

**SAVED, THE WORST OF ALL SINNERS!**  
**ACTS CH9:1-9**

**INTRODUCTION**

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***Where is Christianity? Those who apologise first are the bravest, those who forgive first are the strongest and those who forget first are the happiest!***

**PAUL STILL BREATHING! V1-2**

This Saul (his Jewish name), is Paul (his gentile name) from Ch13:9. There are three accounts of Paul's conversion in Acts, the first is here the second in **Ch22:1-16** and thirdly in **Ch26:12-18**, Luke employs such repetitions only when he considers something to be extraordinarily important! Along with more details of what happened to be found in **Acts Ch9:27; 1<sup>st</sup> Cor Ch9:1, Ch15:8-10; Gal Ch1:15-16; 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy Ch1:15-16**. In these verses Paul says ***he has seen Jesus, was commissioned to be an apostle for Jesus, that Jesus set him apart before his birth, and that he received mercy from Jesus as the chief or worst of all sinners!***

He was heading to Damascus, 150 miles or so from Jerusalem, a large and thriving commercial city at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon mountain range. It was part of the Roman province of Syria and was granted certain civic rights by Rome as one of the ten cities of eastern Syria and the Transjordan called the Decapolis (**Mark Ch5:27; Ch7:31**). It also had a large Jewish population.

The adverb “***eti***” (still) links the narrative that had gone before from **Ch7:58, Ch8:1 + Ch8:3**, concluding that despite the murderous stoning of Stephen and the subsequent scattering of the Christians into Judea and Samaria, Paul was still “breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord”. ***Paul saw it necessary to continue to persecute the Christians in places that remained outside of the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin!***

The language that Luke records to describe Paul portrays him as “a wild and ferocious beast” (Calvin, I, pg256) as the verb “***lymainomai***” whose only New Testament occurrence is in **Ch8:3** “ravaging the Church”, is used in **Psalm 80:13** of wild boars devastating a vineyard, “***The boar from the forest ravages it, and all that move in the field feed on it.***”

### **PAUL FALLING TO THE GROUND! V3-6**

Paul hears and sees from the risen Jesus Christ!

V3 Light – Ex Ch19:16; 2 Sam Ch22:13-15; Psalm 27:1; 77:18; 78:14; 97:4; 144:5-6; Isa **Ch9:2 – GREAT LIGHT**; Ch42:16; 60:1; **Ch60:20 – Everlasting Light**.

V4 Falling to the ground – Ez Ch1:28; **Dan Ch8:17**; Rev Ch1:17.

V4 A voice – Jesus calls him twice and Paul is initially confused to the identity of the voice!

V5 I am Jesus – Jesus reveals Himself to Paul, and uses the word “persecuting” for a second time, for when Paul was persecuting the Church, he was actually persecuting Jesus! Jesus stands with His people always! **We who are united to Christ by faith suffer as Jesus did, and Jesus identifies with us in our suffering!**

V6 Arise – Paul is told what to do by Jesus. Initially he is travelling to Damascus, full of hatred towards the Lord's disciples (**v1**) looking to extradite the Christian, but now, he is blind and needing to be led by the hand, where he will soon be told what he is going to do!

### **PAUL BLIND FOR THREE DAYS! V7-9**

The nameless companions of Paul, hear the sound **v7**, see the light (**Ch22:9**), but do not see or hear Jesus and remained spiritually blind!

The light that is mentioned in v3, appears to be a manifestation of Jesus' heavenly glory and Paul is blinded, symbolising his own spiritual blindness and the need for his sight to be restored by the living resurrected Christ! Paul did not discover a new God to worship, but he discovered that he had been in rebellion against the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob by refusing to acknowledge and worship Jesus as the Son of God and by persecuting the very people of God! Paul had indeed encountered God's risen Son Jesus!

Paul is humbled, realising that he needs Jesus to deliver Him from both his physical and spiritual darkness!

Paul spends three days fasting and fasting in the Bible is often shown as a time of true repentance – **Nehemiah Ch1:4; Jeremiah Ch14:12; Jonah Ch3:7-8** but **also a way of preparing to receive further revelation from the Lord – Exodus Ch34:28; Deuteronomy Ch9:9; Daniel Ch9:1-3.**

**What are we told Paul is doing during these three days? V9+11 – FASTING + PRAYING!**

### **APPLICATION**

Paul, we are told, is not seeking Jesus because he first saw Him as an imposter and blasphemer **Ch6:13-14+Ch9:1.**

Paul was firstly stiff necked and resisting the Holy Spirit **Ch7:51.**

But Christianity, because of Jesus, is the great “CONVERTER” **Ch9:9.**

**JESUS WANTED PAUL IN HIS KINGDOM, JESUS WANTED YOU IN HIS KINGDOM AND JESUS WANTS MORE CURRENTLY UNSAVED PEOPLE IN HIS KINGDOM!**