

That The World May Know: Walk As Jesus Walked - Session 2: Paul's Journey to Rome

Why Antioch of Pisidia?

- 1 How badly did Paul want to go to Rome? Why?
Romans 1:8 – 15
- 2 As Barnabas and Paul taught on the island of Cyprus, who became a believer? What impact did this man's conversion seem to have on Paul?
Acts 13:4 – 12
- 3 Paul knew that he was to take the gospel message to the Gentiles. How might the conversion of Sergius Paulus have influenced Paul's desire to bring God's message to the highest levels of the Roman Empire? To Antioch of Pisidia?
Acts 9:15
- 4 Paul and Barnabas visited Antioch of Pisidia, a key center of Roman influence.
 - a. When Paul spoke in Antioch, what kinds of people were in his audience and heard his message?
Acts 13:16 – 26
Acts 13:43 – 48
 - b. When Paul and Barnabas spoke on the Sabbath for the second time, who showed up to hear them? What kind of excitement did that stir up? How did these events create interest in Roman society?
Acts 13:44 – 50
- 5 For many years, God made it clear to Paul that he was not to go to Rome. When and how did Paul know that God would allow him to fulfill his life's desire to go to Rome and testify of God's message of salvation?
Acts 23:11
Romans 15:18 – 24

Challenging the Lordship of Caesar

Paul had great passion to declare and defend God's honor. He wanted to share the message of Jesus with everyone—Jew and Gentile, small and great. He even wanted to take the message of Jesus to Rome, to the heart and power center of the Roman Empire. God had more for Paul to learn and other things for him to do before he made that one-way trip. So for years God prevented Paul from going to Rome.

- 1 When Paul taught in the synagogue in Antioch, he was probably within sight of Caesar's temple on the hill overlooking the city. There is no indication that he softened his message to placate the Roman authorities.
 - a. What parts of Paul's sermons would Rome have considered to be treasonous?
Acts 13:23 – 34
Acts 13:46 – 47
 - b. Which points in Paul's sermon would Rome have considered to be treasonous?
Acts 13:23 – 47
- 2 No matter where he went in the Roman Empire, Paul taught about the kingdom of God and boldly declared the lordship of Christ.
 - a. Who did Paul say Jesus is? Who was Jesus to Paul?
Romans 1:1 – 6
 - b. Who would glorify God and why? Who would they praise as ruler over the nations and why?
Romans 15:7 – 13

Chosen and Prepared To Be a Disciple

Before taking the Roman name *Paul*, he was known by his Jewish name, *Saul*. Born a free Roman citizen to Jewish parents, he was unusual from birth. There is much to investigate in Saul's background that will help you to better understand this passionate Jewish follower of Jesus the Messiah.

- 1 What do the following Scripture passages reveal about young Saul and the many ways God prepared him for his future task?
Acts 22:3
Acts 22:25 – 29
Acts 23:6
Corinthians 11:22
Philippians 3:4 – 6
- 2 From his earliest days, Saul was a zealous and dedicated follower of God. He studied under Gamaliel, the most highly respected rabbi of his day, indicating that he was a dedicated and brilliant student of the Torah. According to Jewish tradition, Gamaliel also taught Greek wisdom so his disciples could relate the Torah to Hellenistic Romans.
 - a. In what ways would studying under Gamaliel have prepared Saul for his future as a disciple of Jesus long before he even met Jesus?
 - b. In what ways might Saul's training have been similar to Moses' training as Pharaoh's son prior to being given his mission from God?
- 3 Judging from his response to the testimony of Jesus' disciples, what kind of student of the Torah and rabbi was Gamaliel? What kind of training and preparation did Saul receive from Gamaliel?
Acts 5:27 – 40

Saul Becomes a Disciple of Jesus

When he met Jesus, Saul was already an accomplished rabbi who had been disciple under the great Jewish rabbi, Gamaliel. But after encountering Jesus on the Damascus road, Saul had to learn how his new Rabbi—Jesus—interpreted the Hebrew Bible. Eventually he became a teacher (rabbi) in his own right, but it did not happen overnight.

- 1 Christians today sometimes speak of Paul's "conversion to Christianity and give the impression that he is the post-Jewish hero who left Judaism behind and formed a new faith when he met Jesus. Meeting Jesus changed his life and mission, but he never stopped being Jewish. Being a *talmid* of Jesus and worshiping in both the synagogue and the temple became the context within which he followed Jesus the Messiah.
Acts 9:1 – 22
Acts 22:1 – 22
 - a. How did Saul's life in the growing Christian community change as a result of meeting Jesus? Did he believe he had changed religions?
 - b. After his encounter with Jesus, where did Saul go to share his message? Why did he go there? Would he have gone there if he no longer considered himself to be Jewish?
- 2 Answer the following questions.
Acts 9:26 – 28
 - a. When Saul first traveled to Jerusalem after he met Jesus, who did he want to meet?
 - b. What problem did Saul encounter with the believers in Jerusalem? Who took responsibility for him and helped him grow as a disciple of Jesus?

God's Plan for the God Fearers

1. What was God's purpose for calling Abraham to follow him?
Genesis 12:1 – 3
2. How were the Israelites to treat their Gentile neighbors and why? How might this relate to God's purpose for Israel to be a blessing to the world?
Exodus 20:1 - 21
Exodus 22:21
Deuteronomy 10:17 – 19
3. Who were to be God's witnesses? Were they effective?
Isaiah 43:10 – 13
4. What did the prophets say would happen concerning the pagans who lived around Israel?
Isaiah 66:18 – 21
Micah 4:1 – 5
Zechariah 8:20 – 23
5. What part were Jesus' followers to have in completing God's command to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth?
Acts 1:1 – 11
6. What has God promised to do for Gentiles who faithfully worship him?
Isaiah 56:1 – 8

Has God limited faith in the God of the Hebrew Bible to the Jews?
7. Was God's full acceptance and blessing of God-fearing Gentiles difficult for some Jews to accept? Did Paul's teaching that Gentiles were included in God's plan of salvation anger some of the Jews in Antioch?

References

Genesis 12	Exodus 2
Exodus 16	Exodus 20
Exodus 22	Deuteronomy 10
Deuteronomy 24	Deuteronomy 26
Deuteronomy 32	Proverbs 25
Isaiah 43	Isaiah 54
Isaiah 56	Isaiah 66
Micah 4	Zechariah 8
Acts 1	Acts 5
Acts 9	Acts 11
Acts 12	Acts 13
Acts 14	Acts 15
Acts 22	Acts 23
Acts 28	Romans 1
Romans 12	Romans 15
Ephesians 6	Philippians 3
1 Corinthians 8	1 Corinthians 11
2 Corinthians 8	2 Corinthians 11
Galatians 1	Galatians 2
Galatians 4	1 John 2