

ACTS 9:1-42

Lord God, who made the human heart and can turn our hearts with Your grace, speak to my heart in this time of study. Encourage me by the story of Saul's turning. Graciously turn me to Your purpose. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Review

1. What is the cautionary lesson we learn from Simon Magus?

2. What are the instructive and encouraging lessons we learn from Philip in his meeting with the eunuch?

Acts 9:1-19

3. Can you think of another event in the history of the Church more important than Saul's conversion, narrated *three times* in Acts (22:3-16 and 26:9-18)?

4. Write down whatever you can learn about Damascus from footnotes, Bible dictionaries, Wikipedia, etc. How far was it from Jerusalem? How large? Do you have any idea why Saul wants to go *there*?

5. Who is the **subject** (the change-agent) in this story?

6. How might the medical profession describe what happened to Saul?

He was struck by lightning

He had a nervous breakdown

He suffered a stroke, hallucinated, and was temporarily blinded

He had a psychological trauma due to religious fanaticism

He suffered from repressed guilt for his role in persecutions

7. Why do you think Saul was blinded?

8. What role will Saul be given (see v. 15)? What makes Saul an ODD choice for this role? A GOOD choice?

9. Why do you think Saul "must" suffer (v. 16)?

10. How does Saul (Paul) reflect on this experience in 1 Cor. 9:1 and 15:8?

11. When have you, like Ananias, obeyed the Lord even when you had doubts? What happened?

12. Do you think some people are “out of reach”? If so, how does this story challenge that assumption?

13. How would you finish this sentence: “I believe that God has chosen *me* to ...”?

Acts 9:20–31

14. Saul begins to preach “immediately” (v. 20) in the synagogues. Where do you think he has acquired the necessary knowledge to do this?

15. Compare vv. 20–29 with Gal. 1:15–21. What more do you learn about these earliest years of Saul’s Christian walk?

16. How is Saul rescued from a plot against his life (v. 25)? Can you think of an Old Testament story of a great leader rescued in a similar conveyance?

17. What special role does Barnabas play here? Whom have you (or could you) serve as a “Barnabas”?

Acts 9:32–42

18. Which of Jesus’ miracles come to mind as you read this section? Compare the raising of Tabitha with Matt. 9:25, Luke 17:11–17, and John 11:1–44.

19. Tabitha was raised, but Stephen was not. How would you explain God’s mysterious ways to Stephen’s widow or mother?

Memory Challenge

ACTS 9:15 NIV *“But the Lord said to Ananias, ‘Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.’”*

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