

## CHAPTER NINE Acts 9

### Saul's Conversion

#### Overview

#### 1. The Road to Damascus: (Verses 1-19)

Saul was still threatening and murdering the disciples of Jesus. He went to the high priest of the temple in Jerusalem to ask for letters to give to the leaders of the synagogues in Damascus giving him the right to bind up any man or woman who was a follower of Jesus and bring them back to Jerusalem when he returned. As he approached Damascus, a light shined from heaven, he fell to the ground and had a direct encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ. The men who were traveling with Saul heard the voice but saw no one. Saul arose from the ground, but could not see. His traveling companions led him by the hand to Damascus. Saul was blind for three days and went without eating or drinking during that time.

Ananias was a disciple who lived in Damascus and the Lord appeared to him in a vision instructing him to go to Saul to lay hands on him and pray for him to receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. Ananias obeyed and Saul's sight was restored and he received the Holy Spirit. He ate and then spent a number of days with the disciples at Damascus.

#### 2. Saul Preaches: (Verses 20-22)

Saul immediately began preaching that Jesus is the Son of God in the synagogues of Damascus. The people who heard him recognized Saul as the same man who had brought great persecution to the church.

Saul continued to increase in strength, confounding the Jews in Damascus and proving Jesus is the Christ.

### 3. Saul Escapes to Jerusalem: (Verses 23-31)

The Jews at Damascus plotted to kill Saul but he was helped by the disciples of that city to escape through a window in the wall undetected and he fled to Jerusalem.

Saul tried to join the disciples in Jerusalem, but they did not believe he had truly converted and become a Christian. Barnabas came to Saul's defense confirming that he had truly had an encounter with the Lord and had been boldly preaching in Damascus in the name of Jesus.

The Hellenists in Jerusalem tried to kill Saul, and when the believers learned of it, they took him to Caesarea and then sent him to Tarsus. Following this, the churches throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were multiplied.

### 4. Aeneas and Tabitha: (Verses 32-43)

Peter traveled to a small village west of Jerusalem called Lydda. While in Lydda, he came across a man named Aeneas who had been paralyzed for eight years. Peter healed him and everyone who saw that Aeneas had been healed received

Jesus.

After this, Dorcas, a highly regarded godly woman in Joppa, became sick and died. The disciples in Joppa heard Peter was in Lydda and sent for him.

When Peter was brought to the upper room where Dorcas laid, widows were present in the room weeping over her death. Peter put them out of the room, knelt next to her body and said, "Arise." Dorcas immediately opened her eyes, sat up on the bed, and Peter took her hand and lifted her up. He then called the widows to show them she was alive. Because of this miracle, many in Joppa came to know Jesus Christ.

Peter remained in Joppa for many days and stayed in the home of Simon the tanner.

## The Challenge of Chapter Nine:

God's mercy, forgiveness, and salvation are extended to all who will receive, even to the worst of sinners. Saul's dramatic conversion caused many to believe in Jesus Christ and the letters written by the Holy Spirit through his hand still instruct and encourage saints today.

Ananias' willingness to obey God in ministering to Saul, even through the fear and doubt he experienced, is a lesson to us that our obedience could be the difference between heaven and hell for someone's soul. In leading a person to the Lord, we may never know in this lifetime how God might use that life to impact the kingdom of God.

Even when faced with the most severe persecution, we must never stop boldly proclaiming Jesus Christ.

Part of the salvation Jesus provided includes healing. Just as the healing of Aeneas and Dorcus resulted in salvations, the same is true today of healings and miracles. We need to be bold to do as the Bible instructs believers to lay hands on the sick and expect to see them recover.