

LECTURE 3
THE APOSTLE PAUL

“He saw Paul coming, a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat hooked, full of friendliness; for now he appeared like a man, and now he had the face of an angel.”

Acts of Paul and Thecla 3 [A 2nd Century apocryphal account of Paul’s missionary journeys]

Early Days

1. The man whom we know as Paul was born with the name of _____ in Tarsus in Cilicia. It was a town of perhaps 500,000 inhabitants with a mixed population.
2. Paul was thus by birth a Jew of the _____. When or how his family or ancestors came to Tarsus is not known.
3. Paul’s _____ is a matter of scholarly debate. The question surrounds the account by Paul found in Acts 22.3:

³ I am verily a man *which am* a Jew, born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, *and* taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.¹

4. According to the passage, Paul discuss three phases of his early life:
 - a. Born in the city of _____ in Cilicia.
 - b. Brought up [raised] in this city = _____
 - c. Trained by _____
5. Paul’s letters confirm the fact that his _____ educational experience was under Gamaliel, not a Greek tutor. This does not mean that Paul was shut off from Greek influences.
6. According to his own testimony, Paul was a _____ (Phil 3.5).

¹*The Holy Bible : King James Version*. 1995 . Logos Research Systems, Inc.: Oak Harbor, WA

Excurses 1 – The Pharisees

The Pharisees appear in our sources as a distinct party in Judaism of the late Second Temple period, with their own vision of what Israel's standing as God's covenant people entailed. Characteristic of the Pharisaic position was their adherence to a body of traditional material (Gk *paradosis*) handed down "from the fathers," which defined correct behavior in a number of ways and which represented both an interpretation of and a supplement to Pentateuchal Law. In the Gospels Pharisees are generally (though not quite universally) depicted as opponents of Jesus, critical of his behavior, hostile in their questions, malicious in their deliberations. In turn, their piety is attacked as hypocritical, their spiritual leadership is declared bankrupt, and they are charged with leading the nation to its doom.

Essentially they were a nationalistic group who laid enormous stress on living according to the ancestral ways handed down from their ancestors; in practice this meant that they took the traditional laws and explained in meticulous detail how they were to be kept. This task was carried out by the rabbis (otherwise known as scribes or lawyers). One became a rabbi by being taught by a recognized teacher, and Paul's teacher was a well-known Rabbi Gamaliel who figures in Acts 5.33-40.

There were two schools of Pharisees at this time, the more conservative one associated with Shammai and the more liberal one associated with Hillel; Gamaliel belonged to the second party.

7. As a rabbi Paul had also to follow some manual occupation. He was a _____-maker (Acts 18.3), which is wide enough to include leather work and saddlery. He was, therefore, probably not particularly affluent.
8. We do not know anything or certain about Paul's family life. There is a probability that Paul was _____, since this was the normal pattern for Jewish men but, if so, there is nothing to suggest that he had a wife during his life as a missionary and in fact 1 Corinthians 7.8 rules this out; if he had been married, he was by now either divorced or widowed.
9. Paul may have been a member of the _____, the Jewish ruling council, if the statement in Acts 26.10 that he gave his vote against the Christians is to be taken literally; but it may be no more than a metaphorical way of saying that he assented to what was going on.

Paul's Call and Conversion

1. The story of Paul takes on a more definite form some time after the resurrection of Jesus and the beginnings of the Christian churches, when Paul appears as an implacable _____ of the Christians, taking a leading role in active attacks on them.
2. What kind of philosophy and world-view drove Paul at this stage of his life and the national life of Israel?

“The theology which sustained the revolutionaries thus included a reading of Israel’s scriptures which told them in no uncertain terms where they were living in God’s plan and what they should do to further it. Saul, like a great many Jews of his day, read the Jewish Bible not least as a story in search of an ending; and he conceived of his own task as being to bring that ending about...there are three cardinal points of Jewish theology in this period: monotheism, election and eschatology...Believing all of this, Saul was acting as best he knew...a story in search of an ending, an ending that he would himself help to bring about.”²

3. The impression that we form is of a person passionately devoted to the Pharisaic _____ of the Jewish religion. He viewed with intense alarm the rapid development of a heretical movement within Judaism, which committed the twofold blasphemy of elevating an ordinary _____ to be Messiah and of criticizing the _____ worship.
4. These points came to the fore in the teaching of _____ in whose stoning Paul had a minor role (Acts 8.1). He joined in the attacks on other Christians, and at this point was halted by a _____ of Jesus Christ that completely altered the direction of his life and changed him from being an attacker to an ardent disciple and missionary.
5. Saul’s conversion had two sides to it:
 - a. It was a conversion from one form of religion to a _____, even though Paul remained a Jew and would have regarded his Christian faith as the true form of Judaism.
 - b. A calling to be a _____ to proclaim the good news not only to Jews but also to Gentiles in fulfillment of God’s plan for the last days.
6. After this experience, Paul departed to _____ for a protracted period of reflection and teaching by the Holy Spirit.

² Wright, N.T., *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing, 1997, pages 30-31.

Paul as a Missionary

1. After Paul returned from Arabia, he ministered in Syria and Cilicia (Gal 1.21) returning to his hometown in _____.
2. Barnabas brought Paul to assist in the work at Antioch (Acts 11.19-30) where they were sent as _____ from the congregation (Acts 13.1-3). He embarked on _____ missionary campaigns.
3. The First campaign sent Paul and Barnabas to Cyprus and then into the part of central Turkey then known as _____.
4. On their return to Antioch, a crisis developed over the important question of whether the non-Jews who had become Christians, both in Antioch and in the new mission areas, were required to accept the key _____ of the traditional Jewish religion as well
5. A council of the leaders of the Christian movement met in _____ to debate this issue. It was decided that non-Jewish Christians did not need to be circumcised. (Acts 15; Gal 2.1-10).
6. After a sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas concerning a young helper named John Mark, Paul and Silas embarked upon a second missionary campaign. They attempted to go east into Asia, then into northern Turkey, but were redirected by the Holy Ghost to _____ on the Turkish coast of the Mediterranean Sea where they received the Macedonian vision and subsequent work at Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens and Corinth (Acts 16.1-18.21).
7. The third campaign took Paul through Galatia to Ephesus and then into Macedonia and Achaia with significant contact with the Church at _____.
8. The resulting picture is of a traveling missionary who visited in turn a number of strategically placed cities and major towns and stayed as long as was necessary and possible to _____ congregations. In this way he laid the foundation for further _____ in the areas where they were situated.
9. It was during this time that Paul stayed in contact with these churches through his extensive _____.

Paul the Captive

1. Paul then intended to go to _____ and beyond, calling on Rome on the way (Rom 15.28). While he was enroute he was arrested in _____. Paul appealed his arrest to _____ directly and proceeded to Rome under guard and was placed in house arrest in Rome.
2. This is the point that _____ ends. His death explained by speculation and Roman Catholic tradition:
 - a. Paul either _____ or was put to death.
 - b. Paul was released, went on to Spain (1 Clement) and then returned to Rome where he was re-arrested and then _____.
3. In either case it is evident that Paul spent a significant period of his Christian life as a _____ and not as a traveling missionary.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Epistle</i>
30	Crucifixion of Jesus	
31 – 32	Death of Stephen and conversion of Paul Paul in Arabia and Tarsus Paul in Antioch	
45	Visit to Jerusalem First Missionary Campaign Church Council in Jerusalem Second Missionary Campaign	<i>Galatians</i>
50	Paul's arrival in Corinth Return to Antioch Third Missionary Campaign	<i>1 and 2 Thessalonians</i> <i>1 and 2 Corinthians</i>
55	Paul's departure from Ephesus Return to Jerusalem Arrest and Imprisonment	<i>Romans</i>
59	Paul's departure for Rome	
60	Paul's arrival in Rome	<i>Philippians</i> <i>Philemon</i> <i>Colossians</i> <i>Ephesians</i> <i>1 and 2 Timothy</i> <i>Titus</i>

Figure 1. A Possible Chronology