

THE LIFE OF PAUL

LESSON I PAULUS - SAUL

1. Paul is thought to have been born about 0 - 5 AD. Where did Paul live as a boy? Acts 21:39; 22:3 (**Acts 21:39 - But Paul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people."**) (**Acts 22:3 - "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.)**)
2. Cilicia was a province in Asia. Find Cilicia on your maps. A river by the name of Cnidus ran through Tarsus. Mount Tarsus lay to the North of Tarsus. Cilicia lay between the Tarsus mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. Tarsus was a commercial center.
3. What was Paul's nationality? Acts 21:39; 22:25-29; Rom. 11:1; Phil. 3:5 (**Acts 21:39 - But Paul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people."**) (**Acts 22:25-29 - And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?" When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, "Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman." Then the commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." The commander answered, "With a large sum I obtained this citizenship." And Paul said, "But I was born a citizen." Then immediately those who were about to examine him withdrew from him; and the commander was also afraid after he found out that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.) (Rom 11:1 - I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.) (Phil 3:5 - circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee);**
4. How religious was Paul as a Jew? Gal. 1:14; Acts 22:3; Phil. 3:5-6 (**Gal 1:14 - And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.)**) (**Acts 22:3 - "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.)**) (Phil 3:5-6 - circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.)
5. Who had been Paul's teacher? Acts 22:3 (**Acts 22:3 - "I am indeed a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, taught according to the strictness of our fathers' law, and was zealous toward God as you all are today.)**)

Gamaliel was the leading rabbi of the day. It was traditional for the rabbis to have a trade by which they could support themselves while they taught the people without receiving pay.
6. Is there any more in the New Testament concerning Gamaliel? **Acts 5:32-39: And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."**

THE LIFE OF PAUL

When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them. Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while. And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men. For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing. After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed. And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it — lest you even be found to fight against God." NKJV

7. What was Paul's trade? Acts 18:1-3 (**Acts 18:1-3 - After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them. So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.**)

8. What were Paul's thoughts about being a self-supporting preacher? II Cor. 11:7-9; I Cor. 9:1-15 (**2 Cor 11:7-9 - Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches, taking wages from them to minister to you. And when I was present with you, and in need, I was a burden to no one, for what I lacked the brethren who came from Macedonia supplied. And in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and so I will keep myself.**) (1 Cor 9:1-13 Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If I am not an apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you. For you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. My defense to those who examine me is this: Do we have no right to eat and drink? Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. NKJV

9. The people of Tarsus ancestry was probably Greek since Alexander the Great entered Tarsus in 334 BC. According to secular history, Alexander brought many Greek residents to the city at that time. What value would this be for Paul and his future work in the Lord? Acts 16:1-3; 21:37; Rom. 1:16; 2:9-10; Gal. 2:3; 3:28; Col. 3:11 Nearly everywhere Paul taught, he taught Greeks.

THE LIFE OF PAUL

10. In what situation do we find Paul when first introduced in the New Testament? Acts 7:58-59; 8:1-4; 9:1; 22:4-5,19-20; Gal. 1:14; 1 Tim. 1:13,15; 1 Cor. 15:9 **(Acts 7:58-59 - and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.") (Acts 8:1-4 - Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.) (Acts 9:1 - Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest) (Acts 22:4-5 - "I persecuted this Way to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women, "as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.") (Acts 22:19-20 - "So I said, 'Lord, they know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believe on You. 'And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'") (Gal 1:14 - And I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries in my own nation, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.) (1 Tim 1:13 - although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.) (1 Cor 15:9 - For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.)**
11. By whose authority was Paul carrying out his attack upon the church? Acts 22:5; 9:1-2 **(Acts 22:5 - "as also the high priest bears me witness, and all the council of the elders, from whom I also received letters to the brethren, and went to Damascus to bring in chains even those who were there to Jerusalem to be punished.") (Acts 9:1-2 - Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.)**