the poor...

Acts 1:8, But ye shall receive **POWER (force, miraculous power, strength)**, after that the Holy Ghost is come **UPON** you: and ye shall be WITNESSES unto me...

Acts 9:18-19, *And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been **scales**: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was **baptized**. And when he had received **meat (food)**, he was strengthened. Then was **Saul** certain days with the **disciples** which were at Damascus.*

NOTE: This was real: he had been so dazzled with the brightness of the light that we may suppose the globe of the eye, and particularly the cornea, had suffered considerable injury. The structure of the cornea was doubtless much disturbed, and the whole of that humor would be rendered **opaque** (not transparent), and incapable of permitting the rays of light to pass through the different humours to the retina, where all the images of things transmitted through the lenses, or humours, are distinctly painted. In the **miraculous cure** the **membrane** was **restored** to its **primitive state**, and the opaque matter separated from the cornea, in the form of thin laminae or scales. This being done, the light would have as free a passage as formerly, and the result would be distinct vision.

And arose, and was baptized - That he was **baptized** by **Ananias** there is every reason to believe; as he appears to have been the chief Christian at Damascus.

(Source: <http://www.studyight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Thought 1. One thought is that Saul was being taught the gospel while he was there. I'm sure they did study the scriptures together and fellowshiped as Christians should do. So, he did receive understanding of certain things that pertain to the gospel. However,

When it came to salvation and questions whether “faith” and “circumcision” were required, NO ONE, including Peter had a clear understanding.

Acts 15:1-2, 6-11 ...certain men which came down from Judea **TAUGHT** the brethren, and said, Except ye **be circumcised** after the manner of Moses, **ye cannot be saved**. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension (disagreement in opinion) and **disputation (mutual questioning, reasoning)** with them, they determined that **Paul** and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the **APOSTLES** and **elders** about this question.

...And the apostles and elders CAME TOGETHER for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much **disputing**, **Peter** rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the **Gentiles** by my mouth should **hear the word** of the gospel, and **BELIEVE**. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even **as he did unto us**; and put no difference between us and them, **purifying** their hearts **by FAITH**. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But **we believe** that through the **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall **be saved**, even as they.

Ephesians 2:8-10, For by **GRACE** are ye saved **through FAITH**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created **IN Christ Jesus** unto **good WORKS**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Titus 3:14, And let ours also learn to MAINTAIN **good WORKS** for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Thought 2. When it came to the Gentiles being included in salvation, Paul said he received this knowledge by revelation from Jesus, by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 3:1-6, For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you **Gentiles**, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that **by revelation** he **made known unto me the mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now **revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit**; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the SAME BODY, and partakers of his **promise** in Christ by the gospel...

Acts 9:20-22, And **straightway** he **preached Christ** in the **synagogues**, that he is the **Son of God**. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But **Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews** which dwelt at Damascus, **PROVING** that this is very **Christ**.

Thought 1. Notice the **HUMILITY** of Saul to immediately accept his ministry and preach.

Acts 26:16-17, 19-20, But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a **minister** and a **witness** both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; **Delivering** thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now **I send** thee...

... Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was **NOT disobedient** unto the **heavenly vision**: But shewed first unto them of **Damascus**, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and DO WORKS **meet (suitable (as if drawing praise))** for **repentance**.

NOTE: The great question to be determined, for the conviction of the Jews, was that Jesus was the Son of God. That the **Christ**, or **Messiah**, was to be the Son of God, they all believed. Saul was now CONVINCED that Jesus, whom they had crucified, and who had appeared to him on the way, was the **Son of God**, or **Messiah**; and therefore as such he proclaimed him.

Is not this he that destroyed them - The verb πορθεῖν has three acceptations in the Greek writers: To treat one as an enemy, to spoil him of his goods.

- To lead away captive, to imprison.
- To slay. Paul was properly πορθων, a destroyer, in all these senses. He acted as the most determined ENEMY of the Christians: Being exceedingly mad against them, he **persecuted them** to strange cities, Acts 26:11.

- He shut up many of the saints in prison, Acts 8:3; Acts 9:14; Acts 26:10.

- He **persecuted them** unto death - gave his voice against them that they might be destroyed, and was a principal instrument in the martyrdom of Stephen. He breathed threatenings and slaughter. See Acts 7:58; Acts 8:1; Acts 9:1; Acts 26:10, Acts 26:11.

Confounded the Jews - Overwhelmed them so with his arguments that they were obliged to blush for the weakness of their own cause.

Proving that this - This person, viz. Jesus, is very Christ; Is the Christ, or Messiah.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 9:23, *And after that **many days** were fulfilled, the **Jews** took counsel to **kill him**...*

NOTE: It is obvious that Luke did not here stress the exact **chronology** of the events narrated. Boles gave, as the probable chronology of the events in view here, the following: Saul was struck down on the Damascus road (Acts 9:3-8).

Three days of blindness and prayer (Acts 9:8).

Sight restored, baptized and received (endowed with [BY]) the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:10-19).

Preached Christ and confounded the Jews (Acts 9:19-22).

Made a sudden **departure** to **Arabia** for further study and communion with God (Galatians 1:17, 18).

Came back to Damascus and renewed his preaching with such force that the Jews decided to kill him (Acts 9:23). (This was **three years** after his baptism.)

The plot to kill Paul was discovered, and he escaped to Jerusalem (Acts 9:24,25).

The Christians were afraid of him (Acts 9:26).

Barnabas took up his cause and recommended him (Acts 9:27-29).

Paul began preaching where Stephen left off (Acts 9:29).

There was another plot to **kill him** (Acts 9:29).

The Jerusalem church sent him to Tarsus (Acts 9:30). **ENDNOTE:** ^[22] H. Leo Boles, op. cit., p. 149. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 24-25, *But their **laying await** was known of Saul. And they **watched** the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him **by night**, and let him down by the wall in a basket.*

NOTE: At this time, Damascus was under the government of **Aretas**, **king** of **Arabia**, who was now at war with Herod, his son-in-law, who had put away his daughter in order to marry Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. As Herod was supported by the Romans, Saul's enemies might intimate (suggest obscurely or indirectly) that he was in league with them or Herod; and, as the gates of the city were constantly watched and shut, that **no spy might enter**, and **no fugitive get away**, they thought it would be easy to apprehend him; and doubtless got orders for the different officers at the gates to be on the look-out that he might not be permitted to escape.

Let him down, by the wall - Favoured, probably, by a house built against or upon the wall, through the window of which they could lower him in a basket; and by this means he made his escape. His escape was something similar to that of the **spies** at **Jericho**, Jos. 2:15. (Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Joshua 2:15, Then she let them down by a **cord (rope)** through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.

Acts 9:26, And when **Saul** was come to Jerusalem, he **assayed (attempt)** to join himself to the disciples: but they were ALL **afraid** of him, and believed not that he was **a disciple**.

NOTE: Dummelow thought it strange "that after his arduous (HARD) work in Damascus, the church of Jerusalem should **still doubt** the fact of **Paul's conversion**"; but it was doubtless due to the lack of adequate communications in those days, and also to the reluctance of those Christians whose loved ones and friends had been **imprisoned, scourged, and even put to death** by Saul of Tarsus, to *believe* that HIS CONVERSION was sincere. The more remarkable thing, it seems to this writer, is that there was found one, the noble Barnabas, who dared to believe it FULLY and to undertake his recommendation to the whole church.

Assayed to JOIN himself ... As noted earlier, such an expression as this makes "JOINING the church" a legitimate concept, provided the uniting with a given congregation is understood by it. **ENDNOTE:** ^[25] J. R. Dummelow, Commentary on the Holy Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 831.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 9:27, But **Barnabas** took him, and brought him to the **apostles**, and **declared** unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he **had preached boldly** at **Damascus** in the **name (authority)** of Jesus.

NOTE: It is probable that Barnabas had been at Damascus, and had there related to him, the whole account of Saul's conversion and entrance on the ministry, which he gives a particular relation of, as follows: **and declared unto them, how he had seen the Lord in the way**; he told the apostles, Peter and James, how that Christ had appeared to him in person, as he was on his way to Damascus: **and that he had spoken to him**; and expostulated (discuss) with him about his persecution of him in his members, and bid him go into the city, where it should be told him what he should do...

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/geb/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 9:28-30, And he was with them **coming in** and **going out** at Jerusalem. And he spake **BOLDLY** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the **Grecians**: but they went about to **slay him**. Which when the brethren **knew**, they brought him down to Caesarea, and **sent him forth** to Tarsus.

NOTE: The same class of **Jews** who had **raised** the **persecution** against **Stephen** now sought the **death** of Saul. By the aid of the brethren he was taken to the seaport of Cæsarea and sailed for his old home at Tarsus. Some think, however, from Galatians 1:21, that the journey was made by land through Syria. It is more likely that he sailed from Cæsarea to Seleucia in Syria, and from thence made his way to Tarsus. Four or five years pass before the next mention of Saul in Acts (Acts 12:25), an interval passed in preaching Christ (Galatians 1:23), and resulting in the planting of churches in Cilicia (Acts 15:23, 41).

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pnt/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)

Acts 9:31, Then had the churches **REST** throughout all **Judaea** and **Galilee** and **Samaria**, and were **edified** (improved in literary, moral or religious knowledge); and walking in the **FEAR** (reverence) of the Lord, and in the **COMFORT** of the Holy Ghost, **were multiplied**.

NOTE: The Roman emperor, **Caligula**, had ordered his statue to be placed in the **temple** at Jerusalem for worship, a desecration of the temple, and the Jews were too much engaged in their efforts to prevent this to **persecute** the church.

(Source: <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/pnt/view.cgi?bk=ac&ch=9#1>)