

## **Life of Paul**

### **Part 3 - From Persecutor to the Persecuted.**

#### **Acts 21:39 - Acts 22:5**

Map of Paul's world. Sent a couple of weeks ago.

#### **Birth Place. Tarsus.**

Around 5 BC in Tarsus in Cilicia which today would be modern-day Turkey. He was born of Jewish parents who possessed Roman citizenship. Paul was born a Roman citizen. Many people had to buy citizenship at a great cost. (Acts 22:28) Tarsus was a free city. Because Paul was a Roman citizen by birth it did allow him some privileges. **Acts 22:25-27, Acts 25:10-11.** The Emperor Pompey made Cilicia a Roman province in 64 BC, and its capital, Tarsus, was a free city from the time of Augustus.

Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin. Philippians 3:5-6.

#### **Childhood**

Around AD 10, His family moved to Jerusalem. Acts 22:3, He indicates that Jerusalem was his boyhood home. Paul's nephew was in Jerusalem after his conversion. Acts 23:16.

## **Education**

Around age 13, He learned from a great Rabbi Gamaliel where He was taught Jewish history, the Psalms, and the prophets. He would study under him for 5 or 6 years. Under Gamaliel, Saul would learn Old Testament Scriptures in great detail. One of the methods he would learn would be a diatribe.

In the Bible, a diatribe refers to a literary style used by biblical authors, particularly Paul, which involves engaging in a rhetorical argument with an imaginary or real opponent through questions, objections, and refutations. It's a form of persuasion where the author debates with an interlocutor to clarify a point or correct a misunderstanding.

## **Here's a more detailed explanation:**

- Rhetorical Style: Diatribe is a specific rhetorical style found in ancient literature, including the Bible.

- Debate with an Interlocutor: It involves a writer or speaker engaging in a dialogue, often with an imaginary opponent, to explore an idea or refute a viewpoint.
- Paul's Use: Paul frequently uses diatribe in his letters, especially in Romans, to address potential objections and misunderstandings of his teachings.
- Characteristics: Key features of diatribe include:
  - Dialogue with imaginary opponents: The writer sets up a hypothetical conversation with someone who disagrees.
  - Question and answer format: Questions are posed to the interlocutor, followed by the author's response or refutation.
  - Use of objections: The author anticipates and addresses potential objections from the opponent.
  - Rhetorical questions: Questions are used to make a point or guide the reader towards a specific conclusion.

- Transitioning to new topics: Objections and questions can serve as a bridge to introduce new aspects of the argument.
- Example: In **Romans 2:1**, Paul uses diatribe by addressing someone who might be judging others while engaging in similar sins.

## Pharisee

Saul's parents were Pharisees. Pharisees were fervent Jewish nationalist who adhered to strictly to the Law of Moses They would seek to protect their children from contamination by the Gentiles and especially, the Greeks. Paul would be able to speak Greek, some Latin, Aramaic and Hebrew. A Lot of this can be seen in **Acts 21:37 and 40**.

Saul's family may have had Roman citizenship but they would have view Jerusalem and the holy city.

The context of our main passage, we see the fervor of the crowd. Just as Saul was full of fervor and zeal against the

followers of the Way, So this Jewish crowd is in a fervor against Paul.

Paul would present the gospel of Christ to a various types of people. It would be the religious crowd that would give him the most difficult time. Religious people are often fervor in their own personal beliefs

Paul visited the synagogues in a variety of places around the Roman Empire but would come to a place where he would grow weary of constant Jewish backlash. Yet, many Gentiles would come to the Lord because of Paul.

Family and friends may give you a difficult time but don't quit. God will bring others across your path. They may look different, talk different, dress different and be different but they need a swinging light as well.

**Acts 26: 1-8; 26-28.**

**Hymn: Almost Persuaded**

“Almost persuaded” now to believe;

“Almost persuaded” Christ to receive;

Seems now some soul to say,

“Go, Spirit, go Thy way,  
Some more convenient day  
on Thee I’ll call.”

## 2

“Almost persuaded,” come, come today;  
“Almost persuaded,” turn not away;  
Jesus invites you here,  
Angels are ling’ring near,  
Prayers rise from hearts so dear;  
O wand’rer, come!

## 3

Oh, be persuaded! Christ never fails—  
Oh, be persuaded! His blood avails—  
Can save from every sin,  
Cleanse you without, within—  
Will you not let Him in?  
Open the door!

## 4

“Almost persuaded,” harvest is past!

“Almost persuaded,” doom comes at last;

“Almost” cannot avail;

“Almost” is but to fail!

Sad, sad that bitter wail—

“Almost—but lost!”

## **5**

Be now persuaded, oh, sinner, hear!

Be now persuaded, Jesus is near;

His voice is pleading still,

Turn now with heart and will,

Peace will your spirit fill—

Oh, turn today!