

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL

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BIBLICAL STUDIES

Abstract

Saul of Tarsus, being a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin was a highly educated Pharisee in Jesus' day. Saul believed that the early Christian church was a threat to Judaism. His primary goal was to exterminate the Christians. Saul was given permission by the leaders in Jerusalem to roundup Christians and is given authority to execute them. During Paul's journey to Damascus in Syria he is met by the risen Lord Jesus Christ. From that day on Saul's name is changed to Paul and his life is never the same. Paul sees a bright light and hears the voice of Jesus. He is blinded for a time of three days and when the time is fulfilled, the scales fall from Paul's eyes and he sees that Jesus is the Messiah that his people have been waiting for.

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CHAPTER I

”Saul’s Conversion”

In the Bible, The book of “Acts” according to the apostles is written by Luke and documents actions of the early church.

After Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven the church underwent severe persecution and in response to that, believers fled to cities and disbursed over Asia Minor.

The Jews felt that the Church of Jesus Christ also known as “The Way” was a huge threat to their traditions, customs and by acknowledging that Jesus was God in the flesh, was equivalent to blaspheme. They felt it was their job to stamp out this new movement. One such group was the Sanhedrin (keepers of the Mosaic Law) in Jerusalem. Even though they had been waiting for their long promised Messiah, their pride kept them from seeing that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.

In Acts chapter seven we read one of the Hellenic Jews Stephen, becomes a martyr for Jesus Christ. This is where Stephen gives a discourse about Jesus. Stephen starts with the call of Abraham, goes down through the patriarchs, and how God delivers Israel through the hand of Moses, then how Moses wrote about the coming Messiah. Stephen rebukes the crowd and tells them that they are resisting the Holy Spirit by not accepting Jesus and His sacrifice. This infuriates the Pharisees and they stone Stephen to death. As Stephen is being stoned, he sees the risen Savior and asks Jesus to receive his spirit.

In Acts chapter 7:58, we are introduced to Saul. He is close enough to the situation to hold the cloaks of those who would stone the martyr Stephen. Saul participating in this event shows us his deep involvement with Stephen’s death. Saul has the opportunity to speak up and

save Stephen's life, but he didn't. Therefore, being a partaker and witness to Stephen's death makes Saul just as guilty and therefore, an accomplice to his death.

As I read this chapter. I can't help but wonder if the Pharisees really thought this was a threat to Judaism or more of a threat to their power and their control over the Jewish people.

What would make them so angry that they would commit murder and think that they were doing God's service? In the book of Genesis we read about the pride and anger that caused the fall of Lucifer and Cain killing his brother Abel. I suppose the same rage surfaced in the hearts of these unregenerate Pharisees enough for them to commit murder as well.

Persecution of the church intensifies. Acts chapter 8 tells us Saul goes house to house dragging off men and women and committing them to prison for their faith in Christ.(Acts 8:1-3)

As I read chapters 7 and 8 in the book of Acts and how Saul persecutes the believers for their faith in Jesus Christ. I have one question, who does this guy think he is? Upon further investigation of Saul, we find that he was born in Tarsus to an Israelite family of the tribe of Benjamin. He is brought up with compliance and law and he being admitted to the Sanhedrin as a Pharisee means that he was an expert in the Old Testament Jewish law and a Roman Citizen which would make him the equivalent of a doctor in our day. In Saul's mind he was protecting the very essence of the Old Testament law.

Acts chapter 9 Saul is still incited to anger and murder, he asks for letters from the Chief Priests to go to every synagogue in Damascus so that he can continue arresting, imprisoning and murdering those who believe in Jesus.

On his way to Damascus Saul is confronted by the risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Acts Chapter 9:3-9 gives an account of what happens to Saul. This brings to mind as I think about saying from "being kicked off your high horse."

Saul has what the Bible says appears as scales on his eyes and he cannot see. The Bible further says he didn't eat or drink for three days. Jesus appears to Ananias and sends His disciple to visit Saul. Notably Ananias is alarmed because he has heard of Saul's reputation and how he persecutes the brethren everywhere, but nevertheless Ananias obeys God's command. He goes and seeks out Saul, Ananias prays for Saul, the Bible says something like scales fell from his eyes and he could see. Saul arose and was baptized. He ate, spent some days with the disciples in Damascus, and his life was never the same.

I see the scales that fell from Saul's eyes being representative of our own pride and arrogance when we think we know better than God knows. This is what the Bible calls the "Veil" (2 Corinthians 3:16) being removed from the eyes of our understanding being enlightened and getting a Spirit of Wisdom and revelation knowledge of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:17). As Saul beholds a glimpse of his risen Savior he is faced with his own sinfulness. He changes his name from Saul (His Jewish name) to Paul (His Gentile name) as he is a new creation in Christ. The Greek translation of Saul, means "Asked of God", but the Greek translation of Paul means "little". (Standard Educational Corporation, 1988, p.945 dictionary)

The Bible doesn't tell us what kind of Revelation Paul received over those three days but as you read through the Book of Acts, Paul commits his whole life, mind, actions and being to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the lost and dying world even until his own death at the hand of Emperor Nero.

CHAPTER II

“Paul’s Ministry Begins”

The apostle Paul gives us little glimpses throughout books of the New Testament that he penned by his own hand, about his life changing experiences. The New Testament is compiled of 27 books, 12 of them Paul wrote, which accounts for 44% of the New Testament. He chronicles his journeys triumphs, setbacks, partners in ministry and the powerful ways the Lord worked in his life.

Paul's ministry starts in Damascus and 37A.D. He traveled on three missionary journeys through the Roman and Greek Empires. He is imprisoned in Judea, proceeds on a voyage to Rome where he is imprisoned until his death in 67A.D.

Paul tells us that after his conversion, Galatians 1:17 says that Jesus instructs him to go to desert of Arabia it is there Paul is trained to preach the Gospel. Some people may wonder why Jesus did not send Paul out immediately after his conversion; I have a theory about this.

Although, it is possible to commit large passages of Scripture to memory, sometimes distorting and manipulating the Scriptures to fit our own beliefs; I believe Paul needed special instruction on how Jesus was the fulfillment of the Old Testament Law. We cannot begin to fully understand the Gospel until we are converted, filled with the Holy Spirit and have a life changing experience.

The scales are removed from our eyes and we come face-to-face with the risen Lord. If that does not happen the Bible becomes just another book. Once God’s word is written on our hearts, our spirits grow and we start to live by Jesus’ principles and understand salvation in Christ. Until we are filled with the Holy Spirit, life means very little. At this time Paul received such deep and intense revelation directly from Jesus that his mind, heart and spirit could barely

contain it. We can say that we know our Lord, but until we do what he says are actions our empty.

The Apostle Paul's first missionary journey starts out in Antioch he travels with his Ministry companions, Barnabas and Mark. (Acts 14:28) Paul and his companions cover the area of Antioch, Cyprus, Syria and Paphos. They sailed to Phrygia, which is now southern Turkey, and continued to Perga, Iconium, Lystra, Pisidia back to Syria. Paul's first missionary journey lasts about six years from 44 A.D to 50 A.D. (Acts 13:4-6, 14:3, 14:21, 14:24-28.

As Paul starts his second missionary journey about 51 A.D. and his ministry companion is Silas. Paul and Silas travel to Derby and Lystra where they find Timothy, a young man with a Jewish mother and Greek father. The Bible tells us it was Paul's custom to first visit the synagogue to preach to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. Timothy is converted and joins Paul as his ministry companion. They travel through Asia Minor to Galatia, Macedonia and areas of Greece. It's during this time that Paul meets Aquilla and Priscilla all three are tent makers. As Paul befriends the people he disciples, he establishes churches in order to have a meeting place where new believers can be taught and disciples could grow up in the body of Christ. Paul's second journey comes to a close around 54 A.D. (Acts 16:14-34, Acts 17:14-15, 18:-5,23 & 26.)

Paul's third journey begins in 54 A.D. (Acts 18:23) Paul proceeds to visit all of the early churches that he started, Timothy joins him while he is traveling. He writes letters to the churches and addresses very controversial topics about the law, prophets; behavior towards one another; God and how to live our lives (Acts 19:9-22). It is during Paul's final missionary journey he is beaten and brought before the Sanhedrin. He preaches Jesus Christ to them and tells them he will be a witness or martyr in Rome (Acts 23:12) Paul is sent to the governor, and

because no one wants to deal with him and because some of the Jews vowed to kill Paul. He is sent to Rome because he is Roman citizen, he then appeals to Caesar Acts.25:11.

Paul writes most of his letters to the churches from a prison cell being chained to Roman soldiers. Paul ministers to his guards while some profess faith in Christ and are part of Caesar's household. Paul is beheaded by Emperor Nero and 67A.D. I think his life is best summed up in the Scriptures:

Rom 1:16-17 I am not ashamed of the gospel , because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile. 17 For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."

During Paul's missionary journeys he often encountered violence, verbal abuse and loneliness, ship wrecks, stoning and gets caught up in a riot in Ephesus. He also saw miracles and he knew his life would not come to an end until his journey was finished. Paul had an audience with kings, governors and a Caesar. He saw doors open for ministry as people were healed and raised from the dead. When he spoke he had the power of the Holy Spirit with him. When Paul went into a town he never left it the way he found it.

The Apostle Paul had been a murderer and a persecutor of Christians but once Jesus, the risen LORD appeared to him he was never the same he gave his life for the sake of Christ and the furthering of the Gospel message.

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Who are the *Pharisees*?

Pharisee means "to separate" or "separated." Pharisaism was a major "school of thought" or sect of the Jews. Popular at the time of Jesus (John 7:48) they were known for their rigid adherence to the letter of the law (Acts 26:5, Matthew 23:3, Luke 11:39, etc.).

Jesus frequently rebuked the Pharisees for their self-righteous, unmerciful, hypocritical way of life (Matthew 9:11, 23:14; John 8:7, Luke 18:11, etc.).

The Sanhedrim (Sanhedrin) is the supreme council of the Jews composed of 70 elders plus the high priest (as president of council) that had jurisdiction over religious matters. In the New Testament, the Sanhedrim is also referred to as the "chief priests and elders of the people" (Matthew 26:3).

(Standard Educational Corporation, 1988, p.945 dictionary)

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Acts 7:1 Stephen's Address: The Call of Abraham Then the high priest said, "Are these things so?" 2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.' 4 Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell. 5 And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him. 6 But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years. 7'And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.' 8 Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs. 9 The Patriarchs in Egypt "And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him 10 and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. 11 Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. 13 And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh. 14 Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people. 15 So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers. 16 And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the

sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem. 17 God Delivers Israel by Moses "But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt 18 till another king arose who did not know Joseph. 19 This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live. 20 At this time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. 21 But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son. 22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. 23 "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. 24 And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. 25 For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand. 26 And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?' 27 But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us? 28 Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?' 29 Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons. 30 "And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai. 31 When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him, 32 saying, 'I am the God of your fathers — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look. 33 'Then the LORD said to him, "Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground. 34 I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I

will send you to Egypt.'" 35 "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush. 36 He brought them out, after he had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years. 37 Israel Rebels Against God "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.' 38 "This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us, 39 whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, 40 saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' 41 And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. 42 Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 43 You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.' 44 God's True Tabernacle

"Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen, 45 which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David, 46 who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob. 47 But Solomon built Him a house.

48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: 49'Heaven is My throne,And earth is My footstool.What house will you build for Me? says the LORD,Or what is the place of My rest? 50 Has My hand not made all these things?'

51 Israel Resists the Holy Spirit "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."54 Stephen the Martyr When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice,"Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. NKJV

Acts 8:1-3 Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. NKJV

Acts 9:3-9 *As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." 7 And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one. 8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. NKJV*

2 Cor 3:16 *Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. NKJV*

Eph 1:17 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, NKJV*

Gal 1:17 *nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. NKJV*

2 Cor 11:22-33 *Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. 23 Are they ministers of Christ? — I speak as a fool — I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. 24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness — 28 besides the other things, what*

comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation? 30 If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity. 31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is blessed forever, knows that I am not lying. 32 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands. NKJV

***Acts 13:4-6** So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. 5 And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as their assistant.*

6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, NKJV

***Acts 14:19-28** Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. 20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 Strengthening the Converts*
And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God." 23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. 24 And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed. 27 Now when they had come and gathered

the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples. NKJV

***Acts 16:14-34** 14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. 15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. 16 Paul and Silas Imprisoned Now it happened, as we went to prayer, that a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. 17 This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. 20 And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; 21 and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." 22 Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. 24 Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. 25 The Philippian Jailer Saved But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. 26 Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. 27 And the keeper of*

the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. 28 But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." 29 Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. 30 And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. 34 Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

NKJV

***Acts 17:14-15** Then immediately the brethren sent Paul away, to go to the sea; but both Silas and Timothy remained there. 15 So those who conducted Paul brought him to Athens; and receiving a command for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed, they departed. NKJV*

***Acts 18:5-23** When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. 6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles." 7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized. 9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent; 10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city." 11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.*

12 When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, 13 saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law." 14 And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you. 15 But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such matters." 16 And he drove them from the judgment seat. 17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things. 18 Paul Returns to Antioch So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila were with him. He had his hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow. 19 And he came to Ephesus, and left them there; but he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay a longer time with them, he did not consent, 21 but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing." And he sailed from Ephesus. 22 And when he had landed at Caesarea, and gone up and greeted the church, he went down to Antioch. 23 After he had spent some time there, he departed and went over the region of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples. NKJV

***Acts 19:9-22** But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 10 And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. 11 Miracles Glorify Christ Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them. 13 Then some of*

the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 This became known both to all Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. 18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. 19 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed. 21 The Riot at Ephesus When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." 22 So he sent into Macedonia two of those who ministered to him, Timothy and Erastus, but he himself stayed in Asia for a time. NKJV

Acts 23:12 *And when it was day, some of the Jews banded together and bound themselves under an oath, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. NKJV*

Acts 25:11 *For if I am an offender, or have committed anything deserving of death, I do not object to dying; but if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them. I appeal to Caesar." NKJV*