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By Dan Maines

Acts 9

Acts 9:1-2

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

† Saul's zeal for the Law drove him to persecute the followers of Christ. The term "the Way" signified the distinct path of the new covenant.

† Josephus (Wars 2.17.4) records the authority of high priests to send orders, fitting Saul's commission.

Acts 9:3-4

Now as he 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?"

† Saul's encounter with Christ was direct and supernatural. Jesus identified Himself with His body, the church, to persecute them was to persecute Him.

Acts 9:5-6

And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and it will be told to you what you must do."

† Saul's question revealed his blindness. The Lord revealed Himself clearly: Jesus, the crucified and risen Messiah. His command showed Saul's calling was divinely appointed.

Acts 9:7-9

The men who traveled with him 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, they brought him into Damascus. And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

† Saul's blindness symbolized his spiritual condition. Three days of darkness prepared him for new sight in Christ.

Acts 9:10-12

Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord said to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man

from Tarsus named Saul; for he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and laying his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight."

† God prepared both Saul and Ananias. Straight Street is a well-known road in Damascus, confirming the historical setting.

Acts 9:13-16

But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many people about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints in Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings, as well as the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer in behalf of My name."

† Saul, the persecutor, was chosen to become the chief apostle to the Gentiles. His mission was not comfort, but suffering for Christ's name.

Acts 9:17-19

So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately something like fish scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthened.

† Saul's healing and baptism marked his transformation. His blindness was lifted, both physically and spiritually. Baptism signified his covenant entrance into Christ.

Acts 9:20-22

Now for several days he was with the disciples who were in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." All those hearing

him continued to be amazed, and were saying, "Is this not the one who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name, and had come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" But Saul kept increasing in strength and confounding Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

† Saul's immediate preaching testified to the radical change. The persecutor became preacher. His knowledge of Scripture enabled him to prove Jesus was the Christ.

Acts 9:23-25

When many days had elapsed, the Jews plotted together to do away with him, but their plot became known to Saul. And they also watched the gates day and night so that they might put him to death; but his disciples took him at night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a large basket.

† Saul faced persecution early. Deliverance through a wall basket highlights God's providence.

† Josephus (Wars 2.19.2) mentions city walls with guarded gates, matching this description.

Acts 9:26-27

When he came to Jerusalem, he tried repeatedly to associate with the disciples; and yet they were all afraid of him, as they did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took hold of him and brought him to the apostles, and described to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had talked to him, and how he had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus at Damascus.

† Barnabas played a crucial role in affirming Saul's genuine conversion. His testimony opened fellowship with the apostles.

Acts 9:28-30

And he was with them, moving about freely in Jerusalem,

speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord. And he was talking and debating with the Hellenistic Jews; but they were attempting to put him to death. Now when the brothers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus.

† Saul's ministry immediately met with opposition. Like Stephen, he debated Hellenistic Jews, and like Stephen, they sought his death.

Acts 9:31

So the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria enjoyed peace, as it was being built up; and as it continued in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it kept increasing.

† After Saul's departure, the church experienced peace and growth. Persecution scattered the church, but also strengthened it.

Acts 9:32-35

Now as Peter was traveling through all those regions, he also came down to the saints who lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas who had been bedridden for eight years, because he was paralyzed. Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; get up and make your own bed." Immediately he got up. And all who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

† Peter's healing of Aeneas echoed Jesus' miracles. The result was mass conversion in the region.

Acts 9:36-39

Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which translated in Greek is called Dorcas); this woman was full of deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did. And it happened at that time that she became sick and died; and when they had washed her body, they laid it in an upstairs room.

Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, having heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, "Do not delay in coming to us." So Peter got ready and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the room upstairs; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.

† Tabitha (Dorcas) was remembered for her works of charity. Her death grieved the widows she served, demonstrating the fruit of her discipleship.

Acts 9:40-42

But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up; and calling all the saints and widows, he presented her alive. It became known all over Joppa, and many believed in the Lord.

† Peter raised Tabitha from the dead, imitating Christ's raising of Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:41). Such miracles confirmed Christ's power at work in His apostles.

Acts 9:43

And Peter stayed in Joppa many days with a tanner named Simon.

† Peter's stay with a tanner, considered unclean by Jewish standards, shows God's preparing him for the Gentile mission in Acts 10.

How it applies to us today

† Saul's conversion shows no one is beyond God's grace. The persecutor became preacher.

† The gospel breaks barriers of fear, persecution, and cultural

prejudice.

† God equips His people through suffering and miraculous works for the advance of the kingdom.

† Like Tabitha, believers today can leave a lasting legacy of service and kindness.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus, Wars 2.17.4 – Authority of high priests to send letters

† Josephus, Wars 2.19.2 – City walls and guarded gates

† Philo, On Abraham – Divine calling and obedience as foundation of faith

† Mishnah, Sanhedrin 9.6 – Penalties for heretics

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 2.1 – Spread of gospel and early conversions

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