

The Acts of the Apostles

Lesson 10: The Conversion of Saul of Tarsus

Acts 9:1-43

Chapter 9 begins with Saul of Tarsus continuing to persecute the followers of Christ.

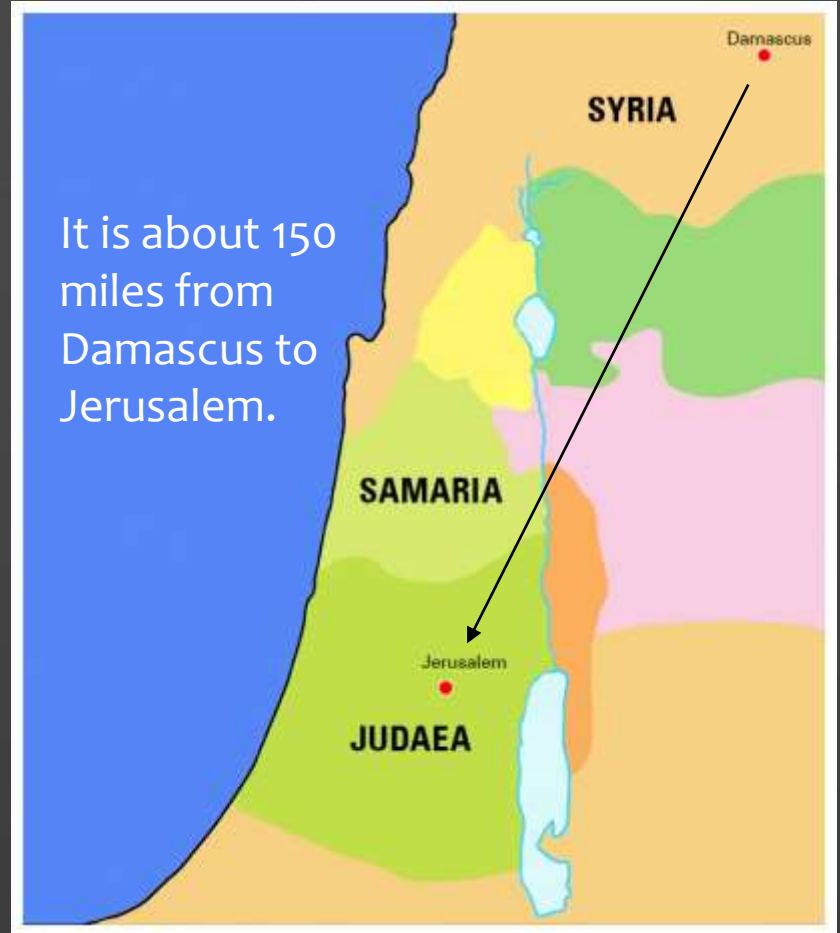
Acts 9:1-2

- ¹ And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,
- ² And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.



Acts 9:1-2

- 1 And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest,
- 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.



Acts 9:3-4

- ³ And as he journeyed,
he came near Damascus:
and suddenly there shined round
about him a light from heaven:
- ⁴ And he fell to the earth,
and heard a voice saying unto him,
Saul, Saul,
why persecutest thou me?



Acts 9:5

And he said,
Who art thou, Lord?

And the Lord said,
I am Jesus whom
thou persecutest:

*it is hard for thee to
kick against the
pricks.*



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Farmers use a sharply-pointed stick called a *prick* to guide their plow animals. When the beast resists, it causes its own pain.

Acts 9:6

And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.



Paul asked the two most important questions in life:

Who art you, Lord?

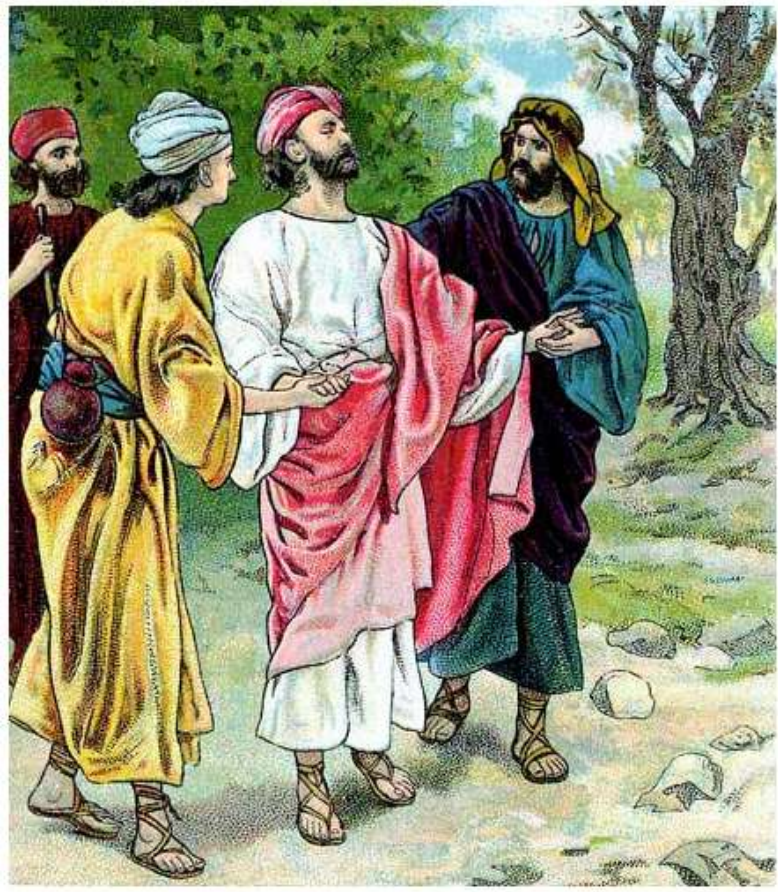
What would you have me to do?



Acts 9:7

And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.





Acts 9:8-9

- ⁸ And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus.
- ⁹ And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

Acts 9:10

¹⁰ And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord.



Acts 9:11-12

- ¹¹ And the Lord *said* unto him,
Arise, and go into the street
which is called Straight,
and enquire in the house of Judas
for one called Saul, of Tarsus:
for, behold, he prayeth,
¹² And hath seen in a vision a man
named Ananias coming in,
and putting *his* hand on him,
that he might receive his sight.



Acts 9:11-12

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The street called Straight was the Roman street *Decumanus Maximus* that ran from east to west in the old city of Damascus, Syria.



Acts 9:13-14

- ¹³ Then Ananias answered,
Lord, I have heard by many of this
man, how much evil he hath done to
thy saints at Jerusalem:
- ¹⁴ And here he hath authority from the
chief priests to bind all that call on
thy name.



Acts 9:13-14

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Ananias was one of the Christians
Saul had come to arrest!

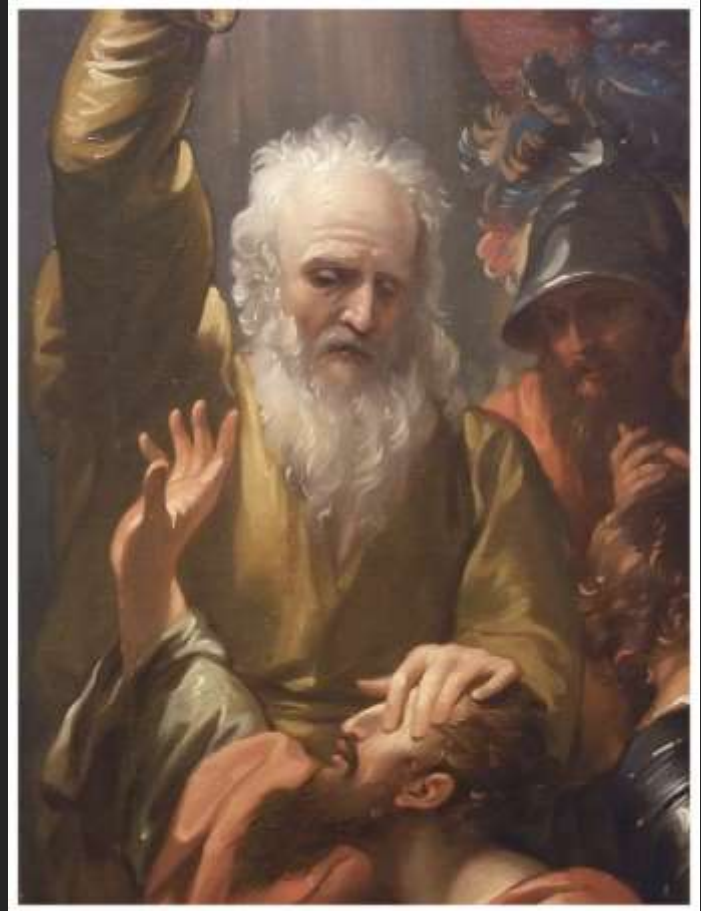
Acts 9:15-16

- ¹⁵ But the Lord said unto him,
Go thy way:
for he is a chosen vessel unto me,
to bear my name before the Gentiles,
and kings, and the children of Israel:
- ¹⁶ For I will shew him how great things
he must suffer for my name's sake.



Acts 9:17

And Ananias went his way,
and entered into the house;
and putting his hands on him said,
Brother Saul,
the Lord, *even Jesus*,
that appeared unto thee in the way
as thou camest, hath sent me,
that thou mightest receive thy sight,
and be filled with the Holy Ghost.



Acts 9:18-19a

- ¹⁸ And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales:
and he received sight forthwith,
and arose, and was baptized.
- ¹⁹ And when he had received meat,
he was strengthened.



Acts 9:19b-20

- ¹⁹ Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.
- ²⁰ And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.



Acts 9:21

²¹ But all that heard *him* were amazed,
and said;
Is not this he that destroyed them
which called on this name in
Jerusalem,
and came hither for that intent,
that he might bring them bound
unto the chief priests?



Acts 9:22

²² But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.



Acts 9:23

²³ And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:



Acts 9:23

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These “many days” were about 3 years!
After his conversion, Paul went into seclusion in Arabia before returning to Damascus. He wrote about this in his letter to the churches of Galatia:





Galatians 1:15-17

- ¹⁵ But when it pleased God,
who separated me from my mother's womb,
and called me by his grace,
- ¹⁶ To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him
among the heathen;
immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:
- ¹⁷ Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which
were apostles before me;
but I went into Arabia,
and returned again unto Damascus.



Galatians 1:18

¹⁸ Then after three years
I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,
and abode with him fifteen days.



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¹⁸ Then after three years
I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,
and abode with him fifteen days.

Paul's years in Arabia are not part of the Acts story.

Now we read what happened to Paul in Damascus
AFTER he returned from Arabia,
but BEFORE he went to Jerusalem to see Peter.

The first of many plots against Paul's life took place when he was back in Damascus.



Acts 9:23-24

²³ And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him:

²⁴ But their laying await was known of Saul.

And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.



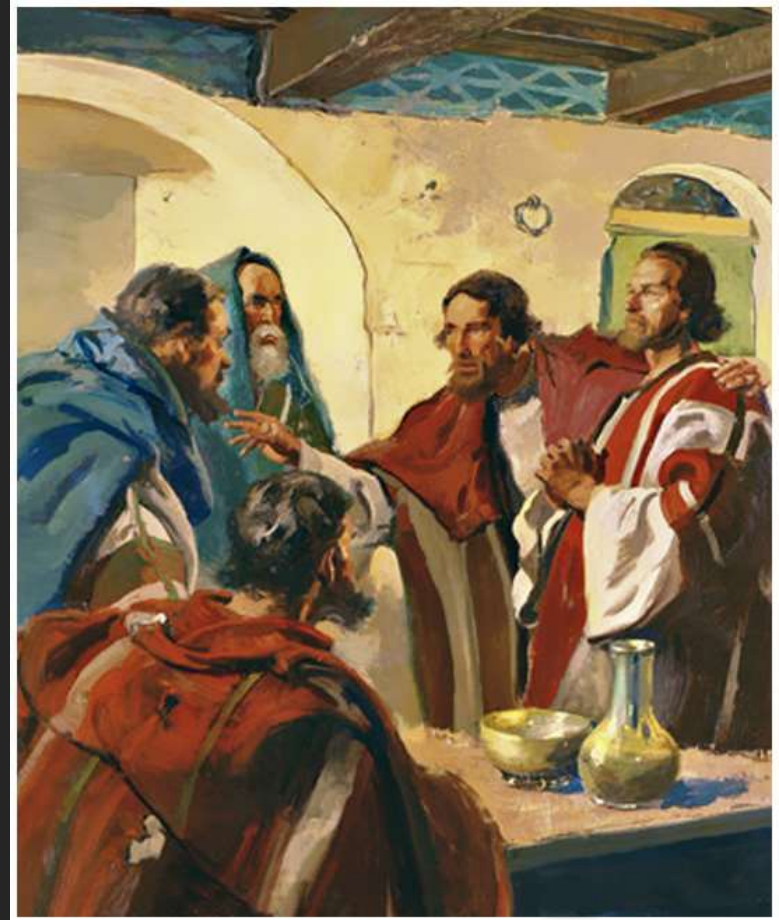
Acts 9:25

Then the disciples took him by night, and let *him* down by the wall in a basket.



Acts 9:26-28

- ²⁶ And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.
- ²⁷ But Barnabas took him, and brought *him* to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.
- ²⁸ And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.



Acts 9:29

²⁹ And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.



Acts 9:29

²⁹ And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against **the Grecians:** but they went about to slay him.



Remember that Saul of Tarsus had been associated with the Greek-speaking Jews who had participated in the death of Stephen. These were his peers. How he wanted their eyes to be opened, also!





Acts 9:30

*Which when the brethren knew,
they brought him down to Caesarea,
and sent him forth to Tarsus.*

Paul wrote about this in his letter to the Galatians:





Galatians 1:21-24

- ²¹ Afterwards I came into the regions of Syria and Cilicia;
- ²² And was unknown by face unto the churches of Judaea which were in Christ:
- ²³ But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed.
- ²⁴ And they glorified God in me.

Acts 9:31

Then had the churches rest
throughout all Judaea
and Galilee
and Samaria,
and were edified;

and walking in the fear of the Lord,
and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost,
were multiplied.



The focus of Chapter 9 now shifts to Peter, with a story that leads to a dramatic change in the history of God's dealings with man:

Acts 9:32-33

³² And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all *quarters*, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda.

³³ And there he found a certain man named Aeneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.



Acts 9:34-35

³⁴ And Peter said unto him,
Aeneas, Jesus Christ
maketh thee whole:
arise, and make thy bed.

And he arose immediately.

³⁵ And all that dwelt at Lydda
and Saron saw him,
and turned to the Lord.



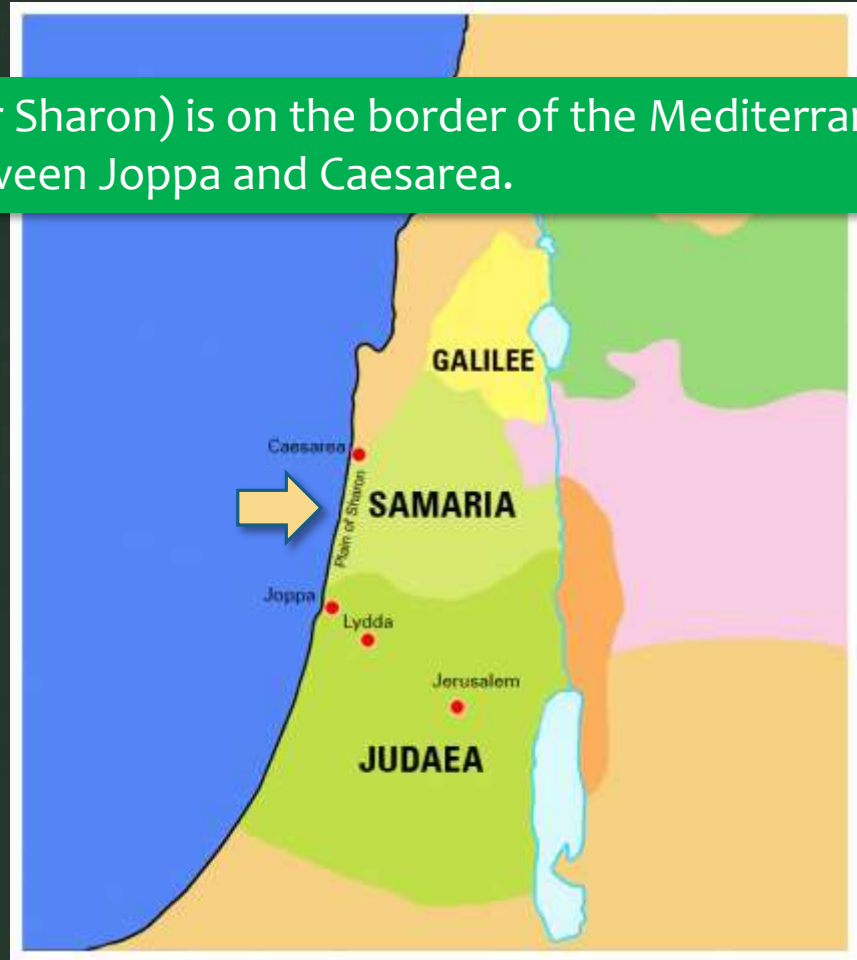
Saron (or Sharon) is on the border of the Mediterranean Sea, between Joppa and Caesarea.

Acts 9:34-35

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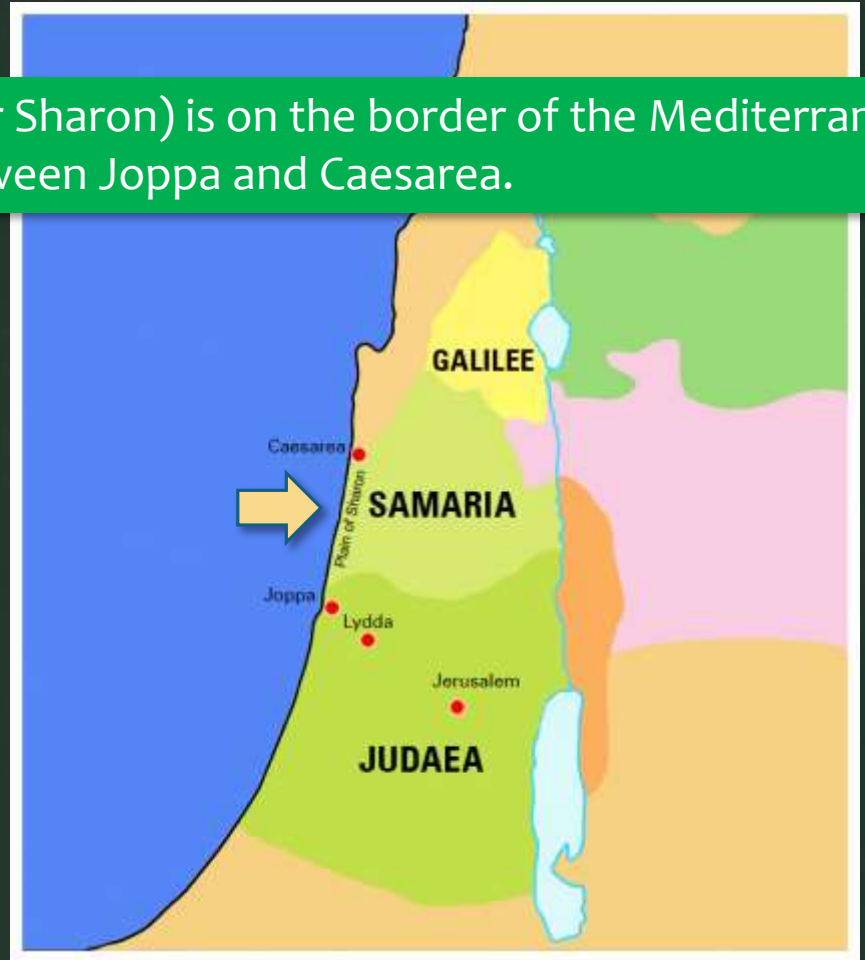
And he arose immediately.

35 And all that dwelt at Lydda
and Saron saw him, and
turned to the Lord.



Saron (or Sharon) is on the border of the Mediterranean Sea, between Joppa and Caesarea.

Song of Solomon 2:1
I am the rose of Sharon,
and the lily of the valleys.



Acts 9:34-35

- ³⁶ Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.
- ³⁷ And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when they had washed, they laid *her* in an upper chamber.



Acts 9:38-39a

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them.



Acts 9:38-39a

³⁸ And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that he would not delay to come to them.

³⁹ Then Peter arose and went with them.



Acts 9:39b

When he was come,
they brought him into
the upper chamber:
and all the widows
stood by him weeping,
and shewing the coats
and garments which
Dorcas made, while she
was with them.



Acts 9:40

But Peter put them all forth, and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning *him* to the body said, Tabitha, arise.

And she opened her eyes:
and when she saw Peter, she sat up.



Acts 9:41-42

- 41 And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.
- 42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.



Acts 9:43

And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

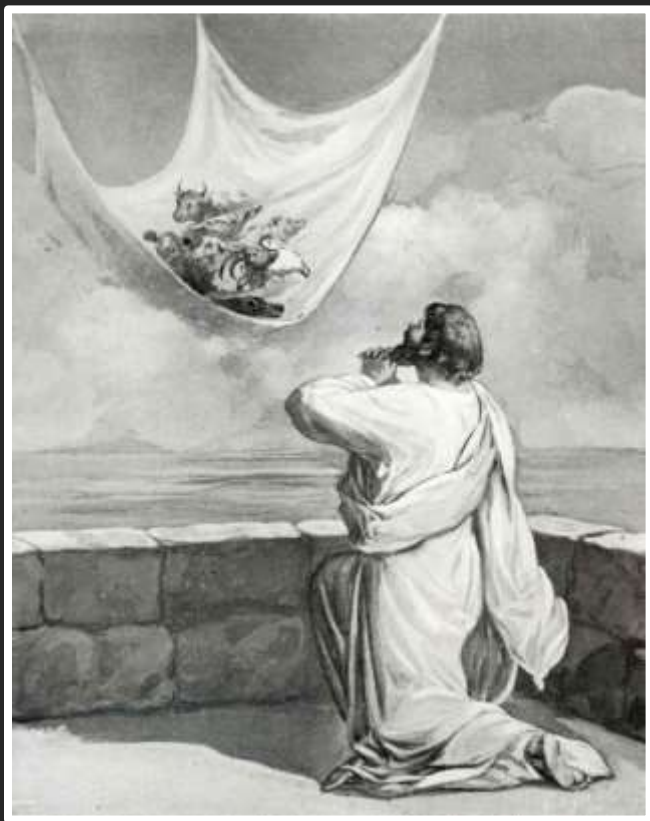


Acts 9:43

And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

End of Chapter 9





UP NEXT:

In Joppa, Peter learns that “God is no respecter of persons.”

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. According to Acts 9:4, what was the first question the Lord asked Saul of Tarsus (Paul)? 10 points.
2. What were the two questions Saul asked the Lord? 20 points.
3. Where did the Lord tell Ananias to meet Saul? 10 points.
4. In Galatians 1:17, Paul writes about his ___ years in the land of _____. 10 points.
5. How did Paul escape from Damascus? 10 points.
6. Who introduced Saul to the apostles in Jerusalem? 10 points.
7. What miracle did Peter do in Lydda? 10 points.
8. What miracle did Peter do in Joppa? 10 points.
9. At the end of Chapter 9, where was Peter staying? 10 points.

Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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