

“Lack of Understanding & Relationship Leads To Encounter, Fasting, & Prayer!”

Acts 9:1-9

Now **Saul**, still breathing threats and murder against the **Disciples of the Lord**, went to the **High Priest (Caiaphas)**, and asked for **Letters (Warrants Of Authority, Legal Arrest & Extradition)** from him to the Synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the **“Way”**, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As Saul was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a **Light from Heaven** flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a Voice saying to him, **“Saul! Saul! Why are You Persecuting Me?”** And Saul inquired, **“Who Are You, Lord?”** And the Lord said, **“I AM Jesus Whom You are Persecuting, Is it hard for you to kick against Me?”** The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, **hearing the Voice but seeing no one**. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, the men brought him into Damascus. And **Saul was three days** without **sight**, and **neither ate nor drank (Fasting & Praying)**. **Acts 9:1-9 (NKJV)**

Q

“What Was The Context By Which Saul Of Tarsus (A Jew From Roman/Greek Descent By Birth) Operated On Behalf Of All Of Judaism & The Sanhedrin Council In The Persecution Of The Church?”

A

**Saul Was A Gentile/Jew From Birth Like Many In The Hellenistic World.
This Combined Genealogy Allowed Him Access To Both
The Freedman Synagogue (Gentile/Jewish Converts) - **Acts 6:8-14**
& The Main Temple (Jewish Born Believers) - **Acts 6:15****

Q

“What Was Saul’s Original Role For The Sanhedrin?”

A

Saul Was A “Jewish Praeco”

A Proclaimer Of The Trial Sentence Pronounced With Councilor Authority Of The Sanhedrin

“And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.” ...

“Now Saul was consenting to Stephen’s death.” ... Acts 7:58b & 8:1a

Q

“What Became Saul’s Expanded Role For The Sanhedrin?”

A

Saul Was A “Jewish Procurator”

An Agent Representing The Jewish Council In Both Jewish & Roman Courts of Law

In The Countries Under Roman Civil Law & Rule

“At that time, a great persecution arose against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered (diaspora) throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.”... “As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison!” **Acts 8:1b & 3**

“Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the Disciples of the Lord, went to the High Priest and asked Letters (Warrants Of Authority & Legal Arrest & Extradition) 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 in chains to Jerusalem.” **Acts 9:1-2**

Q

“Who Exactly At First Was Saul Persecuting & Dragging Off In Chains Both In Jerusalem In This Passage & Later In Damascus In The Next Chapter?”

A

Gentile Converts To Christianity Who Had Fled Jerusalem & Judea To Samaria & Damascus!

... “And they were all scattered (*diaspora*) throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” ... Acts 8:1

Q

“What Was The Outcome Of This Persecution & Scattering From Jerusalem & Judea, To Samaria & Damascus?”

A

The Word Of God’s Good News Spread More Quickly Than If There Was No Persecution!

“Therefore, those who were scattered (*diaspora*) went everywhere Preaching the Word.”

Acts 8:4

Q: “What Was God’s Response To This

New Severe Form Of Persecution Against His People?”

“Then **Saul**, still breathing threats and murder against the **Disciples of the Lord**, went to the **High Priest (Caiaphas)** and asked **Letters** (**Warrants Of Authority & Legal Arrest & Extradition**) 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 in chains to Jerusalem.” Acts 9:1-2

A: God Response - Direct Divine Personal Intervention!

As Saul was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a **Light from Heaven** flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a Voice saying to him,

“Saul! Saul! Why are You Persecuting Me?”

Acts 9:3-4

Q

“Has God Ever Directly Intervened In Your Life To Save You From A Certain Death?”

Q

“Has God Ever Directly Intervened In Your Life To Save You From The Persecution Of Those Who Have Hated You Only Because Of Your Faith & Witness To Jesus Christ?”

Q

“Has God Ever Directly Intervened In Your Life To Save You From Yourself And Your Misguided Or Selfish Decisions Against Him Or Others?”

Q

“Have You Ever Thought Back To A Time In Your Life When You Only Served Yourself At The Expense Of Others?”

Q

“Did Saul (Paul) Ever Look Back Later In His New Life In Christ And Reflect About His Sinful Condition, His Attitude, & Spirit Toward Others, Especially Christians?”

A – Yes, He Did!

Paul Later In Chains For His Witness To Christ Testified To King Agrippa In Caesarea Philippi!
“Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the **Name of Jesus of Nazareth**. This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the Saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities.”

Acts 26:9-11 (NKJV)

A – Yes, He Did!

Paul Later Reflected In His 1st Epistle - Letter To Timothy!

“And I Thank *Christ Jesus Our Lord* who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the *Grace of Our Lord* was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in *Christ Jesus*. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that *Christ Jesus* came into the world to save sinners, of *Whom I am Chief (Among All Sinners)*. However, *for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me, first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.*”

1st Timothy 1:12-16 (NKJV)

Let's Go Back To God's Direct Intervention In The Life Of Saul Of Tarsus!

As Saul was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a *Light from Heaven* flashed around him; and he fell to the ground and heard a Voice saying to him, “*Saul! Saul! Why are You Persecuting Me?*”

Acts 9:3-4

Q

“What Did Saul Recognize In His Blindness Both Physically & Mentally?”

A

**That The Voice Speaking To Him Was Indeed God,
As God's Spirit Suddenly Awakened Saul's Spirit By Direct Divine Revelation!
And Saul inquired, “*Who Are You, Lord?*”**

Acts 9:5a

Immediately God Responds Audibly & Visually In Person (Epiphany & Theophany)!

And the Lord said, “*I AM Jesus Whom You are Persecuting, Is it hard for you to kick against Me?*”

Acts 9:5bc

Q

“What Happened To Saul In This Instant Direct Divine Personal Awakening?”

A

**Paul Later Describes Exactly What He Suddenly Understood:
His Intellect Was Enlightened, His Unbelief Was Changed To Faith, He Laid Down His Will,
His Evil Actions Were Halted & Changed, & The Thoughts Of His Heart Were All Changed,
In An Instant Moment In Time!**

A

**After Some Inward Reflection,
Paul Describes His Glorious Conversion Experience
To The Church In Corinth!**

“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by *Manifestation of the Truth* commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the *Sight of God*. But even if our *Gospel Is Veiled, It Is Veiled* to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age (Satan) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the *Light of the Gospel of the Glory of Christ, Who Is the Very Image of God, should Shine* on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but *Christ Jesus the Lord*, and ourselves your bondservants for *Jesus' Sake*. For it is the *God Who Commanded Light to Shine Out of Darkness, Who has Shone in Our Hearts to Give the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face of Jesus Christ!*”

2nd Corinthians 4:1-6 (NKJV)

(Continued)

Q

“What Was Paul’s Immediate Response To God’s Intervention In The Person Of Jesus Christ?”

A

Saul Immediately Is Humbled & Obediently Asking God’s Will In His Life!

So, Saul trembling and astonished, said, ***“Lord, what do You want me to do?”***

Then the Lord said to him,

“Arise and go into the City (Damascus), and you will be told what you must do!”

Acts 9:6

Q

***“Was This Miraculous Intervention Of Signs & Wonders
On The Road To Damascus Confirmed By Anyone Other Than Saul?”***

A – Yes!

The men who traveled with Saul stood speechless, **hearing the Voice but seeing no one.**

Acts 9:7

NOTE!

Now, this is indeed important information, for even the unbelievers in Jesus Christ the Lord, the soldiers with Saul, also are witnesses to the Divine Intervention from Heaven! For many modern skeptics often say Paul mad this whole event up. But when these soldiers were in Damascus, they stirred up the people against Saul to kill him, and later after returning to Jerusalem they witness to the High Priest and Sanhedrin Council. The proof of these events is that now Saul (Paul) is hunted by the Jewish Religious Authorities as well (Acts 21).

Q

“What Was Paul’s Immediate Response To God’s Will & Command To Him?”

A

Saul Immediately Obeys The Lord And Follows His Every Direction!

Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, the men brought him into Damascus.

Acts 9:8

A

**Saul Also Prepared Himself For God’s Next Intervention In His Life
By Fasting & Praying For Three Days**

And **Saul was three days** without **sight**,

and **neither ate nor drank (Fasting & Praying)**.

Acts 9:9

Q

“What Is The Message For Us Today, Gathered Together Here In God’s Presence?”

A

We Are To Be Listening For God’s Voice & Will & Not Our Own!

A

We Are To Be Listening For God’s Voice & Will & Not Someone Else’s!

A

**We Need To Be Spending Time Alone With God In Prayer Daily,
& When He Leads In Prayer & Fasting,
Awaiting His Next Intervention Or Direction In Our Lives!**