

“Suspicion, Witness, Encouragement, Testimony, Trust, & Proof!”

Acts 9:26-31

And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the Disciples (Followers); but They were all afraid of him and did not believe that he was a Disciple (Follower). But Barnabas (*The ‘Son of Encouragement’*) took him and brought him to the Apostles. And He (Barnabas) declared to Them (Apostles) how He (Saul) had seen the Lord on the Road (to Damascus), and that He (Lord) Had Spoken (Rhema) to Him (Saul), and how He (Saul) had preached boldly at Damascus in the ‘Name of Jesus’ [And of Saul’s Escape from the City of Damascus with the help of the Disciples/Followers there]. So, Saul was with Them (Disciples/Followers) at Jerusalem, coming in and going out (*for 15 days*). And he spoke boldly in the ‘Name of the Lord Jesus’ and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. When the Brethren (Disciples/Followers) found out, They brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus (Saul’s Birthplace/Hometown). Then the Churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, had peace and were edified. And Walking in the Fear of the Lord and in the Comfort of the Holy Spirit, They (Disciples/Followers) were multiplied. **Acts 9:26-31 (NKJV)**

Q: “Why After Three Years Did The Apostles & Disciples Of The Lord Jesus Christ Still Doubt Saul?”

A: Saul Had Never Even Spoken With Any Of The Original Apostles,

As He Had Been Away In Voluntary Exile In Arabia (Nabataea) For The Past Three Years! And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the Disciples (Followers); but They were all afraid of him and did not believe that he was a Disciple (Follower). **Acts 9:26**

Q: “So, How Would Saul Ever Get An Opportunity To Prove His Sincerity & Changed Heart?”

A: It Would Demand Someone Who Had Great Spiritual Insight, Courage, Boldness, & The Gifts Of Compassion & Encouragement, To Stand Alongside & Have Faith In Saul & His Personal Testimony Of Transformation in God’s Spirit!

A: It Would Take A Man Like Joses – Barnabas To Come Alongside Saul of Tarsus!

RECALL

“And Joses, who was Also named by the Apostles, Barnabas, which is Translated, ‘Son of Encouragement’, who was a Levite of the Country of Cyprus, who also having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the Apostles’ feet. **Acts 4:32-37**

But Barnabas (*The ‘Son of Encouragement’*) took him and brought him to the Apostles. **Acts 9:27a**

Q: “What Did Barnabas Rely Upon As Evidence To Demonstrate Saul’s New Life In Christ?”

A – Firsthand Account Of Paul

His Epiphany Encounter & Vision Of The Resurrected Christ On The Road To Damascus!

A – Firsthand Account of the Damascus Disciple/Followers

How The Brethren (Disciples of Damascus) Had Aided In Saul’s Escape From The Religious & Governmental Authorities Who Wanted Saul Killed!

Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. But their plot became known to Saul. And They (Jews) watched the gates day and night, to kill him. Then the Disciples took him (Saul) by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket (where he made his escape to Jerusalem). **Acts 9:23-25**

And He (Barnabas) declared to Them (Apostles) how He (Saul) had seen the Lord on the Road (to Damascus), and that He (Lord) Had Spoken (Rhema) to Him (Saul), and how He (Saul) had preached boldly at Damascus in the ‘Name of Jesus’ [And of Saul’s Escape from the City with the help of the Disciples/Followers there]. **Acts 9:27b**

Q: "What Happens Next To Saul While He Is In Jerusalem In The Year 37 AD?"

A: According To Luke

So, Saul was with **Them (Disciples/Followers)** at Jerusalem, coming in and going out (**for 15 days**). And he spoke boldly in the **'Name of the Lord Jesus'** and **disputed against the Hellenists**, but **they attempted to kill him**. **Acts 9:28-29**

A: According To Saul/Paul

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other Apostles except James, the Lord's Brother." **Galatians 1:18-19**

IRONY!

The Same Hellenistic Freedman Jews That Disputed, Lied, Bore False Witness, & Plotted To Kill Stephen With The Approval Of Saul – **Now Want To Take Saul's Life As Well!**

Here Again Paul's Recount Of His Conversion & His Early Years Following With A Special Emphasis On The Double Command Of Our Lord To Immediately Leave Jerusalem & Retreat!

"Brethren and fathers, hear my defense before you now!" And when they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, they kept all the more silent. Then Saul/Paul spoke his account: "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this City at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today. I persecuted this "Way" to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished. Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a **Great Light from Heaven shone around me. And I fell to the ground and heard a **Voice** saying to me, **'Saul, Saul, Why are you persecuting Me?'** So, I answered, **'Who are You, Lord?'** And **He said** to me, **'I AM Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.'** And those who were with me indeed saw the **Light** and were afraid, but they did not hear the **Voice of Him Who** spoke to me. So, I said, **'What shall I do, Lord?'** And the **Lord said** to me, **'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.'** And since I could not see for the **Glory of that Light**, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. Then a certain **Ananias**, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, came to me; and he stood and said to me, **'Brother Saul, receive your sight.'** And at that same hour I looked up at him. Then he said, **The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'** Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the Temple, that I was in a trance and saw **Him saying** to me, **'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, for they will not receive your testimony concerning Me.'** So, I said, **'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. And when the blood of Your Martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'** Then **He said** to me, **'Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles!'** **Acts 22:1-21 (NKJV)****

Q: "What Happens To Saul From The Year 37 AD – 46 AD?"

A: According To Luke

When the **Brethren (Disciples/Followers)** found out, **They** brought him down to **Caesarea** and **sent him out to Tarsus** (Saul's Birthplace/Hometown). **Acts 9:30**

A: According To Saul (Paul) He Preached & Taught In Tarsus of Cilicia In His Home Province Of Asia Minor From 37 to 46 AD. Tarsus, Turkey Is A City Near The Coast Of The Mediterranean Sea 100 Miles From Isle Of Cypress!

"Afterward, I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia (Tarsus). And I was 'unknown' by face to the Churches of Judea which were in Christ. But they were hearing only, "He who formerly persecuted us, now preaches the faith which he once tried to destroy!" And they Glorified God in me." **Galatians 1:21-24**

Q: "Was Saul/Paul Successful In His Evangelism & Missionary Work Among His Own People?"

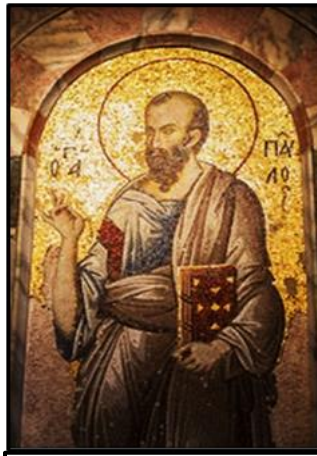
A: YES!

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Saul Remembered From The Beginning By His People!



St. Paul's Church



St. Paul's Fresco



St. Paul's Well

Q: "When Will We Encounter Saul (Paul) Again According To Luke?"

A: Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul (Late In The Year 46 AD). Acts 11:25

A: And when he (Barnabas) had found him (Saul), he brought him to Antioch (Early In The Year 47 A.D.). So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the *Disciples* were first called "*Christians*" in Antioch (In 47 AD) Acts 11:26-27

Q: "What Should We Do As Christians Today,

When Someone Who Formerly Hated And Warred Against The Lord Comes Into Our Midst, Testifying Their Life Has Changed Now That The Lord Has Revealed Himself To Them?"

A: We Should Pray & Observe Their Lives, Their Behavior, And Their Attitudes, For A While, Being Cautious.

A: But We Should Also Be Supportive, Encouraging, & Loving Toward Them, As The Lord Has Been To Us. For We Were All Once Enemies of the Lord, And Outsiders To His Mercy & Grace!

Q: "What Happened To The Churches In Israel After The Departure Of Saul/Paul?"

A: They Prospered & Grew In Number Daily As They Walked In The Fear & Admonition of the Lord & In The Comfort & Guidance Of The Holy Spirit!

Then the Churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, had peace and were edified. And Walking in the Fear of the Lord and in the Comfort of the Holy Spirit, They (Disciples/Followers) were multiplied. Acts 9:31

Q: "How Should We The Body Of Christ Today Act Toward One Another & In Sharing The Gospel With Others Outside The Faith?"

A: We Should Walk In The Fear & Admonition, & Comfort & Guidance, Of God's Holy Spirit.

So That We Can Be Well Equipped & Ready To Share The Love, Mercy, Forgiveness, & Grace, Of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Just Like Our Brother Saul/Paul Of Tarsus Did So Long Ago!