

Acts 9: 20-31 Study Guide

Last week, you began **Acts 9** and learned about the conversion of Saul, who is later renamed Paul.

This week, **Day 1** will focus (through various Scriptures) on this man, Saul/Paul.

Days 2-5 will cover **Acts 9:20-31**.

Scriptures in Study Guide:

To make things easier, Scriptures will be included in your daily lessons to help you with the missing words.

Scriptures included are in the **NKJV (New King James Version)**.

Day 1 (Various Scriptures; Saul's/Paul's Background)

Acts 22:3-5

3 "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous for God as any of you are today. **4** I persecuted the followers of this Way to their death, arresting both men and women and throwing them into prison, **5** as the high priest and all the Council can themselves testify. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in Damascus, and went there to bring these people as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished.

Acts 22:3:

- "I _____ a Jew, born ____ Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought _____ in this city. I studied _____ Gamaliel and was _____ trained in ____ law of our ancestors. I was just as zealous ____ God as any of you are today.

Questions:

- As a Jew who was born and raised in Tarsus of Cilicia, who did Saul/Paul study under? _____
- Write out **Acts 5:34** - _____

- **According to Acts 5:34**, how was Gamaliel regard by all of the people? _____

- **According to Acts 22:3**, what was Saul/Paul thoroughly trained in? _____

- Who does Saul/Paul say that he was zealous for? _____

- **Note:** when Saul persecuted Christians, he believed he was doing God's work.

Acts 22:4:

- I _____ the followers of this Way _____ their death, arresting _____ men and women and throwing _____ into prison,

Questions:

- How severely did Saul/Paul persecute the followers of this Way (meaning Christians)? _____

- After he arrested them, where did he throw them? _____

Acts 22:5:

- as _____ high priest _____ all the Council can themselves _____. I even obtained letters from them to their associates in _____, and went there to _____ these people as _____ to Jerusalem to _____ punished.

Questions:

- What did Saul/Paul obtain to bring Jesus' followers back as prisoners to Jerusalem to be punished? _____

- Who can testify that Saul/Paul really did do violence against Jesus' followers? the _____ and all the _____

Day 1 continued on next page

Day 1 (Various Scriptures; Saul's/Paul's Background); cont'd

Philippians 3:5-6

5 circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; **6** concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Philippians 3:5:

- circumcised _____ eighth day, of the stock of _____, *of* the tribe ____ Benjamin, a Hebrew of _____ Hebrews; concerning the law, _____ Pharisee;

• **Questions:**

- When was Saul/Paul circumcised? _____
- What tribe was Saul/Paul from? _____
- What was Saul/Paul concerning the law? _____

Note: Scholars believe that Saul was most likely named after Israel's 1st king, Saul. (See **1 Samuel 9:1-2; 9:16**)

Philippians 3:6:

- _____ zeal, persecuting _____ church; concerning _____ righteousness which is _____ the law, blameless.

• **Questions:**

- What did Saul/Paul do with zeal? _____
- How was Saul/Paul's "righteousness" in regard to how he kept God's law? _____

Background:

Saul was a Jewish Pharisee who was committed fully to his system of religion. To him, until Jesus met Him on the Damascus Road in Acts 9, he believed he was serving the Lord. Saul had all that knowledge without understanding. And it will be this knowledge, much like God orchestrated in Moses' life, to be able to articulate and explain God's truths that we now have as most of the New Testament. God had plans for Saul to always be Paul. And when the time was right, God saved him. Do you know someone in your life that you wonder how can God save that person? Do you remember a past behavior or choice that crosses your mind still that makes you cringe? Know that the cross is enough. It was enough to save Saul who would become Paul and it is enough for anyone who repents of their rejection of Christ and calls upon His Name to be saved (see Acts 2:38-39). Paul is the perfect example of how God can take His enemy and make him his child.

- To finish today's study, **write out** Paul's words to the Corinthians in **2 Corinthians 5:17**:

Day 2 begins on the next page

Day 2 (Acts 9:20–22)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read all of **Acts 9** out loud and answer the following review questions below.

Today's Scriptures:

20 Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. **21** Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?" **22** But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this *Jesus* is the Christ.

Acts 9:20:

- Immediately _____ preached the Christ in _____ synagogues, that He _____ the Son _____ God.
- **Questions:**
- How quickly did Saul (later named Paul) preach? _____
- Who did Saul preach about in the synagogues? _____
- What did Saul preach about the Christ? _____
- According to **Matthew 16:16**, what was Simon Peter's answer to Jesus' question of Who does he say that Jesus is? _____
- According to **John 19:7**, why did the Jewish leaders say that Jesus had to die?

Acts 9:21:

- Then _____ who heard _____ amazed, and said, "Is _____ not he who destroyed _____ who called on this _____ in Jerusalem, and has come _____ for that purpose, so that he might _____ them bound to _____ chief priests?"
- **Questions:**
- What was the reaction of all who heard Saul preaching that Christ was the Son of God? _____
- What did they say that Saul wanted to do to those who called on "this" (Jesus) name in Jerusalem?

- What did they say was Saul's purpose of coming to Jerusalem?

- What group of people was Saul suppose to bring Jesus' followers back to? _____
 - **Note:** the chief priests were most likely members of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish high court). Up until this point, Saul was one of them. (See **Acts 7:58** and **Acts 8:1**).

Acts 9:22:

- But Saul _____ all the more in strength, and _____ the Jews who _____ in Damascus, proving that _____ *Jesus* is the Christ.
- **Questions:**
- What did Saul increase in all the more? _____
- How did Saul confound the Jews who dwelt in Damascus?

- Note: *Christ means Messiah

Day 3 begins on the next page

Day 3 (Acts 9:23–25)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read all of **Acts 9** out loud and answer the following review questions below.

Today's Scriptures:

23 Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him. **24** But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him. **25** Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.

Acts 9:23:

- Now _____ many days were _____, the Jews plotted _____ kill him.
- **Questions:**
- What did the Jews (these are the Jewish leaders) plot to do after many days were past? _____

Acts 9:24:

- _____ their plot _____ known _____ Saul.
- _____ they watched _____ gates day _____ night, _____ kill him.
- **Questions:**
- Who did the Jews' plot become known to? _____
- What did they watch day and night in order to try to kill Saul? _____

Acts 9:25:

- Then _____ disciples took _____ by night and let him down through _____ wall in _____ large basket.
- **Questions:**
- What did the disciples do? _____
- What time of day did they leave him down through the wall in a large basket? _____

Note: this will just be the beginning of Saul/Paul's own persecution for his faith.

- Write out **Acts 9:16** - _____
- For the remainder of today, let's do a Scripture dive to learn more about the physical suffering that Saul/Paul went through after his conversion. **Answer the questions below the Scripture.**
- **2 Corinthians 11:25-27: 25** Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; **26** *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren; **27** in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness

Questions:

- How many times, from **verse 25**, was Paul beaten with rods? _____
- How many times, from **verse 25**, was he stoned? _____ (compare **Acts 14:19-20**; tells about this stoning)
- How many times, from **verse 25**, was he shipwrecked? _____
- What did he spend out in the deep (meaning out at sea)? _____
- Name the different areas he faced "perils" from (see **verse 26**)? _____

- In **2 Corinthians 11:27**, write out all the ways that Paul describes his physical state?

Day 4 begins on the next page

Day 4 (Acts 9:26–28)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read all of **Acts 9** out loud and answer the following review questions below.

Today's Scriptures:

26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. **27** But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. **28** So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.

Acts 9:26:

- And _____ Saul had come ____ Jerusalem, he _____ to join the disciples; but they were ____ afraid of him, and _____ not believe _____ he was a disciple.

• **Questions:**

- Who did Saul try to join when he came to Jerusalem? _____
- What was the reaction of the disciples when Saul tried to join them? _____
- Did they believe that he was a disciple of Jesus Christ? _____
- Remember Ananias told the Lord he was also afraid of Saul. What was Ananias' reason for his fear of Saul? (See **Acts 9:13-14**)

- **Note:** Ananias believed God and faced his fear by doing what God told him to do. At times, we may be fearful to follow God's Word because it may cost us relationships, opportunities, etc. In those moments, remember Who holds the future and trust God's Word to be true. He is Sovereign.

Acts 9:27:

- But Barnabas took him _____ brought him ____ the apostles. And _____ declared to them _____ he had _____ the Lord on the road, _____ that He had spoken _____ him, and how he _____ preached boldly _____ Damascus in _____ name of Jesus.

• **Questions:**

- Who took Saul and brought him to the apostles? _____
- What did Barnabas declare to them?
 - how _____ had seen the _____ on the road,
 - and that He had _____ to him,
 - and how he had _____ boldly at Damascus in the name of _____.
- **Note:** this is the same Barnabas who we met at the end of **Acts 4** who sold a piece of land and used it for those in need by laying it at the apostles feet. (See **Acts 4:36-37**)

Acts 9:28:

- So he was _____ them at Jerusalem, coming in _____ going out.

• **Questions:**

- Where was Saul with the disciples coming in and going out among them? _____

Reminder: Jerusalem is where the apostles stayed while all the other believers (who could not stay) scattered to preach in Judea and Samaria. (See **Acts 8:1; Acts 1:8**)

Background:

Saul/Paul details more of his conversion time in his writings to the Galatian church.

- Write out **Galatians 1:18-19** -

Day 5 begins on the next page

Day 5 (Acts 9:29–31)

Pray God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.
Read all of **Acts 9** out loud and answer the following review questions below.

Today's Scriptures:

29 And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. **30** When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus. **31** Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

Acts 9:29:

- _____ he spoke boldly in the _____ of the Lord Jesus and disputed against _____ Hellenists, but they attempted _____ kill him.
- **Questions:**
- In what way did Saul speak in the name of the Lord Jesus? _____
- Who did Saul/Paul dispute against? _____
- What did the Hellenists attempt to do to Saul/Paul when he disputed with him? _____

Acts 9:30:

- When _____ brethren found out, they _____ him down _____ Caesarea and sent him _____ to Tarsus.
- **Questions:**
- What happened when the brethren (the fellow Christians) found out? _____

Acts 9:31:

- Then _____ churches throughout all Judea, _____, and Samaria had peace _____ were edified.
- And walking _____ the fear of _____ Lord and in the comfort _____ the Holy Spirit, they _____ multiplied.
- **Questions:**
- What happened to the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria? _____
- How were these churches walking? _____
- Write out **Proverbs 9:10** - _____
- Who comforted these churches in all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria? _____
- What was happening to the church? _____

We will finish up **Acts 9** next week. The scene will shift and Luke, the author of **Acts**, will focus again on the apostle Peter and how God uses him to open up the gospel to the Gentile world. I'm praying for you.