

PAUL [A JEW] MEETS JESUS

Acts 7:59-8:4 (Review)

59Some Jews threw rocks at Stephen (because he believed in Jesus) – 60and Stephen died. 8:1-3Paul was happy that Stephen died. And Paul started to destroy Jesus' people. Paul went from house to house – he looked for believers in Jesus – and Paul put men and women in jail. The believers in Jesus ran away from Jerusalem. 4And, everywhere the believers went, the believers told everyone about Jesus.

Acts 9:2-26

9:2Then Paul planned to go to Damascus [a city in Syria about 250 kilometers north of Jerusalem]. He wanted to find believers in Jesus. Paul wanted to put them in jail.

3Paul was going to Damascus – and he was near Damascus. Suddenly, there was a very bright light from heaven. The light flashed around Paul. 4He fell to the ground. And Paul heard a voice. The voice said, “Paul, Paul, why are you persecuting me?”

5Paul asked, “Who are you?” The voice said, “I am Jesus. You are persecuting me.”

6Jesus said to Paul, “Get up. Go into Damascus. A man will tell you what you must do.” 8Paul got up from the ground. He opened his eyes – but he could not see! So people took Paul's hand – the people led Paul into Damascus. 9For three days Paul was blind. For three days he ate and drank nothing.

10A man named Ananias lived in Damascus. Ananias believed in Jesus. Jesus talked to Ananias in a vision – 11and Jesus said, “Go to Paul. Put your hands on Paul – and Paul will see again.”

13Ananias answered, “Lord! I have heard many bad things about Paul – Paul has done many bad things to your people in Jerusalem. 14Now he has come to Damascus. He wants to arrest all believers.”

15But Jesus said, “Go! I have chosen Paul to do a very special job. Paul will tell the Gentiles [non-Jews] about me – and Paul will tell Gentile kings about me. And Paul will tell the people of Israel [Jews] about me. 16I will tell Paul: You must suffer very much for me.”

17Then Ananias went to Paul. Ananias put his hands on Paul – and Ananias said, “Brother Paul, Jesus sent me to you. You will see again. And the Holy Spirit will fill you.” 18Immediately, Paul could see. Then Paul got up – and he was baptized [because he believed in Jesus].

19Paul stayed in Damascus – he stayed with believers in Jesus. 20Immediately Paul went to the Jewish churches – and he said: Jesus is the Son of God. 21The people were very surprised. They said, “Isn’t this Paul? In Jerusalem Paul arrested believers in Jesus. Now he has come to Damascus to arrest believers in Jesus!”

22But Paul became more and more powerful – Paul proved [from the Old Testament] that Jesus is the Messiah. But the Jews in Damascus could not answer Paul.

23After many days the Jews planned to kill Paul. 25But Paul escaped – 26and he went to Jerusalem.

CONTENT QUESTIONS

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Paul feel when Stephen was killed? (verse 8:1-3)
- Then what did Paul do to Jesus' people? (verse 8:1-3)

Why do you think Paul hated Jesus?

Answer:

The Jews wanted to kill Jesus because (1) Jesus did good work on the Rest Day, and (2) Jesus said: God is my Father, so I am the same as God. John 5:18

(1) The Rest Day was the most important rule in the Old Testament for Jews.

(2) The Jews thought that Jesus was only a man – and no man should say: I am the same as God.

So, do you think Paul was trying to help God?

- Then what did Paul plan to do? (verse 9:2) Why?
- What happened to Paul when he got near Damascus? (verses 3-4)
- What did he hear? What did the voice say? (verse 4)
- What did Paul ask the voice? (verse 5)
 - Paul was trying to help God, but what did the voice answer? (verse 5)
 - So, who spoke to Paul? (verse 5)

How do you think Paul felt when he heard this?
Do you think Paul was shocked?

- What did Jesus tell Paul to do? (verse 6)
- What was Paul's problem? (verse 8)
- How long was Paul blind? How long did he eat and drink nothing? (verse 9)

What do you think Paul thought about for 3 days?

How does it feel to completely change your thinking?

- What did Jesus tell Ananias to do? (verse 11)
- Did Ananias want to go see Paul? (verses 13-14) Why not?

- Why did Jesus choose Paul? (verses 15)

Jesus chose Paul to be God's most important worker.
Are you surprised by this?

Does Creator God have a big heart or a small heart?
How big is God's love?

Later, Paul said:

"15Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners – and I am the worst sinner. 16But Jesus was very loving and merciful to me. Why was Jesus loving and merciful to me? Because I am the worst sinner – so Jesus wanted to show his great patience to me. I am the example for you – I am the example of Jesus' great patience. Jesus' patience has no limit for you, if you want to believe in Jesus and receive eternal life."

1 Timothy 1:15-16

- What **else** will Paul do for Jesus? (verse 16)
- What did Ananias do for Paul? (verse 17)

Did Ananias hate Paul? Or did Ananias accept Paul? ("Brother Paul...")

- What did Paul do first? (verse 18)
- What did Paul do in Damascus? (verse 20) What did he say?
- Why were people surprised? (verse 21)
- What did Paul prove? (verse 22)

What is the Messiah? (See vocabulary list)

- What did the Jews plan to do to Paul? (verse 23)
- But what did Paul do? (verses 25-26)

This is an amazing story!
Do you have any thoughts about it?