

Saul with Ananias

Acts 9:15—19

Acts 22:12—16

Acts 26:16—18

- It was on the road to Damascus that God gave Saul his commission to reach the gentiles.
Acts 26:16—17 ¹⁶But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; ¹⁷rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you,
- Paul emphasizes that his commission did not involve any man, but came from heaven by Jesus Christ and God the Father. This makes sense considering that Israel has an earthly hope and earthly promises and an earthly focus while we have a heavenly hope and focus. Paul's connection to heaven was obvious right from the beginning.
Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father
- His commission involved going to Gentiles, kings and the sons of Israel. This is completely opposite of what we find in the "Great Commission". The 12 Apostles were to evangelize Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and then the rest of the world. The Apostles are still in Jerusalem because of their failure to win over Jerusalem. The "Great Commission" has yet to be fulfilled. Saul is now given a new personal commission, but the old commission given to the 12 Apostles is still in effect because God has not yet told them otherwise.
Acts 9:15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel;
- Ananias then gave Saul back his sight, gave him the gift of the Holy Spirit and then baptized him. (See Acts 9:17—18; 22:12—16)
 - This was a departure of the conversion process for Israel under the Kingdom plan.
 - The Spirit was given only AFTER individual Jews were subjected to a purification through baptism.
 - This baptism was a necessary element in the process of preparing Israel for their priestly function but was going to fade away completely in the future as the Prophetic program for Israel fades away.
 See Acts 2:4; 2:38; 8:15—17; Exodus 19:6

Acts 9:19—31

- This passage highlights Saul's activities after his conversion.
- Saul's persecution was so intense and widespread that when he was converted, there was peace in the whole region.
- Events after Saul's conversion and before his first missionary journey:
 1. Stayed in Damascus for several days with the disciples.
Acts 9:19 Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,
 2. Went down to Arabia for several weeks for a crash course on the Dispensation of Grace OR was in Arabia for 3 years for training then in Damascus for a few weeks. Total time in Arabia and Damascus is three years
 3. Returned to Damascus and preached there for three years OR preached for several weeks.
 - I tend to think he was in Arabia for three years. He would have needed to hide himself from the Jewish authorities now that he defected to the other side and this length of time away from anybody (Jewish believers) would make it clear that his instruction in the newly

formed Dispensation of the Age of Grace did not come from any of the Disciples but directly from God.

Galatians 1:11—12 ¹¹For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. ¹²For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

4. Went to Jerusalem and spent 15 days with Peter.

Galatians 1:17—18 ¹⁷nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. ¹⁸Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, (Peter) and stayed with him fifteen days.

5. Went to Tarsus for 5—6 years and established churches in the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Galatians 1:21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.

Acts 9:30 But when the brethren learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

6. Spent one year in Antioch.

Acts 11:25—26 ²⁵And [Barnabas] left for Tarsus to look for Saul; ²⁶and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.

Verse 22

- Saul was preaching Christ. This is common ground for both Kingdom and Body gospels. However, since the Body was formed with the salvation of Saul, any believer will be brought into the Body also and not the Kingdom.
- Saul's knowledge about the Body and the Dispensation of the Age of Grace was rudimentary at this point. He will not have full knowledge until almost 25 years later.

Verse 27

- After Saul was let down in a basket to escape those who wanted to kill him in Damascus, he went to Jerusalem and tried to make contact with the Disciples. They wanted nothing to do with him until Barnabas brought him to the Apostles.
 - We first met Barnabas selling all his possessions and laying them at the Apostles feet.
Acts 4:36 Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth (Cyprus—an island in the Mediterranean Sea), who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement),
 - This is the second time Barnabas is mentioned. He will accompany Paul on his first missionary journey in Acts 13.

Verse 28—31

- While in Jerusalem for the 15 days, he met with Peter and preached Christ.
 - This was pretty bold since he had turned against the leadership who had sent him to kill Jewish believers.
- His message was not “Repent for the Kingdom is at hand”, or “Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins”, but was centered on Jesus Christ.
 - Peter, on the other hand, preached a message similar to John the Baptizer: “Repent and be baptized”.
 - Jesus Christ is the center or foundation of the Kingdom believers or Body believers. Each group needed to put their full trust in Him for their salvation. Beyond that, Jewish believers had not yet been told to put the Mosaic Law behind them (that is what Hebrews seem to be doing) and the Gentile believers were also expected to keep the Law. It is after Acts 15 that the Gentile believers are told they are free of Law keeping.
- After leaving Jerusalem, to avoid death, Paul went to Caesarea (on the Sea) then to Tarsus. (Paul's home town)

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