



The Apostle Paul, Servant of Christ



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Overview Study Guide

Unit II, Chapter 4

“Preparing to be a Missionary”

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Introduction

In Part I, we explored Paul the person by looking at his “bio” information that is available (chapter 1), his conversion to Christ (chapter 2), and his ministry calling (chapter 3). The profile developed from these studies only prepares us to understand the service of the apostle from his conversion in the mid 30s to his martyrdom in the mid 60s of the first Christian century. Although this service had many aspects, it essentially revolves around being a missionary and a writer. In Part II, we will explore the missionary dimension, and in Part III the writer dimension.

Part II: The Missionary

Many of us in North America grew up in churches where missions and missionary service were greatly emphasized both throughout the congregation, and especially by the women’s organization in the church. For those of us who grew up in Southern Baptist churches in the second half of the last century, the Christmas season always meant the “Lottie Moon Christmas Offering” in a foreign missions emphasis with special programs and money goals for the offering that year. Easter meant the “Annie Armstrong Easter Offering” for home missions emphasis. Then in September or October, depending on where you lived in the US, there was the state missions offering emphasis.¹



Annie Armstrong



Lottie Moon

Even in the small rural Baptist Church on the edge of west Texas where I grew up, there were always missionaries on furlough who came and spoke -- almost always with slide pictures and displays of items native to the country where they were serving. Among Baptists in the US, missionaries were the heroic figures who represented individuals about as close to “Baptist saints” as was possible within the limits of the biblical understanding. Most Baptist young people grew up idealizing the missionaries and either praying that God would call them into such service, or else dreading the possibility of such a calling that meant leaving home and family to serve God in some far off place in the world a long

¹In Texas, this is the Mary Hill Davis Offering for Texas Missions.

These three offerings were named after women who distinguished themselves in missionary service in different ways, and thus function as inspirational models. Among Baptists in the South, the role of the Women’s Missionary Union organization (WMU) in the churches has had a profound impact on generating missions sensitivity among the churches. These three women in their service in the early 1900s received their primary prayer and financial support from the various WMU groups in Southern Baptist and Texas Baptist churches.

way from home.

My first experience of 'direct missions' came during the late 1950s when our little country church of 150 people sent the pastor, his wife, and four young people on a two week "missions trip" to a place outside Cleveland, Ohio to help begin a church. Sometime later our pastor was called to serve this congregation as pastor after graduating from his seminary studies in Fort Worth, Texas. With parents who served as leaders in the church, and a saintly grandmother who had prayed all her adult life for God to call one of her children into Christian ministry, I was surrounded by folks who had a passion for reaching the entire world with the Gospel of Christ. After making a public commitment to vocational Christian ministry in 1957, missionary service was clearly one of the possible directions available to me. Indeed, God guided my ministry in a very different direction with pastoring churches and teaching the New Testament in seminaries and universities on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. But missions has never been on a "back burner" in my concerns and interest in it has been present through over half a century of service to the Lord.

At the heart of this focus in missions has been the example of the apostle Paul. His missionary travels and work have inspired and challenged me for many, many years. In my formative years, the image of a 'missionary' was highly romanticized and without much understanding of what missionaries actually did "on the mission field." Thankfully that has changed for me over the years with much better understanding. Sadly in today's North American religious scene, missions is not a high priority emphasis, and the number of vocational missionaries serving from the US is slowly declining. But thankfully the trend is the opposite in southern hemisphere Christianity where Christian missions, not only regionally but globally, is thriving and exploding in growth, and the same thing as well as in Asia.

Consequently, the question needs to be raised, "Who is a missionary?" And, "What do missionaries do?" We need some understanding of this both from a modern perspective, with some historical background behind the trends in our world today. But we also need a clear sense of the biblical perspective on missionary service as the scriptural roots of the contemporary practice. Part II of this study will concentrate on the study of the service of the apostle Paul as an early missionary in the cause of the Gospel. Both the primary sources of Paul's own writings and the main secondary source of the Book of Acts by Luke will provide the foundational information.

4.1.0 Missions Overview

If we are to understand Paul's contribution to missionary service, some awareness of what missionary service is becomes necessary. And especially how that is understood in today's world. Sounds easy enough. But when one begins trying to sort through the literature on modern missions immediately a bewildering maze of confusing ideas confronts the reader. What does become clear is that different Christian groups have very different ideas of what constitutes missionary service. And this runs the spectrum of different denominations to the parachurch groups with some sort of missionary thrust in their organization. Doing missions as a Roman Catholic is very different than doing missions as a Baptist. And doing missions even as a Baptist means many different approaches, depending upon which Baptist missions sending agency you look at.

How does one begin to describe such a complex and diverse dynamic?² The modern missions movement

²When one begins searching through existing publications the challenge becomes finding materials done carefully and systematically, Robert L. Plummer notes:

Two broad observations need to be made before we look at particular scholars' views on Paul's missionary expectations of the churches. First, biblical teaching on missions and evangelism has been neglected by the academy. This problem is widely recognized, though few attempts have been made to rectify it.⁶ Due to the lack of serious biblical studies on missionary themes, a missions-related "history of research" is difficult to write. A researcher is often left to piece together another scholar's views on a missionary topic from a smattering of incidental references in his or her writings. Furthermore, while it may be shown that particular scholars have similar views, it is often difficult to show clear lines of dependence between them. Because many scholars judged missionary topics as only peripherally important, they apparently saw little need to document prior opinions on the subject.

A second broad observation is that existing studies devoted exclusively to missionary subjects rarely meet the demands of a rigorous biblical theology. Such works are frequently written by missiologists for their peers and/or more popular audiences. David Bosch insightfully comments,

Even where [missiologists] are sufficiently sophisticated not to use the Bible as a handy reference file of quotations to justify their own group's actions, they do have a tendency to operate with a very large brush. On the one hand, they are inclined to overlook the rich diversity of the biblical record and therefore to reduce the biblical motivation for mission to one single idea or text (for instance, the great commission or, more recently in liberation theology circles, Jesus' appeal to Isaiah in Luke 4); on the other hand, they tend far too easily to read back into the Bible aspects of the missionary enterprise in which they are involved today.⁷

[Robert L. Plummer, *Paul's Understanding of the Church's Mission: Did the Apostle Paul Expect the Early Christian Communities*
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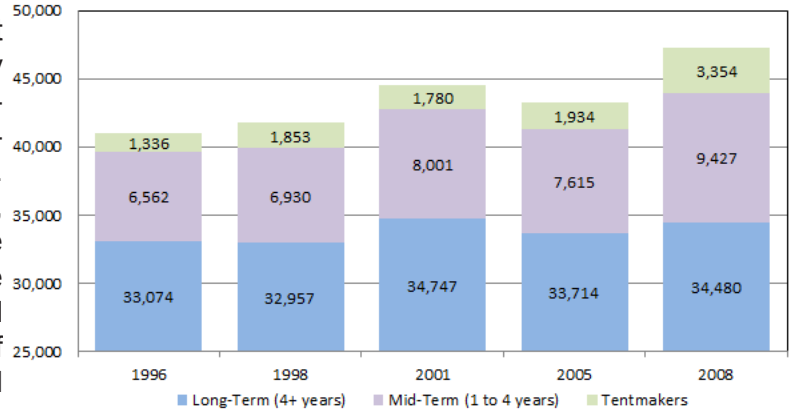
in its beginnings is often identified with the Baptist missionary to India, William Carey who began his service in 1792 through the sponsorship of the newly formed *British Missionary Society*, known today as the *BMS World Mission*. But without question, serious activity had been taking place since the beginning of Christianity to spread this new religion around the world.³ Until the beginning of the modern era of missionary activity most efforts to spread Christianity came through the Roman Catholic Church and the various orders inside the church. From the Protestant Reformation to the beginning of the modern era of missions, the central European Moravian Church played the dominant role of missionary activity as the first large scale missionary effort by a Protestant Christian group.⁴ The distinguishing factor of William Carey, in contrast to the Moravian churches, is the establishment of a missionary sending agency as the spiritual and financial supporter of missionaries serving in other countries. From that time to the present, the work of missionaries has largely depended upon the support base of the missionary in his/her home country.



Thus the missionary movement for the last two hundred plus years has largely operated under the general model of missionaries being sent out (mostly from Europe and North America) by sending agencies in the homeland of the missionary. These agencies may often be para-church organizations such as the China Inland Mission etc. or they are branches of Christian denominations, such as the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. The administrative operation of these agencies is very diverse and largely depends on the missionary philosophy of either the board of directors or the denominational leaders with supervisory roles over the agencies.

Preparatory training requirements, methods of funding the field missionaries, supervision of the missionaries on the field, periodic furlough opportunities -- all these and more differ from group to group. Some missionaries are required to "raise their support" from individuals and churches before leaving for service, while others under denominational based agencies are provided full support from the funds contributed to the denomination by member churches. Arguments pro and con for each of these patterns have been made over the decades. Some sending agencies have very high prerequisites for appointment (e.g., missionaries from the US based Cooperative Baptist Fellowship), while other agencies make few educational, psychological, and experiential requirements on their appointees, so long as they successfully raise the required support finances.

Full-Time On-Location U.S. Workers 1996 to 2008



At the beginning of the current century, the patterns are undergoing profound change.⁵ For one thing,

to Evangelize? (Milton Keynes; Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006), 3-4.]

³For a very detailed time line listing of Christian missions from the beginning to the present see "Timeline of Christian Missions," Wikipedia.org at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Christian_missions.

⁴"The Moravian missionaries were the first large-scale Protestant missionary movement. They sent out the first missionaries when there were only 300 inhabitants in Herrnhut. Within 30 years, the church sent hundreds of Christian missionaries to many parts of the world, including the Caribbean, North and South America (see Christian Munsee), the Arctic, Africa, and the Far East. They were the first to send lay people (rather than clergy) as missionaries, the first Protestant denomination to minister to slaves, and the first Protestant presence in many countries." ["Moravian Church: Missions," Wikipedia.org]

⁵For a comprehensive overview of the history of missions in Christianity, two volumes are especially helpful:

Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions*, vol. 6 of the History of the Church. 2nd ed., ed. by Owen Chadwick. New York: Penguin Books, 1986.

"A History of Christian Missions" traces the expansion of Christianity from its origins in the Middle East to Rome, the rest of Europe and the colonial world, and assesses its position as a major religious force worldwide. Many of the world's religions have not actively sought converts, largely because they have been too regional in character. Buddhism, Islam and Christianity, however, are the three chief exceptions to this, and Christianity in particular has found a home in almost every country in the world. Professor Stephen Neill's comprehensive and authoritative survey examines centuries of missionary activity, beginning with Christ and working through the Crusades and the colonization of Asia and Africa up to the present day, concluding with a shrewd look ahead to what the future may hold for the Christian Church.

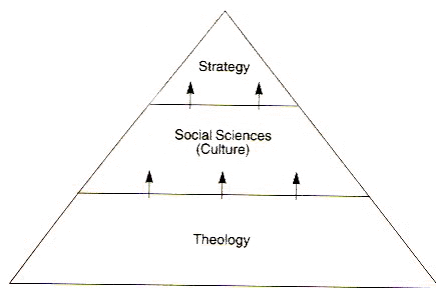
Ruth A. Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing Company, 2004.

This is history at its best. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* is readable, informative, gripping, and above all honest. From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya helps
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even though the number of missionaries sent out from North America remains relatively high, it is not increasing very much, especially in terms of career missionaries. At the same time, missionaries being sent out from so-called 'developing countries,' especially in South America, Africa, and Asia are exploding in numbers to equal or surpass the number of those coming from North America and Europe. With this flux and change comes also alternative patterns of sending, funding, supervising, reporting etc. The so-called "faith missions" method of the previous two centuries is being revamped to become the dominant pattern on the contemporary scene. The emergence of computer technology and the social media networks etc. have opened up massive appeals for direct funding and support of individuals who have little or no accountability to any sending agency or Christian denomination. Developing chaos is beginning to surface in many circles of the Christian effort to spread the Gospel world wide. Yet increased efforts to bring integrity and cohesion into the contemporary mixture are being made as well. The missionary society model, that has been the major anchor point of foreign missions efforts from Europe and North America, are evolving into think tanks, newly structured sending agencies et als. that expend massive efforts at developing and assessing missionary strategy and focus for the coming decades. Increasingly, these efforts are becoming global in nature rather than just western world based. In such a rapidly changing transition period one would expect a certain level of chaos and confusion. And clearly such is the case presently. A bewildering maize of models on 'how to do missions' can be found with just a little bit of probing. And this -- I suspect -- just touches the tip of the iceberg!

The modern pattern of "how to do missions" falls under the contemporary label of 'missiology.' One of the more helpful sources for understanding this concept is the web site *missiology.org* at www.missiology.org. This 'think tank' organization seeks to assist sending agencies with educational materials for planning and implementing individual missionary strategies.

What is missiology? The following provides a helpful summation of the component elements of a missiology:



Missiology is made up of three interdependent areas of study: Theology, the social sciences, and strategy. To facilitate understanding, these disciplines are described separately, even though they are closely related in the actual practice of missions. Picturing the areas of study in tiers implies that some are foundational to others.⁶

At its simplest expression, missiology refers to developing a religious foundation for doing missionary work. Upon this foundation rests the study and analysis of the culture where the projected work is to be done. Culminating this at the top is the development of a strategy on how to implement biblical principles into each cultural setting in order to carry out the plans for evangelizing individuals and planting churches. The philosophy in our world is to carefully work through each of these stages before beginning the missionary work. Constant reassessment of each of the three phases is needed -- especially the second and third levels -- during the time of missionary labors on the field.

readers understand the life and role of a missionary through real life examples of missionaries throughout history. We see these men and women as fallible and human in their failures as well as their successes. These great leaders of missions are presented as real people, and not super-saints. This second edition covers all 2,000 years of mission history with a special emphasis on the modern era, including chapters focused on the Muslim world, Third World missions, and a comparison of missions in Korea and Japan. It also contains both a general and an 'illustration' index where readers can easily locate particular missionaries, stories, or incidents. New design graphics, photographs, and maps help make this a compelling book. *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya* is as informative and intriguing as it is inspiring--an invaluable resource for missionaries, mission agencies, students, and all who are concerned about the spreading of the gospel throughout the world.

For a classic treatment stressing the structural changes in missionary strategy a must read publication is:

David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. vol. 16 in American Society of Missiology Series. 20th anniversary edition. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.

"The most comprehensive and thorough study of the Christian mission done in this generation, if not this century." --Alan Neely. "Unquestionably stands out as the most comprehensive and enlightened work on mission models studies across Christian traditions and mission history." --Louis Luzbetak, SVD. "This is a well-informed and courageous study of the theology of mission and the first to implement paradigm theory for the understanding of mission." --Hans Kung. A new concluding chapter explores the impact and unfolding application of Bosch's seminal vision of an emerging "post-modern" paradigm linking the transcendent and imminent dimension of salvation.

⁶Taken from http://www.missiology.org/?page_id=20, under "The Discipline" home page.

For our purposes, the theological foundation for a missiology is the relevant focus.⁷ The objective is to examine ‘how Paul did it’ and then to draw insights from his example for application to a modern understanding of missions. This will include his ‘theological foundation’ for missions, reflections of his cultural understanding, and signals of the strategy he used.⁸ Some efforts to evaluate samplings of modern missiology in use today against this backdrop will be made at the end of each chapter.

4.1.1 Terms and Concepts

To be quite clear, a modern paradigm such as the one employed by the Missiology.org group possesses limitations for assessing the work of the apostle Paul. At the heart is the enormous gulf between Paul’s world and our world culturally and socially. But it does provide a way of getting into the ancient texts of Acts and the writings of Paul in order to glean insights that can possibly challenge what is being done in today’s world.

4.1.1.1 Missions Terminology

In today’s world, many words relate to this concept of spreading the Gospel globally; included among them are missions, missionary, missiology, missional, church planting, evangelism. Before probing biblical terms, we need some basic understanding of the contemporary terms. Only then can we build possible connecting links between the ‘then’ and ‘now’ of missions. Without both ‘horizons’ clearly in view we have no way of evaluating the merits of what is being attempted in our world under the label of missions.

4.1.1.1.1 Definitions of modern terminology. *What does ‘missions’ mean?* The *Merriam-Webster* online dictionary gives as the religious meaning of the word ‘mission’ the following definitions:⁹

⁷This is the most neglected area of modern analysis:

Too often, however, we take the theological foundation of missions for granted. Paul Hiebert writes,

Too often we choose a few themes and from there build a simplistic theology rather than look at the profound theological motifs that flow throughout the whole of Scripture. Equally disturbing to the foundations of mission is the dangerous potential of shifting from God and his work to the emphasis of what we can do for God by our own knowledge and efforts. We become captive to a modern secular world view in which human control and technique replace divine leading and human obedience as the basis of mission. (Hiebert 1993, 4)

Hesselgrave confirmed the absence of theological foundations in contemporary missiology when he made a thematic content analysis of book reviews and articles published in major mission journals (*Missiology*, *International Review of Missions*, and *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*) between 1973 and 1986. He concluded that the social sciences and history have been given more attention in the study of missiology than has theology (1988, 139-144) and asks, “Of what lasting significance is the evangelical commitment to the authority of the Bible if biblical teachings do not explicitly inform our missiology?” (1988, 142). Without a theological foundation missions quickly becomes merely another human endeavor. [http://www.missiology.org/?page_id=20]

The authors touch on an issue of major importance in the contemporary scene of missionary work. It is easier and less controversial to deal with sociology and strategy than the religious foundation for such work. Yet without a solid biblical basis for missionary work, such efforts will not have eternal impact and will eventually fizzle and die.

⁸A helpful resource on this narrow topic of Paul’s missiology is Plummer, Robert L. *Paul’s Understanding of the Church’s Mission: Did the Apostle Paul Expect the Early Christian Communities to Evangelize?*. Milton Keynes; Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster, 2006. This publication is a revision and updating of Dr. Plummer’s PhD dissertation done at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2001. It stands as one of a very few serious treatments of the methods of the Apostle Paul in preaching the Gospel as a missionary. It is published as a volume in the *Paternoster Biblical Monographs* series by Paternoster, a British evangelical publishing agency in Milton Keynes, UK.

⁹The Spanish equivalent to ‘mission’ is *misión*, which is defined religiously by the online *Spanish Dictionary* as “3. Misión, cierto número de eclesiásticos enviados para instruir a los fieles o convertir a los infieles, y el sitio o paraje donde se establecen.”

The Wikipedia Spanish site describes *misión* as follows:

Las misiones puede referirse a los asentamientos o colonias establecidos por misioneros para evangelizar regiones inhóspitas y a su vez prestarles ayuda humanitaria, como también puede referirse a organizaciones religiosas evangélicas responsables por el envío de misioneros, como es el caso de Operation Mobilization o Youth With A Mission.

La principal misión fue la de los jesuitas en América del Sur (Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay y Brasil). El factor que motivó su desaparición fue la expulsión de los jesuitas. Los franciscanos continuaron con las Misiones de la Baja California y Baja California Sur y se expandieron hacia el Norte o Alta California, actual Estado de California (EE. UU.) y fue la obra conjunta de los virreyes con sus gobernadores, los franciscanos, dominicos y jesuitas, los colonos y los indios. De hecho la cadena de misiones continuaba desde el sur de la Baja California hasta más arriba de San Francisco. También toda la Frontera, desde Arizona a la Florida en los actuales Estados Unidos de América.

The German equivalent to ‘mission’ with a religious meaning, according to *dict.leo.org* is *die Mission* (mission), *die Missionartätigkeit* (missionary activity), *die Missionsgesellschaft* (mission society), or *die Missionstation* (missionary station). The *Wikipedia German* site describes *Mission* as follows:

Der Begriff Mission leitet sich vom lateinischen „missio“ (Sendung) ab und bezeichnet die Verbreitung des christlichen Glaubens (Evan-
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2. a: a ministry commissioned by a religious organization to propagate its faith or carry on humanitarian work; b: assignment to or work in a field of missionary enterprise; c (1): a mission establishment; (2): a local church or parish dependent on a larger religious organization for direction or financial support; **d plural**: organized missionary work; e: a course of sermons and services given to convert the unchurched or quicken Christian faith.

Some distinction is made between the singular form 'mission' and the plural form 'missions.' The most relevant definition to our study provided here is definition 2. d. "organized missionary work."¹⁰ But as a working definition, missions as organized missionary work functions well, along with its counterpart *Misión* in Spanish and *die Mission* in German with the sense of Missionstätigkeit understood.

Next, *what is the meaning of the term 'missionary'?* The English word first appeared in 1625 and is defined by the M-W dictionary as "a person undertaking a mission and especially a religious mission." *Wikipedia.org* adds some 'flesh' to this minimal definition:¹¹

A missionary is a member of a religious group sent into an area to do evangelism or ministries of service, such as education, literacy, social justice, health care and economic development.¹⁻² The word "mission" originates from 1598 when the Jesuits sent members abroad, derived from the Latin *missionem* (nom. *missio*), meaning "act of sending" or *mittere*, meaning "to send".³ The word was used in light of its biblical usage. In the Latin translation of the Bible, Christ uses the word when sending the disciples to preach in his name. The term is most commonly used for Christian missions, but can be used for any creed or ideology.⁴

With these depictions of a missionary, one begins to sense the modern division of missions into a purely religious thrust such as evangelism and/or into a dominantly humanitarian emphasis. One can serve as a 'missionary' by spreading the Gospel or simply by helping people in poverty find a more prosperous life. What emerges out of this current pattern is a wide range of missionary service options. The web site Mission Finder Org, which advertises itself by the slogan "We Help You Find Your Mission," lists some thirty-eight different types of missionary service opportunities.¹² These range all the way from "Academics" to "Water Well, Pumps," and

gelium), meist durch für diese Aufgabe entsandte Missionare („Sendboten“). Die Mission ist meist ausgerichtet auf bestimmte Gebiete oder Zielgruppen und verfolgt in der Regel das Ziel, dass Menschen ganzheitlich, sozial Hilfe erfahren und sie sich durch Bekehrung dem Christentum zuwenden. Die Entsendung und finanzielle Unterstützung der Missionare geschieht durch eine kirchliche Institution, ein überkonfessionelles Missionswerk, eine einzelne christliche Gemeinde oder den persönlichen Freundeskreis der Missionare.

¹⁰Wikipedia.org provides the following description of Mission:

Christian missionary activities often involve sending individuals and groups (called "missionaries"), to foreign countries and to places in their own homeland. This has frequently involved not only evangelization (in order to expand Christianity through the conversion of new members), but also humanitarian work, especially among the poor and disadvantaged. Missionaries have the authority to preach the Christian faith (and sometimes to administer sacraments), and provide humanitarian work to improve economic development, literacy, education, health care, and orphanages. Christian doctrines (such as the "Doctrine of Love" professed by many missions) permit the provision of aid without requiring religious conversion.

An interesting example of the modern evolution of this modern concept of missionary activity is the web site, *Strong Missions.com*, which advertises itself as a complete missions - adventure package:

Costa Rica UVMIM Mission Trips

Youth, College, Adult and Family Mission Trips to Costa Rica

Strong Missions is a turn-key Christian organization that brings you or your group safe, affordable and fully-organized mission/adventure trips to Costa Rica and helps the people therein, especially children and families, gain the basic resources necessary for a healthy life. Strong Missions does so while giving you many choices regarding your team trip, and we're based in Costa Rica, meaning that we live here all year and therefore accept teams and individuals for most dates, and can do so with just a few weeks notice. In addition, from registration to the completion of the trip, your group will have personal contact with your group's individual Spanish/English speaking guides, Charlie Strong, Rebecca Rusnak and Scott Andrews, all United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Individual Volunteers in Costa Rica, or interns trained by them.

¹¹The Spanish equivalent to missionary is misionero, which is described by *Wikipedia Spanish* as:

Un misionero es un cristiano que desea salir de su lugar de residencia con el fin de ayudar al prójimo y evangelizar a la gente de otros sitios. Normalmente eran monjes encargados de adentrarse en territorios fuera del control de su religión y fundar asentamientos denominados misiones. Hoy en día se trata tanto de religiosos como de laicos, que realizan una verdadera labor de ayuda social hacia los más pobres.

In German the word is Missionar, and is described by *Wikipedia German* as:

Ein Missionar (aus dem Lateinischen für Gesandter) ist ein Angehöriger einer Religion, der oft in einem fremden Land, seinen Glauben verbreiten will oder, im Auftrag einer Missionsgesellschaft, religiös motiviert soziale Arbeit leistet. Mit dem Begriff sind im europäisch geprägten Kulturkreis vor allem christliche Missionare gemeint, während die anderen missionierenden Religionen ihre eigenen Bezeichnungen für diese Personengruppe haben.

¹²One of the controversies in the decade long "SBC Controversy" in the 1980s was the criticism that the "Foreign Mission Board" was appointing too many missionaries to service options not directly related to evangelism and church planting. Once the fundamentalist segment cemented their control over the SBC in the 1990s, the foreign mission board was directed to re-structure its work so that all missionary appointees, especially career missionaries, had to be 'field evangelists' with a focus on church planting, even though their training might have prepared them for other types of service. A minimum amount of their time had to be re-directed toward church planting. Many chose to resign their appointments with the SBC rather than conform to the new policies. The signaling of this shift came in

quite interestingly include options like “Automotive Repairs,” “Chefs/Culinary/Restaurants,” and “Dance.” And these just touch the tip of the iceberg in specifying missionary service options that actually exist in the broader scope of Protestant Christianity. Added to this range of service options is the duration of one’s missionary activity. Usually a distinction is made between a “Short-term Missionary” and a “Career Missionary.”¹³ Consequently, in today’s world a missionary can be an individual doing one of a wide range of activities, and serving either for a few weeks or over a life time. What makes one a missionary is where this service is rendered. Usually it is in a country other than his or her homeland, or, sometimes in another part of the individual’s home country from the region or town he or she calls home.

Currently the term missionary can be applied to almost any activity ‘done in the name of Christ’ away from one’s hometown. It no longer implies just the goal of converting people to Christianity, or, of establishing new churches.

Yet, in the modern missions movement since William Carey in the late 1700s, missionaries have never labored in foreign countries solely with the religious goals of conversion or church planting. When Carey first arrived in India in 1793, he spent the first six years managing an indigo factory in order to supplement his meager income from the British Missionary Society back home. During that time he learned the Bengali language, translated the New Testament into Bengali and developed his plans for forming his missionary community as the launch pad for his work. When other missionaries from the BMS arrived in 1800, the group purchased a large home in Serampore to accommodate all their families along with a school, which became the principle means of their financial support. It wasn’t until Carey had been in India for several years that he saw his first convert to Christianity. Out of the school came Christian training, a publishing agency, and a church that helped spread the Christian faith in the region. Carey was also a botanist and contributed greatly to the horticultural work in India. The last years prior to his death in 1834 were spent teaching and writing as a faculty member at Serampore College that he helped establish in 1818. The scope of his missionary activities helped set a standard for missionary work over the past two hundred years.

What is the meaning of the term missiology? Although we touched on this at the beginning of the chapter, some further treatment is merited here. The *Merriam-Webster* online dictionary gives the following definition: “the study of the church’s mission especially with respect to missionary activity.” Since the word first appeared in English in 1924, its usage is not extensive, especially in other western languages.¹⁴ Missiology, then, tends to center in the

the name change from “Foreign Mission Board” to “International Mission Board.” This aspect was largely overlooked in the shadow of the more public controversy concerning the requirement of existing missionaries to sign the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement that discriminated again women in ministry among other controversial aspects.

This focus now is embedded into the IMB definition of a career missionary:

Career missionaries are the foundation of our mission efforts. *They invest a lifetime in cross-cultural evangelism, church development, and church planting movements.* They are gifted at using their professional, vocational, technical, and ministerial skills to share the gospel and lead the lost to Christ, which is our primary goal and purpose. All new missionaries begin by serving a 36-month apprentice term. Successfully completing the apprentice term leads to career service. [<http://going.imb.org/3yrsormore/career.asp>]

¹³For example, the *International Mission Board* of the Southern Baptist Convention lists four options under “Ways You Can Serve” for doing missionary service: “2 to 3 Years,” “3 Years or More,” “volunteer,” or “Students.” These are further divided out. In the “2 to 3 Years” category there are ISC [International Service Corps] (singles, couples, & young families 21+ yrs), Journeyman (singles/couples w/o children 21-26 years), and Masters (50 yrs +) categories.

¹⁴Wikipedia.org provides some detailed description in its article, “Missiology,” wikipedia.org. Especially helpful is a list (with some hyperlinks) of prominent missiologists who have specialized in this academic field and have written extensively regarding missiology.

An intensive search for a Spanish equivalent word suggests that such a word or concept does not exist in the Spanish language. In German the equivalent word is *die Missionswissenschaft* (=science of missions). Wikipedia German provides a brief but helpful depiction of Missionswissenschaft in the German tradition:

Die Missionswissenschaft (Missiologie) ist ein Teilgebiet der praktischen Theologie. Sie beschäftigt sich mit der systematischen Erforschung der Geschichte und Praxis der christlichen Mission. Sie umfasst die Bereiche Missionsgeschichte und Missionslehre. Als eigenständige theologische Disziplin wurde die Missionswissenschaft im evangelischen Raum durch Gustav Warneck und im katholischen Bereich von Joseph Schmidlin etabliert.

What becomes clear is that the subject of missiology is dominantly an English speaking topic of study and discussion. The European discussion tends to get caught up in the linkage of nineteenth century missionary efforts with western colonialism, as is noted in an article presented in 1997. Also missionary activity historically was linked to ecumenical emphases; this is often a major focus of the European discussion. But advancements are being made with increasing study of the contemporary scene of missiology as well in European studies:

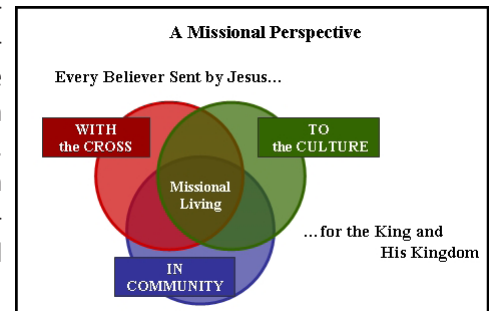
Der Begriff Mission führt deutlich Probleme im Schlepptau, die der Disziplin zu schaffen machen. Hierzu gehört etwa, daß die von Europa ausgehende Ausbreitung des christlichen Glaubens in den vergangenen Jahrhunderten stark in den Sog kolonialen Expansionismus und Imperialismus geriet. Mit dem Zusammenbruch der politisch-kulturellen Vormachtsansprüche Europas im

academic side on the analysis of missionary activity with intensive focus on methods and philosophy. One finds this emphasis primarily in the centers of world missions mostly connected to universities or seminaries in North America and Europe.¹⁵

What does the more recent term “missional” mean? Grammatically the word is an adjective in English.¹⁶ An article in Christianity Today’s *Leadership Journal* from 2008 provides a very helpful treatment of the contemporary use of the term ‘missional.’¹⁷

First, let me say what missional does not mean. Missional is not synonymous with emerging. The emerging church is primarily a renewal movement attempting to contextualize Christianity for a post-modern generation. Missional is also not the same as evangelistic or seeker-sensitive. These terms generally apply to the attractional model of church that has dominated our understanding for many years. Missional is not a new way to talk about church growth. Although God clearly desires the church to grow numerically, it is only one part of the larger missional agenda. Finally, missional is more than social justice. Engaging the poor and correcting inequalities is part of being God’s agent in the world, but we should not confuse this with the whole.

A proper understanding of missional begins with recovering a missionary understanding of God. By his very nature God is a “sent one” who takes the initiative to redeem his creation. This doctrine, known as *missio Dei* — the sending of God — is causing many to redefine their understanding of the church. Because we are the “sent” people of God, the church is the instrument of God’s mission in the world. As things stand, many people see it the other way around. They believe mission is an instrument of the church; a means by which the church is grown. Although we frequently say “the church has a mission,” according to missional theology a more correct statement would be “the mission has a church.”



Rahmen weltweiter Entkolonisierungsprozesse mußte deshalb auch der traditionelle Missionsgedanke in die Krise kommen. Nicht übersehen werden sollte auch, daß der säkulare und mehrheitlich wohl auch der religiöse Zeitgeist heute nicht mehr nur einer zänkischen Rechthaberei unter den Konfessionen, sondern auch einem rivalisierenden Wettstreit zwischen den Religionen mit Unverständnis gegenübersteht.

[D. Becker, “Fachvorstellung Missionstheologie und Religionswissenschaft,” in: J. Dittmer (Hg.), *Theologie auf dem Campus*. 50 Jahre Augustana-Hochschule, Neuendettelsau 1997, S. 210-217.]

A very helpful discussion of the broad scope of missiology or Missionswissenschaft is found in the article, “Mission im Zeitalter der Globalisierung” by Klaus Schäfer in 2001 published by the Evangelisches Missionswerk in Deutschland.

The report, “Encounter beyond routine,” from the International Africa Consultation at the Academy of Mission at the University of Hamburg in Hamburg Germany, January 17-23, 2011, is quite helpful for insights into the rapid growth of some aspects of Christianity in Africa. The contention is made that every day about 22,000 Africans make a commitment to Christ in relation to some organized Christian group related to Pentecostalism. A major focus of this meeting in 2011 was on Pentecostalism in Africa, thus limiting the scope of the report and the meeting.

¹⁵Some of these centers include the *Oxford Centre for Mission Studies* (UK: OCMS), the *Henry Martyn Centre for Understanding Mission and World Christianity* (Westminster College, Cambridge University, UK), *Center for the Study of Global Christianity* at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (US, South Hamilton, MA), die *Missionsakademie an der Universität Hamburg* (Germany), the *School of Intercultural Studies* at Fuller Theological Seminary (US, Pasadena, CA), the *World Missions Center* at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (US, Fort Worth, TX) et als. These centers are usually a part of a global organization, like the *International Association for Mission Studies*, which promotes the academic study of missions through conferences and publications. These centers are a part of an academic institution which provides degree programs for students desiring training for missionary service.

These centers are distinct from another newly emerging pattern, a ‘think tank’ center for promoting global missions that provides opportunity for existing missionaries, and others to study mission strategy. One of the pioneering centers of this kind is the *U.S. Center for World Mission*, founded in 1976 by Ralph Winter in Pasadena CA. Newer centers along these lines include the *World Mission Centre* in Pretoria, South Africa, the *Canadian Centre for World Mission* in Stouffville, ON, among the reported forty such centers that have been established over the past few of decades, according to Darrell Dorr, in “Centers for World Mission: Echos from Singaport 1988.” Some of these centers provide missionary training but not as a part of a higher education degree program.

To be added to these centers are the missionary training programs of various Christian denominations that are distinct from their universities and seminaries. With over 5,000 foreign missionaries under appointment, one of the largest such programs is the one operated by the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention at Richmond, VA.

¹⁶“The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines missional as ‘relating to or connected with a religious mission; missionary.’ In contemporary use ‘missional’ is an alternative for the adjective ‘missionary.’” [“Missional living, Wikipedia.org]. Interestingly, the English word ‘missional’ does not appear in the current version of the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary*. The adjective forms of the noun mission are given as ‘mission’ (1904 first use) and ‘missionary’ (1644 first use).

¹⁷Alan Hirsch, “Defining Missional,” *Leadership Journal*, fall 2008 at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/fall/17.20.html>.

A somewhat different perspective is seen in Van Sanders' description:¹⁸

Missional then, no matter what noun it is modifying, must qualify the meaning of that noun by referencing God's mission as defined by Scripture. More specifically, missional limits any noun that it modifies to the temporary mission task of the Church to make disciples of all *ta ethne* for God's glory and worship ... Therefore, a local church is missional when it intentionally pursues God's mission for His glory among all peoples by following His patterns and His ways of expanding His kingdom.

It has been represented graphically in the following way. The adjective 'missional' should be understood to imply not just a missionary way of thinking. Rather, the concept is broader and more inclusive. And thus it should include a perspective of a divine way of viewing God's creation and humanity in need of restored relationship with Him. Included in this is how God has established the restored relationship through the redemptive work of Christ, and the responsibility of His people who enjoy this restored relationship to spread the news of the possibility of this restored relationship through the Gospel. As such the term extends beyond the traditional boundaries of 'missionary' activities targeting people located in different geographical areas to that of the home base of the missionary.

*What does the phrase 'church planting' mean?*¹⁹ *And how is it similar to or different from the term 'evangelism'?* Church planting is defined as:

Church planting is a process that results in a new (local) Christian church being established. It should be distinguished from church development, where a new service, new worship centre or fresh expression is created that is integrated into an already established congregation. For a local church to be planted, it must eventually have a separate life of its own and be able to function without its parent body, even if it continues to stay in relationship denominationally or through being part of a network.²⁰

Church planting as a strategy for establishing new churches has continuously evolved over the past century or so, especially since the original publication of Roland Allen's influential book, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* in 1912. David Fitch, a missions professor and pastor,²¹ has attracted considerable attention with his recent publication, *The End of Evangelicalism*, where he calls on denominations to shift church planting models from funding a church planting missionary for three years to establish a new congregation to partial funding of a team of three or four leader couples for ten years, who are bi-vocational, to establish themselves in a location with the long-term goal of establishing a Christian community appropriate to the individual situation, whether Bible study groups, a new church etc. Most likely a self-sustaining new congregation will emerge out of such a ten year commitment from the leadership team. But this is only one of many emerging models that various individuals and groups are experimenting with in different locations around the world. How deep are the biblical roots

¹⁸Van Sanders, "The Mission of God and the Local Church," in *Pursuing the Mission of God in Church Planting*, ed. John M. Bailey, Alpharetta: North American Mission Board, 2006, 25.

¹⁹In today's terminology, a distinction is made between 'church planting' and 'church planting movement.' The latter is defined as: "A Church Planting Movement is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment." ["What Are Church Planting Movements?"] churchplantingmovements.com]. Another definition comes from the IMB of the SBC: "Church Planting Movement (CPM) is a rapid and multiplicative increase of indigenous churches planting churches within a given people group or population segment." ["Church Planting Movements," imb.org]

The fundamental difference in meaning is that 'church planting' describes a strategy for establishing new churches, while 'church planting movement' refers to a historical movement where a rapidly growing number of churches is established indigenously. "In a CPM, indigenous churches plant more churches within a people group or geographic area. A church will sponsor formation of multiple spin-off churches that will themselves very quickly reproduce new churches, generally with common teachings and doctrine. It is different from traditional missions in that the new churches are generally started by a lay leader from the sponsoring church and not an outside missionary. A key characteristic of an authentic church planting movement is the rapidity with which a new congregation itself starts another similar church." ["Church planting," Wikipedia.org.]

For 'church planting' try this definition: "Church planting is the establishing of an organized body of believers in a new location. The process of planting a church involves evangelism, the discipleship of new believers, the training of church leaders, and the organization of the church according to the New Testament model. Usually the process also includes writing a church charter and/or doctrinal statement and finding a place to meet or buying property and erecting a new building." ["What is church planting?"] gotquestions.org]

²⁰"Church planting," Wikipedia.org. A wide array of web sites devoted to church planting are now available from differing perspectives on this subject: *ChurchPlanting.org*; *ChurchPlantingMovements.com*; *ChurchPlantingVillage.net*; *Acts29network.org*; *Dynamic Church Planting International* at *dcpi.org*; *NewChurches.com*; *Church Planting Leadership* at *churchplanting.net*; *churchmultiplication.net*; *newfrontiersplanting.org*; *Church Planting Solutions* at *churchplanting4me.com*; *e4network.org*; *Baptist Church Planting Ministry* at *bcpm.org* (US Independent Baptist based); *ChurchPlantingInternational.com*; *UrbanExpression.org.uk*;

²¹See "About David Fitch," *Reclaiming the Mission* at *reclaimingthemission.com* for details about his spiritual journey and experience in the field of church planting in connection to the *Northern [Baptist] Seminary* in Chicago and the Christian & Missionary Alliance denomination.

of such approaches remains one of the ongoing questions and often criticisms of many of these efforts.

The relationship of ‘church planting’ and ‘evangelism’ is somewhat controversial among missiologists today. Essentially the tension exists between determining whether evangelism is one aspect of church planting (“reaching people to establish churches”), or whether church planting is one aspect of evangelism (“reaching people through establishing churches”).²²

With the English word ‘evangelism’ one needs to clearly distinguish between ‘evangelism’ as a strategy for presenting the Gospel to those without Christ, and ‘evangelization’ which refers to the communication of the Christian faith to new geographical areas and cultures.²³ Additionally, a clear distinction between ‘evangelism’ and ‘proselytism’ needs to be drawn. At some levels of meaning the two terms are close in meaning, with ‘proselytism’ viewing efforts to convert others negatively.²⁴ But a real distinction between the two terms is possible, as is reflected below:

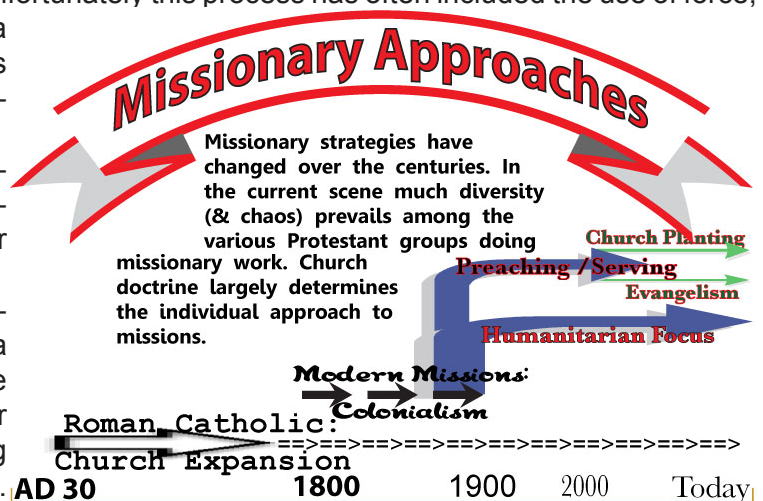
While evangelism is usually regarded as converting non-Christians to Christianity, this is not always the proper usage of the word. If converting to Christianity includes services or material benefits it is called proselytism.²⁵

A non-technical distinction between the two terms in light of the above would be that evangelism leads to conversion while proselytism leads to changing opinions and group identification.

Another important distinction is between ‘evangelism’ and ‘Christianization.’ While the two terms can be close in meaning, the latter refers more to the process in transforming a culture so that it adopts Christian values and practices.²⁶ In the history of Christian missions, unfortunately this process has often included the use of force, usually military, to bring about the transformation of a culture. The term in today’s usage frequently stresses a history of this process of establishing Christian values by various church groups.

What has hopefully become clear through exploring this jungle of terminology is that we live currently in a rather chaotic situation regarding the matter of Christian missionary work.

I can remember considering missionary service in the mid 1960s when the idea of serving as a missionary was relatively clear and well defined. One made a commitment to missionary service in his/her church, and then applied to the missionary sending agency of the denomination the church belonged to.



²²See “Evangelism and Church Planting,” *Church Planting Village.net* for a discussion of these two terms. For a different view, see “Church Planting is the Result of Effective Evangelism,” Effective Evangelism Training.org.

²³“Evangelism refers to the practice of relaying information about a particular set of beliefs to others who do not hold those beliefs. The term is often used in reference to Christianity. Christians who specialize in evangelism are known as evangelists whether they are in their home communities or living as missionaries in the field. Some Christian traditions consider evangelists to be in a leadership position; they may be found preaching to large meetings or in governance roles. Christian groups who actively encourage evangelism are sometimes known as evangelistic or evangelist. The scriptures do not use the word evangelism, but evangelist is used in Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11, and 2 Timothy 4:5. The communication of Christian faith to new geographical areas and cultures is often referred to as evangelization, or specifically, world evangelization.” [“Evangelism,” Wikipedia.org]

²⁴“Proselytizing is the act of attempting to convert people to another opinion and, particularly, another religion. The word proselytize is derived ultimately from the Greek language prefix προς- (toward) and the verb ἔρχομαι (to come) in the form of προσήλυτος (a new comer).[1] Historically in the Koine Greek Septuagint and New Testament, the word proselyte denoted a gentile who was considering conversion to Judaism. Though the word proselytism originally referred to Early Christianity (and earlier Gentiles), it also refers to other religions’ attempts to convert people to their beliefs or even any attempt to convert people to another point of view, religious or not. Today, the connotations of proselytizing are often negative and the word is commonly used to describe attempts to force people to convert; however, this article will be using it in the more neutral meaning of attempting to convert.” [“Proselytism,” Wikipedia.org]

²⁵Cf. “Evangelism: Proselytism,” Wikipedia.org.

²⁶ “The historical phenomenon of Christianization (or Christianisation) is the conversion of individuals to Christianity or the conversion of entire peoples at once. It also includes the practice of converting native pagan practices and culture, pagan religious imagery, pagan sites and the pagan calendar to Christian uses, due to the Christian efforts at proselytism (evangelism) based on the tradition of the Great Commission. Various strategies and techniques employed in Christianization campaigns from Late Antiquity through the Middle Ages: Ancient holy sites were destroyed or converted to Christian churches, indigenous pagan gods were demonized, and traditional religious practices were condemned as witchcraft and even criminalized — sometimes upon penalty of death” [“Christianization,” Wikipedia.org]

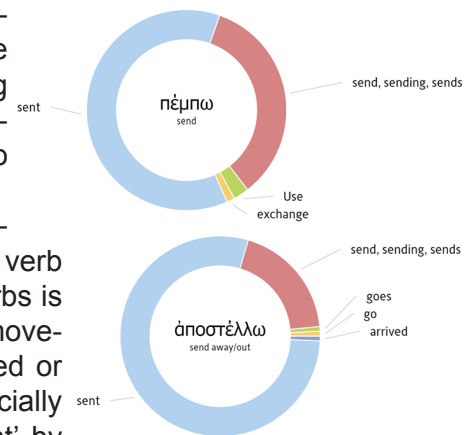
After meeting the agency's set of qualifications, an appointment to missionary service was given jointly by the mission board and the local congregation in a commissioning service. A part of this appointment process was the determination of the location of service somewhere in the world, along with the determination of the exact nature of this service as a field evangelist, educator, missionary doctor etc. After appropriate orientation to missionary service, the individual was then sent to the designated field to first learn the language and culture of the people he/she would be serving. Usually after a two year training period on the field, then assignment to a specific missionary place of service launched a life long career of ministry as a missionary.

This model hardly exists in today's world, some forty plus years later. Adaptations of it can still be found among some denominational groups, but these are declining and themselves undergoing radical change. Short term missionary service verses career missionary service are options. Serving in humanitarian ministries, often over against, Gospel preaching ministries of evangelization and church planting are options. Most now have to raise most, if not all, of their financial support from their home base before going to the field of service -- as opposed to complete financial support from the missions agency of their denomination. And this profile is largely North American. Elsewhere in the world, especially within the church planting movements outside the United States, the picture is often very different in terms of the employed strategy for doing missionary work.

One of the consequences of this confusing picture is to push forward the question, How did they do it in the New Testament? And can we learn important insights from scripture about missionary activity in today's world?

4.1.1.1.2 Definitions of biblical terms. When one searches the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament not many words come to the surface. The concept of missions is clearly present, but specialized vocabulary depicting aspects of missionary activity are not plentiful. The words centered in 'sending' and communicating the Gospel are those that relate in some manner to the idea of missions.

The idea of 'sending' or 'being sent' is communicated in the New Testament either by the verb ἀποστέλλω (135 NT uses²⁷) or by the alternative verb πέμπω (80 NT uses²⁸).²⁹ Linguistically, the core concept of both sets of verbs is movement from point A to point B, but these verbs usually emphasize the movement away from point A because of a superior authority having authorized or commanded such movement, as is illustrated in the charts to the right especially with the passive voice sense of 'sent'.³⁰ This sense of having been 'sent' by someone is always present in both these sets of Greek verbs. What establishes the distinctly religious meaning related to 'missionary' activity is often signaled by the designated object or adverbial modifiers of these verbs defining the purpose of the sending, as well as God being the 'subject' of the sending action, i.e., the sender. The tendency in the New Testament is to favor ἀποστέλλω over πέμπω because in secular Koine Greek the widely established formula ἀπεσταλμένοι ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως (sent by the king) easily



²⁷And also note the compound derivative verbs ἐξαποστέλλω (I send out) and συναποστέλλω (I send with).

²⁸Compound forms of πέμπω in the NT include ἐκπέμπω (I send out w. a purpose in mind), συμπέμπω (I send with), ἀναπέμπω (I send back or I send up, on), προπέμπω (I send someone on their way), μεταπέμπομαι (I send someone to get something).

A sprinkling of alternative verbs can overlap here in meaning. These include ἀπολύω (w. the mng. I send away) and ἐκβάλλω (w. the mng. I send away or I drive out).

²⁹In the NT, ἀποστέλλειν occurs some 135 times. The distribution is such that outside the Gospels and Acts it is found only 12 times, 3 times in 1 Jn., 3 in Rev., 3 in Paul (R. 10:15; 1 C. 1:17; 2 C. 12:17), or 4 if we include 2 Tm. 4:12, once in Hb. 1:14 and once in 1 Pt. 1:12. In the Gospels and Acts the occurrence is more or less even in relation to the scope of the individual writings, and the word is obviously an acknowledged part of the vocabulary. Of the compounds, apart from → ἐξαποστέλλειν we find only συναποστέλλειν in 2 C. 12:18. Alongside ἀποστέλλειν, πέμπειν occurs some 80 times. Of these 33 are in the Fourth Gospel and 5 in Rev. There are 10 occurrences in Lk. and 12 in Ac., while only 4 in Mt. and 1 in Mk. (5:12), the form in Mt. being always πέμψας with the following fin. verb. In contrast with ἀποστέλλειν the distribution is thus most uneven in the historical books." [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:403.]

³⁰For a very helpful presentation of the semantic domains involved here see topics 15:34-15:74 in Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*. electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. New York: United Bible Societies, 1996. Some forty plus Greek verbs in the NT convey the idea of movement away from a point A, each with different shades of meaning. The number of verbs conveying the idea of movement generally is presented by Louw-Nida in topic 15 and includes over 250 verbs in the Greek NT. But this number doesn't begin to encompass a large percentage of the possible verbs in Koine Greek verbs with the idea of movement that were in use during the first Christian century.

lent itself to the idea of a divine commissioning to go preach the Gospel.³¹ πέμπω can suggest divine authorization for a mission, but just as easily can designate human agency in the sending action. Additionally ἀποστέλλω is favored by the LXX translators for the Hebrew נָשָׂא, especially in regard to the prophets, largely because of the background idea of divine commissioning associated with the Greek verb. The model of divine commissioning of the prophets clearly stands in the background of the early Christian understanding of divine commissioning to preach God's message to all the nations.

The noun ἀπόστολος from the verb ἀποστέλλω always carries with it this sense of commissioning or authorization, normally by God. Here the secular Greek background usage did not play an important role for the NT writers, since the noun was primarily a political, commercial, military, or sea faring term.³² The background religious history of the Greek προφήται in the pagan temples did not contain the idea of a divine commissioning, but instead focused on the communication of a message by the prophet that had been mediated to him or her from the gods through intermediaries.³³ The one exception to this was in Cynic-Stoic philosophy where the

³¹“Already the formula ἀπεσταλμένοι ὑπὸ τοῦ βασιλέως links with the thought of sending the further thought of the associated authorisation of the one sent. The men thus described are representatives of their monarch and his authority.⁵ Yet the use of ἀποστέλλειν in this sense is not in any way restricted to the legal sphere. On the contrary, it takes on its full sense when used, if we may put it thus, to express the impartation of full religious and ethical power. This takes place in the diatribe of the Cynics and Stoics,⁶ though in this respect it is simply following a common usage of philosophical religion.⁷ The Cynic knows himself to be an ἄγγελος καὶ κατάσκοπος καὶ κήρυξ τῶν θεῶν (Epict. Diss., III, 22, 69), not because he is ordained such by himself or his pupils, but because he is certain that he is one who is divinely sent, an ἀποσταλείς, like Diogenes (I, 24, 6). Epictetus can lay it down as a rule (II, 22, 23: τὸν ταῖς ἀληθείαις Κυνικὸν ... εἰδέναι δεῖ, ὅτι ἄγγελος ἀπὸ τοῦ Διὸς ἀπέσταλται ...) that the ultimate presupposition for genuine Cynicism is awareness of being divinely sent. In all these cases⁸ ἀποστέλλειν is a technical term for divine authorisation, whereas πέμπειν is used when it is a matter of the charging of the Cynic with a specific task on human initiative⁹ (I, 24, 3: καὶ νῦν ἡμεῖς γε εἰς τὴν Ἰώμην κατάσκοπον πέμπομεν. οὐδεὶς δὲ δεῖλὸν κατάσκοπον πέμπει ...; ibid., I, 24, 5).¹⁰ Even linguistically, however, it is another matter, and goes beyond the awareness of mission expressed by ἀποστέλλεσθαι, when Epictetus alleges as the only authority, even in face of the emperor and his representative, the καταπεπομφῶς αὐτὸν καὶ ᾧ λατρεῖται, ὁ Ζεὺς (III, 22, 56, cf. 59). This brings us close to a view which represents the divinity of the true philosopher and which is first emphatically proclaimed by the Cynics (θεῖος ἄνθρωπος) in adoption of a thought of Antisthenes.¹¹” [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:399.]

But one should not assume that ἀποστέλλω as ‘sent’ always implies divine commissioning. The NT is clear at this point as numerous human senders are specified with the verb: Herod in Matt. 2:16, the general population in Matt. 14:35, the Pharisees in Matt. 22:16, Herod’s wife in Matt. 27:19, Jesus’ mother and brothers in Mk. 3:31 et als. But being sent by God is the dominant usage of ἀποστέλλω in the NT.

³²“Only occasionally in the Gk. field does ἀπόστολος have a meaning related or apparently related to that which it bears in the NT. For the most part the similarity is only external. The background of usage is basically different in the two cases. In the older period ἀπόστολος is one of the special terms bound up with sea-faring, and more particularly with military expeditions; it is almost a technical political term in this sense. Originally it was an adj., as shown by Plat. Ep., VII, 346a (ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πλοίοις πλεῖν). It was often combined with πλοῖον to mean a freighter or transport ship, though sometimes it could be used as a noun, i.e., without πλοῖον, for the same purpose (τὸ ἀπόστολον, Ps. Hdt. Vit. Hom., 19). . . .

“How far normal usage differed from that of the NT in the first Christian period and the time of the Early Church is shown by the papyri.⁸ Here we find it in the technical sense of an accompanying bill or invoice, e.g., for shipments of corn (P. Oxy., IX, 1197, 13 etc.),⁹ as also in the sense of a passport (BGU, V, 64; cf. VI, 1303, 26). These senses go rather beyond those mentioned above, yet do not refute kinship with them. They rather develop more consistently the abstraction from the personal already noted, so that we might almost speak of a complete mechanisation of the term. It is not irrelevant that even in this final stage of its history we can still see evidence of the background in maritime commerce from which the word derives or by which it is originally characterised.”

[Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:407-408.]

³³“The earlier period has no parallel to the NT apostle. The Greek προφήται are proclaimers of a truth, and in so far as they belong to a sanctuary they are thus mouthpieces for the deity which they serve.¹⁰ This is true of the Pythian, who is simply an intermediary between the deity and the believer who is anxious for knowledge.¹¹ The very fact that she is anonymous and timeless shows that no independent significance is attached to her. The whole problem of the authorisation of the intermediary remains in the background. This is self-explanatory, however, in view of her role, even when the mediation is accomplished through one of the messenger-gods, as is usually the case in post-Christian Hellenism (→ 75). The words → ἄγγελος and → κήρυξ, which usually occur along with πρέσβυς, πρεσβευτής etc. in this connection (cf. 1 Tm. 2:7; 2 Tm. 1:11), are a purely external expression of the fact that what is at issue is not a commission which must always be linked with a person, but the message which mediates fellowship as such, and in relation to which the bearer has only the significance of a supernumerary. This fact has its ultimate basis in the close relationship which Greek religion, so far as it is concerned with human intermediaries, sees between the divine office of the messenger and inspiration.¹² This also explains why it is that in the religious messenger of Hellenism there is no development of an awareness of mission or of a claim to full personal authority but there necessarily results a surrender of one’s own consciousness and personality to the deity.” [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:408-09.]

philosopher Epictetus portrays the ideal Cynic as aware of having been sent by Zeus to deliver his message.³⁴ But here the dominant terms are *κατάσκοπος* (*inspector*), *ἄγγελος* (*messenger*), and *κῆρυξ* (*herald*). The divine authorization of the gods was mainly seen in the term *κατάσκοπος* that designated their authority to inspect the lives of the people and to propose solutions to assessed problems in line with the Cynic or Stoic philosophy. It is thus only a superficial similarity that was outwardly visible to the non-Christian audiences when Paul and the other missionaries preached the Gospel message in the market places and public gathering spots in their travels, for example at Athens in Acts. 17:16-34. To such audiences these men seemed to be traveling philosophers advocating their particular brand of philosophy.³⁵

Thus the question arises about why the noun *ἀπόστολος* became so important in early Christian understanding. In Hellenistic Judaism this word is rarely found; not at all in Philo, only twice in Josephus, and only once in the Septuagint text.³⁶ Not until one gets to the beginning Christian century does the connection between the *מַיְהוּבֵי* and *ἀπόστολος* become traceable as denoting a messenger commissioned by God, but the Greek word does not gain much entry into Jewish writings in Greek simply because of its dominant Christian associations by this point in time. The parallels, however, between the rabbinic *מַיְהוּבֵי* and the Christian *ἀπόστολος* do become notable.³⁷ But during the first Christian century Jewish missionaries, who were numerous at that time, are never called *מַיְהוּבֵי*. This largely because their activity was not officially sanctioned by established religious authorities.³⁸ Although the Jewish rabbis will often speak of Moses, Elijah, Elisha, and Ezekiel as *מַיְהוּבֵי* of God, they never so label the Jewish missionaries nor do they speak of the prophets as such as a group.

But in the New Testament the noun *ἀπόστολος* shows up some 79 plus times as a very important concept. Without antecedent usage either in secular Greek or Judaism prior to the New Testament, the question of origins



³⁴“An exception is to be found to some degree in the representatives of Cynic-Stoic philosophy in so far as Epictetus¹³ describes for us the reality and not merely the ideal of the true Cynic. For here we have a strong consciousness of mission and a related self-consciousness. The Cynic realises that he is “sent by Zeus,” and Epictetus can even say that it is only this awareness of divine sending that makes the *ταῖς ἀληθείαις Κυνικόν* (Diss., III, 22, 23).¹⁴ To be sure, → *ἄγγελος* and → *κῆρυξ* are here, too, the words used to describe this mission as regards its content (→ 399); but in addition, quite apart from the important part played by → *ἀποστέλλειν* as a technical term for commissioning and authorising by the deity,¹⁵ there emerges as a third function that of the *κατάσκοπος τῶν θεῶν*.¹⁶ As such he has to investigate (*κατασκέπτεσθαι*) quite exactly (*ἀκριβῶς*, III, 22, 25), and therefore as a true *κατάσκοπος* (I, 24, 3), how matters stand with men, and then *ἀπαγγεῖλαι τάληθῆ* to them (III, 22, 25), as none has done but Diogenes, the first *κατάσκοπος* and the great example of the Cynic (I, 24, 6; III, 22, 24).¹⁷ The Cynic thus observes men and seeks to fix on the points in their lives at which he can help as a “doctor of the soul, moral support and deliverer.”¹⁸ In so far as he does this, he becomes the *ἐπισκοπῶν*,¹⁹ so that Epictetus can call true Cynics the *ἐπισκοποῦντες πάντας κατὰ δύναμιν ἀνθρώπους, τί ποιούσιν, πῶς διάγουσιν, τίνος ἐπιμελοῦνται, τίνος ἀμελοῦσι παρὰ* V I, p 410 *τὸ προσήκον* (III, 22, 77).²⁰ The Cynic brings help as the *κῆρυξ τῶν θεῶν*,²¹ in his *κηρύσσειν*, however, he shows himself to be *ἐπισκοπῶν*, which can only have meaning if he is truly a *κατάσκοπος*.” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:409-10.]

³⁵One should note that the religious emphasis of the Christian preachers would not have led the audiences to distinguish these preachers from the philosophers, since most every ancient philosophy had a fundamental religious component.

³⁶“The LXX⁴⁴ has the word only at 3 Βασ. 14:6 in the passage 14:1–20 which is missing in the Vaticanus⁴⁵ and which is thus usually given according to the Alexandrinus: *ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀπόστολος πρὸς σε σκληρός*. These are the words of the prophet Ahijah to the wife of king Jeroboam when she comes to ask concerning the fate of her sick son. The Hebr. original is: *הַשִּׁבְעָה הַלְלוּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ*. It should be noted first that *ἀπόστολος* is the rendering of *הַלְלוּ*, which is obviously taken as a noun, though it is really a pass. part.,⁴⁶ for only on this assumption is the translation *ἀπόστολος* ... *σκληρός* possible. *ἀπόστολος* thus attains an individual character in this passage. It makes no difference that in the *ἀπόστολος πρὸς σε* we still have an echo of the verbal form of the original. More important is the fact that *ἀπόστολος* is here the messenger of God in the technical sense, since the word expresses the fact that Ahijah is commissioned to deliver a divine message to the wife of the king.⁴⁷” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:413.]

³⁷“Moreover the *מַיְהוּבֵי*, who were usually ordained rabbis, were specially set apart for their task by the laying on of hands in the name of the community which sent them. Their mission thus acquired a religious as well as an official character (→ *χειροτονέω*).⁶⁷ Perhaps this final element is also specifically expressed in the fact that *מַיְהוּבֵי* were not sent out alone but usually two or more together.⁶⁸” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:417.]

³⁸“On the other hand, it must be emphasised most strongly that Jewish missionaries, of whom there were quite a number in the time of Jesus,⁷⁰ are never called *מַיְהוּבֵי*, and that in relation to them the words *הַלְלוּ* and *ἀποστέλλειν* play no part. Their work took place without authorisation by the community in the narrower sense, and it thus had a private character, though without detriment to its scope and significance.⁷¹” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:418.]

and meanings takes on special importance.³⁹ What appears to be the case is that the idea of the Jewish *דַּיָּוָה*, current in first century Judaism, provides the conceptual foundation for the Christian use of *ἀπόστολος*. Signals pointing this direction surface in John 13:16, 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25 et als. Unquestionably, the vast majority of the 80 NT uses designate the Twelve and Paul as occupying a unique status as distinctly commissioned by Jesus. But in a few instances the divine commissioning core meaning, without the technical designation of the Twelve apostles, can be detected. In Acts 14:4, Luke feels comfortable labeling Paul and Barnabas as *ἀπόστολοι*, in the sense of commissioned missionaries from God. In Gal. 1:19, James, the Lord's brother is possibly called an *ἀπόστολος* in the sense of one sent by God, in contrast to Luke's use of the label *πρεσβύτερος* for him in Acts 15.⁴⁰ Paul uses the term *ἀπόστολοι* to refer to the husband and wife team of Junias and Andronicus in Rom. 16:7. And a wider circle than just the Twelve is designated as *ἀπόστολοι* by Paul in 1 Cor. 15:7. The Jewish conceptual idea *דַּיָּוָה*, of a community commissioning individuals in behalf of God to go out as authorized messengers, is especially prominent in the commissioning of Paul and Barnabas as missionaries in Acts 13:1-4.⁴¹ The divine commissioning of an *ἀπόστολος*, primarily in the sense of the Twelve, is made very clear by Paul in 1 Cor. 12:28-29.

Consequently, one is left with the strong conclusion that, while the core idea of a divinely commissioned person as an *ἀπόστολος* has an affinity with the Hebrew *דַּיָּוָה*, the specific meanings attached to this Greek noun in the New Testament are uniquely Christian.⁴² The beginning point is Jesus' commissioning of the Twelve to function in a unique capacity as His authorized messengers, as is reflected in Luke 6:12-16, Matthew 10:1-4, and Mark 3:13-19. The term, in rather limited usage, then came to be applied to a select few individuals whose ministry reflected a divine commissioning as well, but not in the same role as the Twelve. Thus, the English label 'missionary' can be applied to these individuals as they traveled away from Jerusalem to elsewhere in the Mediterranean world in order to deliver the message of the Gospel. The term 'missionary' then has a strong geographical focus, and becomes applicable whenever there is a relocation away from one's home in order to carry out Christian ministry.

εὐαγγελίστης (*evangelist*), *εὐαγγελίζομαι* (I 'gospelize'). These two terms, noun and verb, are central to the early Christian idea of communicating the idea of the positive message of salvation in Christ. The driving force behind missionary activity among Christians was the desire to inform the entire world that the God of this universe has established a way for sinful humanity to come into His utterly holy presence without suffering instant destruction. And in this way of deliverance one is enabled to continue in God's holy presence not just through this earthly life but it extends into the unceasing ages of eternity as well.

Thus a cluster of words surface in the writings of the New Testament affirming such communication of this positive message of life and salvation, but at the core is the *εὐαγγελί-* group.⁴³ The noun *εὐαγγελίστης*, interestingly, is found only three times. In Acts 21:8, a Christian named Philip who lived in Caesarea is called *ὁ εὐαγγελίστης*, "[Philip the evangelist](#)."⁴⁴ This functioned more as a nickname with the modern equivalent of 'the

³⁹“There is now no trace of the common use of *ἀπόστολος* outside the Bible and in Josephus (→ A. 1 and B. 1). In the NT *ἀπόστολος* never means the act of sending, or figuratively the object of sending. It always denotes a man who is sent, and sent with full authority. Thus the Gk. gives us only the form of the NT concept; the *דַּיָּוָה* of later Judaism provides the content.” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 1:421.]

⁴⁰One should also note that the statement *ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου*, is fully capable of being understood as “[but others of the apostles I did not see, except that I did also see James the Lord's brother](#).” James as the leader of the local *πρεσβύτεροι* is distinguished from the Twelve. Thus Paul makes use of *ἀποστόλων* in the technical meaning of the Twelve here. Paul's point is that his contact was limited to the two leaders of the apostles and the local elders in Jerusalem.

⁴¹Interestingly Luke's 'commissioning' term for the sending out of Paul and Barnabas by the church at Antioch is *ἀπολύω*, rather than *ἀποστέλλω* in Acts 13:3, *τότε νηστεύσαντες καὶ προσευξάμενοι καὶ ἐπιθέντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς ἀπέλυσαν*.

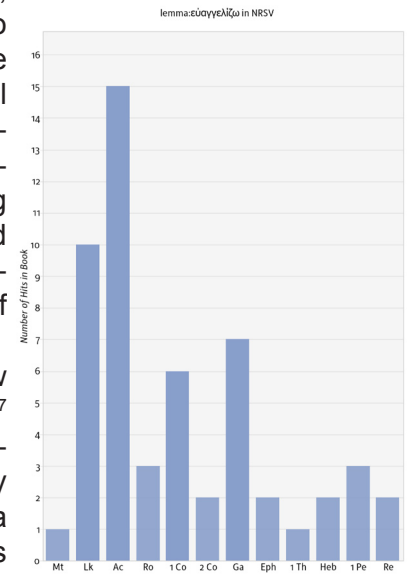
⁴²By lacking this Jewish heritage the other verbs, namely *πέμπω* and its derivatives, do not contain the tone of divine commissioning inherently in their meaning. No noun form ever developed out of the participle verb form, as with *ἀποστέλλω* ==> *ἀπεσταλμένος* ==> *ἀπόστολος*. Thus the New Testament writers gravitated toward this *ἀποστέλ-* word group as a natural means of communicating the divine commissioning of individuals as a part of the New Covenant instituted by Jesus.

⁴³One should not overlook the etymological foundations of the *εὐαγγελι-* group of words. They are connected to *ἀποστέλ-* group via the *ἀγγελ-* root origin as a deeply connected word to being sent to deliver a message. Out of the *ἀγγελ-* stem comes *ἄγγελος* (*messenger*) as well as a wide variety of words related to communicating the Gospel: *ἀγγελία* (message), *ἀγγέλλω* (I announce), *ἀναγγέλλω* (I speak), *ἀπαγγέλλω* (I appeal), *διαγγέλλω* (I announce), *ἐξαγγέλλω* (I proclaim), *καταγγέλλω* (I proclaim), *προκαταγγέλλω* (I proclaim in advance), *καταγγελεύς* (a proclaimer). The *εὐαγγελι-* group simply adds the Greek adverb *εὖ* for good or well to the root stem in order to stress the positive content of the message being delivered.

⁴⁴[Acts 21:7-10. 7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we greeted the believers and stayed with](#)
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communicator.’ Secondly, Timothy is encouraged by Paul in 2 Tim. 4:5 to ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ‘do the work of an evangelist’ among several other tasks while at Ephesus.⁴⁵ Here communicating the Gospel message is closely linked to the responsibility of pastoral care of the communities of believers at Ephesus. Timothy was coming in as a missionary associate of Paul with the job assignment to help the churches at Ephesus solve their problems and grow spiritually. Not too many years prior to Timothy’s arrival at Ephesus, Paul had written to this church in Eph. 4:11 that τοὺς εὐαγγελιστάς, ‘evangelists,’ were among those commissioned by God. Given the distinctive way the list is set up in the Greek text, it appears that evangelists, along with prophets and apostles, were to be regional or global individuals who would come into local congregations to assist the ‘pastor / teacher’ leaders of the house church groups in training the membership to do Christian ministry.⁴⁶ All of these leaders provided by God were to work toward the common goal of enabling all believers to become ministers, whose work would lead to the achieving of the stated objectives of Christian maturity, unity, and solid understanding of the Christian faith (cf. Eph. 4:12-16). Thus careful examination of the limited use of the noun εὐαγγελιστής in the New Testament strongly points toward individuals traveling from place to place communicating the Gospel in the work of a missionary.

On the other hand, the verb εὐαγγελίζομαι with some 54 uses in the New Testament stresses communicating the good news of the Gospel (εὐαγγέλιον).⁴⁷ Although semantically it is a verb in the category of words concerning speaking, the concept in NT uses goes beyond merely informing an audience orally of the conceptual details of the Gospel message. It underscores delivering a message persuasively which leads to a positive commitment to the demands of the message.⁴⁸ Thus some scholars have suggested a new word should be



them for one day. 8 The next day we left and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of *Philip the evangelist*, one of the seven, and stayed with him. 9 He had *four unmarried daughters* who had the gift of prophecy. 10 While we were staying there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

7 Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν πλοῦν διανύσαντες ἀπὸ Τύρου κατηγήσαμεν εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα, καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐμείναμεν ἡμέραν μίαν παρ’ αὐτοῖς. 8 τῇ δὲ ἐπαύριον ἐξεληθόντες ἦλθομεν εἰς Καισάρειαν, καὶ εἰσεληθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον *Φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ* ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ ἐμείναμεν παρ’ αὐτῶ. 9 τούτῳ δὲ ἦσαν *θηγατέρες τέσσαρες παρθένοι* προφητεύουσαι. 10 ἐπιμενόντων δὲ ἡμέρας πλείους κατήλθεν τις ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας προφήτης ὀνόματι Ἄγαβος,

Philip is also identified as “one of the seven,” (ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ) which links him to the seven individuals chosen by the Jerusalem church as deacons in Acts 6:5 (6:1-7). At this later date (Acts 21 in late 50s, while Acts 6 in early 30s), he now made his home on the Mediterranean coast rather than Jerusalem.

And he was nicknamed ‘the communicator’ with the label τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ. Luke illustrated this by choosing him as one of two of these seven to provide more details regarding in his narrative in Acts 8:4-40. Here Philip first traveled north into Samaria preaching the Gospel to these mixed blood people who were not considered true Jews (vv. 4-25) and then he went southward into Gaza and led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christian faith at an oasis (vv. 26-40). Thus Philip from the beginning established himself as a missionary preacher of the Gospel who helped the early church begin breaking down the barriers of racial discrimination inside Christianity. From Luke’s later description in chapter twenty-one he had four daughters who were gifted in communicating the Gospel as well. This ability ‘ran in the family’ so to speak.

⁴⁵2 Tim. 4:5. As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, *do the work of an evangelist*, carry out your ministry fully.

σὺ δὲ νῆφε ἐν πᾶσιν, κακοπάθησον, *ἔργον ποιήσον εὐαγγελιστοῦ*, τὴν διακονίαν σου πληροφορήσον.

⁴⁶Eph. 4:11-13. 11 The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, *some evangelists*, some pastors and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

11 καὶ αὐτὸς ἔδωκεν τοὺς μὲν ἀποστόλους, τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, *τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς*, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, 12 πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας, εἰς οἰκοδομὴν τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 13 μέχρι καταστήσωμεν οἱ πάντες εἰς τὴν ἐνότητα τῆς πίστεως καὶ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰς ἄνδρα τέλειον, εἰς μέτρον ἡλικίας τοῦ πληρώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

⁴⁷Although the active voice verb form εὐαγγελίζω existed in Koine Greek at this time, the New Testament writers only use the middle voice form εὐαγγελίζομαι which dominated Koine Greek prior to the first Christian century. Only three exceptions to this NT pattern exist where the active voice form εὐαγγελίζω is found in Rev. 10:7; 14:6 and in an alternative text reading in Acts 16:7. The NT preference for the middle voice form εὐαγγελίζομαι seems to reflect the influence of the LXX which came into being (appx. 175 BCE) when the middle voice form dominated the spelling of the verb in the Greek language.

⁴⁸See the Louw-Nida Greek lexicon topics 33.69 through 33.108 for a listing of verbs denoting oral speech. For the above stated reason, εὐαγγελίζομαι is not included in this list. Additionally it is not included in topics 33.256-33.261 of words for preaching or proclaiming. Rather it (33.215) is listed among topics 33.189-217 with words for informing and announcing mostly containing words from the ἀγγέλ- root stem. [Louw, Johannes P. and Eugene Albert Nida. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic*

created in English that more adequately conveys the idea of this verb: to 'gospelize.' The distribution of this verb εὐαγγελίζομαι very naturally reflects Luke's interest in the spreading of the Gospel through missionary preaching in the early church with 15 of the 54 NT uses found in Acts, along with ten others in his gospel writing stressing Jesus' delivery of the good news of God's salvation as He traveled from place to place in Palestine. All but eight of the remaining 29 uses are found in Paul's writings. Between Luke and Paul using the term 45 times, only five other NT writers make very limited use of the verb. Thus the missionary setting of the preaching of the Gospel is firmly established in the New Testament.

4.1.1.2 Missions Concepts. But examining words alone does not fully portray the larger picture of missionary activity in the pages of the New Testament. Signals arise in the New Testament pointing to both theology and history as motivating and shaping the patterns of missionary activity in the early church. Theologically, the apostle Paul understood his calling from God in relation to the covenant of God with Abraham and the promise made to Abraham that he would be a blessing to all nations (cf. Gen. 18:18 // Rom. 4:13; Gal. 3:8-9). The apostle was convinced the key to realizing this blessing was in the Gospel message of salvation in Christ. Paul's calling from God was to preach this message to all the nations (Gal. 1:15-16). Additionally, he saw in the Hebrew prophets Jeremiah (Jer. 1:5) and Isaiah (cf. Isa. 49:1-6) a calling to proclaim God's message to the nations, which he sensed was the same calling given to him on the Damascus road. Finally, the explicit command of Jesus given to the disciples prior to His ascension to disciple the nations (Matt. 28:16-20; John 20:21; Acts 1:8) was clearly known among the communities of faith as a part of the oral Jesus tradition in circulation prior to being written down in the 60s through the 90s of the first century. For Paul -- and increasingly for the entire Christian movement -- the realization grew that all humanity deserved to hear this message of salvation and that God had ordered His church to carry this message to the entire world. Thus missionary activity for Paul was not optional; rather it was central to the divine calling to ministry that he had received from the Heavenly Father.

Strategies for doing missions are not described with detail in any of the scripture texts related to Paul's call to ministry. So, how did Paul know what to do? Paul's testimony to King Agrippa described by Luke in Acts 26:15b-23 provides some initial clues:

The Lord answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. 17 I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles — **to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.**"

19 After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. 21 For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. 22 To this day I have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place: 23 that the Messiah must suffer, and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles."

ὁ δὲ κύριος εἶπεν· Ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὃν σὺ διώκεις· 16 ἀλλὰ ἀνάστηθι καὶ στήθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου· εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ὤφθην σοι, προχειρίσασθαί σε ὑπηρετήν καὶ μάρτυρα ὧν τε εἶδες με ὧν τε ὀφθήσομαι σοι, 17 ἐξαιρούμενός σε ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν, **εἰς οὓς ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω σε 18 ἀνοῖξαι ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν, τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκοτῶν εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ Σατανᾶ ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, τοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτοὺς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ κληρὸν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ.**

19 Ὅθεν, βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα, οὐκ ἐγενόμην ἀπειθῆς τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὀπτασίᾳ, 20 ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐν Δαμασκῶ πρώτῳν τε καὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις, πᾶσάν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας, καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπήγγελλον μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἅξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας. 21 ἔνεκα τούτων με Ἰουδαῖοι συλλαβόμενοι ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐπειρώντο διαχειρίσασθαι. 22 ἐπικουρίας οὖν τυχῶν τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄχρι τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης ἔστηκα μαρτυρόμενος μικρῶν τε καὶ μεγάλων, οὐδὲν ἐκτὸς λέγων ὧν τε οἱ προφῆται ἐλάλησαν μελλόντων γίνεσθαι καὶ Μωϋσῆς, 23 εἰ παθητὸς ὁ χριστός, εἰ πρώτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν φῶς μέλλει καταγγέλλειν τῷ τε λαῷ καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

Clearly the heart of Paul's labors are depicted in v. 20b as ἀπήγγελλον μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἅξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας, **I was proclaiming that they should repent and turn to God in order to do deeds**

reflecting true repentance. In simple terms, Paul preached a message designed to lead people to become committed disciples of Jesus growing out of true repentance and turning to God. This is in line with what Paul declared to the Galatian believers (Gal. 1:16b) that the divine revealing to Christ to Paul in conversion had the purpose *ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν*, so that I might ‘gospelize’ Him among the nations. The key to ‘opening the eyes’ (ἀνοίξει ὀφθαλμούς αὐτῶν) of Jews and Gentiles (Acts 26:18) Paul saw as ἀπήγγελλον, *proclaiming* (Acts 26:20) and εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν, *preaching Him* (Gal. 1:16). From this, it is clear that preaching the Gospel was foundational to Paul’s missionary strategy.

Implicit in his statement to King Agrippa (Acts 26:19) is obedience to the leadership of God in carrying out this assignment in Damascus, Jerusalem, Judea, and the rest of that world. In the commissioning narrative that launched the first missionary journey from Antioch, Luke places heavy emphasis on the role of the leadership of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1-4):

13 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the ruler, and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, *the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”* 3 Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

4 So, *being sent out by the Holy Spirit*, they went down to Seleucia; and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

13.1 Ἦσαν δὲ ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ κατὰ τὴν οὔσαν ἐκκλησίαν προφῆται καὶ διδάσκαλοι ὃ τε Βαρναβᾶς καὶ Συμεὼν ὁ καλούμενος Νίγερ, καὶ Λούκιος ὁ Κυρηναῖος, Μαναῖν τε Ἡρώδου τοῦ τετραάρχου σύντροφος καὶ Σαῦλος. 2 λειτουργούντων δὲ αὐτῶν τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ νηστευόντων *εἶπεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· Αφορίσατε δὴ μοι τὸν Βαρναβᾶν καὶ Σαῦλον εἰς τὸ ἔργον ὃ προσκέκλημαι αὐτούς.* 3 τότε νηστεύσαντες καὶ προσευξάμενοι καὶ ἐπιθέντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς ἀπέλυσαν.

4 Αὐτοὶ μὲν οὖν *ἐκπεμφθέντες ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος* κατήλθον εἰς Σελεύκειαν, ἐκεῖθεν τε ἀπέπλευσαν εἰς Κύπρον,

Throughout the travels of Paul and those associates who accompanied him a strong emphasis will be placed on these missionaries following the leadership of the Holy Spirit in making choices about where to go and then what to do in each place they journeyed to. Thus, the second clearly expressed component of Paul’s missionary strategy was to exactly follow the leadership of God’s Spirit in carrying out the commission to preach the Gospel. The additional details of actions that Luke will provide in Acts 13-26, and that are sometimes supplemented by statements in Paul’s letters, clearly reflect the desire of these missionaries to be sensitive to God’s leadership in every aspect of their missionary activity.

Did Paul learn anything about missionary methodology from his training as a Pharisee? Further, having lived in a center for philosophical training at Tarsus, did he learn any methods from the traveling philosophers who came through Tarsus on a regular basis seeking to gain converts to their way of thinking? Whatever insights that can be gleaned from these two background models are important to understand for our detailed study of Paul’s methods of doing missionary work. They can help us understand better what Paul did and why he did it.

A first glance, the ‘insider’ only orientation of the ancient Pharisees would suggest that missionary activity was not a part of their agenda in the first Christian century. But Jesus’ very blunt words in Matt. 23:15 seem to challenge this assumption: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cross sea and land *to make a single convert*, and you make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves.” (Οὐαὶ ὑμῖν, γραμματεῖς καὶ Φαρισαῖοι ὑποκριταί, ὅτι περιάγετε τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ τὴν ξηρὰν *ποιῆσαι ἓνα προσήλυτον*, καὶ ὅταν γένηται ποιεῖτε αὐτὸν υἱὸν γεέννης διπλότερον ὑμῶν.) Clearly from Matthew’s term προσήλυτον, “proselyte,” Jesus was alluding to at least some streams of the Pharisees attempting to convert non-Jews to Judaism.⁴⁹ But this text

⁴⁹“The second woe shows that their [the Pharisees] problem is not lack of enthusiasm. Their zeal extends even beyond their primary charge, the people of Israel, to the gaining of proselytes from among other nations. In the Book of Acts we are introduced to proselytes (Acts 2:11; 6:5; 13:43), non-Jewish adherents to the religion and ethics of Judaism, and to a wider circle of ‘worshippers’ who apparently respected and learned from Judaism without themselves becoming formally enrolled as proselytes (Acts 13:50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7). For the baptism of proselytes see on 3:6. There is considerable disagreement about how extensive and how successful Jewish attempts to gain proselytes were at this period, and the generally negative impression of Judaism gained from extant Greek and Latin literature suggests that it may have been an uphill task. But Jews in the Diaspora made serious efforts to combat Gentile prejudice and to commend the religion of Yahweh: the works of Philo and Josephus are clear evidence of this, notably Josephus’ apologetic work, *Against Apion*. For evidence of successful proselytism in the Diaspora see Schürer, 3.160–164; rabbinic discussions of the admission of proselytes (Schürer, 3.173–176) indicate at least openness to their reception, if not active recruitment.²⁸ There is, however, less evidence that Palestinian rabbis of the first century were as zealous in proselytizing as Jesus here describes.²⁹ It is possible that Jesus refers here not so much to the initial conversion of pagans as to the Pharisaic desire to persuade less fully committed Gentile ‘worshippers’ to accept the full responsibilities of proselytism.³⁰ [R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007), 870.]

is subject to more than one interpretation.⁵⁰ And in recent years the tendency among scholars has been to see this more as emphasis on efforts by Pharisees to convince the Gentile ‘God-fearers’ to take the next step of full conversion to Judaism as a proselyte convert. Clearly, Matthew’s interest in including this pericope in his gospel account for an audience in the late 60s to early 70s in the province of Syria may also reflect what was happening in the world of his targeted audience. That a large number of such people lived Palestine is fairly certain, since Second Chronicles (2:17-18) indicates that during Solomon’s reign, nine centuries before Christ, some 153,000 non-Jews were living in Palestine who were put to work helping build Solomon’s temple.

Our interest is to determine, as far as is possible, what kind of strategy might have been used for this activity by these Jewish leaders, whatever its nature. From the writings of both the Jewish philosopher Philo (20 BC - 50 AD) and the Jewish historian Josephus (37 - c. 100 AD), it is clear that both these men greatly desired to commend the Jewish religion to their Greco-Roman friends and thus composed numerous writings both defending and promoting the Jewish people and their religious heritage as either superior to all others, or at least as valuable and important as any of the others. Rather far-fetched efforts were made by Philo to establish a positive conceptual link between Moses and Plato. One should note, however, their efforts were mostly a defence of Judaism to the rest of the world in their day, thus more apologetic than evangelistic. Paul defended his gospel preaching from the description given in both Acts and his writings, but always either to Jews hostile to the Gospel or against criticisms of insider Jews challenging Paul’s teaching of justification by faith from within the Christian movement. Thus the kind of defence of Judaism to the non-Jewish world made by both Philo and Josephus is not utilized by Paul to defend his gospel and his apostleship.

In a second century Christian document, *The Acts of Pilate*, in chapter two makes the claim that Pilate’s wife who warned him against taking action against Jesus (cf. Matt. 27:19) was actually a ‘God-fearer’ who sympathized with the Jewish religion.⁵¹ The historical accuracy of this claim may be questionable, but the text illustrates that many non-Jews had sympathetic feelings toward the Jewish religion.

Our dilemma is that we have little direct information about how the Pharisees went about either trying to convert Gentiles or how they sought to persuade ‘God-fearers’ to fully convert to Judaism. What is clear is that such conversion included circumcision for the males and a formal commitment to obey the Torah, and sometimes it also included a “self-baptism” ritual as a part of the formal commitment to become Torah obedient.⁵² Thus at

⁵⁰“The question of the extent of the missionary activity of first-century Jews is a difficult one. Most scholars have concluded that there was a flourishing Jewish mission among the Gentiles (see esp. J. Jeremias, *Jesus’ Promise to the Nations*, SBT 24 [London: SCM, 1958] 11–19). S. McKnight, however, has recently called attention to the tenuous nature of the evidence for this conclusion. It may well be the case, therefore, that the present verse has in mind not the conversion of pagan Gentiles to Judaism but the conversion of the God-fearing Gentiles (i.e., those already partial converts to Judaism) to full proselytes adhering in particular to the Pharisaic understanding of the righteousness of Torah (see McKnight, 106–8).” [Donald A. Hagner, vol. 33B, *Word Biblical Commentary : Matthew 14-28*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 669.]

⁵¹“And Pilate seeing this, was afraid, and sought to go away from the tribunal; but when he was still thinking of going away, his wife sent to him, saying: Have nothing to do with this just man, for many things have I suffered on his account this night. And Pilate, summoning the Jews, says to them: *You know that my wife is a worshipper of God, and prefers to adhere to the Jewish religion along with you.* They say to him: Yes; we know. Pilate says to them: Behold, my wife has sent to me, saying, Have nothing to do with this just man, for many things have I suffered on account of him this night. And the Jews answering, say unto Pilate: Did we not tell thee that he was a sorcerer? behold, he has sent a dream to thy wife. ”

The dream is an allusion to Matt. 27:19: “19 While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, ‘Have nothing to do with that innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him.’”

⁵²Torah obedience is partially defined in the Book of Moses, but elaborated greatly in the Talmud:

“The Torah lists several rules that proselytes (גר/ger, Strong’s H1616) must follow. These precepts and their interpretation in the Talmud form the basis for any rules regarding converts to Judaism. * partake in Yom Kippur (Lev 16:29); * not possess Chametz during Pesach (Ex 12:19); * celebrate the Feast of Weeks (Deut 16:11); * celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut 16:13-14) and stand at the Day of Assembly of the Sabbatical Feast of Tabernacles (Deut 31:9-13); * not follow after any Nochri gods & their abominations (Idolatry) (Deut 29:09-30:20); * not worship Molech (Lev 20:2) nor practice any of the abominations of the Egyptians & Canaanites (depravity) (Lev 18:3-26, see also Leviticus 18); * not blaspheme (Lev 24:16, Num 15:30-31); * may be donated carrion to eat if in need, but must observe ritual after eating carrion or treif to escape sin (Lev 17:15; Deut 14:21); * not engage in bloodshed (Lev 24:17-22) but Proselytes of the gates & the settlers among them guilty of accidental manslaughter may flee to any of the six cities of refuge (Num 35:15); * not steal by not making compensation for damages (Lev 24:18-22); * not if also settlers steal rights by not following the laws on contracting Jews (Lev 25:47-55); * not steal by eating the Paschal Feast Offering if also a settler (Ex 12:45) or if not without accepting circumcision as compensation if he does (Ex 12:48) there being one law for all in this regard (Ex 12:49; Num 9:14); * not steal God’s compensation for sins by consuming blood and must remember also to drain & bury the blood of any edible game ever caught (Lev 17:10-14); * not steal God’s due by not offering the first fruits after immigration (Deut 26:1-11); * not steal from Aaron if anyone of the Proselytes of the gates would burn an offering by not bringing it to the tent of meeting to offer. (Lev 17:8) but shall bring any free-will,

minimum a great deal of persuasion would be required to convince a non-Jew to undertake all this in religious conversion. During his days of training as a Pharisee, Paul experienced a lot of emphasis on learning how to defend Judaism as well as how to promote it. And he put this into practice with his persecution of Christianity. These skills would serve him well after his conversion in defending and promoting the Gospel to hostile audiences.

In the non-Jewish world of Paul's day itinerant philosophers often traveled the country side preaching their particular philosophy. Quite clearly in 1 Cor. 2:1-5, Paul adopts an 'anti-sophist' stance in his preaching of the Gospel.

2 When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. 2 For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. 4 My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, 5 so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

2.1 Κάγω ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἦλθον οὐ καθ' ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας καταγγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ θεοῦ. 2 οὐ γὰρ ἔκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον· 3 κάγω ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῶ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς, 4 καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας ἀλλ' ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως, 5 ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

What Paul speaks against here was the Sophist style of oratory represented by these traveling philosophers.⁵³ Sophism was not a distinct philosophy itself, but rather a style of oratory and teaching of any one of the many philosophies current in the ancient world.⁵⁴ Although many varieties and approaches existed,⁵⁵ one of the best vow, or sin offerings to the Aaronites to make atonement on the altar (Lev 22:18-25; Num 15:22-29) and shall follow the same rules as the communities of Israel with regards to them. (Num 15:14-16); * have the right to a just hearing of cases before the Sho'etim (Deut 1:16; 24:17; 27:19); * have the right to be chosen to carry the red heifer ashes for a water of sprinkling, but must wash his clothes and declare himself unclean until evening (Num 19:10); * have the right to loving unoppressive treatment from Jews especially if a poor or needy hired help (Ex 22:21; 23:9; Lev 19:33-34; Deut 10:18-19; 24:14); * have the right to exemption from being charged interest by Jews (Lev 25:36-37); * have the right if also settlers to have their children contracted to a Jew for life (Lev 25:45); * have the right as Israel's brethren (Exod 12:19, Lev 10:6) not to be ruled over with rigour if under contract to a Jew (Lev 25:46); * have the right to enjoy rest on the Sabbath (Deut 5:13-14; Ex 20:9-10; 23:12); * have the right if also settlers to eat of Jews' statutorily unharvested Sabbatical year produce (Lev 25:6); * have the right to field corners & purposefully ungleaned & forgotten harvest & fallen fruit in Jews' fields (Deut 24:19-21; Lev 19:9-10; 23:22); * have along with the Levites, Asuphim & widows the right to in the Shaari (Beth Din) feast of Israel's tithe in the end of every third year (Deut 14:29; 26:12-13); * have the right to replace the unfaithful (Deut 28:43)."

[“Proselyte: Rules for proselytes in the Torah,” *Wikipedia.org*]

⁵³“In a relatively recent monograph solely devoted to 2:1–5 Michael Bullmore contends that Paul both uses and opposes rhetoric in these verses: ‘It was against a particular strain of Graeco-Roman rhetoric that Paul set forth his own statement of rhetorical style.’³³¹ The specific style which Paul opposed and disowned is described by Bullmore as ‘public display oratory’ associated with the Second Sophistic. Stylistic virtuosity won audience approval, in contrast to Paul’s conscious choice of ‘a simple and unaffected style which draws no attention to itself.’³³² This harmonizes precisely with the issues about apostolic agency urged by Best and Crafton (and endorsed in our comments above) as well as perceptions of two types of rhetoric identified by Clarke, Winter, Witherington, and especially Pogoloff.³³³ All of these writers, including Bullmore, cite primary sources, especially Plutarch, but also Dio Chrysostom, on the competitive showmanship of local provincial rhetoric at the Isthmian games. One could hear crowds of ‘wretched sophists’ competing for applause, while rhetoricians were called in to entertain diners between courses at banquets.³³⁴

“Bruce Winter confirms such a reconstruction of the situation behind 2:1–5. Paul’s language is ‘anti-sophistic.’³³⁵ There were ‘sophistic conventions regarding the initial visit to a city by an orator seeking to establish a reputation as a professional speaker.’³³⁶ He would be ‘escorted with much enthusiasm and éclat (φιλοτιμία)’.³³⁷ Winter shows significant parallels between 2:1–5 and Dio’s apologia of c. AD 102 (Orations 47), e.g., the use by Dio of μεγαλόφρων, ‘high-minded’ address.³³⁸ In 2:1–5 ἀπόδειξις and δύναμις presuppose rhetorical allusions, i.e., to demonstration and to persuasiveness respectively: ‘1 Cor 2:1–5 reveals a distinct constellation of rhetorical terms and allusions.’³³⁹ Nevertheless, ‘Paul repudiated the sophistic method of ‘presenting himself’ when he came to Corinth ... [not] projecting an image of himself...’³⁴⁰”

[Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 205.]

⁵⁴“Sophism in the modern definition is a specious argument used for deceiving someone. In ancient Greece, sophists were a category of teachers who specialized in using the tools of philosophy and rhetoric for the purpose of teaching *aretê* — excellence, or virtue — predominantly to young statesmen and nobility. The practice of charging money for education (and providing wisdom only to those who can pay) led to the condemnations made by Socrates (through Plato in his dialogues, as well as Xenophon’s *Memorabilia*). Through works such as these, Sophists were portrayed as ‘specious’ or ‘deceptive’, hence the modern meaning of the term. The term originated from Greek σοφισμα, sophisma, from σοφίζω, sophizo ‘I am wise’; confer σοφιστής, sophistēs, meaning ‘wise-ist, one who does wisdom, one who makes a business out of wisdom’ and σοφός, sophós means ‘wise man’.” [“Sophism,” *Wikipedia.org*]

⁵⁵“Protagoras of Abdera, who appeared about 445 BCE. is named as the first Sophist; after him the most important is Gorgias of Leontini, Prodicus of Ceos and Hippias of Elis. Wherever they appeared, especially in Athens, they were received with enthusiasm and

known 'models' of Sophism was Gorgias of Leontini.⁵⁶ Finding and espousing the truth was not a concern for these philosophers; rather being able to present one's ideas in a convincing manner was the objective.⁵⁷ What the apostle Paul is speaking out against here is labeled the second school of Sophism that emerged in the second century BC and continued through the second century AD.⁵⁸ Convincing an audience to accept their ideas was to be achieved simply by dressing up those ideas in the most favorable manner possible through rhetoric and oratory. Whether the ideas were good or worthless was of no importance. The sophist boast was that he could convince you that black was really white and that the worst things imaginable could become the most sensible reasoning that anyone could conceive. All of this could be achieved through ornate rhetoric and persuasive delivery by oratory. And the sophist philosopher could -- for a hefty fee -- teach you how to do this.

Paul makes a strong point to the Corinthians that when he first came to Corinth preaching the Gospel it absolutely was not in the style of sophism. The outward pattern of Paul's missionary activity, as described in Acts,⁵⁹ would have had enough resemblances to the pattern of the Sophists that audiences would not have sensed any difference, especially at the beginning of the speeches given in the marketplace.⁶⁰ The use of schools (ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου) for giving lectures, as Paul did at Ephesus, was rather common place for sophists and other teachers.⁶¹ Paul used some of Gorgias' style in taking questions and responding to them as καθ' ἡμέραν

many flocked to hear them. Even such people as Pericles, Euripides, and Socrates sought their company." ["Sophists," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*]

⁵⁶"Gorgias (Greek: Γοργίας, Ancient Greek: [gorgias]; 'the Nihilist'; c. 485 – c. 380 BC), [1] Greek sophist, pre-socratic philosopher and rhetorician, was a native of Leontini in Sicily. Along with Protagoras, he forms the first generation of Sophists. Several doxographers report that he was a pupil of Empedocles, although he would only have been a few years younger. 'Like other Sophists he was an itinerant, practicing in various cities and giving public exhibitions of his skill at the great pan-Hellenic centers of Olympia and Delphi, and charged fees for his instruction and performances. A special feature of his displays was to invite miscellaneous questions from the audience and give impromptu replies.'² His chief claim to recognition resides in the fact that he transplanted rhetoric from his native Sicily to Attica, and contributed to the diffusion of the Attic dialect as the language of literary prose." ["Gorgias," Wikipedia.org]

⁵⁷"The most popular career of a Greek of ability at the time was politics; hence the sophists largely concentrated on teaching rhetoric. The aims of the young politicians whom they trained were to persuade the multitude of whatever they wished them to believe. The search for truth was not top priority. Consequently the sophists undertook to provide a stock of arguments on any subject, or to prove any position. They boasted of their ability to make the worse appear the better reason, to prove that black is white. Some, like Gorgias, asserted that it was not necessary to have any knowledge of a subject to give satisfactory replies as regards it. Thus, Gorgias ostentatiously answered any question on any subject instantly and without consideration. To attain these ends mere quibbling, and the scoring of verbal points were employed. In this way, the sophists tried to entangle, entrap, and confuse their opponents, and even, if this were not possible, to beat them down by mere violence and noise. They sought also to dazzle by means of strange or flowery metaphors, by unusual figures of speech, by epigrams and paradoxes, and in general by being clever and smart, rather than earnest and truthful. Hence our word 'sophistry': the use of fallacious arguments knowing them to be such. Early on Sophists were seen to be of merit as people of superior skill or wisdom, as we find in Pindar and Herodotus. We learn from Plato, though, that even in the 5th century there was a prejudice against the name 'sophist'. By Aristotle's time, the name bore a contemptuous meaning, as he defines 'sophist' as one who reasons falsely for the sake of gain." ["Sophists," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*]

⁵⁸"With the revival of Greek eloquence, from about the beginning of the second century CE., the name 'sophist' attained a new distinction. At that time the name was given to the professional orators, who appeared in public with great pomp and delivered declamations either prepared beforehand or improvised on the spot. Like the earlier sophists, they went generally from place to place, and were overwhelmed with applause and with marks of distinction by their contemporaries, including the Roman Emperors. Dion Chrysostom, Herodes Atticus, Aristides, Lucian, and Philostratus the Elder belong to the flourishing period of this second school of sophists, a period which extends over the entire second century." ["Sophists," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*]

⁵⁹This in the sense of traveling from town to town, often giving public speeches in the market place after being shut out of the local synagogue, and appealing to the people to adopt a particular way of living. Perhaps further resemblances were present beyond what Luke depicts in Acts as well. One should not forget that θεολογία (theologia) or εὐσέβεια (religion) was a branch of φιλοσοφία (philosophy) in the ancient world.

⁶⁰One very typical example is in Acts 19:8-10 at Ephesus, "8 He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and **argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus**. 10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord."

8 Εἰσελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐπαρρησιάζετο ἐπὶ μῆνας τρεῖς διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων [τὰ] περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. 9 ὡς δὲ τινες ἐσκληρύνοντο καὶ ἠπειθούοντο κακολογοῦντες τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους, ἀποστὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀφόρισεν τοὺς μαθητὰς **καθ' ἡμέραν διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου**. 10 τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας.

⁶¹"Day after day he would hold his discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. From the classical period of Greece on, *scholē* was used of the place where pupils and teachers met (Plutarch, *Alexander* 7.3; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Isocrates* 1; *Demosthenes* 44). Tyrannus is otherwise unknown; he might have been a teacher in Ephesus or may have simply owned the lecture hall. The name Tyrannos has been found on first-century Ephesian inscriptions. MS D adds at the end *apo hōras pente heōs dekatēs*, 'from the fifth hour to

διαλεγόμενος (“daily discussing”) implies in Acts 19:9.⁶² But the apostle goes to great pains to distance himself from the flowery oratory of the Sophists along with their deceptive practices. As he asserts in vv. 4-5,

My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

4 *καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμά μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως*, 5 ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ’ ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

Did Paul learn some missionary methodology from his Pharisaical teacher Gamaliel (Acts 22:3) and from the Sophist philosophers (Acts 19:1-10) of his day? The answer is yes he did, and some of it was regarding “how not to do it.” Our study of Paul’s activities as a missionary will uncover both his strategy and possible sources of influence of at least some of his strategy.

4.2.0 Depiction of Paul’s Beginnings

When Saul of Tarsus met the risen Christ on the road to Damascus about 33 AD, clearly he had no prior concept of becoming a missionary, and certainly not a Christian missionary to non-Jewish people. But the Acts 9:18b-25 narrative makes it clear that upon conversion “immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, ‘He is the Son of God’” (9:20; καὶ εὐθέως ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ἐκήρυσσεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ). Did he have any training or preparation that enabled him to begin ministry so quickly after conversion? And does his practice conflict with his later recommendation through Timothy to churches about not selecting recent converts as leaders: “He must not be a recent convert, or he may be puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6; μὴ νεόφυτον, ἵνα μὴ τυφωθείς εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέση τοῦ διαβόλου)?

An examination of some of the key passages related to activities immediately following his conversion are important signals of how the apostle prepared himself for the life long ministry of preaching the Gospel.

4.2.0.1 Departure from Damascus

After spending time in Damascus (and in nearby Arabia), Paul left for Jerusalem now as a Christian, and not as a persecutor of Christians. The manner of his time in Damascus and departure is portrayed as turbulent and not peaceful. Elation by the Jewish-Christian community in Damascus was offset by shock turned into anger by the Jewish synagogue community in the city. Finally, this anger resulted in a plot to kill the apostle and the local government authorities got involved in trying to capture Paul and do him harm. This was a challenging way for a new Christian to begin ministry!

4.2.0.1.1 Paul’s Description: Gal. 1:16b-17

Gal. 1:15-19. “15 But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, *I did not confer with any human being, 17*



the tenth,” i.e., each day from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., thus during the normal Mediterranean siesta period. Cf. W. M. Ramsay, “Notes on the New Testament and the Early Church: From the Fifth to the Tenth Hour,” *ExpTim* 15 (1903-4): 397-99, esp. 397-98.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 648.]

⁶²**διαλέγομαι** impf. διελεγόμην Ac 18:19 v.1.; 1 aor. διελεξάμην (s. λέγω; Hom.; Polyaeus 3, 9, 40; 7, 27, 2) Ac 17:2; 18:19; pf. 3 sg. διείλεκται (Tat. 21, 3). Pass.: fut. 3 sg. διαλεχθήσεται (Sir 14:20); aor. διελέχθην ([Att.] LXX; Just., D. 2, 4) Mk 9:34; Ac 18:19 v.1. (Hom.+).

1. to engage in speech interchange, converse, discuss, argue (freq. in Attic wr., also PPetr III, 43 [3], 15 [240 B.C.]; BGU 1080, 11; Epict. 1, 17, 4; 2, 8, 12; TestAbr A 5 p. 82, 3 [Stone p. 12] τὰ διαλεγόμενα ὑμῶν; Tat. 21, 3), esp. of instructional discourse that frequently includes exchange of opinions **Ac 18:4; 19:8f; 20:9.** περί τινος (Ps.-Callisth. 3, 32, 2; Just., D. 100, 3; Ath. 9:1) **24:25.** πρὸς τινα (X., Mem. 1, 6, 1; 2, 10, 1; Ex 6:27; Ps.-Callisth., loc. cit.; Jos., Ant. 7, 278; AssMos Fgm. a Denis p. 63=Tromp p. 272) **Ac 24:12.** τινί w. someone (for the syntax, s. 1 Esdr 8:45 ‘inform, tell’; 2 Macc 11:20; EpArist 40; Just., D. 2, 4: the three last ‘discuss, confer’) **17:2, 17; 18:19; 20:7;** sim. converse MPol 7:2.—Of controversies πρὸς τινα with someone (Judg 8:1 B) **Mk 9:34.** περί τινος about someth. (cp. Pla., Ap., 19d; Plut., Pomp. 620 [4, 4]; PSI 330, 8 [258 B.C.] περί διαφόρου οὐ διαλ.; PFlor 132, 3; Just., A II, 3, 3) **Jd 9.**

2. to instruct about someth., inform, instruct (Isocr. 5 [Phil.] 109; Epict.; PSI 401, 4 [III B.C.]; 1 Esdr 8:45; Philo; Joseph.; EHicks, CIR 1, 1887, 45) δ. may have this mng. in many of the above pass. (e.g. Ac 18:4), clearly so **Hb 12:5** (δ. of a Scripture pass. also Philo, Leg. All. 3, 118).—GKilpatrick, JTS 11, ’60, 338-40.—Frisk s.v. λέγω. M-M. TW. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 232.]



nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus. 18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; 19 but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother."

15 ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιτίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ 16 ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι, 17 οὐδὲ ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, ἀλλὰ ἀπήλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν, καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν. 18 Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία

ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε· 19 ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου.

Traditionally, the statement of Paul in Gal. 1:15 -19 has been taken to imply that the three years of time between conversion and his first trip to Jerusalem⁶³ as a Christian was largely spent in reflection and preparation for ministry while he was outside the city of Damascus.⁶⁴ Here he mentions leaving Damascus fairly quickly after conversion for a while and then returning to the city before making his first trip to Jerusalem. Luke makes no mention of the trip into Arabia as a part of the time Paul was in Damascus. This period of time from conversion to his departure for Jerusalem Paul indicates was about three years. Most assume the bulk of that three years was spent in Arabia. What did Paul do in Arabia?

The territory designated by Paul as Ἀραβία (Gal. 1:17) was largely the kingdom of the Nabateans during the first century with Petra as the capital city. Most of this territory was also known as the Decapolis during this period of time as well, as the map on the above left illustrates.⁶⁵ Covering much of modern Jordan, the Nabateans descended from the Edomite of the Old Testament era. Their control extended northward into Syria from time to time during the ancient world. The long time king from 9 BC to 40 AD was Aretas IV Philopateris, who is mentioned by Paul in 2 Cor. 11:32-33, took over control of Damascus in 37 AD as a gift from Emperor Caligula for settling a series of conflicts in Syria.⁶⁶ Thus Arabia, while not heavily populated since it was fundamentally desert territory, did none the less have a number of towns and villages scattered across the territory. It remained largely independent of Rome, although on occasion various Nabatean kings did cooperate with the Roman emperors in joint military projects. The wealth of the kingdom was of such levels that the people and culture enjoyed levels of civilization that matched and sometimes surpassed that of the Romans.

Although earlier scholarship, heavily influenced from the very old Roman Catholic contemplative tradition, assumed that this period of up to three years in Arabia was Paul's training ground where through contemplation and meditation he came to prepare himself for the ministry that lay before him. But the Galatians text, along with

⁶³Although most English translations imply superficially that the starting point for calculating the three years was Paul's return to Damascus from Arabia, the Greek text, "Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία (1:18), strongly suggests that the starting point was his conversion. The same is also true with "Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν, and then after fourteen years, in 2:1. The beginning anchor point to both these subsequent two visits to Jerusalem was his coming to Christ on the road to Damascus.

⁶⁴Cf. "Paul among the Nabateans," *Movements that change the world.*

⁶⁵"The Decapolis ('Ten Cities'; Greek: *deka*, ten; *polis*, city) was a group of ten cities on the eastern frontier of the Roman Empire in Judea and Syria. The ten cities were not an official league or political unit, but they were grouped together because of their language, culture, location, and political status. The Decapolis cities were centers of Greek and Roman culture in a region that was otherwise Semitic (Nabatean, Aramean, and Jewish). With the exception of Damascus, the 'Region of the Decapolis' was located in modern-day Jordan, one of them located west of the Jordan River in Israel. Each city had a certain degree of autonomy and self-rule." ["Decapolis," *Wikipedia.org*]

⁶⁶The dating of the beginning of this Nabatean administration over Damascus is unclear. A coin from Damascus with Aretas IV's image dates back to 37 AD, indicating that it began at least this early, and probably earlier, which would be necessary for Paul's conversion to reach back to 33 AD.



the Acts nine text, suggests otherwise. Paul began his ministry of preaching Christ immediately after conversion and the time spent in Arabia was focused on preaching, not on meditation.

From the available data in Paul's writings, there appears to not be any kind of training or preparation time from conversion to the beginning of his ministry. He simply drew upon already existing skills and had mostly 'on the job' training for his ministry. One should note that in 1 Cor. 15:3-8, (v. 3) Παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι. . . clearly signals that the apostle did receive a considerable amount of his understanding of the Gospel not just by direct revelation from God, but also from the oral teaching about Jesus current in early Christianity that was being passed on orally from individuals to individuals until the writing of the four gospels beginning in the late 60s after the martyrdom of both Paul and Peter.⁶⁷ Thus Paul looked to the original apostles for insight and understanding about the Gospel, as well as from the revelation given directly to him.⁶⁸

4.2.0.1.2 Paul's Description: 2 Cor. 11:32-33

32 In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

32 ἐν Δαμασκῷ ὁ ἐθνάρχης Ἀρέτα τοῦ βασιλέως ἐφρούρει τὴν πόλιν Δαμασκηνῶν πιάσαι με, 33 καὶ διὰ θυρίδος ἐν σαργάνῃ ἐχαλάσθην διὰ τοῦ τείχους καὶ ἐξέφυγον τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ.

From Paul comes a personal reference to his departure from Damascus as he returned back to Jerusalem after his conversion.⁶⁹ The reason for mentioning this to the Corinthians is to signal this episode as an indication of the sufferings Paul endured as an apostle from the very outset of his ministry.⁷⁰ These *τολμᾶντα*, 'boastings,' of superiority that came from his opponents at Corinth in his vigorous defense (cf. 2 Cor. 11:1-12:21) prompted the apostle's reply which included a recounting of his sufferings for the Gospel (11:16-32) in contrast to their avoidance of suffering.⁷¹ The mentioning of the Damascus escape comes at the end of the long list of sufferings and reflects Paul's belief that his weakness brought out God's power more, in how the Lord enabled him to endure all these things from the very beginning of his ministry shortly after his conversion (11:30-31): "If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!)"

⁶⁷"The number of studies on Paul and tradition are too many to list. Among influential works in the earlier part of the second half of the twentieth century, Oscar Cullmann (French 1953, English 1956) states in relation to this verse, 'The very essence of tradition is that it forms a chain.... It is sometimes Paul, sometimes the Church which 'received'. The word καὶ must be particularly noticed, for it certainly belongs to the formula derived from the paradosis terminology ... in 11:23 and ... in 15:3, but also in 1 Cor 15:1.... 'I received the tradition in the same way as I handed it on to you — by mediation' (Cullmann's italics, last quotation cited from E.-B. Allo).⁷⁹ The relation between 'fragments of Creeds' in 1 Corinthians 15 and elsewhere in Paul and the steady development of early Christian creeds is traced by Hans von Campenhausen and also by J. N. D. Kelly. Kelly argues that 1 Cor 15:3-6 is 'manifestly a summary drawn up for catechetical purposes or for preaching: it gives the gist of the Christian message in a concentrated form.'⁸⁰ As Kelly observes, we should not assume that 1 Cor 11:23-25 and 15:3-5 provide the only such examples from Paul. From 1 Corinthians, we noted Eriksson's identification of pre-Pauline tradition in 8:6; 8:11b; 10:16; 12:3; 13 (and also 16:22); Kelly also compares Rom 1:3-4; 4:24; 8:34; Gal 1:4; 1 Thess 4:14; 5:9; and from later material 1 Pet 3:18-20 and 1 Tim 2:5-6, 8 and 6:13-14. The juxtaposition of confession in the saving efficacy of the cross and the divine vindication or glorification of Christ in the resurrection feature in virtually all of these passages as an emergent core pattern of the earliest Christian confessions or creeds within the pages of the New Testament." [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1186-87.]

⁶⁸One instance of this is the technical oral transmission language used by Paul to introduce the Lord's Supper materials in 1 Cor. 11:23, Ἐγὼ γὰρ παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, ὃ καὶ παρέδωκα ὑμῖν.... Unfortunately English translations usually fail to signal that this revelation from the Lord came through the apostles to Paul, as the Greek text clearly signals.

⁶⁹Pauline chronological issues surface with Paul's reference in 2 Cor. Secular history sources strongly suggest that Aretas did not have control over Damascus before 37 AD and that he died in 39/40 AD. If the term ὁ ἐθνάρχης Ἀρέτα τοῦ βασιλέως is taken to mean that the ἐθνάρχης was ruling Damascus in behalf of Aretas, then the dating for this escape must be after 37 AD, which is too late to work with a Pauline chronology system. On the other hand, if the ἐθνάρχης was merely representing the king to a colony of Nabateans living in Damascus when the Romans still controlled the city -- as is likely -- then the earlier time frame of about 36 AD is workable.

⁷⁰"Paul says to his adversaries in Corinth: If in anything one of them, e.g., a full Jew or a servant of Christ, can make bold assertions, he, Paul, can make similar bold assertions, 2 C. 11:21.¹⁸ *τολμᾶω* is used here in a form of speech which in the first instance implies courtesy to the one addressed. But the polite way of praising the opposite speaker shows ironically or sarcastically that his speech is presumptuous → lines 5 ff." [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 8:184-85.]

⁷¹"Paul sets out his position vis-à-vis the opponents in several ways: (a) they rule over the congregation (v 20), he is the Corinthians' sponsor as a bridegroom's agent (vv 2, 3); (b) where the Corinthians have been 'fleece,' Paul has proclaimed a 'free' Gospel (vv 7-11); (c) in place of enticing words which have ensnared the church members (v 18), Paul's message is the truth of Christ (v 10) and the only Gospel of God (vv 4, 7); (d) instead of self praise, Paul has come with a lowly posture (v 7a); (e) far from inflicting injury on them, he loves them (v 11)." [Ralph P. Martin, *Word Biblical Commentary: 2 Corinthians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 40: 361.]

knows that I do not lie.” (Εἰ καυχᾶσθαι δεῖ, τὰ τῆς ἀσθενείας μου καυχῆσομαι. ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ οἶδεν, ὁ ὢν εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι.)

What is described here is an intense effort by the unnamed *ethnarch*, representing the Nabatean King Aretas IV, to capture Paul at the end of the apostle’s time in Damascus. What is debated among scholars is the political role of the ὁ ἐθνάρχης at Damascus.⁷² The term literally means *ethnarch* and has a range of meanings.⁷³

⁷²Various translations either ignore the interpretive problem or else are ignorant of it in doing their translation. Consequently readers of the different translations are usually misled about the role of the ὁ ἐθνάρχης Ἀρέτα τοῦ βασιλέως at Damascus. Note: “the governor under King Aretas,” NRSV, NLT, NIV, NIV 1984, NIVUK, ESV, TEV, HCSB, LEB, NCV, TNIV, Wey, CEB; “the governor, under Aretas the king,” KJV, NKJV, ASV; “the governor of King Aretas,” Message; “the ruler under Aretas the king,” BBE; “the governor of the nation under Aretas the king,” D-R; “the governor who served under King Aretas,” NIV; “The governor of Damascus at the time of King Aretas,” CEV; “the town governor, acting by King Aretas’ order,” Phillips; “the leader of the people under King Aretas,” NLT; “el gobernador de la provincia del rey Aretas,” BR-V. RVC, R-V 1960, R-V 1995; R-V Antigua; “el gobernador del rey Aretas,” PDT; “el gobernador bajo el rey Aretas,” BdA, NBLH; “el gobernador que servía al rey Aretas,” DHH; “el gobernador bajo el mando del rey Aretas,” NTV, N; “le gouverneur du roi Arétas,” Segond 1910; “le gouverneur pour le roi Arétas,” Ostervald; “der Landpfleger des Königs Aretas,” Elberfelder 1905, Luther 1912; “der Statthalter des Königs Aretas,” Luther 1984, Menge-Bibel, Einheitsübersetzung, ZB, NGÜ; “der Bevollmächtigte des Königs Aretas,” GNB; “el capitán de la gente del rey Aretas,” Sagradas Escrituras 1569; “The provost of Damascus, of the king of the folk of Aretas [The provost, or keeper, of Damascus, of the king of the folk Arteas]” Wycliffe.

⁷³There are three main ways of understanding the historical background to v. 32, and they correspond to the three possible meanings of ἐθνάρχης.

1. Tribal chief. On this view the “ethnarch” was a Bedouin sheikh of some Nabatean tribe, lying in wait outside the walls of Damascus to arrest Paul when he exited.³⁰ But there are two difficulties: Paul’s escape down the city wall (v. 32) implies that the danger lay within the city, not outside; at this stage in their history the Nabateans were no longer nomadic (Riesner 85).

2. Governor (many EVV) or *viceroys* (Ogg 19, 22) or *prefect* (Meyer 666). In this case the assumption is that the whole city of Damascus was under Nabatean rule at the time and that the ethnarch was Aretas’s representative in that city.³¹ In support of this view it is argued (1) that ἐφοῦρει τὴν πόλιν suggests that the ethnarch exercised authority over the entire city, with ἐφοῦρει meaning “kept (the city of the Damascenes) with a garrison” (KJV);³² (2) that the absence of Roman coins in Damascus dating from A.D. 34–62 (including the reigns of Caligula [Gaius] and Claudius, A.D. 37–41 and A.D. 41–54 respectively) indicates non-Roman rule in Damascus during those years;³³ and (3) that Damascus may have been handed over to Nabatean sovereignty by Caligula between A.D. 37 and A.D. 40 to placate Aretas after the abortive campaign of Tiberius against Aretas.³⁴

Regarding these three points: (1) ἐφοῦρει τὴν πόλιν need mean nothing more than “kept the city under observation” (NEB, REB) or “was keeping a close watch on the city” (NAB1) or “had patrols out in the city” (Moffatt). But the Lukan parallel passage (Acts 9:24, “they were watching the gates”) suggests that Paul’s meaning may be “kept guards at the city gates” (NLT).³⁵ In any case, Paul did not say τὴν πᾶσαν πόλιν, and if the ethnarch controlled the city one wonders why an immediate arrest was not possible once Paul was found, without garrisoning the whole city. (2) The gap in the numismatic record is negative, and therefore indecisive, evidence. Moreover, Roman coins from Damascus are extremely rare even under Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero.³⁶ (3) If Damascus was in Nabatean hands at the time of Paul’s escape, it is uncertain how and when it ceased to be under Roman control.³⁷

3. Head of an ethnic community (cf. ἔθνος, “race,” “people” + ἄρχων, “ruler”). On this interpretation, the ethnarch was the head of a colony of Nabateans in Damascus, and in this capacity the representative of King Aretas in that city.³⁸ Several considerations support this view.

(a) The Jewish ἐθνάρχης in Alexandria performed a similar role, representing Jewish interests there (Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.117; Strabo 17.798).

(b) Nabatean governors bore the title στρατηγός, not ἐθνάρχης (Knauf 146 n. 6).

(c) Archaeology and topography have established the existence of a Nabatean quarter in the northeast sector of Damascus before the first century A.D.³⁹

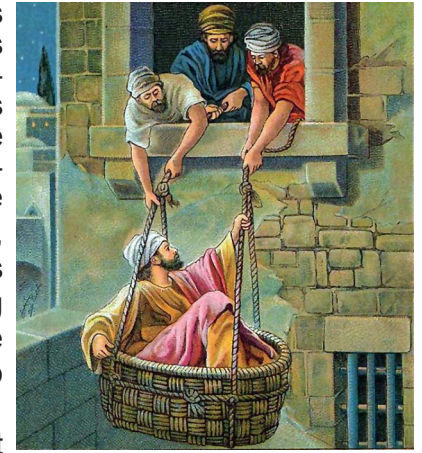
(d) Gal. 1:17 speaks of Paul’s return to Damascus from Arabia, which indicates that at least either at the time of his return (c. A.D. 35) or at the time of writing (c. A.D. 48 if early, c. A.D. 55 if late) Damascus was not under Nabatean control.⁴⁰

(e) Just as ἐφοῦρει need not indicate a formal garrisoning of the whole city of Damascus (see above under [2]), πιάσαι need not point to a formal arrest by a military commander, as if ἐθνάρχης were equivalent to στρατηγός. It may refer to a simple “seizing” by those guarding the city exits.⁴¹

If, with many EVV,⁴² we translate the genitive Ἀρέτα τοῦ βασιλέως by “under King Aretas,” “under” may have the sense “at the time of” or “appointed by” (Wand). But probably more is implied: the ethnarch was “acting for” Aretas (Isaacs) or even “acting by King Aretas’ order” (Phillips).⁴³ However that be, some reason must be given for the virulent opposition of Aretas or his ethnarch. It could have been prompted by Paul’s evangelistic activity in Damascus itself, but it seems more likely, in the light of Paul’s argument in Galatians 1, that his visit to Arabia (Gal. 1:17) was undertaken to begin fulfilling his commission to “preach him [the Son of God] among the Gentiles” (Gal. 1:16). Commenting on Gal. 1:16–17, Lake observes that “the antithesis is not between conferring with flesh and blood in Jerusalem, and conferring with God in the desert, but between obeying immediately the commission of God to preach to the Gentiles, and going to some human source in Jerusalem in order to obtain authority or additional instruction. St. Paul’s argument seems to me to require the sense ‘As soon as I received my divine commission, I acted upon it at once, without consulting any one, and began to preach in Arabia’” (320–21).⁴⁴

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Milton Keynes, Page 143

The issue arises because Damascus was under the direct control of the Romans until 37 AD, and afterwards it was controlled by the Nabateans for a few years until the Romans returned to power there.⁷⁴ The evidence clearly favors the understanding that the Romans controlled Damascus during the first half of the 30s and thus this representative of Aretas⁷⁵ was not a regional governor. Rather, he was the officially appointed representative of the large colony of Nabateans living in Damascus at this time, and his responsibility was primarily to help insure justice for them from the Roman authorities. Paul through his activity in Arabia, south of Damascus, had attracted enough attention to incur the anger of Aretas who had his representative post guards to try to catch Paul as he was leaving the city. This strongly supports the view that, during his time in Arabia outside Damascus, the apostle had vigorously preached the Gospel and thus stirred up political opposition to him.



Through the help of fellow Christians who had access to an apartment located on the city wall with openings (διὰ θυρίδος⁷⁶...διὰ τοῦ τείχους⁷⁷) through the wall, Paul was lowered in a basket to the ground during the middle of the night and managed to get away from the city undetected by these authorities. Paul's point in recalling this episode to the Corinthians is to stress that immediate compliance with the divine commissioning to preach the Gospel after his conversion also produced persecution from the beginning of his ministry. This kind of conflictive dynamic at the beginning was to shape the tone and tenor of Paul's entire Christian ministry. I'm not sure how most of us would respond were we to face something similar immediately after coming to Christ. Clearly Paul's steadfast commitment to serve the risen Christ in the face of such opposition reflects a serious commitment to the Lord in his encounter with Christ on the Damascus road. Paul's faith was not nurtured in isolation and through quiet contemplation. Rather it was ironed out in the hot fires of intense opposition and persecution from the very beginning. One can easily understand why Paul felt that ministry and suffering naturally go together. That was his experience from beginning to end in ministry.

UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 821-23.]

⁷⁴“ἐθνάρχης, ου, ὁ a title used w. var. mngs., but in gener. a pers. appointed to rule over a particular area or constituency on behalf of a king (Strabo 17, 1, 13; Ps.-Lucian, Macrob. 17; SEG XXVI, 1623, 25; OGI 616, 2f=στρατηγός νομάδων; epitaph in Dschize: ZDPV 20, 1897, 135; coins [Ztschr. f. Numismatik 35, 1903, 197ff]; 1 Macc 14:47; 15:1, 2; Jos., Bell. 2, 93, Ant. 14, 117; 19, 283. Cp. Philo, Rer. Div. Her. 279) **head of an ethnic community/minority, ethnic head/leader 2 Cor 11:32**.—ESchürer, StKr 72, 1899, 95ff, History I 333f, 12; TZahn, NKZ 15, 1904, 34ff; ESchwartz, GGN 1906, 367f; JStarcky, Dict. de la Bible, Suppl. VII '66, 915f; EKnauf, ZNW 74, '83, 145–47 (someth. like a consul). S. also Ἀρέτας.—M-M.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 276.]

⁷⁵“This Aretas was reigning at Petra from 9 B.C. to A.D. 39/40 (Steinmann, Aretas IV). He was the father-in-law of Herod Antipas who divorced Aretas' daughter to marry Herodias (Mark 6:17, 18), who was his niece and sister-in-law. Aretas was angry with this action, and took his revenge several years later. In A.D. 36 with Vitellius, Roman legate of Syria, who was also determined to settle a score against Herod who had gained favor with the emperor Tiberius at Vitellius' expense (Josephus Ant. 18.104, 5), Aretas moved. He invaded Petra where he defeated Herod's army (Ant. 18.116). Tiberius took this defeat as an insult to Rome's ally, so Vitellius was ordered to launch a reprisal against Aretas. But Tiberius' death in A.D. 37 prevented its being carried out. Aretas does not seem to have had control of Damascus, since Vitellius' route suggests that he had no need to oust Aretas from such a strategic city, and the Roman legions stationed in Syria would have deterred any precipitate adventure to gain the city. The absence of Roman coins between A.D. 34 and 62 seems to be a happenstance, and most modern historians do not use this negative factor to prove that Aretas was in control of Damascus, until the early years of Caligula's reign. This emperor showed a friendly attitude to Aretas, and present opinion (reported in Jewett, *A Chronology*, 30–33; yet challenged by Luedemann, *Paul*, 31; cf. Burchard, *Zeuge*, 150–58) is that Aretas' control of Damascus is to be dated from A.D. 37. Since Aretas died in A.D. 39/40, Paul's flight may be dated within this two year span (cf. Hughes' note, 424–28; Ogg, *Chronology*, 22, 23 agrees).” [Ralph P. Martin, *Word Biblical Commentary : 2 Corinthians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 40:385.]

⁷⁶“θυρίς, ἴδος, ἡ (s. θύρα) **window** (so Aristot.+; ins, pap, LXX; En 101:2; TestJos 14:1; JosAs; Philo, Plant. 169; Joseph.; loanw. in rabb.) καθέζεσθαι ἐπὶ τῆς θ. *sit at (in) the window Ac 20:9*. διὰ θυρίδος *through the window 2 Cor 11:33* (Palaeph. p. 20, 5; UPZ 15, 7; 53, 5; Josh 2:15; 1 Km 19:12; Jos., Bell. 6, 252, Ant. 6, 217; for related incidents, s. Wetstein: Athen. 5, 52, p. 214a and Plut., Aemil. Paul. 26, 269a). ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς θυρίδος AcPl Ox 6 recto, 5f (=Aa I 241, 12).—DELG s.v. θύρα. M-M. TW.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 462.]

⁷⁷“τείχος, ους, τό (Hom.+; loanw. in rabb.; ‘wall’, freq. designed for defense) **wall**, esp. city wall **Ac 9:25; 2 Cor 11:33** (διὰ τοῦ τείχους as Jos., Ant. 5, 15. Cp. Athen. 5, 214a κατὰ τῶν τευχῶν καθιμήσαντας φεύγειν; s. also Plut., Aemil. Paul. 269 [26]); **Hb 11:30; Rv 21:12, 14f, 17–19** (on assoc. w. pers. s. Reader, Polemo 264f, 375). Pl. of several circular walls surrounding the tower in Hermas: Hs 8, 2, 5; 8, 6, 6; 8, 7, 3; 8, 8, 3.—B. 472. DELG. M-M.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 994.]

4.2.0.1.3 Luke's Description: Acts 9:19b-25

For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, 20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." 21 All who heard him were amazed and said, "Is not this the man who made havoc in Jerusalem among those who invoked this name? And has he not come here for the purpose of bringing them bound before the chief priests?" 22 Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah.

23 After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, 24 but their plot became known to Saul. They were watching the gates day and night so that they might kill him; 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.

Ἐγένετο δὲ μετὰ τῶν ἐν Δαμασκῶ μαθητῶν ἡμέρας τινάς, 20 καὶ εὐθέως ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς ἐκήρυσσεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ. 21 ἐξίσταντο δὲ πάντες οἱ ἀκούοντες καὶ ἔλεγον· Οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πορθήσας ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο, καὶ ὧδε εἰς τοῦτο ἐληλύθει ἵνα δεδεμένους αὐτοὺς ἀγάγη ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς; 22 Σαῦλος δὲ μᾶλλον ἐνεδυναμοῦτο καὶ συνέχυνεν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους τοὺς κατοικοῦντας ἐν Δαμασκῶ, συμβιβάζων ὅτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ χριστός.

23 Ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἱκαναί, συνεβουλεύσαντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν· 24 ἐγνώσθη δὲ τῷ Σαύλῳ ἡ ἐπιβουλὴ αὐτῶν. παρετηροῦντο δὲ καὶ τὰς πύλας ἡμέρας τε καὶ νυκτὸς ὅπως αὐτὸν ἀνέλωσιν· 25 λαβόντες δὲ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ νυκτὸς διὰ τοῦ τείχους καθήκαν αὐτὸν χαλάσαντες ἐν σπυρίδι.

Luke's account of Paul's activity in Damascus after his conversion stresses different items than does Paul's in Galatians 1 and 2 Corinthians 11.⁷⁸ Our interest here is primarily on his departure from Damascus that surfaces in verses 23-25. The method of escape -- a basket through an opening on the city wall -- is the similar to Paul's account in 2 Cor. 11 although not quite the same terminology is used.⁷⁹ Luke stresses that Christian disciples in Damascus got Paul through the window and down to the ground outside the city wall, while Paul's use of the passive voice ἐχαλάσθη (I was lowered) does not identify who facilitated his escape.

But the source of the danger to Paul is different -- this is a major difference. In Acts, it is the Jewish opposition to his preaching the Gospel, while in 2 Corinthians it is government authorities. While not necessarily contradictory of one another, Paul emphasized the government opposition to him as a Christian preacher, while Luke stresses the Jewish synagogue opposition to Paul from religious differences. The common trait between both texts is that intense opposition to Paul arouse from his preaching of the Gospel. The Nabatean rulers didn't care for it because it evidently upset the pockets of Jewish communities present in these desert towns of Arabia. The Jewish synagogue leaders in Damascus were alarmed by the claims of Jesus being the Jewish Messiah.

The lingering insight from Paul's experience of leaving Damascus how he did is that sometimes opposition to us becomes most intense when it is religious in nature. It may or may not channel itself through official government structures in expressing hostility toward us. In Paul's experience it evidently was 'double barreled' in shooting at him. But when fired up by the perception that we are advocating something understood as heresy and potentially destructive, that opposing anger can quickly rise to a boiling level. What I have observed over my half a century plus of Gospel ministry is that the more legalistic a religious tradition the more intense becomes its opposition to any viewpoint different from its own. Paul passionately defended his understanding of the Gospel from the Hebrew Bible, especially from the Torah and from the Prophets. But his opponents read the same Bible

⁷⁸A major issue interpretatively is reconciling Luke's statement in Acts 9:19b, 22-23 with this statement by Paul in Gal. 1:17.

Luke: For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus, 20 and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God." . . . 22 Saul became increasingly more powerful and confounded the Jews who lived in Damascus by proving that Jesus was the Messiah. 23 After some time had passed, the Jews plotted to kill him, . . . 25 but his disciples took him by night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket. 26 When he had come to Jerusalem,

Paul: 16b I did not confer with any human being, 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

The simplest way to bring these two accounts together is to assume that Gal. 1:17 belongs in the Acts narrative sequence of events either just before Acts 9:23 or just before 9:22. Some limited early time was spent in Damascus before departing for Arabia, and some time after returning is assumed in order for the Jewish opposition against Paul to reach levels of plotting to kill him.

⁷⁹The terminology is similar but not exactly the same. Compare διὰ τοῦ τείχους (through the wall) in both Acts 9:25 with 2 Cor. 11:33. But what is missing in Acts is διὰ θυρίδος (through a window) that is found in 2 Corinthians.

The means of escape is αὐτὸν χαλάσαντες ἐν σπυρίδι (having lowered him in a basket) in Acts 9:25 and ἐν σαργάνῃ ἐχαλάσθη (I was lowered in a basket) in 2 Cor. 11:33. Luke uses the term σπυρίς for basket, while Paul describes it as a σαργάνη (rope basket). "The words used for basket in this passage and in 2 Corinthians 11.33 are two different words. The word used in 2 Corinthians refers to a large woven bag or basket which may be used for straw or for bales of wool; the basket here is made of similar material, but was probably smaller, though it was evidently large enough for a man to stand in." [Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 195.]

in radically different ways than he did and thus were convinced of the correctness of their interpretation and therefore of the falseness of his. The religious legalism of Paul's opponents grew out of a deep desire to "built a fence around the Torah" in order to protect it from being wrongly interpreted.⁸⁰ But the feeling of having to protect God's Word from corruption laid the foundation for a religious legalism that could easily brand any divergent viewpoint as dangerous and needing to be destroyed. Thus the apostle experienced the bitter sting of that very early in his service to Christ, and would suffer from its repeated attempts to 'bite' him hard until the day of his death at the hands of Emperor Nero in the mid 60s of the first century. Personally I feel enormously challenged by Paul's example of faithfulness to this ministry calling that was exhibited from the very beginning of his Christian life.

4.2.0.1.4 Luke's Description: Acts 26:19-20

"19 After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20 but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance."

19 Ὅθεν, βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα, οὐκ ἐγενόμην ἀπειθῆς τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὄπτασίᾳ, 20 ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐν Δαμασκῶ πρώτον τε καὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις, πᾶσάν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας, καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπήγγελλον μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας.

What the apostle asserted to King Agrippa was his faithfulness to obey what God told him to do in his conversion experience. The ministry calling is defined by Paul as τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὄπτασίᾳ, the heavenly vision.⁸¹ Paul wisely uses language here that his Gentile audience would understand and affirm.⁸² Clearly from Acts 9:1-9, his experience had centered in a resurrection appearance of Christ to Paul outside Damascus. Out of that encounter had come a commission to preach the Gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. This would have interested these non-Jewish rulers listening that day, that the God of the Jews would commission a Jew to bring a positive message to non-Jews. Not something they were accustomed to hearing from Jewish people.

Paul's response was -- in Luke's words -- not disobedience: οὐκ ἐγενόμην ἀπειθῆς τῇ οὐρανίῳ ὄπτασίᾳ.⁸³ With creativity, Paul affirms his passionate obedience to God's assignment. And he does so in language that Agrippa and Festus would have understood, and affirmed -- out of their pagan religious background of religious visionary language. Notice that the challenge of Paul by Festus in v. 24 was not that Paul was ignorant or disobedient to his God: "You are out of your mind, Paul! Too much learning is driving you insane!" μαινῆ, Παῦλε· τὰ πολλὰ σε γράμματα εἰς μανίαν περιτρέπτει. In Festus' mind this inspired prophet had lost touch with reality because of his education!⁸⁴

Paul asserts a consistency in his obedience from the beginning until the day of his appearance before Agrippa some twenty five or so years later: ἀλλὰ τοῖς ἐν Δαμασκῶ πρώτον τε καὶ Ἱεροσολύμοις, πᾶσάν τε τὴν

⁸⁰For details see the Jewish writing Aboth 1:1 and other related ancient Jewish texts. ["A Fence around the Torah," *elijah.net*]

⁸¹ὄπτασία is a Lucan word (Lk. 1:32; 24:23); also 2 Cor. 12:1. This Pauline passage is enough to show that Paul was not incapable of speaking of visions that he had received. See also (for the converting and appointing vision) Gal. 1:15f. οὐκ . . . ἀπειθῆς itself implies that the vision included a command. In the present passage this reflects the ἀποστέλλω of v. 17." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 1162.]

⁸²"The operative words are the mellifluous phrase about obedience to the celestial vision. Such visions could not be ignored with impunity. Examples were available to prod the recalcitrant.⁷⁹ Socrates was but one of those who justified their missions by reference to a divine injunction.⁸⁰ Paul's argument is framed in language that would be acceptable to a Greco-Roman audience." [Richard I. Pervo and Harold W. Attridge, *Acts: A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, Hermeneia--a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 634.]

⁸³"An example of Lucan *litotes*; BDR § 495:2, n. 9 lists as examples 12:18; 15:2; 19:11, 23, 24; 20:12; 21:39; 26:19, 26; 27:20; 28:2. The impression given here is of modesty on Paul's part, but in fact Luke seems use this mode of speech as a form of emphasis. Paul was wholeheartedly obedient." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 1162.]

⁸⁴"For the impression of madness cf. 1 Cor. 14:23 (μαίνεσθε); but it is learned, not enthusiastic, madness of which Festus accuses Paul. Cf. ἐμμαϊνόμενοι in v. 11 (with the note). Thus Bruce (1:448), 'The remark was not offensive; both μαίνομαι and μανία are cognate with μάντις, 'seer', 'inspired person'; he refers to Plato, Phaedrus 245a. Similarly Page (250) speaks of 'the philosophic 'madman', and quotes Phaedrus 249d. StrB 2:770 quote Targum Yerushalmi I on Num. 22:5: Balaam had become 'irrsinnig' (אִשְׁפָּח) because of the greatness of his learning. This rather flattering interpretation of Paul's 'philosophic' madness is not suitable to the present context. In the next verse Paul firmly rebuts the suggestion of madness; he is not what Festus says that he is. This also is against Schille's view (453) that for Luke the charge is a way of commending Paul's 'Schriftgelehrsamkeit'." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 1167.]

χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ἀπήγγελλον, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the Gentiles. In a pattern of expanding concentric circle like description, the apostle indicates that he proclaimed (ἀπήγγελλον) the assigned message first to Jews (Damascus, Jerusalem, and Judea) and then to Gentiles. This echoes the assertions elsewhere in both Acts and in Paul's writings that he was charged to preach the Gospel message to Jews and to Gentile. Perhaps it is most compactly stated in Rom. 1:16, Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι, For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Thus a pattern defining Paul's missionary strategy emerges here. Carry the Gospel message from place to place, first to the Jewish synagogue and then to the general public largely non-Jewish.

What was the message? Paul defines it as μετανοεῖν καὶ ἐπιστρέφειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἄξια τῆς μετανοίας ἔργα πράσσοντας, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance. This is consistent with Paul's words to the Galatians in 1:16: ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles.⁸⁵ In Luke's depiction, Paul's message parallels that of John the Baptizer in Luke 3:8, ποιήσατε οὖν καρποὺς ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας· καὶ μὴ ἄρξησθε λέγειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· Πατέρα ἔχομεν τὸν Ἀβραάμ, λέγω γὰρ ὑμῖν ὅτι δύναται ὁ θεὸς ἐκ τῶν λίθων τούτων ἐγεῖραι τέκνα τῷ Ἀβραάμ, Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. This intentional paralleling of Jesus, Peter, and Paul by Luke is one of the trademark characteristics of his gospel and Acts.⁸⁶

Paul's message was uniform. That is, he did not have one message for the Jews and a different one for the Gentiles. Salvation through Christ came the same way for both Jew and Gentile. It was this uniform message that aroused the ire of the Jews, which Paul mentions to Agrippa (v. 21): ἔνεκα τούτων με Ἰουδαῖοι συλλαβόμενοι ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ ἐπειρῶντο διαχειρίσασθαι, For this reason the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me.

4.2.0.2 First Trip to Jerusalem

After Paul's escape from Damascus he journeyed back to Jerusalem, but now as a Christian preacher of the Gospel under persecution from Jews and others. We don't know which of the two common routes, pictured on the map, that Paul took, but the approximately 150 mile trip did involve a journey of sev-



⁸⁵“So, after his conversion, he immediately proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God in Damascus (9:20), then in Jerusalem, during a short visit, to the Hellenistic Jews (9:29), and after that in many lands to Jews³² and especially to Gentiles. In Acts, in distinction from his letters, Paul is a missionary to Jews and Gentiles alike, a ‘world apostle.’³³ With his proclamation went the call to repent and turn to God,³⁴ and to perform deeds which were the natural fruit of true repentance. John the Baptist had called for such deeds on the part of his hearers, who declared their repentance by receiving baptism at his hands; it was incumbent on them to show the genuineness of this repentance by their subsequent way of life (Matt. 3:8 par. Luke 3:8). While Paul insists that it is ‘not because of works’ but through faith that men and women receive the saving grace of God, he equally insists that those who have received this saving grace are God’s ‘workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them’ (Eph. 2:8–10).” [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 468.]

⁸⁶“**Parallelism.** Luke makes extensive use of parallelism in his narrative. His habit of matching events and characters throughout the two volumes has frequently been noted. As Mary is overshadowed by the Holy Spirit in Luke 1:34–35, for example, so are Mary and the disciples overshadowed by the Spirit at the beginning of Acts (1:13–14; 2:1–4). Peter and Paul work similar miracles (Acts 3:1–10 and 14:8–11; 9:36–40 and 20:7–12), which in turn mirror the miracles of Jesus (Luke 5:17–26; 8:40–56). Peter and Paul face similar threats (Acts 8:9–13 and 19:13–19) and enjoy similar miraculous escapes (Acts 12:6–17 and 16:25–34). The trial of Stephen in Acts 6:8–15 overlaps that of Jesus in Luke 22:66–71, and the connection between them is rendered unmistakable by Acts 7:56 (cf. Luke 22:69). The ‘passion’ of Paul bears some resemblance to that of Jesus (see esp. Acts 21:1–14). By the device of parallelism, Luke accomplishes two things. First, he establishes connections among his main characters; second, he joins parts of his narrative together. Attempts to make parallelism (or *chiasmus*) the dominant architectonic element of his narrative, however, gain their plausibility by forcing the textual evidence (Morgenthauer 1949; Goulder 1964; Talbert 1974). They above all fail to reckon with the essentially linear character of Luke’s narrative.” [Luke Timothy Johnson, “Luke-Acts, Book of” In vol. 4, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 409–10.]

eral days.⁸⁷ When Paul arrived back in Jerusalem it was not to an open arms welcoming of him into the Christian community. A religious community feeling intense opposition from the Jewish authorities, instead, responded very cautiously.

In both Paul's writings and twice in Acts we find references to this trip back to Jerusalem. We will look at Galatians first as the primary source material, and then the two references in Acts as secondary source material. How these three accounts may possibly fit together will then be explored.

With each of the accounts, honest interpretation demands careful consideration of the literary and historical setting of each passage with the details inside the text being understood in light of the setting and the writing intention of each author. Otherwise, artificial structuring of details in comparison studies, and especially those with differing emphases, will be created in a way that results in false interpretation of each of the passages. Thus integrity in exegesis necessitates consideration of each text first separately and independently. Only after such an examination can we make a true comparison of the details of all three texts.

4.2.0.2.1 Paul's Description: Gal. 1:18-24

18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; 19 but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord's brother. 20 In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, 22 and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; 23 they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God because of me.

18 Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε· 19 ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου. 20 ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν, ἰδοὺ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι. 21 ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας. 22 ἤμην δὲ ἀγνωστὸς τῷ προσώπῳ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, 23 μόνον δὲ ἀκούοντες ἦσαν ὅτι Ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε νῦν εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν ἣν ποτε ἐπόρθει, 24 καὶ ἐδόξαζον ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸν θεόν.

Setting. In seeking to understand Paul's words to the Galatians about this trip to Jerusalem, one must keep his writing purpose clearly in mind. He sets it forth emphatically in 1:11-12.⁸⁸ This central thesis of the independency of his gospel message from human authorization is followed by a series of evidences of that independency in 1:12-2:21. These verses, 18-24, comprise the second and third of the five evidences of the independency of his apostleship, and subsequently of his message, from human authorization. With such a narrow objective in mind, one would not expect a full accounting of activities that took place while Paul was in Jerusalem. The historical aspect of this view is very secondary in importance to the religious purpose for alluding to it in Paul's mind.



Text Meaning. The reference to the Jerusalem trip is highlighted in verses 18 through 19, and the consequence of it in verses 22 through 24. Between these two segments in the reference to traveling back home to Tarsus (v. 21), and a solemn oath of truthful accuracy in his words (v. 20).

In the first sentence (vv. 18-19), Paul makes three claims:

- 1) Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν,
- 2) καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε·
- 3) ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου.

Let's take a look at each of them in order to get the picture.

1) Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas. The core expression is ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, where Paul says he went up to Jerusalem. One must remember the very Jewish orientation of this expression. Damascus lay 150 miles to the north

⁸⁷“The 150-mile journey from Jerusalem to Damascus can now be completed in one day, thanks to excellent roads. When Saul set out from Jerusalem with his escort, he had the choice of two routes: One went east down through the canyon called Wadi Qelt to Jericho, then turned north through the Jordan River valley. It crossed the river at Scythopolis (modern-day Beit Shean). This route would have taken Saul around the southern shores of the Sea of Galilee and up to the mountain roads linking the Decapolis with Damascus. In summer time it is hot and uncomfortable, lying far below sea-level until the area east of the Sea of Galilee is reached. The more frequented route moved through the khaki-colored hills of Samaria (the northern part of the West Bank/Palestine today), across the Jezreel Valley, then skirted the west shore of the Sea of Galilee, passing very near Capernaum, the base for Jesus' three-year ministry (irony!).” [“Paul's Missionary Journeys,” welcometohosanna.com]

⁸⁸**Gal. 1:11-12.** 11 For I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel that was proclaimed by me is not of human origin; 12 for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

11 Γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον· 12 οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό, οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

east of Jerusalem, and in modern expression we would not describe traveling southwest as ‘going up.’ But Jews in the ancient world always referred to a trip to Jerusalem as ‘going up’ regardless of the direction being traveled. Conversely, a trip out of Jerusalem in any direction was ‘going down.’⁸⁹ The verb use here is parallel to ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα in v. 17, and essentially the same as πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα in 2:1. Such terminology was theologically motivated rather than geographical. The temple was in Jerusalem and going toward the temple meant going up to where God dwelled on the earth. Leaving the temple meant going away from where God was in the temple, and thus was always ‘going down.’

When did Paul make this trip? He says Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία, *then after three years*. Three years after what? And ‘next’ after what? Although the phrase seems innocent enough, a huge interpretive battle has been fought over the past fifty plus years around the meaning these four Greek words. As a part of his argument Paul uses Ἐπειτα three times in 1:18, 21, and 2:1 to indicate subsequent events happening in succession to one another. Thus Paul indicates a trip to Jerusalem (v. 18), a trip to Syria and Cilicia (v. 21), and a trip to Jerusalem (2:1). Little problem exists with the first two of these, but -- as we will examine in detail in a subsequent chapter -- a large problem exists with the third one over whether this later trip to Jerusalem (2:1-10) relates to the so-called ‘famine relief’ visit mentioned in Acts 11:27-30 or the Jerusalem council visit of Acts 15:1-29. The impact of this on the dating of the Galatians letter is substantial, which ranges from the mid 40s at the close of the first missionary journey to the mid point of the third missionary journey in the mid 50s. Additionally the credibility of Paul is somewhat at stake here as well.⁹⁰

Context becomes very important to sorting out Paul’s meaning here in 1:18 and 1:21. In recounting his conversion experience in 1:15-17, the first two assertions, negative in nature, that are made are: εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι 17 οὐδὲ ἀνῆλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, *immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood, neither did I go up to Jerusalem to the apostles before me*. Instead, he went into Arabia and later returned to Damascus: ἀλλὰ ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν καὶ πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν (v. 17b). The ‘then’ (Ἐπειτα) signals that he did eventually decide to make a trip to Jerusalem. His initial rejection of the idea immediately after conversion was not a permanent decision, only a temporary one.⁹¹ Thus Ἐπειτα in 1:18 should be better translated to reflect a subsequent reversal of the decision to not go to Jerusalem. The more common pattern is ‘then’ in English, ‘darauf’ or ‘erst’ in German, ‘después’ in Spanish, and ‘plus tard’ in French.⁹²

The ‘after three years’ (μετὰ ἔτη τρία) can specify either three years of time or designate in the third year.⁹³ The usual understanding is that the starting point of the three years is Paul’s conversion, rather than his return to Damascus. And the same will be true for the subsequent Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν, *then after fourteen years again*, in 2:1. If, as we have reckoned in chapter three, that Paul’s conversion took place sometime in 33 AD, then this first trip to Jerusalem as a Christian occurred sometime in 35 to 36 AD.

⁸⁹“The prefix ἀνά (‘up’) of the aorist verb ἀνῆλθον conforms to the expression εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα (see also v 18), for one regularly ‘goes up’ to Jerusalem (cf. 2 Sam 8:7; Ezra 1:3; 7:7; 1 Esd 2:5; 1 Macc 4:36–37; 3 Macc 3:16; Mark 10:32–33; Luke 2:42; John 2:13; 5:1; Acts 11:2; 18:22; 21:12, 15; 24:11; 25:1, 9).” [Richard N. Longenecker, vol. 41, *Word Biblical Commentary : Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 33.]

⁹⁰“Ἐπειτα, ‘then’, ‘next’. This the first of three successive occurrences of ἔπειτα (cf. v 21; 2:1). The force of Paul’s argument here depends on his giving a consecutive account of his career since his conversion, with special reference to his visits to Jerusalem. His case would be weakened if his readers were given reason to suspect that he had omitted any material detail—it would be particularly suspicious if he omitted a visit to Jerusalem.” [F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982), 97.]

⁹¹“Then’ (ἔπειτα) indicates that he considers this visit to be part of another period,¹⁹² and not part of the reaction to the vision of Christ.” [Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians : A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 76.]

⁹²Bible translators are often in a dilemma over how to best translate Ἐπειτα, and thus handle it in different ways: then (KJV, RSV, NRSV, ASV, NASB, BBE, D-RV, ESV, HCSB, LEB, NIV, NIV 1984, NIV-UK, TNIV, NKJV, Wey, 21stCKJV, CEB); do not translate it (NLT, NCV, Message); later (TEV, CEV, Phillips); afterward (Wycliffe); Darnach (Luther 1545); Danach (Luther 1984); Darauf (Elberfelder 1905; Elberfelder 1995; Menge; Schlachter); Erst (HOF, GNB; NLB); no translation (Einheitsübersetzung); Dann erst (ZB); Entonces (BdA, NBLH); Depués (R-VA); Después (BR-V 1960, BR-V 1995, R-VC, PDT, NVI, DHH.); más tarde (Castilian); luego (NTV); plus tard (Segond 1910, BS, NEG 1979, Segond 21).

⁹³“The exact length of the interval can not be determined from this phrase, which is probably a round number (cf. Acts 20:31, and with it Acts 19:8, 10, 22). In reckoning the years of their kings the later Jews apparently counted the years from one New Year’s Day, the 1st of Abib (or Nisan) to another, and the fraction of a year on either side as a year. See Wieseler, *Chronological Synopsis of the Four Gospels*, pp. 53 ff. But we do not know that Paul would have followed the same method in a statement such as this. It is not possible in any case to determine how large a part of the three years was spent in Arabia.” [Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1920), 59.]

Paul indicates his objective for the trip: εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, [to Jerusalem to visit Cephas](#). In the Greek New Testament, the word for Jerusalem is spelled differently: τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα, ἡ Ἱεροσόλυμα, ἡ Ἱεροσάλημα, and ἡ Ἱερουσαλήμ.⁹⁴ Such variations in spelling geographical names with a non-Greek or non-Latin origin are common in ancient Greek, in that they generally reflect efforts to reproduce a phonetic equivalent sound in Greek from the source language of the name. And different writers understood the sounds differently.

His desire was to get acquainted with Peter, the leader of the Twelve in Jerusalem. ἱστορῆσαι from ἱστορέω is only found this one time in the New Testament.⁹⁵ The noun form ἱστορία with the meaning of inquiry or story underscores an investigation to discover information, and thus clearly signals that Paul's visit was not intended as a social call, but rather as an meeting to learn about Peter and his understanding of the Gospel. Contrary to some interpretive streams that clearly are contradicted by the larger context of 1:11-2:21 in Galatians, Paul had no intention of receiving formal instruction or authorization for his ministry from Peter.⁹⁶ This was an informal visit for Paul to meet the acknowledged leader of the Christian movement in Jerusalem and to hear his understanding of the Gospel.



Why does Paul call Peter Κηφᾶν, [Cephas](#)? Cephas is the Aramaic equivalent of Peter.⁹⁷ The Greek name Πέτρος is much more commonly used by the writers of the New Testament with Κηφᾶς only used by Paul and one time in John 1:42 by Jesus.⁹⁸ In Galatians with the strong emphasis on Peter's role in Jewish Christianity and [Paul's in Gentile Christianity](#), it seems somewhat natural for Paul to use one of Peter's Jewish names, especially

⁹⁴“Ἱεροσόλυμα, τὰ and ἡ (also Ἱερ-, Ἱεροσάλημα [GJs 20:4 pap]) and Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἡ indecl. (also Ἱερ-; ἐλλῆσῆ, ἐλλῆσῆ) **Jerusalem**. On the breathing s. B-D-F §39, 1; Mlt-H. 101; on the form of the name s. B-D-F §56, 1 and 4; W.-S. §10, 3; Mlt-H. 147f; Ramsay, Exp. 7th ser., 3, 1907, 110ff, 414f; Harnack, D. Apostelgesch. 1908, 72ff; RSchütz, ZNW 11, 1910, 169–87; JJeremias, ZNW 65, '74, 273–76; GKilpatrick, NovT 25, '83, 318–26; DSylva, ZNW 74, '83, 207–21.—τὰ Ἱεροσόλυμα (Polyb. 16, 39, 4; Diod S 34 + 35, Fgm. 1, 1; 2; 3; 5; Strabo 16, 2, 34; 36; 40; Appian, Syr. 50 §252; Cass. Dio 37, 15; 17; Timochares [II B.C.]: 165 Fgm. 1 Jac. [in Eus., PE 9, 35]; Ps.-Hecataeus: 264 Fgm. 21, 197 Jac. [in Jos., C. Ap. 1, 197]; Agatharchides [II B.C.]: 86 Fgm. 20a, 209 Jac. [in Jos., C. Ap. 1, 209]; Manetho [III B.C.]: 609 Fgm. 10 a, 241 Jac. [in Jos., C. Ap. 1, 241 al.]; Lysimachus [I B.C.–I A.D.]: 621 Fgm. 1, 311 Jac. [in Jos., C. Ap. 1, 311]; PGM 13, 997; LXX in Apoc. [Thackeray 168]; EpArist 32; 35; 52; Philo, Leg. ad Gai. 278; Joseph. [Niese index]; Just. [9 times]) is the form found in Mt (the sole exception 23:37 is fr. a quot.), Mk and J; it is also found in Lk and Ac, as well as **Gal 1:17f; 2:1**; PtK 4 p. 15, 35.—πᾶσα Ἱεροσόλυμα **Mt 2:3**; GEb 13, 78; seems to go back to a form ἡ Ἱεροσόλυμα, ης (cp. Pel.-Leg. 14, 14 πᾶσα [ἡ] Ἱεροσόλυμα; Tob 14:4; s. B-D-F §56, 4.—S. also PGM 4, 3069 ἐν τῇ καθαρᾷ Ἱεροσολύμῳ and 13, 233 ἐν Ἱερωσολύμῳ).—ἡ Ἱερουσαλήμ (predom. in LXX; pseudopigr.; Philo, Somn. 2, 250; Just. [22 times apart from quot.]; Mel. [consistently].—Jos., C. Ap. 1, 179 Clearchus [Fgm. 7] is quoted as reporting remarks of his teacher Aristotle in which the latter uses the form Ἱερουσαλήμη [doubted by Niese; Eus., PE 9, 5, 6 has the same quot. fr. Clearchus w. the form Ἱερουσαλήμ] besides Mt 23:37 (s. above) in Lk, Ac (s. P-LCouchoud/RStahl, RHR 97, 1928, 9–17), predom. in Paul, **Hb 12:22; Rv**; 1 Cl 41:2; Judaicon 20, 71; GPT; εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ AcPl Ha 8, 30 (Ἱεροσόλυμα BMM verso 1).—Mostly without the art. (PsSol; GrBar prol. 2; AscIs), s. B-D-F §261, 3; 275, 2; W.-S. §18, 5e; w. the art. only **J 2:23; 5:2; 10:22; 11:18; cp. Ac 5:28; Gal 4:25f; Rv 3:12**. No certain conclusions can be drawn concerning the use of the two forms of the name (they are used in the same immediate context by Hecataeus [264 Fgm. 21 Jac., in Eus., PE 9, 4, 2 v.l.]); the mss. vary considerably in their practice.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 470-71.]

⁹⁵ἱστορέω (s. next entry) fut. ἱστορήσω; 1 aor. ἱστόρησα; pf. ptc. gen. pl. ἱστορηκότων (Ath. 30, 3); pf. pass. 3 sg. ἱστόρηται 1 Esdr 1:31 (Aeschyl., Hdt. et al. in the sense ‘inquire’, etc.; ins, pap, 1 Esdr, Just., Ath.) **visit** (for the purpose of coming to know someone or someth.: Plut., Thes. 30, 3, Pomp. 640 [40, 2], Lucull. 493 [2, 9], Mor. 516c; Epict. 2, 14, 28; 3, 7, 1; OGI 694; Sb 1004; PLond III, 854, 5 p. 206 [I A.D.]; Jos., Bell. 6, 81, Ant. 1, 203 a monument) ἱστορήσαι Κηφᾶν *to make the acquaintance of Cephas* **Gal 1:18** (GKilpatrick, TManson memorial vol., ed. AHiggins '59, 144–49 ‘to get information from’; against him OHofius, ZNW 75, '84, 73–85 [reff.]; but s. JDunn, ibid. 76, '85, 138f. Cp. Ac 17:23 v.l. [Clem. Al., Strom. 1, 19 p. 58, 20 St.]).—DELG s.v. οἶδα. M-M. TW. Sv.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 483.]

⁹⁶“Much speculation has been spent on the term ἱστορεῖν, usually without considering the literary context and function of the passage. To be sure, Paul wants to rule out that it was at this occasion that he received instruction (cf. 1:12) about the gospel or Jesus.¹⁹⁶ An informal ‘visit’ to the famous Cephas by the Apostle is quite understandable after all these years, and it does not put into question the contention that he received the gospel from divine revelation and not from human sources.¹⁹⁷” [Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians : A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 76.]

⁹⁷“Κηφᾶς, ᾧ, ὁ (כִּפְאֵי ‘rock’) **Cephas**, Aram. surname of Simon; the Gk. form of the surname is Πέτρος (s. the lit. on πέτρα 1b and Πέτρος) **1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; 15:5; Gal 1:18; 2:9, 11, 14**; 1 Cl 47:3. K=Πέτρος J 1:42 (s. JFitzmyer, To Advance the Gospel, '81, 112–24).—M-M. EDNT. TW.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 544.]

⁹⁸**John 1:42**, He brought Simon to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are **Simon** son of John. You are to be called **Cephas**” (which is translated **Peter**).

ἤγαγεν αὐτὸν πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἶπεν· σὺ εἶ **Σίμων** ὁ υἱὸς Ἰωάννου, σὺ κληθήσῃ **Κηφᾶς**, ὃ ἐρμηνεύεται **Πέτρος**.

the one that Jesus gave to him.⁹⁹ One can only imagine the awkwardness of this meeting, especially when they first made contact. Where the meeting took place is not indicated, although by implication from Paul's statement it was wherever Peter was staying in the city. We know clearly from the gospels that he had a home at Capernaum in Galilee, but nothing is ever mentioned about a residence in Jerusalem.

2) καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε, and I remained with him fifteen days. This second claim of Paul stresses the brevity of the visit with Peter in Jerusalem.¹⁰⁰ Such an emphasis is consistent with Paul's objective in Gal. 1:11-2:21 of minimizing his contact with the Twelve apostles in the early years of ministry. These two men had much to discuss. Peter very likely was keenly aware of Paul's trip to Damascus in persecuting Christians, and also had been informed of what had happened to Paul the three years previous to this visit. It would take time for both men to begin to feel comfortable with one another.¹⁰¹ This short two week visit laid the foundation for a developing relationship over the next thirty years when their paths would occasionally cross.

3) ἔτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου, but I did not see any other apostle, except I did see James the Lord's brother. This third claim is again consistent with Paul's writing objective here, but becomes problematic when we compare it with Luke's account in Acts 9 (see below discussion).

⁹⁹Paul mentions Cephas (Peter) as a leading Christian personality several times in Galatians. When he first traveled to Jerusalem, it was for the purpose of visiting Cephas (1:18). Cephas appears at that time to have been the leading man among the apostles (1:19). At the so-called Apostolic Council (2:1–10) Cephas appears behind James and before John as one of the 'pillars' who concluded the agreement with Paul and Barnabas (2:9). This agreement charged him with the responsibility for the mission to the Jews (2:7–8, where his name is Peter [on this problem see below on 2:7]). Later at Antioch (2:11–14) Paul confronted Cephas in that severe conflict which led to their separation. Cephas' influence is further attested by the existence of a Cephas group in Corinth (1 Cor 1:12; on this see the article by Vielhauer mentioned below). The figure of Cephas-Peter in other parts of primitive Christian literature is informed mostly by legend, and reliable historical data are scarce. John 1:35–42, a section which perhaps depends on reliable sources, gives his name as 'Simon the son of John' (v.l. 'the son of Jona'),¹⁹⁸ and his and his brother's home village as Bethsaida.¹⁹⁹ The two brothers, Simon and Andrew, are said to have been disciples of John the Baptist before they became disciples of Jesus. Simon was married (Mark 1:29–31; 1 Cor 9:5), and owned a house at Capernaum (Mark 1:29), which may have been found by recent excavations. His profession may have been that of a fisherman (Mark 1:16 par.; Luke 5:2; John 21:3). "Cephas" is an honorific name (Aramaic כֶּפַח "rock"; Greek πέτρα, transcribed as Κηφᾶς and rendered into Greek as Πέτρος, Latin *Petrus*, English 'Peter'). When and why Simon received this name is described by the legend of his vocation (Matt 16:16–19).²⁰⁰ After Jesus' death Cephas may have been the first to see the risen Jesus in a vision (1 Cor 15:5; Luke 24:34). He appears as the first leader of the church in Jerusalem (Gal 1:18; Acts 1:15, and *passim*). His death as a martyr is attested in the New Testament (cf. John 21:18–19; 1 Pet 5:1 [?]; 2 Pet 1:14; see also 1 Clem, 5.1–7). The tradition has Rome as the place of martyrdom (most probable), but it could be also Asia Minor and Syria (less probable). Whether the 'tomb of Peter' found under the Vatican is historical, or what is historical about it, is still doubtful in spite of all the publicity. The date of Cephas' death is also uncertain. The anti-Pauline literature included in the pseudo-Clementines show Peter, together with James, as the main opponents of Paul. This situation is consciously seen in harmony with Galatians, and indeed it may be historical." [Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 76-77.]

¹⁰⁰καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε, 'and stayed with him fifteen days.' The preposition πρὸς with the accusative to mean 'with' is probably a colloquialism of Koine Greek (cf. Mark 6:3, πρὸς ἡμᾶς, 'with us'; John 1:1, πρὸς τὸν θεόν, 'with God'; 1 John 1:2, πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, 'with the Father'). 'Fifteen days' with Peter is in contrast to 'three years' absence from Jerusalem, thereby highlighting the comparatively short period of time and suggesting how impossible it is from that to conceive of Paul as a disciple of Peter. Certainly an informal visit with the foremost disciple of Jesus three years after Paul's dramatic conversion carries no idea of subordination or dependence. It is of itself quite understandable without any onerous implications for Paul's apostolic integrity. In fact, one could wonder why it did not happen sooner." [Richard N. Longenecker, vol. 41, *Word Biblical Commentary: Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 37.]

¹⁰¹"On the other hand, though Paul did not go up to Jerusalem διδαχθῆναι ('to be taught') by Peter, but ἱστορῆσαι Κηφᾶν, "'o get acquainted with Cephas,' that does not mean, as F. J. A. Hort concluded, that he only went "to 'explore' St. Peter, to find out how he would be disposed to treat the persecutor now become a champion" (*Judaistic Christianity*, 56). With Paul's stress on the unity of believers in Christ (cf. 3:26–29; see also 1 Cor 1:10ff.; 12:12ff., *passim*), it is quite understandable that he would at some time want to establish fellowship with Peter. The fact that he waited three years before making the attempt need not indicate either aloofness from or disagreement with Peter. As A. S. Peake observed: "Jerusalem would not be the safest place for Paul to visit after he had not merely failed to fulfill his commission from the High Priest but had gone over to the Christians" (*Paul and the Jewish Christians*, 8 n. 1). Furthermore, while being with the acknowledged leader among Jesus' earthly companions, Paul could not have failed to be interested in a firsthand account of Jesus' earthly life (cf. G. D. Kilpatrick, "Galatians 1:18 *ΙΣΤΟΡΗΣΑΙ ΚΗΦΑΝ*," 144–49). Certainly their fifteen days together were not spent 'talking about the weather.' They discussed, without a doubt, matters pertaining to their common commitment to Christ. And it is not beyond the range of reasonable probability to believe that such discussions included Peter's accounts of Jesus' ministry, and that from such accounts Paul learned much. But to learn about the details of Jesus' earthly life from Peter and to be subordinate to or dependent on Peter for his apostleship and Gentile mission are clearly quite different matters. Paul is willing to acknowledge the former, but he is adamant in his rejection of the latter." [Richard N. Longenecker, vol. 41, *Word Biblical Commentary: Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 37-38.]

Paul underscores that he did not see personally (οὐκ εἶδον) the rest of the Twelve during this two week visit with Peter. Our modern tendency would be to imagine a big ceremony arranged by the apostles in Jerusalem in order to officially welcome Paul into the Christian community with opened arms in gratefulness to God for turning this persecutor into a preacher. For Paul this visit was a brief, get acquainted with meeting with Peter as the leader of the Christian movement and of the Twelve. As such, it was critical for Paul in finding acceptance into the Christian community after the years of being its persecutor. If the leader accepted Paul's conversion and calling from God, then acceptance by the larger Christian community would be assured. If not, then acceptance by the community in Jerusalem would be virtually impossible.

Why there was not contact with the other apostles during this visit is not explained. All kinds of conjectures have been put forth, but none have any evidence behind them.¹⁰² One should not overlook a couple of aspects of the scenario for Paul in Jerusalem at this point. First, the Jewish leadership certainly would not have been happy to see him back in town, since he 'betrayed' his written mission to bring Christians back to Jerusalem for prosecution by the authorities. To show up in the one larger assembly place of the 'upper room' (cf. Acts 1:12-14) that was large enough for a moderately sized group to gather together in one place would have exposed him to unnecessary danger to the Jewish authorities. Clearly the other large meeting place for the Christians in the outer court of the temple would have been off limits. For Paul's safety only meetings in small groups would have worked, especially in light of the recent Jewish attempts to arrest him in Damascus (cf. Acts 9:23-25). Thus a private meeting that focused on the leader of Christianity seems to be the better option. And it extended over a two week period, thus providing ample opportunity for these two men to thoroughly discuss their individual concerns.

Additionally the identity of James is problematic, regarding whether or not Paul calls him an apostle or not. The language of Paul is not clear even in the Greek about the status of James: εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου, **except James the Lord's brother**. What Paul clearly asserts is that he did see James as well as Peter during that two week period. The vagueness of the Greek construction has created the view that Paul calls James an apostle here. Clearly then by this point in the late 30s -- as Luke makes abundantly clear in the Acts 15 meeting in Jerusalem in the mid to late 40s -- James stood as the spiritual leader of the Christian community in Jerusalem. The apostles' leadership was in the process of shifting to a regional leadership of the growing movement not only in Jerusalem but as it began to spread beyond the city into the surrounding territory, as Acts 7-12 illustrate. In Acts, James¹⁰³ is called an 'elder,' πρεσβύτερος (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18), not an 'apostle,' ἀπόστολος. And it is clear that he functioned as the 'senior pastor' of the other house church leaders in the city. Thus not only was it proper protocol for Paul to meet him, but very important to establish a relationship with this local leader of the Christian movement. This would be significant, because in the Acts narratives from chapter twelve onward whenever Paul came into Jerusalem he always met with James. Given the grammatical nature of Paul's statement in Greek, one does not need to conclude that Paul considered him an apostle. The best understanding of the statement is that Paul saw Peter but none of the other apostles. And as an after thought he did see James, the other acknowledged leader of the Christian movement in Jerusalem.¹⁰⁴ Although many challenge

¹⁰²Paul does not explain why he saw no other apostle during his visit; the other apostles may not have been present in Jerusalem at the time, possibly being engaged in missionary work in Judaea,¹⁷ but it is best not to conjecture." [Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 75.]

¹⁰³Ἰάκωβος, ου, ὁ (Grecized form of the preceding, W-S. §10, 3; EpArist 48; 49. Oft. in Joseph., even for the patriarch [s. Ἰακώβ]). In the spelling Ἰάκουβος: POxy 276, 5 [77 A.D.]; BGU 715 II, 11; 1 Esdr 9:48) **James** (for the history of this name s. OED s.v. James).

...
"4. the Lord's brother (Jos., Ant. 20, 200), later head of the Christian community at Jerusalem, confused w. 2 at an early date; **Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3; 1 Cor 15:7; Gal 1:19; 2:9, 12; Ac 12:17; 15:13; 21:18**; GHb 361, 7 (Lat.); probably Papias 2:4. This J. is certainly meant **Js 1:1** (MMeinertz, D. Jk u. sein Verf. 1905; AMeyer, D. Rätsel des Jk 1930); **Jd 1**; and perh. GJs 25:1 in title and subscr.—GKit-tel, D. Stellg. des Jak. zu Judentum u. Heidenchristentum: ZNW 30, '31, 145–57, D. geschichtl. Ort des Jk: ibid. 41, '42, 71–105; KA-land, D. Herrenbr. Jak. u. Jk: Neut. Entwürfe '79, 233–45; GKittel, D. Jak. u. die Apost. Väter: ZNW 43, '50/51, 54–112; WPrentice, in Studies in Roman Economic and Social Hist. in honor of AJohnson '51, 144–51; PGaechter, Petrus u. seine Zeit '58, 258–310; DLittle, The Death of James: The Brother of Jesus, diss. Rice Univ. '71; WPratscher, Der Herrenbruder Jakobus u. die Jakobustradition '87."

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 464.]

¹⁰⁴James was perhaps already the leader of one group in the Jerusalem church. About nine years later 'James and the brethren' seem to form a distinct group from those associated with Peter (Acts 12:17). James's influence was destined to increase rapidly until he became the acknowledged leader of the Jerusalem church as a whole, taking precedence even over Cephas/Peter (see 2:9, 12 below, with notes *ad loc.*). This is the more remarkable because the references to Jesus' family in the gospel tradition (both Markan and Johannine)

this conclusion,¹⁰⁵ it is, none the less, consistent with the grammar and the historical situation.¹⁰⁶

Who was this James? Paul speaks of him as τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου, the *Lord's brother*. The very unscriptural view of Mary that emerges some centuries later that she was a 'perpetual virgin' creates an impossible dilemma here for Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox readers. Consequently all kinds of attempts are made to get around this clearly defined reference that James and Jesus were both children of Mary.¹⁰⁷ But clearly in the New Testament, Mary gave birth to four sons and an unspecified number of daughters.¹⁰⁸ During Jesus' earthly ministry his family was not particularly sympathetic to his ministry, but after the resurrection they became a part

imply that they were far from being followers of his during his ministry. 'Even his brothers', says the fourth Evangelist, 'did not believe in him' (Jn. 7:5), and we should gather as much from Mk. 3:21, 31–35. But according to Paul (1 Cor. 9:5) and Luke (Acts 1:14) they had a distinct place among his followers from the early post-resurrection period onwards. If it be asked how this change in their attitude came about, at a time when Jesus' shameful death might well have confirmed in their minds the misgivings which they had felt about him all along, Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 15:7, that Christ in resurrection 'appeared to James', points to the answer." [F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982), 99–100.]

¹⁰⁵The other text often appealed to in favor of Paul labeling James as an apostle is 1 Cor. 15:4–8. Here Paul describes six resurrection appearances of Jesus to various groups: ὄφθη Κηφᾶ (was seen by Cephas); εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα (then by the Twelve); ἔπειτα ὄφθη ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ (then he was seen by 500 brethren at once); ἔπειτα ὄφθη Ἰακώβῳ (then he was seen by James); εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν (then by all the apostles); ὄφθη κάμοι (was seen by me). If the first two (Peter and the Twelve) parallel the fourth and fifth set (James and the apostles), then Paul is clearly using the term ἀποστόλοις with a wider meaning than the Twelve. But this explanation fails on the basis of not being the most natural reading of the text where τοῖς δώδεκα and τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν simply designate multiple appearances to the Twelve with some present at one appearance and all present later on. This is consistent with the Synoptic Gospel accounts.

What is incidentally interesting here is that the reference of the resurrection appearance to James by Jesus is only found here in the New Testament. One can well imagine that Paul learned this directly from James either in this initial visit with James or else from one of the subsequent visits with him while Paul was in the city.

¹⁰⁶"This final clause of v 19, introduced by the words *ei mê* and apparently simple and straightforward, is in fact difficult to interpret and thus to translate. To no small extent the way in which the Galatians will have understood the clause is certain to have depended on the tone of voice employed by Paul's messenger in reading it aloud, a factor inaccessible to us. There are two major alternatives:

"(a) Taking the words *ei mê* to mean 'except,' one would have an instance in which Paul is admitting to an exception:

I saw none of the other apostles; well, true enough, I did see one of them, namely James.

"We might compare 1 Cor 1:14, where Paul again follows a denial with a clause introduced by *ei mê*: 'I am thankful that I did not baptize a single one of you! Oh yes, true enough, I did baptize Crispus and Gaius.' In both of these instances Paul may intend grudgingly to admit that he has to reckon with one or more exceptions to the claim he makes in the major clause (in 1 Cor 1:14 Crispus and Gaius; in Gal 1:19 James). On this reading Paul considers James to be an apostle, and he admits that, in regard to James, his claim in the preceding clause has to be qualified.

"(b) But the Greek expression *ei mê* can also denote contrast; taking it in that meaning, one arrives at a different paraphrase:

I saw none of the other apostles, and thus I cannot be said to have received instruction from them; but, by contrast, leaving aside the category of the apostles, I did see James."

[J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 173–74.]

¹⁰⁷"There is a disagreement among early Christian writers about the exact relation which those 'brothers' bore to Jesus. Tertullian (*Adv. Marc.* 4:19; *De Car.* 7) appears to have regarded them as uterine brothers, the sons of Joseph and Mary; others, like the author of the *Protoevangelium of James* (9:2), took them to be sons of Joseph by a previous marriage. This latter view was defended by Epiphanius in a letter subsequently incorporated in *Haer.* 78. The view that they were uterine brothers was explicitly affirmed about AD 380 by Helvidius of Rome, who disapproved of the prevalent tendency to exalt virginity above marriage and child-bearing. Helvidius was answered in 383 by Jerome (*Adversus Helvidium de perpetua virginitate beatae Mariae*), who propounded a third view—that the Lord's ἀδελφοί were actually his first cousins, the sons of Alphaeus by 'Mary of Cleopas', whom he inferred from Jn. 19:25 to be the Virgin's sister (cf. Mk. 15:40). This view, as Jerome claimed, safeguarded the perpetual virginity not only of Mary but also of Joseph. It is plain that the controversy was occasioned rather by considerations of theological propriety than by a concern for historical fact. J. B. Lightfoot conveniently distinguishes the three principal views just listed as the Epiphanian, the Hevidian and the Hieronymian ('The Brethren of the Lord', *Galatians*, 252–291). See also R. E. Brown, K. P. Donfried, J. A. Fitzmyer, J. Reumann (ed.), *Mary in the NT* (London, 1978), 65–72, 270–278." [F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians : A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982), 99.]

¹⁰⁸**Mark 6:3**, Is not this the carpenter, *the son of Mary and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon, and are not his sisters here with us?* And they took offense at him. οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τέκτων, ὁ υἱὸς τῆς Μαρίας καὶ ἀδελφὸς Ἰακώβου καὶ Ἰωσήφου καὶ Ἰούδα καὶ Σίμωνος; καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ ὧδε πρὸς ἡμᾶς; καὶ ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ.

See also **Matthew 13:55–56a**, 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not *his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?* 56 *And are not all his sisters with us?* 55 οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοῦ τέκτονος υἱός; οὐχ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ λέγεται Μαρίας καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ Ἰάκωβος καὶ Ἰωσήφ καὶ Σίμων καὶ Ἰούδας; 56 καὶ αἱ ἀδελφαὶ αὐτοῦ οὐχὶ πᾶσαι πρὸς ἡμᾶς εἰσιν;

of the circle of followers of Jesus, with James (and Jude) emerging as Christian leaders.¹⁰⁹

Following these three basic claims, Paul then (v. 20) does something considered normal in ancient Judaism; he swears under oath that he is correctly relating these events: ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν, ἰδοὺ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι, *In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!* What motivates this is not explained by Paul,¹¹⁰ but it does clearly signal that his relationship with the apostles and James in Jerusalem had been somehow called into question by the Judaizing teachers who were operating among the churches of Galatia. Whether or not his opponents were charging that his teaching was contradicted by the leaders in Jerusalem is not clear, but they seemed to be claiming that their version of the gospel was the correct one. And that it perhaps had the backing of the apostles in Jerusalem. But the logic of Paul's defense of his gospel and apostleship does not counter such a charge of distance between Paul and the leaders in Jerusalem. Instead, it is predicated on the claim that his message came directly from God by divine revelation (cf. 1:11-12). Further, it then did not depend on apostolic authorization for its validity. To be sure, especially in 2:1-10, Paul does claim their acceptance of his understanding of the Gospel in the same way it is affirmed by Luke in Acts 15:1-29. Irregardless of the underlying dynamic motivating the oath here, Paul felt compelled to assert to the Galatians that the brief depiction of the meeting with only Peter and James over a two week period on this first trip to Jerusalem was correct.

Further confirmation of the very brief meeting only with Peter and James is made by Paul at the end of this passage in vv. 22-24: 22 ἤμην δὲ ἀγνοοῦμενος τῷ προσώπῳ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, 23 μόνον δὲ ἀκούοντες ἦσαν ὅτι ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε νῦν εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν ἣν ποτε ἐπόρθει, 24 καὶ ἐδόξαζον ἐν ἔμοι τὸν θεόν, 22 and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; 23 they only heard it said, "The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy." 24 And they glorified God because of me. What Paul indicates is that in this very brief visit to Jerusalem the Christian communities scattered over the province of Judea, where Jerusalem was located, did not personally interact with him. But word spread extensively about his conversion. And this prompted grateful joy and praise to God that their old enemy was now preaching the very Gospel he had tried to stamp out.

The language used by Paul, ἤμην ἀγνοοῦμενος τῷ προσώπῳ, carries with it the idiomatic sense of *'they did not know what I looked like.'*¹¹¹ What did he look like? Later church tradition suggests that Paul was far from a handsome person whose physical appearance would have been easily remembered.¹¹² The apostle's point in this statement, however, is not to stress that these believers could have given a physical description of him from having seen him. Rather, it is to claim that he had no physical contact with these Christian communities across the region of Judaea during this first visit to Jerusalem.

The way Paul refers to the churches needs some comment: ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, *to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.* The Christian movement is designated by Paul in this letter three times:

^{109c}James, 'the brother of the Lord,'²⁰⁹ must not be confused with other New Testament figures bearing the name: James, the son of Zebedee, and James, the son of Alphaeus. Mark 6:3 (= Matt 13:55) mentions James as one of Jesus' brothers. During Jesus' lifetime James was not a member of his movement (cf. Mark 3:21, 31-35, and par.; John 7:3-5). Like Paul, James was converted by a vision of Jesus (1 Cor 15:7).²¹⁰ He became a member of the Jerusalem church (Acts 1:14) and rose to prominence quickly (Gal 1:18-19; 2:1-10; Acts 15:13; 21:18-19). After Peter's departure (Acts 12:17) he became the leading figure of Jewish Christianity. His death as a martyr is attested by Josephus as having occurred in A.D. 62.²¹¹ He bore the title ὁ δίκαιος ('the Just') because of his piety.²¹² Nothing is known about James' theology, but after his death he became an important figure in Jewish Christianity and was made the author or addressee of pseudepigraphal writings.²¹³ The opposition against Paul made him their leader, a process which begins in Gal 2:11-14 and continues in the Jewish-Christian groups of the second century.²¹⁴ [Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia--a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 78-79.]

^{110c}A solemn oath²¹⁵ concludes the preceding account.²¹⁶ Paul employs the oath formula in order to assure that he had written the truth: ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν, ἰδοὺ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι ('Now, what I am writing to you, behold before God, I am not lying!'). The function of such oaths in rhetoric is to provide a kind of 'proof' to cover what is in doubt.²¹⁷ But Paul's words are too concise to conclude from them precisely what was in doubt and why. We can say that Acts 9:26-30 shows a different version of the story which supports the doubts rather than Paul's assurances. But we do not know whether Acts has included traditions which were unfavorable to Paul, or which turned out to be unfavorable later, or which were used by the opponents of Paul against him.²¹⁸ [Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia--a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 79.]

^{111c}ἤμην δὲ ἀγνοοῦμενος τῷ προσώπῳ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, 'I remained personally unknown to the churches of Judea that are in Christ.' The imperfect, periphrastic ἤμην δὲ ἀγνοοῦμενος emphasizes the continuance of the state described, and so suggests 'I remained unknown.' τῷ προσώπῳ ('by face') is a locution (both then and today) for 'personally.' [Richard N. Longenecker, vol. 41, *Word Biblical Commentary: Galatians*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 41.]

^{112c}'If the traditional (but late) description be accepted, he was short, bald-headed, with bushy eyebrows and piercing eyes, and with slightly bandy legs. Such a man would surely be remembered well, if once seen.' [R. Alan Cole, vol. 9, *Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 98-99.]

ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, *to the churches of Galatia* (1:2); τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, *the church of God* (1:13); and ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ, *to the churches of Judea that are in Christ* (1:22). The common word here is ἐκκλησία, *congregation*, and, whenever a geographical term is attached, it is in the plural rather than the singular. Paul can envision the people of God collectively with the singular form as in 1:13, but when specific local congregations are intended by geographical specification the plural form is used as in 1:2 and 1:22. One of the interpretive issues that emerges from the plural forms is whether τῆς Ἰουδαίας (*of Judea*)¹¹³ and τῆς Γαλατίας (*of Galatia*) specify ancient Roman provinces or merely geographical regions, since both words are capable of either meaning. Most likely they do indicate governmental provinces, although scholarly opinion is divided on this.¹¹⁴

By the term ἐκκλησία Paul is identifying the church as a people of God called into assembly and meeting in worship and service to Christ. Their meeting places were mainly private homes and rarely public facilities. But through meeting in homes the spiritual family nature of their existence found easy affirmation and undergirding.

The point that Paul celebrates in his words to the Galatians is that these believers rejoiced over the amazing news of Paul's conversion to Christ. They did not yet know him personally, but they could express praise to God for having turned Paul's life around in spiritual transformation.

For Paul this first trip to Jerusalem as a Christian was profitable. He met with Peter and James for two weeks in discussing the Christian faith and his experience with Christ. He did not seek their authorization or approval for what he was doing; God had already given him that on the road to Damascus. But he established lines of communication with these two leaders that would be the basis for shared ministry the rest of all their lives. Perhaps out of danger and concern for Paul's safety he only stayed two weeks in the city before leaving to head north to Syria and Cilicia (v. 21). His way of narrating this trip underscored the independency of his Gospel and apostleship claim from any official authorization by the Twelve in Jerusalem.

4.2.0.2.2 Luke's Description: Acts 9:26-31

26 When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus. 28 So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him. 30 When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

31 Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

26 Παραγενόμενος δὲ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπέειραζεν κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς· καὶ πάντες ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτόν, μὴ πιστεύοντες ὅτι ἐστὶν μαθητῆς. 27 Βαρναβᾶς δὲ ἐπιλαβόμενος αὐτόν ἤγαγεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους, καὶ διηγήσατο αὐτοῖς πῶς ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ εἶδεν τὸν κύριον καὶ ὅτι ἐλάλησεν αὐτῷ καὶ πῶς ἐν Δαμασκῷ ἐπαρρησιάσατο ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. 28 καὶ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν εἰσπορευόμενος καὶ ἐκπορευόμενος εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, παρρησιαζόμενος ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου, 29 ἐλάλει τε καὶ συνεζήτει πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς· οἱ δὲ ἐπεχείρουν ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν. 30 ἐπιγνόντες δὲ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ κατήγαγον αὐτόν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτόν εἰς Ταρσόν.

31 Ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένη, καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνετο.

Setting. The setting of Luke's account of Paul's first trip to Jerusalem is similar to but very distinct from that of Paul in Galatians. Verses 26-31 come as a part of Luke's insertion of Paul's conversion in his narrative of the early days of the Christian movement in 9:1-31. The literary objective of Luke is seen more clearly in comparing the first and last statements of this larger text, the narrative introduction and conclusion:

9:1-2. Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

9.1 Ὁ δὲ Σαῦλος ἐπιμπνέων ἀπειλῆς καὶ φόβου εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς τοῦ κυρίου, προσελθὼν τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ 2

¹¹³The churches in Judea are elsewhere alluded to in a similar manner only in 1 Thess. 2:14, For you, brothers and sisters, became imitators of *the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea*, for you suffered the same things from your own compatriots as they did from the Jews,... ὑμεῖς γὰρ μιμηταὶ ἐγενήθητε, ἀδελφοί, *τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν οὐσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*, ὅτι τὰ αὐτὰ ἐπάθετε καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων συμφυλετῶν καθὼς καὶ αὐτοὶ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων...

¹¹⁴The reason for the importance of this lies mostly with the specification τῆς Γαλατίας. Whether this is a province or a region is a part of the dating issues for the letter as early or late dating. We will look at this more in a latter chapter dealing with the letters of Paul. The designation τῆς Ἰουδαίας would virtually be the same location of Judea whether it is taken as a province or a region. Jerusalem was the largest city in Judea by far with half or more of the total population of Judea located in the city itself.

ἤτήσατο παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολὰς εἰς Δαμασκὸν πρὸς τὰς συναγωγάς, ὅπως ἐάν τις εὕρη τῆς ὁδοῦ ὄντας, ἀνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας, δεδεμένους ἀγάγῃ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ.

9:31. *Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.*

31 Ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένη, καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνετο.

The conversion and early activity of Paul comes in the verses between this narrative introduction (vv.1-2) and conclusion (v. 31). Luke traces Paul going from Jerusalem to Damascus and then returning to Jerusalem as a changed person, in order to explain how the Christians in Jerusalem were protected by God from continued persecution coming from the Jewish religious leaders in Jerusalem. His narrative is divided up into a series of five episodic scenes: 9:1-9, meeting the risen Christ; 9:10-19a, initial contact with Christian community in Damascus; 9:19b-22, early preaching activity in Damascus as a Christian; 9:23-25, dramatic escape of Jewish authorities in Damas with help of Christians; 9:26-30, his establishing contact with the believing community in Jerusalem on his return trip. Our text, vv. 26-30, is the final episode before the narrative conclusion affirming the relief from persecution that enabled the continued growth of the Christian movement in Palestine (Judea, Galilee, Samaria).

Thus Luke seeks to communicate how Paul's connection to the Christian community, especially in Jerusalem, did a complete reversal. While in Damascus he moved from an outsider persecutor of the church to an insider preacher for the church. This powerful transformation, accomplished by God while Paul was away from the city, resulted in a period of relief from persecution not just for Jerusalem, but for the entire region all the way from Galilee in the north to Judea in the south. Thus when Paul comes back to Jerusalem as a Christian we will expect Luke to focus on how he established connections as an insider within the Christian community there.

Luke will stress several aspects that are different from those of Paul in Galatians, in large part because his literary strategy is different from that of Paul. The narrative conclusion in v. 31 is also one of several 'summarizing statements' interjected into the Acts framework to affirm how the church experienced growth during these early years.

Text Meaning. The episode of Paul's return to Jerusalem is found in vv. 26-30, and is followed by the summarizing statement in v. 31 as an implication (οὖν) of the episodic narrative. The episode (vv.26-30) is presented by four relatively short sentences by Luke, each of which merit our attention.

Episode statements:

1) Verse 26: Παραγενόμενος δὲ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐπέιραζεν κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς· καὶ πάντες ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτόν, μὴ πιστεύοντες ὅτι ἐστὶν μαθητῆς, *When he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple.* Luke begins with a standard topic sentence that introduces the scenes of the narrative. The core expression is in two main clauses: ἐπέιραζεν κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς· καὶ πάντες ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτόν, *he attempted to join the disciples; and they were all afraid of him.* This is central to Luke's narration of this trip. Paul -- according to Luke -- made repeated efforts¹¹⁵ to join the fellowship of believers. But they rejected his repeated efforts out of fear of him. A certain irony exists here.¹¹⁶ For some time the Pharisee Paul had persecuted these Christians and sought to make life miserable for them. Now in returning to the city as a Christian escaping persecution in Damascus from Jewish leaders there, he not only faces hostile rejection by the Jewish authorities in the city, but also the Christian community rejects his repeated efforts to identify with them.¹¹⁷ The nature of Paul's attempts to reach out to the believers is described by Luke as

¹¹⁵The imperfect tense form of ἐπέιραζεν (*he was repeatedly attempting to*) indicates repeated actions over a period of time in the iterative function of the imperfect tense of the Greek verb. In addition, Luke typically uses the imperfect verb as a core expression in topic sentences for his episodic narratives. And Luke matches the corresponding second verb ἐφοβοῦντο (*they continued to be afraid*) with the same function of the imperfect tense verb. Paul's efforts continued for a period, and the disciples' fear of him also continued.

¹¹⁶This would set a pattern for Paul that took place numerous times over his career: "Rolloff (155) notes that rejection by Jews in Jerusalem followed by the Gentile mission would be a primary example of a pattern that recurs several times in Acts." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 468.]

¹¹⁷Luke's indication (vv. 26-27) of a community of μαθηταῖς existing in Jerusalem in addition to the ἀποστόλους at this point of time suggests one of two possibilities in light of his prior indication that every believer except the apostles had abandoned Jerusalem during the period of persecution prior to Paul's conversion (cf. 8:1b): Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ διωγμὸς μέγας ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις· πάντες δὲ διεσπάρησαν κατὰ τὰς χώρας τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας πλὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων, *That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria.*

Either new converts during that three year period who lived in Jerusalem had come into the Christian community. Or, many of these persecuted believers had returned home to the city during the three years that Paul was in Damascus and Arabia. Probably, a combination of both these accounts for this reference, which Luke does not explain.

κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς. That is, Paul made repeated attempts to ‘attach himself’ to the disciples.¹¹⁸ By this Luke suggests Paul’s desire was to become deeply a part of the Christian community in Jerusalem.

Does this conflict with Paul’s statement to the Galatians? There (1:18) he claimed ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἰστορησαί¹¹⁹ Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε, *I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days*. Possibly. Some of the tension between the two accounts here is reduced by realizing that Paul was stressing minimal contact with the apostolic leadership, while Luke was emphasizing all through his narrative about Paul in Acts chapter nine the connections of the Christian Paul with the believing communities in both Damascus and Jerusalem. When both sets of statements are taken ‘absolutely’ as detailed historical fact, tension clearly does exist. But both Paul and Luke were writing in basic, general terms, which urges caution in pressing a lot of tension between these two sets of statements.

To the first main clause ἐπείραζεν κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς (9:26) Luke adds the qualifier Παραγενόμενος εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, *after arriving in Jerusalem*. Luke does not stress a time factor here, although previously he has emphasized short periods of time passing between events in Paul’s activities: Ὡς δὲ ἐπληροῦντο ἡμέραι ἰκαναί, *After some time had passed* (v. 23); μετὰ τῶν ἐν Δαμασκῶ μαθητῶν ἡμέρας τινὰς, *For several days he was with the disciples in Damascus* (v. 19b); καὶ ἦν ἡμέρας τρεῖς μὴ βλέπων, *For three days he was without sight* (v. 9). For some scholars, this suggests that Luke implies that Paul was anxious to get back to Jerusalem fairly soon after his conversion.¹²⁰ Such an understanding would point a different direction from Paul’s explicit mentioning of being away from Jerusalem three years (Gal. 1:18). Yet such conclusions are assumptions, rather than direct statements by

^{118c} **κολλάω** aor. ἐκόλλησα LXX; pf. κεκόλληκα Job 38:38. Pass.: 1 fut. κολληθήσομαι **Mt 19:5**; 1 aor. ἐκολλήθην; pf. pass. κεκόλλημαι LXX (κόλλα ‘glue’; Aeschyl. et al.; Pla., Diod S, Plut., ins, pap, LXX; TestAbr A 20 p. 103, 18 [Stone p. 54]; Test12Patr; AscIs 97; EpArist 97; Philo) gener. ‘join together.’

1. to join closely together, bind closely, unite τινά τινι *someone with or to someone*; fig. extension of the lit. mng. ‘to glue’ or ‘join’ substances, act. ἡ ἀγάπη κολλᾷ ἡμᾶς τῷ θεῷ love unites us w. God 1 Cl 49:5. ἡ νοουθέτησις ... κολλᾷ ἡμᾶς τῷ θελήματι τοῦ θεοῦ admonition unites us w. God’s will 56:2.

2. to be closely associated, cling to, attach to, pass. most freq. in act. sense

a. *cling (closely) to someth.*

α. lit. τινί (Job 29:10) of stones ἐκολλῶντο ἀλλήλοις *they were joined* Hv 3, 2, 6. Of dust: τὸν κονιορτὸν τὸν κολληθέντα ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ὑμῶν *the dust of your city that clings to us* **Lk 10:11**.

β. fig. cling to = *come in close contact with* (cp. Ps 21:16; 43:26 ἐκολλήθη εἰς γῆν ἡ γαστήρ ἡμῶν. The act.=‘bring into contact’ PGM 5, 457 κολλήσας τ. λίθον τῷ ὠτίῳ) ἐκολλήθησαν αἱ ἁμαρτίαι ἄχρι τ. οὐρανοῦ *the sins have touched the heaven* = reached the sky (two exprs. are telescoped) **Rv 18:5**.

γ. fig. of the Spirit, which is (closely) joined to the flesh 2 Cl 14:5.

b. *join oneself to, join, cling to, associate with*

α. of a pers., w. dat. of thing κολλήθητι τῷ ἄρματι τούτῳ **Ac 8:29** (a rendering like *stick to this chariot* suggests the imagery).—W. dat. of pers. (which may very rarely be replaced w. a prepositional constr. [AscIs 3:1 πρὸς αὐτόν but τῷ Μανασσῆ, cp. Tob 6:19 εἰ αὐτήν S, αὐτῇ BA]) 1 Cl 30:3; cp. 46:1. τοῖς εἰρηνεύουσι 15:1. τοῖς ἀγίοις 46:2 (quot. of unknown orig.); Hv 3, 6, 2; Hs 8, 8, 1. τοῖς δούλοισι τοῦ θεοῦ 9, 20, 2; 9, 26, 3. τοῖς δικαίοις 8, 9, 1. τοῖς ἀθόφοις κ. δικαίοις 1 Cl 46:4. τοῖς διψύχοις καὶ κενοῖς *the doubters and the senseless* Hm 11:13. τοῖς ἀκαθάρτοις B 10:8; cp. 10:3ff. Also μετὰ τινος (cp. Ruth 2:8) 10:11; 19:2, 6; D 3:9. τῷ κυρίῳ *join oneself to the Lord* (cp. 4 Km 18:6; Sir 2:3; on this vs. and 6:16 below s. SPorter, ETL 67, ’91, 104f: economic connotation; cp. **Lk 15:15** below) **1 Cor 6:17**; Hm 10, 1, 6. τῇ γυναικὶ αὐτοῦ *be joined to his wife* **Mt 19:5** (cp. Vi. Aesopi G 30 P. p. 46, 14, where a woman says to Aesop: μή μοι κολλῶ=don’t come too near me; 1 Esdr 4:20; Philo, Leg. All. 2, 50). τῇ πόρνη *join oneself to a prostitute* **1 Cor 6:16** (cp. Sir 19:2). Associate with on intimate terms, *join* **Ac 5:13; 9:26; 10:28** (CBurhard, ZNW 61, ’70, 159f). *Become a follower or disciple of someone* (cp. 2 Km 20:2; 1 Macc 3:2; 6:21) 17:34. *Hire oneself out to someone* **Lk 15:15** (JHarrill, JBL 115, ’96, 714–17, “he was indentured”). Have someth. to do with: lying spirits Hm 11:4.

β. of impers. things: of anger ὅταν κολληθῆ τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ when it attaches itself to a pers. Hm 10, 2, 3. Also of punishment Hs 6, 5, 3.

γ. w. dat. of thing cling to, enter into a close relation w. (Ps 118:31; TestIss 6:1, Dan 6:10 τ. δικαιοσύνη, Gad 5:2) ταῖς δωρεαῖς *cling to the gifts* 1 Cl 19:2. τῷ ἀγαθῷ *be attached or devoted to what is good* **Ro 12:9**; B 20:2; D 5:2 (cp. TestAsh 3:1 τῇ ἀγαθότητι). τῇ εὐλογίᾳ *cling to the blessing* 1 Cl 31:1. κρίσει δικαίᾳ B 20:2.—DELG s.v. κόλλα. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 555-56.]

¹¹⁹The Aorist purpose infinitive ἰστορήσα expressly asserts the purpose of Paul’s traveling to Jerusalem was to visit Cephas. Whether an additional larger objective of connecting to the Christian community might have been in mind by Paul, such as Luke implies in Acts 9:26 with *πείραζεν κολλᾶσθαι τοῖς μαθηταῖς*, is a matter of conjecture without clear indication in Paul’s statement to the Galatians.

^{120c}According to Paul this visit took place ‘three years’ after his conversion (Gal. 1:18). Luke is not specific but gives the impression of a shorter period (vv. 19b and 23), suggesting that Paul obviously established his contact with the leaders of the Jerusalem community as early as possible.” [Gerhard A. Krodel, *Acts*, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986), 180.]

either Paul or Luke. Thus any asserted tension at this point is artificial and not warranted by the scripture texts. All that Luke states directly is that after Paul arrived in Jerusalem he began making efforts to link up the believers in the city.

The second main clause, πάντες ἐφοβοῦντο αὐτὸν, *they were all fearful of him*, is qualified by μὴ πιστεύοντες ὅτι ἐστὶν μαθητῆς, *not believing that he was a disciple*. This circumstantial, or possibly causal, participle provides the reason for their fearfulness of Paul. Their lack of trust in what Paul claimed continued repeatedly along with all his efforts to join up with them. Suspicion that he was merely pretending to be a disciple in order to gain inside access to the group was strong. Luke's term πάντες stresses the widespread doubt that permeated the entire Christian community in Jerusalem.¹²¹ One should be able to understand this in light of the intense persecution that Paul had unleashed on them earlier. Nothing is mentioned about Paul's traveling companions who went to Damascus with him. Presumably, they became Christians as well and then returned to Jerusalem with him. But they would not provide credible indication about true Christian conversion to the Jerusalem believers.

With this topic sentence Luke sets up his main point stressing establishment of a positive relationship between Paul and the believers in Jerusalem.

2) Verse 27: Βαρναβᾶς δὲ ἐπιλαβόμενος αὐτὸν ἤγαγεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους, καὶ διηγήσατο αὐτοῖς πῶς ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ εἶδεν τὸν κύριον καὶ ὅτι ἐλάλησεν αὐτῷ καὶ πῶς ἐν Δαμασκῷ ἐπαρρησιάσατο ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ. *But Barnabas took him, brought him to the apostles, and described for them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.* Luke includes certain parallels between the reaction to him in Damascus and then in Jerusalem: a) Both communities were skeptical about Paul's conversion (vv. 13-14 // v. 27); b) God used a heroic Christian as the bridge into the Christian community for Paul (Ananias in Damascus // Barnabas in Jerusalem); c) Jewish opposition to Paul's preaching erupts (vv. 23-24 // v. 29); d) the believing community helps Paul escape (v. 25 // v. 30).

The heroic figure in this episode is Barnabas.¹²² Although everyone else is skeptical about Paul, Barnabas reaches out to him in acceptance of his claim to now be a Christian. Either he accepted Paul's explanation of what happened to him on the road to Damascus, or else someone from the Christian community in Damascus supplied this information to Barnabas in a convincing manner.¹²³ Luke does not specifically indicate the source of Barnabas' information, only that he did know the conversion story about Paul.

Upon learning this, Barnabas took action: Βαρναβᾶς δὲ ἐπιλαβόμενος αὐτὸν ἤγαγεν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους, *Barnabas, taking charge, led him to the apostles.* The normal meaning of this suggests Paul was escorted by Barnabas to a meeting of the group of apostles in Jerusalem. Exactly who was present in the meeting is not specified. Paul, in Gal. 1:18-20, has claimed that he only saw Peter and James while in Jerusalem.¹²⁴ Clearly some tension

¹²¹“When Saul returned to Jerusalem, he was in a difficult position. His old associates knew all about his defection, and he could expect no friendly welcome from them. On the other hand, the disciples of Jesus, with whom he now wished to associate himself, had not forgotten his campaign of persecution. One can scarcely feel surprise at their suspicion when he made overtures to them. The role of the agent provocateur was as familiar in antiquity as in more recent times; what assurance had they that this was not a scheme of Saul's to gain their confidence for their more effective undoing?” [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 193.]

¹²²“The example of Barnabas is noteworthy. As his name is explained in 4:36, ‘Son of Consolation,’ he now brings that consolation to the Christians of Jerusalem in acting as the bridge whereby Saul is brought into their midst and reconciled with them. Barnabas reaches out to the converted Saul and welcomes him as a fellow Christian. He explains to the others what God's grace has produced in the life of an individual who is open to it. Consolation and encouragement come from the Holy Spirit, who makes Barnabas the mediator of it. Under such guidance of the Spirit the Christians of Jerusalem advance in ‘the fear of the Lord’ and grow in numbers.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 438.]

¹²³“For Barnabas see on 4:36. He is rightly described by Hengel (101) as a Hebrew; cf. FS Borgen (23). This is a better description than Bauernfeind's ‘Mittelstellung’—better, that is, for history, not necessarily for Luke's account. Later Barnabas will appear as Paul's colleague in Antioch (11:25, 26), his travelling companion on the mission of help to Jerusalem (11:27–30; 12:25), his fellow missionary (13; 14), and delegate along with him from Antioch to the Jerusalem Council. Later still he will separate from Paul (15:37–40; Gal. 2:13), though not it seems permanently. Why he should have acted as Paul's sponsor remains unknown; Luke gives no hint. Barnabas himself (though originally from Cyprus) was a Jerusalemite and enjoyed the confidence of the apostles. It may be that Luke thought that one known to have contacts with Jerusalem, and known to have worked with Paul, would make a suitable bridge-builder.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 468.]

¹²⁴**Gal. 1:18-20.** 18 Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; 19 but *I did not see any other apostle*, except I did see James the Lord's brother. 20 In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!

18 Ἐπειτα μετὰ ἑτὴ τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱερουσόλυμα ἰστορήσαι Κηφᾶν, καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε· 19 *ἔτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον*, εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου. 20 ἃ δὲ γράφω ὑμῖν, ἰδοὺ ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι οὐ ψεύδομαι.

between Luke's account and Paul's is present here regarding how many of the apostles Paul personally met in Jerusalem.¹²⁵ But this should not obscure Luke's fundamental point of Barnabas taking the initiative in setting up a meeting between Paul and the Christian leadership in Jerusalem so as to pave the way for Paul's acceptance into the community.

The second action of Barnabas was that διηγήσατο αὐτοῖς πῶς ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ εἶδεν τὸν κύριον καὶ ὅτι ἐλάλησεν αὐτῷ καὶ πῶς ἐν Δαμασκῷ ἐπαρρησιάσατο ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, *he described to them how Paul saw the Lord on the way, and that he spoke to Him, and how in Damascus he boldly spoke in the name of Jesus*. The two most pivotal events, his conversion and his preaching of the Gospel, become the center points of Barnabas' explanation to the apostles about Paul. These events become the needed evidence of the sincerity of Paul's Christian claims, and thus of his acceptance into the Christian community at Jerusalem.

Note something important here. Evidence of conversion becomes Christian obedience to the Lord's commands. This was critical to the acceptance of Paul's claims to be a Christian in the minds of these leaders in Jerusalem. And that Paul's initial preaching had been done in the Jewish synagogue community at Damascus added further credibility to the testimony.

3) Verses 28-29: καὶ ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν εἰσπορευόμενος καὶ ἐκπορευόμενος εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, παρρησιαζόμενος ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου, ἐλάλει τε καὶ συνεζήτει πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς· οἱ δὲ ἐπεχείρουν ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν. *So he went in and out among them in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. He spoke and argued with the Hellenists; but they were attempting to kill him*. Upon accepting Paul, Luke states that Paul ἦν μετ' αὐτῶν εἰσπορευόμενος καὶ ἐκπορευόμενος εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, *was with them coming and going in Jerusalem*. Luke signals here, from the requirements for being an apostle in 1:21,¹²⁶ that Paul gained full acceptance among these leaders.¹²⁷ Some see a greater tension here with Paul's statement in Gal. 1:22 (*I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ, ἤμην δὲ ἀγνοούμενος τῷ προσώπῳ ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας ταῖς ἐν Χριστῷ*).¹²⁸ Some rather strange proposals exist in an effort to reduce the supposed tension.¹²⁹ But careful analysis of both texts does not justify such an understanding. Luke stresses Paul's activity in Jerusalem, while Paul in Galatians stresses his lack of contact with churches scattered over Judea. Additionally, Luke's emphasis is on frequent contact with the leaders in Jerusalem, not necessary with the larger Christian community. One should not lose sight of the scattering of pockets of believers in house churches over the city and nearby region. Given the short time that Paul was in Jerusalem -- fifteen days according to his account -- it would have been physically impossible to have visited very many of these groups. Additionally, that was not his objective in coming to Jerusalem. Acceptance as a Christian by the leadership and the opportunity to explain his experience to them was his central mission, as well as reaching out to former acquaintances in the synagogues with his sharing of the Gospel with them.

¹²⁵πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστολούς. Cf. Gal. 1:18f. Bengel laconically comments, 'Petrum et Jacobum. Gal. 1:18, 19.' So also Hengel (86). Stählin unconvincingly attempts a compromise with 'Besonders Petrus and Johannes' (141). Paul's account must be accepted. Luke was aware of a visit to Jerusalem but had no details and supposed that Paul would have seen all the apostles (as no doubt he would have done himself). He would think that 8:1 was still valid; the apostles were in Jerusalem." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 469.]

¹²⁶**Acts 1:21.** *So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,*

δεῖ οὖν τῶν συνελθόντων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν ἐν παντὶ χρόνῳ ᾧ εἰσῆλθεν καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ἐφ' ἡμᾶς ὁ κύριος Ἰησοῦς

¹²⁷Paul was now 'with them' (v. 28). The Greek text says literally that he was 'going in and out among them' in Jerusalem. The expression is familiar from Acts 1:21, where it refers to the circle of apostles. That meaning may well be intended here. Paul was fully accepted into the apostolic circle. He too was a 'witness' for Christ.⁴⁶⁷ [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 243.]

¹²⁸For example: "The conflict with Galatians is even greater here (cf. Gal 1:22). The entire description contains no concrete material. Paul appears as the one who steps into the gap left by the death of Stephen." [Hans Conzelmann, Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 75.]

¹²⁹"It is not so easy to reconcile Luke's description of Saul's public activity at Jerusalem in association with the apostles with the statement in Gal. 1:22 that, until the time of his departure for Syria and Cilicia (and after that), he 'remained unknown by face to the churches of Judaea,' which knew of him only by hearsay. One commentator removes the phrase 'in Jerusalem' from verse 28 (taking it to be a gloss) and regards verses 28 and 29 as a continuation of Barnabas's description of Saul's activity at Damascus. Verse 30 would then go on: 'And the brothers recognized him⁶⁰ (that is, as a disciple) and brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.' Thus, we are assured, 'the whole difficulty vanishes.'⁶¹ It does not, and even if it did vanish, one must have reservations about an emendation, however ingenious it may be, which is proposed not because it has any textual attestation but because its adoption will help to remove a discrepancy. It is true that there is a marked resemblance between the account of Paul's activity at Damascus (his bold preaching and the consequent plot against his life) and that of his activity in Jerusalem. Luke's sources probably supplied him with little detail about the Jerusalem visit; hence the generalizing terms in which he reports it." [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 194-95.]

Although the participle phrase παρρησιαζόμενος ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου (*speaking boldly in the name of Jesus*) is often attached to the main verb, ἦν, that precedes it, adverbial modifiers in ancient Greek usually preceded verbs that they modify. If so taken here, Paul's bold speaking in the name of Jesus was primarily in connection to his speaking and debating the Hellenistic Jews in the city: ἐλάλει τε καὶ συνεζήτει πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς.

This activity was dominant during Paul's stay in the city. What is ironic is that Luke's reference πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς goes back to Stephen's earlier debates with the same group (cf. 6:9).¹³⁰ The synagogue of the Freedmen (τῆς συναγωγῆς τῆς λεγομένης Λιβερτίνων) included Hellenistic Jews from Cilicia (Tarsus, the capital city), which Paul evidently was connected to during his Pharisee days in Jerusalem. Just as Stephen debated with them (*συζητοῦντες* τῷ Στεφάνῳ, 6:9), so now Paul followed the same pattern as Stephen (*συνεζήτει* πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς), but this time from a Christian perspective. That must have been truly shocking to these who had known him during these days. And just as they were not able to overwhelm Stephen's viewpoint (6:10¹³¹) and plotted to kill him, in similar fashion they plotted to kill Paul as well: οἱ δὲ ἐπεχείρουν ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν. This time there was no effort to go through any kind of legal process; they just made several efforts (ἐπεχείρουν) to murder Paul outright (ἀνελεῖν αὐτόν¹³²), so intense was their anger toward him.

What Luke depicts here is shocking in a way, and yet not completely so. Paul's conversion was seen as a betrayal of the Jewish ancestral traditions, and thus made him dangerous with his preaching of the Gospel. With the success of the Christian movement in Jerusalem in attracting large numbers of followers,¹³³ a sense of real threat from this new religious movement called the Way was felt by various Jewish leaders concerned to

¹³⁰**Acts 6:9-10.** 8 Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. 10 But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.

8 Στέφανος δὲ πλήρης χάριτος καὶ δυνάμεως ἐποίει τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα ἐν τῷ λαῷ. 9 ἀνέστησαν δὲ τινες τῶν ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς τῆς λεγομένης Λιβερτίνων καὶ Κυρηναίων καὶ Κυρηναίων καὶ Ἀλεξανδρέων καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ Κιλικίας καὶ Ἀσίας συζητοῦντες τῷ Στεφάνῳ, 10 καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυον ἀντιστηναί τῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι ᾧ ἐλάλει.

¹³¹**Acts 6:10.** But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. καὶ οὐκ ἴσχυον ἀντιστηναί τῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ τῷ πνεύματι ᾧ ἐλάλει.

132 “**ἀναιρέω** (s. prec.) fut. ἀναιρήσω and ἀνελεῖν (B-D-F §74, 3), the latter (Dionys. Hal. 11, 18, 2; Jdt 7:13; Just., D. 112, 2 [ἀνεῖλε A]) formed after 2 aor. ἀνεῖλον, which appears also in the forms (B-D-F §81, 3) ἀνεῖλα (ἀνεῖλατε **Ac 2:23**, ἀνεῖλαν **10:39**); subj. ἀνέλω; mid. ἀνειλόμην (v.l.) and ἀνειλάμην (ἀνεῖλατο **7:21** [-ετο v.l.]; cp. CIG 4137, 3; Ex 2:5, 10; B-D-F §81, 3; s. W-S. §13, 13; Mlt-H. 226 s.v. αἰρέω); fut. pass. ἀναιρεθήσομαι LXX; 1 aor. pass. ἀνηρέθη; pf. act. inf. ἀνηρηκέναι (Just., D. 73, 6); pf. pass. ἀνήρημαι LXX (also Just., Tat., Mel.) (Hom.+). . . .

2 to get rid of by execution, do away with, destroy, of pers. τινά *someone, mostly of killing by violence, in battle, by execution, murder, or assassination* (Trag., Hdt.+; SIG 226, 20; 709, 35; UPZ 8, 15 [161 B.C.]; PAMh 142, 8; LXX; EpArist 166; Jos., Bell. 1, 389, Ant. 17, 44; Just., Tat., Ath.; Mel., P. 96, 736; Iren. 4, 33, 7 [Harv. II 261, 6]; Orig., C. Cels. 1, 61, 8) ἅ. πάντας τοὺς παῖδας **Mt 2:16** (PSaintyves, Le massacre des Innocents: Congr. d'Hist. du Christ. I 229–72); ἀνελεῖν πάντα τὰ βρέφη GJs 22:1 (follows ἀνελεῖται corr. to ἀναιρεῖται; cp. ἀνελεῖν τὰ βρέφη AcEsdr 4, 11 p. 28: 13 Tdf.). ἐζήτουν τὸ πῶς ἀνέλωσιν αὐτόν *they sought a way to dispose of him* **Lk 22:2**. τοῦτον **Ac 2:23**; cp. **5:33, 36; 7:28** (Ex 2:14); **9:23f, 29; 22:20; 23:15, 21; 25:3**; 1 Cl 4:10 (Ex 2:14). ἅ. ἐάντων commit suicide (Parthenius 17, 7; Jos., Ant. 20, 80) **Ac 16:27**. Of execution (Chariton 4, 3, 5) **Lk 23:32; Ac 10:39; 12:2; 13:28**. ἀκρίτως AcPl Ha 9, 19 (restored). Synon. w. θανατοῦν 1 Cl 39:7 (Job 5:2). Of the destruction of the Lawless One ὃν ὁ Κύριος Ἰησοῦς ἀνελεῖ (vv.11. ἀνελοῖ, ἀναλοῖ, ἀναλώσει, s. ἀναλίσκω) τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ *whom the Lord Jesus will slay with the breath of his mouth* 2 Th 2:8 (after Is 11:4). Pregnant constr., of martyrs ἀναιρούμενοι εἰς θεόν *those who come to God by a violent death* IEph 12:2. Of the tree of knowledge: kill οὐ τὸ τῆς γνώσεως (sc. ξύλον) ἀναιρεῖ ἀλλ' ἢ παρακοῆ ἀναιρεῖ Dg 12:2.—Pass. ἀναιρεῖσθαι **Ac 23:27; 26:10**; AcPl Ha 9, 20 (restored); ἀναιρεθῆναι **Lk 23:32; Ac 5:36; 13:28**; be condemned to death **26:10**; Papias (11:2; 12:2); AcPl Ha 4, 21f; 5, 5f; 8, 19.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 64.]

¹³³Compare:

Acts 4:4 But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand, πολλοὶ δὲ τῶν ἀκουσάντων τὸν λόγον ἐπίστευσαν, καὶ ἐγενήθη ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ὡς χιλιάδες πέντε;

Acts 5:14 Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, μᾶλλον δὲ προσετίθετο πιστεύοντες τῷ κυρίῳ πλήθη ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν;

Acts 6:1 when the disciples were increasing in number, πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν ἐγένετο;

Acts 6:7 The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith, Καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤρξανεν, καὶ ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ σφόδρα, πολὺς τε ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει;

Acts 9:31b Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers; καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνετο.

preserve their traditional understanding of Judaism. When one of their ‘stars’ goes over to the other side, this outburst of hatred and intent to murder him is understandable, although not excusable.

What Paul experienced in Jerusalem was not unique to him, however. Peter and the other apostles had already encountered this vicious hostility, with some of it having come from the Pharisee Paul years earlier. Much of the Christian community in Jerusalem had fled the city at the height of persecution after Stephen’s martyrdom (cf. 8:1b).¹³⁴ Many of them, however, had returned to the city during the three years of Paul’s absence while in Damascus and Arabia. Thus Christianity had a growing presence in the city, in spite of the opposition to it from the Jewish authorities. Paul encountered this when he sought to preach the Gospel in his old synagogue in the city.

4) Verse 30: ἐπιγνόντες δὲ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ κατήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτὸν εἰς



Ταρσόν. *When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.* Just as believers in Damascus did -- according to Luke in Acts 9:23-25 -- when Paul’s life came into danger in Jerusalem the believing community came to his rescue. This time Luke refers to them as οἱ ἀδελφοί, *brothers*, again signaling their acceptance of Paul as a brother in Christ. Interestingly, the brothers had to learn about these efforts to kill Paul in Jerusalem: ἐπιγνόντες. How is not mentioned. One would assume that Paul’s sister lived in Jerusalem during this time (cf. 23:16-22), and that Paul most likely stayed with her and her son during the time he was in the city. This may very well have been the opportunity to witness to his own family members in the city as a Christian.



When the fellow believers discovered the efforts to kill Paul, they escorted him to the Mediterranean coastal city of Caesarea and sent him back home to Tarsus. Some possible tension exists here with Paul’s statement about leaving Jerusalem in Gal. 1:21, *Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia*, ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας. The contention is made that Paul describes an overland trip eventually back home to Tarsus in Cilicia through Syria, whereas Luke clearly signals a sea voyage directly back to Tarsus, located just a little ways off the Mediterranean coast, some 571 kilometers from Jerusalem. But neither writer states explicitly how Paul traveled from point A to point B, only that he did.¹³⁵ Clearly taking a ship from Caesarea to Antioch in Syria would have been the safest way to escape the danger Paul was facing in Jerusalem and Judea. Then either by ship or by land he could have journeyed on back from Syria to Tarsus in Cilicia very easily.

What Luke does stress is their desire to get Paul far away from the danger to his life in Jerusalem: ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτὸν εἰς Ταρσόν, *sent him far away to Tarsus*. They have come to value him as a witness to the Gospel given his passionate defense of Christ against Jewish criticism while in their city. Also interesting is that now Luke has provided us insight into how Barnabas and Paul first met. This would establish a lasting friendship that, although severely tested by John Mark later on (cf. 15:36-40), would overcome adversity and difference of viewpoint at times. Finally, in Luke’s writing style, we have Paul introduced (9:1-3), and neatly tucked away in the background until Luke chooses to bring him forward again in his narrative beginning in 11:25.

Summary statement:

Verse 31: Ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ’ ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένη, καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνετο. *Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.* In writing his story of the early church from about 30 AD to 60 AD, Luke periodically inserts summarizing narratives or statements as a literary pause from the series of

¹³⁴Acts 8:1b That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ διωγμὸς μέγας ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἱερουσολύμοις· πάντες δὲ διεσπάρησαν κατὰ τὰς χώρας τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας πλὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων. 2 συνεκόμισαν

¹³⁵“sent him off to Tarsus. Presumably by ship, although he could have made the journey overland northward through Syria to Cilicia, which may be what Gal 1:21 suggests, “into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.” That, however, is not likely, because it would mean that Saul had to traverse all the rest of Palestine alone. See E.M.B. Green, “Syria and Cilicia—A Note,” *ExpTim* 71 (1959–60): 52–53. Thus Saul is sent back as a Christian by fellow Christians to his hometown. On Tarsus, see NOTE on 9:11. In his hometown Saul carries out a missionary role for a good period of time; see Gal 1:23, which speaks of his ‘preaching the faith’ in the region of Cilicia.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *S.J., The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 440.]

episodes that he stitches together for his story.¹³⁶ The statements usually come as an expression of a spurt of growth and advancement of the Christian movement following the solution of some problem facing the communities of faith. Clearly, such is the case with this summarizing statement in 9:31.¹³⁷

Luke sees out of Paul's conversion in Damascus, return to Jerusalem, and then departure to Tarsus a signal for a period of relief from persecution of the Christian movement by the Jewish authorities. His sentence makes two primary points: peace and growth in the Christian movement.

The 'church'¹³⁸ came to enjoy a period of εἰρήνην, *peace*, with Paul now a Christian convert.¹³⁹ Now only was it free from the high danger of persecution, but the atmosphere of peace promoted οἰκοδομουμένη, *being built up*. Luke's term here for spiritual strengthening underscores a time where Christians could 'catch their breath' a bit from living in constant opposition and danger from their neighbors and the authorities. Interestingly, the impact of Paul's conversion was felt not just in Jerusalem but all through Palestine from the southern province of Judea to the northern most province of Galilee. This was a substantial consequence!

Additionally it began growing again: ἐπληθύνετο.¹⁴⁰ The ongoing process of growth came about, however, through the Holy Spirit having the freedom to work because of the deep reverence of Christ by the believers: καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος.¹⁴¹ The period of time from Stephen's martyrdom to Paul's conversion was challenging to believers in Palestine, with intense persecution popping up all over the place. But now God had dramatically moved to resolve that problem so that His people could have a

¹³⁶Summary Narratives: Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 5:12-16;

Summary Statements: 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20 [28:30-31]

[Taken from "Literary Forms in the Acts of the Apostles," cranfordville.com]

¹³⁷“This verse, standing on its own, can hardly be anything other than a summary editorial note, inserted by Luke. Compare the earlier summaries, 2:42–47; 4:32–35; 5:12–16; 6:7. μὲν οὖν is a formula with which Luke often begins a new section of his book (e.g. at 8:4), and it would not be improper to take the verse as the beginning of the new section that continues as far as 11:18, a section that first takes Peter to Joppa, where he waits for the summons that leads to the founding of a mixed church, including Gentiles, at Caesarea. The formula is, however, in itself backward-looking, and here means that new developments will rest on a sound foundation laid in Judaea, Galilee, and Samaria. Since the verse is related both to what precedes and to what follows it seems necessary to consider it on its own as a connecting link.

“Nothing has hitherto been said about the founding of churches in Galilee; see the notes below. The occurrence of Galilee at this point probably signifies only that the church is now (according to Luke) settled and established in all Jewish areas, including the half-Jewish area of Samaria. Galilee could hardly be omitted. The church is at peace and flourishing, and is now ready for further expansion; the first steps in this direction Luke will proceed in the next sections to describe.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 472.]

¹³⁸Several manuscripts [αἱ ... ἐκκλησίαι ... εἶχον ... οἰκοδομούμεναι καὶ πορευόμεναι ... ἐπληθύνοντο 614 1409 2344 Byz [L P] *Lect* (I 422 I 1154 *omit* καὶ πορευόμεναι; I 680 ληταιβόμεναι [sic] for πορευόμεναι) it^{tr}. g^{lg}. (p) syr^h (cop^{bomss}) geo slav Chrysostom; (Augustine) Bede¹⁴ // αἱ ... ἐκκλησία πάσαι ... εἶχον ... οἰκοδομούμενοι καὶ πορευόμενοι ... ἐπληθύνοντο E (Ψ ἢ ... ἐκκλησία ... εἶχον ... οἰκοδομημένοι κ. π. ... ἐπληθύνετο) it^c] have the plural ἐκκλησίαι, *churches*, rather than the singular. Given the geographical markers of τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας, the meaning is centered on the local congregations situated in each of the three provinces, whether viewed individually (with the plural) or collectively (with the singular).

[Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini et al., *The Greek New Testament*, Fourth Revised Edition (With Apparatus); *The Greek New Testament*, 4th Revised Edition (With Apparatus) (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; Stuttgart, 2000; 2009).]

Interestingly, Paul prefers the plural in the two references to Christianity in Judea: Gal. 1:22, ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Ἰουδαίας, and 1 Thess. 2:14, τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν οὐσῶν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

¹³⁹“εἰρήνη is not used in Acts in the theological sense of e.g. Rom. 5:1 except at 10:36. Schille (237) indeed thinks that here it does refer to ‘Heilszustand’ (he quotes the Hebrew עִלְוָה), but the context implies that Luke means simply that the Christians now lived an undisturbed life, which however made for Christian development.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 473-74.]

¹⁴⁰“Was multiplied (ἐπληθύνετο [ep^lethuneto]). Imperfect middle passive. The multiplication of the disciples kept pace with the peace, the edification, the walking in the fear of the Lord, the comfort of the Holy Spirit. The blood of the martyrs was already becoming the seed of the church. Stephen had not borne his witness in vain.” [A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Ac 9:31.]

¹⁴¹“Through the help of the Holy Spirit is rendered by most translators as ‘in the consolation/comfort of the Holy Spirit.’ But ‘consolation’ or ‘comfort’ carry too much the notion of relief from sorrow, the full meaning of the word is better expressed by ‘encouragement,’ ‘assistance,’ or ‘help.’ Through the help of the Holy Spirit may be restructured in some languages as ‘this happened because the Holy Spirit was helping’ or ‘the Holy Spirit caused this to happen’ (in which case ‘this’ refers to the building up and the growth of the church). In the expression ‘walking in the fear of the Lord,’ ‘walking’ (in Greek) refers to conduct or way of life, and ‘fear’ means ‘respected’ or reverence (see Moffatt, Goodspeed).” [Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS handbook series; Helps for translators (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 198.]

moment to recoup and become stronger.

4.2.0.2.3 Luke's Description: Acts 22:17-22

17 After I had returned to Jerusalem and while I was praying in the temple, I fell into a trance 18 and saw Jesus saying to me, 'Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me.' 19 And I said, 'Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. 20 And while the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by, approving and keeping the coats of those who killed him.' 21 Then he said to me, 'Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

17 Ἐγένετο δέ μοι ὑποστρέψαντι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ προσευχομένου μου ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ γενέσθαι με ἐν ἐκστάσει 18 καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν λέγοντά μοι· Σπεῦσον καὶ ἔξελθε ἐν τάχει ἐξ Ἱερουσαλήμ, διότι οὐ παραδέξονται σου μαρτυρίαν περὶ ἐμοῦ. 19 κἀγὼ εἶπον· Κύριε, αὐτοὶ ἐπίστανται ὅτι ἐγὼ ἤμην φυλακίζων καὶ δέρων κατὰ τὰς συναγωγὰς τοὺς πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ σέ· 20 καὶ ὅτε ἐξεχύνετο τὸ αἷμα Στεφάνου τοῦ μάρτυρός σου, καὶ αὐτὸς ἤμην ἐφεστῶς καὶ συνευδοκῶν καὶ φυλάσσω τὰ ἱμάτια τῶν ἀναιρούντων αὐτόν. 21 καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς με· Πορεύου, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰς ἔθνη μακρὰν ἐξαποστελῶ σε.

Setting. The literary setting of this paragraph is Paul's speech to the angry Jewish crowd in the temple court yard. The larger episode of 21:27-22:29 is set up in 21:27-36 with his arrest by the Roman tribune after an angry crowd tried to kill him thinking that he had violated the ritual purity of the temple. Paul defends himself to the Roman military officer (21:37-40) and receives permission to speak to the crowd from the steps of Antonio's Fortress. His speech is recorded in 22:1-21, in which he introduces himself (vv. 1-5), tells of his conversion (vv. 6-16), and of his calling (vv. 17-21). It is his mentioning of a calling to preach to Gentiles that causes the crowd to interrupt his speech with shouting and leads the Roman tribune to take Paul inside the Fortress to investigate the matter further (22:22-29).

Thus our passage comes as the third segment of Paul's speech to the angry Jewish crowd and focuses on his calling to preach to the Gentiles. What is of particular importance is that it adds new material to the narratives about the first trip to Jerusalem that is not found in Acts 9:26-30, 26:19-20, or Gal. 1:18-24. To be sure, this has prompted substantial speculation about why Luke chooses to insert this into Paul's speech before the crowd in the temple courtyard.¹⁴² But the literary setting signals the appropriateness of its inclusion here as a part of Paul's identification with the temple and of having direct revelatory experiences from God while in the temple.

Text Meaning. Verses 17-21 contain three sentences summarizing an experience of Paul inside the Jerusalem temple. The primary text is a dialogue between Paul and the risen Jesus centered on a warning about Jewish rejection of his preaching of the Gospel. Verse 22 contains the hostile reaction of the Jewish crowd to Paul's statement about going to the Gentiles, this response is described in vv. 22-29.

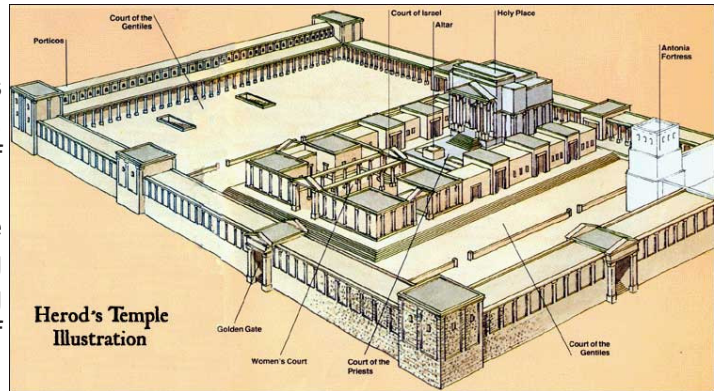
Luke sets up the scene with Paul indicating when and where he was when the vision took place: Ἐγένετο δέ μοι ὑποστρέψαντι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ καὶ προσευχομένου μου ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ.¹⁴³ Two markers are important here. First, this event happened (Ἐγένετο) to Paul after he had returned (μοι ὑποστρέψαντι) from Damascus to Jerusalem (εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ). The aorist participle ὑποστρέψαντι clearly indicates this event happened after Paul had arrived back in Jerusalem from Damascus. Thus the event is a part of the first trip back to the city after his conversion. Whether this came toward the beginning or at the close of the two week stay in the city is not indicated. The content of the vision would suggest the latter, as a warning for Paul to leave the city.

Second, the event happened while Paul was in the temple praying: προσευχομένου μου ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ. Sev-

¹⁴² This is a new detail, since there is no mention of such an experience in chap. 9. That chapter tells of Paul's preaching in Damascus and later of his first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion (9:26-29; cf. Gal 1:18). There is nothing about his praying in the Temple or about a further vision of the Lord, as here. According to Gal 1:18 the first visit to Jerusalem occurred three years after Paul's conversion; see NOTE on 9:26. The Lucan Paul is thus eager to admit that he still continued to pray in the Temple after his conversion. Strikingly, Paul's commission is now related to an experience in Jerusalem, in contrast to chap. 9, where the commission is mediated by Ananias in Damascus. There Ananias is told that Paul is to be 'a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles and kings, and the children of Israel' (9:15). All of this is the result not only of abridgment of the earlier narrative but also of a recasting of the narrative in speech form to make it more convincing to the Jerusalemites who are being addressed. See C. Burchard, *Der dreizehnte Zeuge*, 164-65." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 707-08.]

¹⁴³ The syntax of this verse is quite strange. It begins with *egeneto de*, 'and it happened that,' on which the infin. *genesthai me en ekstasei*, 'that I fell into a trace,' depends (see *Luke*, 118). The usual temporal accompaniment is expressed by a dat. pron. with a ptc., *moi hypostrepsanti eis Ierusalēm*, '(it happened) to me returning to Jerusalem,' to which is strangely added a gen. absol. *kai proseuchomenou mou en tō hierō*, 'and as I was praying in the Temple.' This is a violation of the normal grammatical rule of the gen. absol., which is not supposed to modify anything in the main clause (see BDF §423.4)." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 708.]

eral aspects here should be noted. Luke highlights with this inclusion Paul's desire to continue worshipping God in the temple in the pattern of traditional Jewish prayers being offered up at prescribed times during the week. For Jewish men, this would have been in the Court of Israel, as per the diagram. His Christian conversion did not cause him to abandon the God of Abraham; to the contrary, he was even more passionate about seeking God through prayer now. Additionally, mentioning going into the temple to pray would counteract the charge of his having defiled the temple (cf. 21:27-29).¹⁴⁴



What Paul experienced while praying in the temple was γενέσθαι με ἐν ἔκστασει, *I fell into a trance*. The language of ἔκστασις is overwhelmingly a Lukan term with six of the seven NT uses in Luke and Acts. The noun refers either to amazement or a trance, with the latter being the meaning here.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps the echoes of God's calling of Isaiah (6:1-10) and other prophets in the Old Testament were heard by the crowd with Paul's depiction.¹⁴⁶ Luke's point is to stress that while in God's temple praying Paul saw the risen Jesus who spoke directly with him to warn him about the rejection by the Jews of his preaching of the Gospel.

The conversion between Jesus and Paul begins with Christ first speaking to Paul: "*Hurry and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testimony about me,*" Σπεύσον καὶ ἔξελθε ἐν τάχει ἐξ Ἱερουσαλήμ, διότι οὐ παραδέξονται σου μαρτυρίαν περὶ ἐμοῦ. Paul came to Jerusalem with a deep burden to share his experience with Christ to his Jewish friends in the city. Perhaps he thought they would hear him gladly. But as Acts 9:29 makes clear, their reaction was intensely negative and hostile. Thus Paul indicates that the Lord told him to leave the city quickly in order to protect his life. This in no way contradicts Luke's indication in 9:30 that the disciples in Jerusalem insisted that he leave the city for his own safety.

Paul's initial reply was to plead for continued opportunity to try to convert these people who knew him as a persecutor of Christians: "*Lord, they themselves know that in every synagogue I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. And while the blood of your witness Stephen was shed, I myself was standing by, approving and keeping the coats of those who killed him,*" Κύριε, αὐτοὶ ἐπίστανται ὅτι ἐγὼ ἤμην φυλακίζων καὶ δέρων κατὰ τὰς συναγωγὰς τοὺς πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ σέ· καὶ ὅτε ἐξεχύννεται τὸ αἷμα Στεφάνου τοῦ μάρτυρός σου, καὶ αὐτὸς ἤμην ἐφεστῶς καὶ συνευδοκῶν καὶ φυλάσσω τὰ ἱμάτια τῶν ἀναιρούντων αὐτόν. Many people in the Jewish crowd that night knew first hand that Paul was telling the truth about his past. He alluded to his persecution of Christians generally (cf. 9:1), and specifically to his role in Stephen's martyrdom (cf. 8:1). From Luke's earlier statement that Paul "*approved of their killing him*" (ἦν συνευδοκῶν τῇ ἀναιρέσει αὐτοῦ) in 8:1 comes now the reaffirmation of this along with

¹⁴⁴ "Perhaps the reason Paul referred to it is that it indirectly answers the mob's charge that he had defiled the temple. A person who goes to the temple for prayer is not likely to desecrate it.⁴⁰ In the temple Paul fell into a trance⁴¹ and had a vision of the Lord." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, Acts, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 462.]

¹⁴⁵ ἔκστασις, εως, ἡ (s. ἐξίστημι; Hippocr.+)

1. a state of consternation or profound emotional experience to the point of being beside oneself ('distraction, confusion, perplexity, astonishment' in var. aspects: Menand., Fgm. 149 Kock [=136, 2 Kō.] πάντα δὲ τὰ μηδὲ προσδοκώμεν' ἔκστασιν φέρει; Περὶ ὕψους 1, 4; SIG 1240, 14; 1 Km 11:7; 2 Ch 14:13; Ps 30:23) **amazement/astonishment** ἐξέστησαν μεγάλη ἔκστασει *they were quite beside themselves w. amazement* Mk 5:42 (cp. Gen 27:33; Ezk 26:16; 27:35 al.); ἔ. ἔλαβεν ἅπαντας Lk 5:26. [κατ]εἶχεν αὐτὰς ἔκστασις [μεγάλη] AcPI Ha 5, 29. W. τρόμος Mk 16:8. W. θάμβος Ac 3:10.

2. a state of being in which consciousness is wholly or partially suspended, freq. associated with divine action, trance, ecstasy (Galen XIX 462 K. ἔ. ἐστὶν ὀλιγοχρόνιος μανία; Philo, Rer. Div. Her. 257; 258; 264; 265 [after Gen 2:21; 15:12], Vi. Cont. 40; Plotinus 6, 9, 11; PGM 4, 737; Just., D. 115, 3 ἐν ἔκστασει [opp. ἐν καταστάσει]; Orig., C. Cels. 7, 3, 39) γενέσθαι ἐν ἔκστασει *fall into a trance* Ac 22:17; ἐγένετο (ἐπέπεσεν v.l.) ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἔ. *a trance came over him* 10:10. Cp. 11:5.—ERohde, Psyche 3 II 18ff; WInge, Ecstasy: EncRelEth V 157–59; ASharma, Ecstasy: EncRel V 11–17.—RAC IV 944–87. B. 1094. DELG s.v. ἴστημι. M-M. EDNT. TW. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 309.]

¹⁴⁶ "Many scholars have heard allusions here to the call narrative of Isaiah, who likewise has a vision in the temple and learns that God's people would resist his message (cf. Isa. 6:1–10), but of course there was long tradition of God giving revelations to prophets and other messengers in the Holy Place (cf. 1 Sam. 3:3–10; 1 Kings 3:4–5).¹³⁰ In any case, this introduces the first negative note in Paul's speech, and prepares for what follows." [Ben Witherington III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 674.]

greater detail in 22:20. Perhaps in Paul's mind was the thought that because of my past and their awareness of it they will pay attention to what I'm now trying to say as a Christian.

Jesus' answer to Paul was simply: "Go, for I will send you far away to the Gentiles," Πορεύου, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰς ἔθνη μακρὰν ἐξαποστελῶ σε. With this rejection of Paul's plea for more time to witness to his friends in the city, the Lord commands him in strong terms to get out of the city immediately. The basis of this is the Lord's commission to send him far away into Gentile territory. This Christ had already spoken to Paul at Damascus, as affirmed in Acts 9:15-16; 26:15-18; and Gal. 1:16. Now Christ reaffirms it by instructing Paul to get out of the city and head for Gentile country. What Luke asserts in Acts 9:30 is that the disciples in Jerusalem were the instruments for Paul's escape from the city and his traveling into Gentile territory: ἐπιγνόντες δὲ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ κατήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτὸν εἰς Ταρσόν, *When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.*

Therefore, from this segment of Paul's speech we learn of an inner motivation for Paul to leave the city and to head back toward home in Tarsus. Not only was there the outward hostility of the Jewish people to him and his Christian message (9:29) but Paul was told directly by the risen Christ to leave the city (22:18, 21). That such was important is reaffirmed by Luke in his narration of Paul's speech to the Jewish crowd. Just as soon as they heard mention of a divine mission to the Gentiles, they reacted with bitter hostility:

22 Up to this point they listened to him, but then they shouted, "Away with such a fellow from the earth! For he should not be allowed to live." 23 And while they were shouting, throwing off their cloaks, and tossing dust into the air, 24 the tribune directed that he was to be brought into the barracks, and ordered him to be examined by flogging, to find out the reason for this outcry against him.

22 Ἦκουον δὲ αὐτοῦ ἄχρι τούτου τοῦ λόγου καὶ ἐπήραν τὴν φωνὴν αὐτῶν λέγοντες· Αἶρε ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς τὸν τοιοῦτον, οὐ γὰρ καθῆκεν αὐτὸν ζῆν. 23 κραυγαζόντων τε αὐτῶν καὶ ριπτούντων τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ κονιορτὸν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸν ἀέρα, 24 ἐκέλευσεν ὁ χιλιάρχος εἰσάγεσθαι αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν παρεμβολήν, εἴπας μαστιγεῖν ἀνετάζεσθαι αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιγνῶ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν οὕτως ἐπεφώνουν αὐτῷ.

That Paul correctly left the city in the face of such bitter hostility is validated by this subsequent experience some years later. Even the passing of time did not diminish the antagonism of many of the Jews in Jerusalem toward him and his Christian stance. This time the Jewish leaders succeeded in having him arrested, and thought that now they were positioned to finally get rid of him completely. What they did not recognize was that all these events had ultimately been orchestrated by God according to His plans for Paul's life.

Summary of Paul's First Trip to Jerusalem. What picture emerges from comparing these three accounts describing Paul's first visit to Jerusalem as a Christian? A relatively clear picture emerges and includes the following elements:

1) Paul was forced to leave Damascus under threat of being killed. From Paul's account in 2 Cor. 11:29-30 the danger came from the Nabatean king Aretas IV and his representative in Damascus. But from Luke in Acts 9:23-25 the danger arose from the Jewish community in Damascus. Although some tension between these two accounts is clearly present they are not incompatible with one another, since likely the Nabatean opposition to Paul came from his preaching Christ in the various towns of Arabia during the three years he was away from Damascus after his conversion.

2) His time in Jerusalem was focused on making contact with the leaders of the Christian movement in the city, and on preaching the Gospel to his fellow Jews, particularly in the Synagogue of the Freedmen with which he had contact as a Pharisee prior to leaving for Damascus. Paul stresses the former in Gal. 1:18-20 and zeroes in on personal contact only with Peter, the apostolic leader, and James, the leader of the local pastors. Luke in Acts 9:26-30 stresses both activities.

Regarding contact with the Christian leadership Luke underscores more extensive contact with the apostles (vv. 27-28) largely because of the initiative of Barnabas linking Paul up with the apostles. Clearly some unresolved tension does exist between Paul's account and Luke's. Some of it is reduced with Paul's indication that the visit lasted only fifteen days, which greatly limited the amount of contact possible. Paul's indication that Christian groups in the larger region of Judea had no chance to see him personally (Gal. 1:22-23) is not inconsistent with Luke's statement in 9:28 (*he went in and out among them in Jerusalem*) because of a different geographical focus in each account (Judea vs. Jerusalem), and because the free contact by Paul was with the apostles rather than the Christian community at large even in Jerusalem (*them = apostles*). Given the scattered house church structure of that religious community, limited contact is quite understandable, and especially so in light of Paul's most likely have resided with his sister and her son while in the city.

The other activity of Paul while in the city was to spend considerable time preaching and debating with former Pharisee friends in his old synagogue located in Jerusalem. In v. 29, Luke calls them “Hellenists” (Ἑλληνιστάς) which alludes back to Stephen’s earlier debates with the same group (cf. Acts 6:9-15) that led to his martyrdom. What we detect here reflects Paul’s words later on in Romans 1:16, For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, **to the Jew first and also to the Greek**, Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι, **Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἕλληνι**. His ultimate calling from God was to the non-Jewish world, but this was never interpreted by Paul to exclude ministry to his fellow Jewish countrymen, both inside and beyond Palestine.

3) His departure from Jerusalem was under pressure from hostility against him by the Jewish leaders with whom he had earlier worked. In Acts 9:30, Luke indicates that his departure was facilitated by the Christian disciples in Jerusalem who escorted him to Caesarea Philippi on the Mediterranean coast and sent him back to his home in Tarsus. In Acts 22:17-21, Luke highlights in Paul’s speech to the Jewish crowd in the temple courtyard that the spiritual reason for his leaving Jerusalem was a revelation directly from the risen Christ while he was praying in the temple. This came as a warning from the Lord to get out of the city and to go into the territory of the Gentiles. These two narratives are compatible with one another, given the literary setting of each.

Some possible tension arises between the path back to Tarsus described by Luke in Acts 9:30 and the one indicated by Paul in Gal. 1:21.¹⁴⁷ Some see a sea voyage for Paul in Acts while an overland trip in Galatians. In reality, the means of eventually getting back to Tarsus, the capital of the Roman province of Cilicia, is not stated in either text. A sea trip from Caesarea to Antioch in Syria and an overland or sea trip from Antioch to Tarsus would have been a common route for such a trip. To create tension here is artificial and completely unnecessary.

Far more important are the spiritual insights to be gleaned from these texts. What we observe is the powerful hand of God bringing a leading Jewish Pharisee to faith in Christ, and at the same time calling this man to become the instrument of delivering the divine promise of salvation in Christ to all humanity, especially the non-Jewish aspect. Such a radical re-orientation with the racial thinking that this required is remarkable. Paul made the transition quickly and thoroughly. To be sure, his initial experiences of preaching the Gospel first in Damascus and then in Jerusalem were to Jewish audiences. But the trip back home to Tarsus would become something of a transitional moment in Paul’s life that would change him forever. What he discovered in both Damascus and in Jerusalem was the intense Jewish opposition to the idea of Christ as the promised Messiah. And the mentioning of a ministry calling from the God of Abraham to offer eternal salvation to the non-Jewish world through simple faith in Christ was more than even his former Jewish colleagues at the synagogue of the Freedman in Jerusalem could stomach. Intense hostility erupted against Paul in Damascus and then in Jerusalem, forcing him to flee both cities to avoid being murdered. Thus early on, Paul began experiencing persecution for his Christian faith, just as Christ had predicted in his conversion just before arriving at Damascus. The trip to Jerusalem, in spite of the difficulties experienced, did enable him to establish a connection to Peter and James, the two pivotal leaders of the Christian movement at that time. This would prove to be critical for his later ministry which focused on preaching the Gospel outside Palestine almost entirely. Every trip back to Jerusalem would include spending time with these leaders in sharing God’s blessings together.

In trying to sense how God prepared Paul to become the apostle to the Gentiles, these early experiences in Damascus and Jerusalem were important aspects of that training which Paul underwent.



4.2.0.3 Paul’s Time in Tarsus: Acts 9:30; 11:25-26; Gal. 1:21, Rom. 15:18-23.

Acts 9:30. When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

¹⁴⁷Gal. 1:21, 21 Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας.

Acts 9:30, When the believers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. ἐπιγόντες δὲ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ κατήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτὸν εἰς Ταρσόν.

ἐπιγινόντες δὲ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ κατήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν αὐτὸν εἰς Ταρσόν.

Acts 11:25-26a. 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch.

25 ἐξῆλθεν δὲ εἰς Ταρσὸν ἀναζητῆσαι Σαῦλον, 26 καὶ εὐρῶν ἤγαγεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν.

Gal. 1:21. Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας.

Rom. 15:18-21. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news of Christ. 20 Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written,

“Those who have never been told of him shall see,
and those who have never heard of him shall understand.”

8 οὐ γὰρ τολμήσω τι λαλεῖν ὧν οὐ κατειργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν, λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ, 19 ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος· ὥστε με ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 20 οὕτως δὲ φιλοτιμούμενον εὐαγγελίζεσθαι οὐχ ὅπου ὠνομάσθη Χριστός, ἵνα μὴ ἐπ' ἀλλότριον θεμέλιον οἰκοδομῶ, 21 ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται·

Οἷς οὐκ ἀνηγγέλη περὶ αὐτοῦ ὄψονται,
καὶ οἷς οὐκ ἀκηκόασιν συνήσουσιν.

From these sources we must glean our understanding of what Paul did after leaving Jerusalem and returning back home to Tarsus, now as a Christian. What can be gleaned from these scattered references is not a lot of information. One side note: the inclusion of Rom. 15:18-21 comes because of the statement in verse 19 that Paul has preached the Gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, which was located west of Macedonia and north of Greece. His claim is for a far reaching ministry already by the mid-50s at the mid point of the third missionary journey when this letter was written from Corinth. Additionally, his statement about not wanting to cover ground that others have already covered is important insight into his ministry strategy as well.

The composite picture from both Luke and Paul about his travels from Jerusalem to Tarsus leave the clear impression that he touched base in Syria with already existing Christian communities on the way home and probably went overland through the eastern region of Cilicia before reaching Tarsus. From the emerging patterns previously at Damascus, Arabia, and Jerusalem Paul consumed most of his time and energy preaching the Gospel message about Christ as the means of salvation from God. Clearly from Acts 11:25-26, once Paul reached Tarsus he remained there for quite some time until Barnabas looked him up to enlist his help with the work at Antioch. The beginnings of the church at Antioch are described by Luke in Acts 11:19-24 as the outgrowth of Jewish Christians fleeing the persecution in Jerusalem unleashed by Stephen's martyrdom (cf. Acts 8:1-4). Those who ended up in Antioch -- as well as Phoenicia and Cyprus -- continued sharing the Gospel inside the Jewish communities there. After a period of time believers from Cyprus and Cyrene came to Antioch and preached the Gospel to non-Jews with exploding results in large numbers of these people coming to Christ in faith. When Paul mentions having gone through Syria on his way home in Gal. 1:21 most likely one of the stops, if not the primary one, was at Antioch. By this point a Jewish Christian community was already existing in the city.

That must have been some kind of experience when Paul showed up at Antioch to affirm the believers who were now living there in large part because of his earlier persecution of them at Jerusalem in his Pharisee days. As they now came face to face with their former enemy, their rejoicing most likely was even more enthusiastic than that which Paul mentions regarding the churches in Judea who only heard about his conversion (cf. Gal. 1:23-24).

How long was Paul in Tarsus before Barnabas enlisted his help in Antioch? It is difficult to say with certainty. In Gal. 2:1, Paul indicates that his later trip to Jerusalem to resolve the controversy that arose in Antioch over the Gospel (cf. Acts 15:1-29 and Gal. 2:1-10) took place fourteen years after his conversion at Damascus. Assuming that he arrived in Tarsus some three to four years after his conversion, then about a decade of time passed between these two events.¹⁴⁸ But prior to this 'Jerusalem council' trip Paul and Barnabas had been dis-

¹⁴⁸Note the sequence of events: AD 33 - conversion; AD 36 - 1st trip to Jerusalem; AD 47 - Jerusalem Council trip to Jerusalem. These approximations come from Gal. one and two.

Other events are narrated by Luke in this period from 36 to 47: (1) trip from Jerusalem to Tarsus via Syria; (2) time in Tarsus; (3) Paul goes to Antioch with Barnabas; (4) church in Antioch sends Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem with relief offering after a year from Paul's arrival in Antioch; (5) the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas; (6) controversy erupts in Antioch over non-Jews "some time" after end of first missionary journey. Packing all these events into the years 36 to 47 clearly suggests that the time in Tarsus could not have been an extended period of many years.

patched to Jerusalem in order to carry a relief offering to the believers in Jerusalem (Acts.11:27-30). And this happened approximately a year after Paul had gone with Barnabas to Antioch from Tarsus, according to Acts 11:26. Additionally, the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas is inserted by Luke prior to this Jerusalem trip in Acts 13:1-14:28. Luke does mention that after returning to Antioch they “stayed there with the disciples for some time” (14:28; διέτριβον δὲ χρόνον οὐκ ὀλίγον σὺν τοῖς μαθηταῖς.) before the controversy erupted in Antioch that prompted the trip to Jerusalem.

When all of the intervening events between the departure from Jerusalem on the first trip and the Jerusalem council trip are subtracted from the fourteen minus three plus years that Paul mentions in Gal. 2:1 something less than ten years remains as the possible time for Paul in Syria, Cilicia, and finally Tarsus, and perhaps considerably less than a decade. Although it does not sound like a lot of time, for Paul it was one of the longest stretches to be in one place during his entire Christian ministry.

What did Paul do while in Tarsus? This is the unanswerable question regarding Paul’s stay in Tarsus. Neither Paul or Luke considered this period to contain major events that were applicable to any of the people they wrote to in Acts or in the letters. Consequently, very little information about this six to ten year period is provided. To be clear, this does not assume that nothing important happened in Paul’s life during this period; only that nothing that was particularly relevant to any of either his or Luke’s readers later on. With the assumption that the pattern of activities continued on in Paul’s life from his conversion to his arrival in the city some four or five years later, we would suggest that he spent most of his time preaching the Gospel, and a lot of it in contact with friends in the Jewish community there from the days of his childhood. But here in the more liberal attitude of Hellenistic Diaspora Judaism where more openness to new ideas and teachings existed. From all indication, Paul did not arouse the intense hostility against him and his message at Tarsus, as had been the case at Jerusalem in his old synagogue at Jerusalem. We had no indication of how many of his family still lived at Tarsus, since the only mention of immediate family, his sister and nephew, indicates their home at this time was in Jerusalem.



Whatever the extent of Paul’s activity in Tarsus during these years, this time provided him with growing experience in serving Christ as a preacher of the Gospel. And this helped prepare him for the next stage of his ministry, when Barnabas showed up on day with the request that Paul come to Antioch to help him with the exploding spiritual awakening that was taking place there, and especially with the flow of non-Jews who were coming into the Christian religion. Barnabas’ having remembered Paul’s testimony of a divine calling to preach the Gospel to Gentiles considered Paul to be potentially helpful in assisting the Christian community in Antioch, now made up of both Jews and non-Jews.

4.2.0.4 Ministry in Antioch: Acts 11:19-30; 12:25

Acts 11:19-30. 19 Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they spoke the word to no one except Jews. 20 But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus. 21 The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord. 22 News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion; 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were brought to the Lord. 25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, 26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called “Christians.”

27 At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 One of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius. 29 The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea; 30 this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

19 Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες ἀπὸ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς γενομένης ἐπὶ Στεφάνῳ διήλθον ἕως Φοινίκης καὶ Κύπρου καὶ Ἀντιοχείας μηδενὶ λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον εἰ μὴ μόνον Ἰουδαίοις. 20 ἦσαν δὲ τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἄνδρες Κύπριοι καὶ Κυρηναῖοι, οἵτινες ἔλθόντες εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ἐλάλουν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς, εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν. 21 καὶ ἦν χεῖρ κυρίου μετ’ αὐτῶν, πολὺς τε ἀριθμὸς ὁ πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον. 22 ἠκούσθη δὲ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὰ ὦτα τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς οὔσης ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν Βαρναβᾶν ἕως Ἀντιοχείας·

Some flexibility may be possible with the realization of ancient tendencies to record dates of the passage of time with the possible meanings of a) after the passing of X amount of time, or b) during the last time period (years, months) mentioned in the stated number.

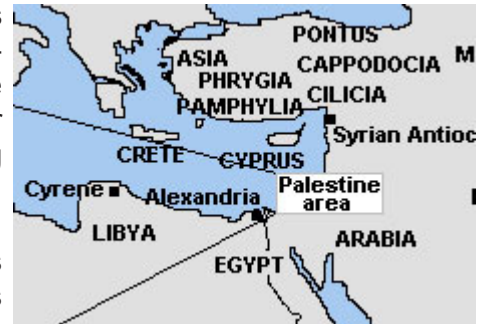
23 ὃς παραγενόμενος καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν χάριν τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐχάρη καὶ παρεκάλει πάντας τῆ προθέσει τῆς καρδίας προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ, 24 ὅτι ἦν ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ πλήρης πνεύματος ἀγίου καὶ πίστεως, καὶ προσετέθη ὄχλος ἰκανὸς τῷ κυρίῳ. 25 ἐξῆλθεν δὲ εἰς Ταρσὸν ἀναζητῆσαι Σαῦλον, 26 καὶ εὐρὼν ἤγαγεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν. ἐγένετο δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν ὅλον συναχθῆναι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ διδάξαι ὄχλον ἰκανόν, χρηματίσαι τε πρῶτως ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητὰς Χριστιανούς.

27 Ἐν ταύταις δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις κατῆλθον ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων προφῆται εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν· 28 ἀναστὰς δὲ εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν ὀνόματι Ἄγαβος ἐσήμανεν διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος λιμὸν μεγάλην μέλλειν ἔσσεσθαι ἐφ’ ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην· ἣτις ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου. 29 τῶν δὲ μαθητῶν καθὼς εὐπορεῖτό τις ὤρισαν ἕκαστος αὐτῶν εἰς διακονίαν πέμψαι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἀδελφοῖς· 30 ὃ καὶ ἐποίησαν ἀποστειλάντες πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους διὰ χειρὸς Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Σαύλου.

Acts 12:25. 25 Then after completing their mission Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark.

25 Βαρναβᾶς δὲ καὶ Σαῦλος ὑπέστρεψαν, εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ πληρώσαντες τὴν διακονίαν, συμπαραλαβόντες Ἰωάννην τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Μάρκον.

The next episode that Luke narrates for us regarding Paul is his move from Tarsus to Antioch. This move would prove to be the chief turning point in his ministry as a Christian. Up to this point, his preaching of the Gospel has centered on fellow Jews. But now in Antioch he would encounter a community of Christians comprised of both Jews and Gentiles. And along with it would come racial controversy, this time from inside the Christian community.



Setting. In the narrative flow of the book of Acts, 11:19-30 resumes the narration activities that stopped with 8:4¹⁴⁹ The persecution of believers unleashed by Stephen’s martyrdom forced all but the apostles out of Jerusalem. Luke summarizes then with the simple declaration that these persecuted believers proclaimed the Gospel wherever they went. He chose Philip to illustrate his point with preaching in both Samaria and Gaza (8:5-40). Paul’s conversion then enters the picture in chapter nine and this segment ends with Paul back in Tarsus (9:30) and the believing communities in Palestine enjoying relief from persecution (9:31). Peter as the leader of the apostles comes back center stage in the narrative with an itinerate ministry in Judea (9:32-10:48), which causes problems for him back in Jerusalem (11:1-18).

Thus Luke’s lead statement in 11:19, “Now *those who were scattered* because of the persecution that took place over Stephen *traveled* as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch,” (*Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες ἀπὸ τῆς θλίψεως τῆς γενομένης ἐπὶ Στεφάνῳ διῆλθον* ἕως Φοινίκης καὶ Κύπρου καὶ Ἀντιοχείας), picks up on the 8:4 statement, “Now *those who were scattered went* from place to place,” (*Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες διῆλθον*). Earlier he indicated that they were “proclaiming the word” (εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον). Now in chapter eleven he says those who traveled into Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch¹⁵⁰ “spoke the word to no one except Jews” (μηδενὶ λαλοῦντες τὸν λόγον εἰ μὴ μόνον Ἰουδαίους). Thus the general pattern of the spread of Christianity at this point was to other Jews. One should note that this was done primarily, if not exclusively, by Greek speaking Jews, often labeled

¹⁴⁹Acts 8:1-4. That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. 2 Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. 3 But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

4 Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word.

Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ διωγμὸς μέγας ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τὴν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις· πάντες δὲ διεσπάρησαν κατὰ τὰς χώρας τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας πλὴν τῶν ἀποστόλων. 2 συνεκόμισαν δὲ τὸν Στέφανον ἄνδρες εὐλαβεῖς καὶ ἐποίησαν κοπετὸν μέγαν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ. 3 Σαῦλος δὲ ἐλυμαίνετο τὴν ἐκκλησίαν κατὰ τοὺς οἴκους εἰσπορευόμενος, σύρων τε ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας παρεδίδου εἰς φυλακὴν.

4 Οἱ μὲν οὖν διασπαρέντες διῆλθον εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν λόγον.

¹⁵⁰“traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. I.e., to the relatively nearby diaspora, where Jews are living.

“Phoinikē was the name of the Mediterranean seacoast area of the Roman province of Syria, in which Tyre and Sidon were the two most important towns, but where Ptolemais, Acco, Sarepta, Berytus, Tripolis, and Arvad were also located. It was cut off from the Syrian inland by the Taurus mountain range. The name *Phoinikē* is related to the adj. *phoinos*, “red-purple,” the color of the famous dye of Tyre, which was called in Akkadian *kinahhu* and is related to the Hebrew name *Kēna’an*, “Canaan,” which *Phoinikē* translates in Exod 16:35 (LXX). See NOTE on 21:3. Cf. F. Millar, *Roman Near East*, 264–95, esp. 285–95.

“*Kypros*, ‘Cyprus,’ was the large island to the south of Asia Minor, about 100 km west of northern Syria. It became a senatorial province of the Roman empire in 22 B.C., the place from which Barnabas originally came (4:36 [see NOTE there]). There was a large colony of Jews on Cyprus (see 13:5; Philo, *Legatio ad Gaium* 36 §282; Josephus, *Ant.* 13.10.4 §284–87). Cf. A. Nobbs, “Cyprus,” *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting* (BAFCS 2), 279–89.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 475.]

as Hellenists.¹⁵¹ The work of Philip and Peter sandwiched between these two texts in chapters eight and eleven signal that change is beginning to take place, but under the leadership of recognized leaders in the Jerusalem church.

Text meaning. But Antioch¹⁵² was going to become the hard test site for how non-Jews would be accepted into Christianity, as Luke signals in verse twenty: “But among them were some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who, on coming to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists also, proclaiming the Lord Jesus” (ἦσαν δὲ τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν ἄνδρες Κύπριοι καὶ Κυρηναῖοι, οἵτινες ἐλθόντες εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ἐλάλουν καὶ πρὸς τοὺς Ἑλληνιστάς, εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν). The large Jewish settlement in Antioch provided ample resources for gaining converts to Christianity, but some of those believers, who migrated from the Lybian town of Cyrene and the island of Cyprus offshore west of Antioch, chose to come to Antioch and did not limit their preaching of the Gospel to only Jews. Using Greek as a mother tongue also, these Hellenistic Jewish Christians freely communicated with non-Jews about Jesus Christ. Although it would take some time to develop, the controversy over how to treat non-Jews coming into Christianity would explode into the major issue confronting first century Christianity.

The beginnings of the controversy lay not just in preaching the Gospel to non-Jews, but especially in the very positive acceptance of that message by these Gentiles: καὶ ἦν χεὶρ κυρίου μετ’ αὐτῶν, πολὺς τε ἀριθμὸς ὁ πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ἐπὶ τὸν κύριον, *The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number became believers and turned to the Lord.* Luke implies that these people were accepted into the Christian community in the same way Jews were when they converted to Christianity. Here lay the seeds of an explosive issue inside Christianity with all kinds of possible implications for its relationship to Judaism.

Consequently news of what was happening in Antioch did not take too long to get back to Jerusalem and to generate considerable apprehension among not just the leadership but the entire church there: ἠκούσθη δὲ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὰ ὄρα τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς οὔσης ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ αὐτῶν, *News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem.* Several factors helped produce this concern. Of major significance was that such an action had only been attempted previously by leaders in the Jerusalem church, Phillip and Peter. And even then it caused considerable uproar. Phillip was a Hellenistic Jew, and Peter, being from Galilee, had some mild ‘liberal’ credentials inside Judaism as well. But Jerusalem was the center of ultra-conservative Judaism, and Christianity to this point had basically reflected tendencies to not challenge this religious mentality with the loaded issue of racism. But

¹⁵¹“Verse 19 refers to the ‘Hellenists’ and looks back to 8:1, repeating the verb ‘scattered’ and reminding the reader of these Greek-speaking Jewish Christian associates of Stephen who had to flee Jerusalem as a result of his martyrdom. One of those who was ‘scattered’ was Philip (8:4), and he witnessed to the Samaritans, an Ethiopian, and to the seacoast communities as far north as Caesarea (8:5–40). Another group of Hellenist refugees is described as evangelizing the seacoast towns further to the north, in the Phoenician plain, which extended some seventy-five miles along the coast of middle Syria from Mt. Carmel north to the river Eleutheros. Its principal cities were Ptolemais, Tyre, Sidon, and Zarephath.¹²² Others began work on the island of Cyprus, the easternmost island of the Mediterranean and some 100 miles off the Syrian coast. Paul and Barnabas would later continue the witness on Cyprus (13:4–12).

“Those who traveled farthest north arrived in Antioch. These coastal towns were all heavily Hellenized, and the Greek language would have been dominant. It was thus an appropriate area for witness by these Greek-speaking Hellenist Christians. Quite naturally, they witnessed at first to Jews only, probably to fellow Greek-speaking Jews, as Stephen had done in the Diaspora synagogues of Jerusalem (6:9).” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 270.]

¹⁵²^c *Antiocheia*, ‘Antioch,’ was the name given to many towns over which Seleucid kings ruled after the death of Alexander the Great. The one meant here was the capital of the Seleucid empire, ‘Antioch on the Orontes (River),’ or ‘Antioch near Daphne,’ i.e., near the spring of Daphne, a sanctuary of the god Apollo. It had been founded about 300 B.C. by Seleucus I Nicator (312 to 281 B.C.), about 32 km inland from its port, Seleucia (13:4). Situated about 480 km north of Jerusalem, it was the third most important town in the Roman Empire at that time (after Rome and Alexandria) and was the seat of the Roman *legatus*, ‘legate’ or governor of the province of Syria. Josephus called it ‘the metropolis of Syria’ (J. W. 3.2.4 §29), a phrase that also appears on its municipal coins. Tacitus called it *Syriae ... caput*, perhaps ‘the capital of Syria’ (historians debate the sense of *caput*). In any case, it became the site of famous philosophical, rhetorical, and medical schools, the home of a renowned library, and was noted for its architectural monuments, theaters, gymnasias, and baths. Many Jews lived there (Josephus, J.W. 7.3.3 §§43–44; Ant. 12.3.1 §§119–20). Citizens of Antioch were known for their scurrilous wit and invention of nicknames. See Finegan, *Archeology of the New Testament*, 63–78; K. Bauer, *Antiochia in der ältesten Kirchengeschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1919); B. M. Metzger, “Antioch-on-the-Orontes,” *BA* 11 (1948): 69–88; R. E. Brown and J. P. Meier, *Antioch and Rome: New Testament Cradles of Catholic Christianity* (New York/Ramsey, NJ: Paulist, 1983), 11–86; G. Downey, *A History of Antioch in Syria from Seleucus to the Arab Conquest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), 163–207, 272–92; *Ancient Antioch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 120–42; I. Levinskaya, “Antioch,” *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting* (BAFCS 5), 127–35; A. Dauer, *Paulus und die christliche Gemeinde im syrischen Antiochia: Kritische Bestandsaufnahme der modernen Forschung mit einigen weiterführenden Überlegungen* (BBB 106; Weinheim: Beltz Athenäum, 1996).” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 475-76.]

now the Hellenistic Jewish Christian stream outside Jerusalem had pushed the envelope hard, rather than the Jerusalem Christian leaders. The issue of Cornelius coming to Christ as a Gentile¹⁵³ had caused considerable unrest in the Jerusalem church, and also earlier when Philip had preached to the Samaritans as well.¹⁵⁴ Even though the explanations of Peter (both from personal examination of the Samaritan situation) and of being directly involved in Cornelius' conversion satisfied the believers at Jerusalem (11:18),¹⁵⁵ it gradually became clear that not everyone in the Jerusalem church was happy with this development.¹⁵⁶

The response of the Christian community in Jerusalem to this rather unsettling news about Gentiles becoming Christians in large numbers at Antioch was to send Barnabas to investigate¹⁵⁷: ἠκούσθη δὲ ὁ λόγος εἰς τὰ ὤτα τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς οὐσῆς ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ αὐτῶν, καὶ ἐξαπέστειλαν Βαρναβᾶν ἕως Ἀντιοχείας, *News of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.* Clearly this was a wise move on their part, because Barnabas was a trusted Hellenistic Jew originally from Cyprus.¹⁵⁸ Most likely Barnabas knew most of these people, especially those from Cyprus, and thus could relate to them more effectively. As will be put in writing later on by the Jerusalem church leaders (cf. Acts 15:25, τοῖς *ἀγαπητοῖς ἡμῶν Βαρναβᾶ* καὶ Παύλῳ), Barnabas was highly respected and regarded by the church in Jerusalem.

The wisdom of this choice is affirmed by Luke with glowing words about Barnabas¹⁵⁹ (vv. 23-24): 23 ὃς παραγενόμενος καὶ ἰδὼν τὴν χάριν τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐχάρη καὶ παρεκάλει πάντας τῆ προθέσει τῆς καρδίας προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ, 24 ὅτι ἦν ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ πίστεως. καὶ προσετέθη ὄχλος ἱκανὸς τῷ κυρίῳ. 23 *When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion; 24 for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were brought to the Lord.* Several qualities about Barnabas are highlighted here. First, upon arriving in Antioch and assessing the situation, Barnabas recognized that what was happening came from God as an expression of His

¹⁵³**Acts 11:1-3.** Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, 3 saying, “Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?”

11.1 Ἦκουσαν δὲ οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ οἱ ὄντες κατὰ τὴν Ἰουδαίαν ὅτι καὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἐδέξαντο τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ. 2 ὅτε δὲ ἀνέβη Πέτρος εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, διεκρίνοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς 3 λέγοντες ὅτι εἰσηλθεις πρὸς ἄνδρας ἀκροβυστίαν ἔχοντας καὶ συνέφαγες αὐτοῖς.

¹⁵⁴**Acts 8:14.** Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.

14 Ἀκούσαντες δὲ οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἀπόστολοι ὅτι δέδεκται ἡ Σαμάρεια τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀπέστειλαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην,

¹⁵⁵**Acts 11:18.** When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, “Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.”

ἀκούσαντες δὲ ταῦτα ἠσύχασαν καὶ ἐδόξασαν τὸν θεὸν λέγοντες· Ἄρα καὶ τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὁ θεὸς τὴν μετάνοιαν εἰς ζωὴν ἔδωκεν.

¹⁵⁶**Acts 15:1.** 15.1 Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

15.1 Καί τινες κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐδίδασκον τοὺς ἀδελφούς ὅτι Ἐὰν μὴ περιτμηθῆτε τῷ ἔθει τῷ Μωϋσέως, οὐ δύνασθε σωθῆναι.

¹⁵⁷“Jerusalem was the ‘mother church’ for all Christians in those days. It was the church of the apostles, the link to Jesus. It was only natural for the Jerusalem church to show an interest in the total Christian witness wherever it was carried. This concern had already expressed itself in their sending Peter and John to Philip’s mission in Samaria (8:14–17) and their inquiring of Peter about his witness to Cornelius (11:1–18). It would reappear when Paul and Barnabas reported to Jerusalem on their successful Gentile mission (15:1–35). Although this could certainly be seen as a sort of ‘supervision’ by Jerusalem, in each instance the Christians of Jerusalem enthusiastically endorsed the new work and gave it their stamp of approval. In this instance, when Jerusalem heard of the Gentile mission in Antioch, the church did not send apostles, as it did when Philip preached to Samaritans. Instead, they sent a nonapostolic delegate but a wise choice indeed—Barnabas, ‘the son of encouragement’ (4:36).” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 271.]

¹⁵⁸**Acts 4:36.** There was a Levite, *a native of Cyprus*, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means “son of encouragement”). Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Βαρναβᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον υἱὸς παρακλήσεως, Λευίτης, *Κύπριος τῷ γένει.*

¹⁵⁹“**Βαρναβᾶς, ᾧ, ὁ** (Βαρνάβας edd.; בַּרנָבָא? SEG VII, 381, 5.—See Dssm., B 175ff, NB 16 [BS 187ff, 307ff], ZNW 7, 1906, 91f; Dalman, *Worte* 32, *Gram.* 2 178, 4; HCadbury, *Semitic Personal Names in Luke-Acts*: RHarris *Festschr.* [Amicitiae Corolla], ed. HWood ’33, 47f, JBL 52, ’33, 59) *Barnabas*, a Levite fr. Cyprus, whose first name was Joseph (**Ac 4:36**), uncle of John Mark **Col 4:10** (cp. **Ac 15:37**) and freq. cited in association w. Paul **Ac 9:27; 11:22, 30; 12:25; chs. 13–15** (18 times); **1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:1, 9, 13; Col 4:10; 2 Cor** subscr.; B subscr. In **Ac 4:36** his name is translated υἱὸς παρακλήσεως son of consolation, but it is not quite clear how this rendering, prob. a popular etymology, is derived.—RTaylor, *CQR* 136, ’43, 59–79; Bruce, *Acts* 160.—M-M.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 167.]

favor on the church (ἰδῶν τὴν χάριν τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ). It was not man-made nor did it represent a distorting of the Gospel. Only a person of deep spiritual insight and integrity could sense this about an extremely controversial issue and then respond positively to it. Second, Luke calls him ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ πλήρης πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ πίστεως, a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. He possessed intrinsic qualities of goodness (ἀγαθός), and the presence of the Holy Spirit, due to the quality of his faith commitment, was quite evident to others.

And respond positively Barnabas did: ἐχάρη καὶ παρεκάλει πάντας τῆ προθέσει τῆς καρδίας προσμένειν τῷ κυρίῳ, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion. Sensing this to be a working of God, Barnabas was grateful to God and sought to encourage (παρεκάλει) this work. As a result, a large number of people turned to Christ, both Jews and non-Jews: καὶ προσετέθη ὄχλος ἱκανὸς τῷ κυρίῳ, And a great many people were brought to the Lord.¹⁶⁰ What we see here is the critical role that spiritual maturity and sensitivity plays in the success of a spiritual moving of God among people. When Christian leaders are genuinely in tune with God, they can sense the powerful moving of God's Spirit and will encourage it, rather than try to hinder it because it doesn't conform to their pre-conceived notions of how God has to work. Here was a deeply religious Jewish man, a Levite by birth, who reached out to non-Jews with encouragement to them to come to God through Christ on the same basis as Jews were. Such was extremely radical and controversial in his day.

The success of the spiritual awakening in Antioch soon grew to such proportions that Barnabas needed help in assisting those being converted to Christ. Remembering Paul and his calling to work with non-Jews, Barnabas reached out to him for help at Antioch¹⁶¹: ἐξῆλθεν δὲ εἰς Ταρσὸν ἀναζητῆσαι Σαῦλον, καὶ εὗρων ἤγαγεν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν, Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch.¹⁶² Perhaps also he was impressed by the vigorous way that Paul took on the criticisms of Christianity from the Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem (cf. Acts 9:29), and realized that such skill could be needed in Antioch.

What evolves from this is a partnership in serving Christ together that will last for a long time and make profound contributions to the spread of the Gospel. Additionally, the foundations they built in Antioch made this community of believers the launch pad for the missionary travels of Paul, Barnabas, and Silas, along with other assistants, that evangelized the northeastern Mediterranean world over the following decade or so.

Once Paul and Barnabas arrive in Antioch from Tarsus, they spent the next year interacting with the various house church groups teaching the believers more about their Christian experience: ἐγένετο δὲ αὐτοῖς

^{160c}The result of the whole process—approach to the Gentiles and the visit of Barnabas—was (as is usual in Acts) an increase in the number of believers. For προσετέθη cf. 2:41, 47; 5:14 (with the notes); the word is characteristic of the first part of Acts. ἱκανός also is a characteristically Lucan word (Lk., nine times; Acts, eighteen times; rest of the NT, thirteen times). It is used again with ὄχλος at v. 26; 19:26.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 553.]

^{161c}Verse 25 and the first words of v. 26 appear in a different form in the Western text: ἀκούσας ὅτι Σαῦλός ἐστιν εἰς Θαρσὸν ἐξῆλθεν ἀναζητῶν αὐτόν, καὶ ὡς συντυχῶν παρεκάλει εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν (D (gig p* sy^{hms}) *mae*). This gives substantially the same sense as the Old Uncial text, though it suggests that information about Saul's whereabouts had been brought to Barnabas who did not go so much to look for him as to ask him to come with him to Antioch. Probably the Western editor thought that this made better sense than a speculative journey; he may have forgotten 9:30. He also makes Saul more of a free agent; in the Old Uncial text Barnabas brings him to Antioch, in the Western text he asks Saul to come.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 554-55.]

^{162c}At 9:30 Saul, whom the Hellenists were seeking to kill, was sent, presumably for his safety, to Tarsus, according to 22:3 his native place. See on 9:11. previously Barnabas had convinced the apostles that Saul was a genuine Christian and no agent provocateur; he had done this because he knew and was able to report that Saul had seen and spoken with the Lord and in Damascus had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus (9:27). After this, Saul had continued in Jerusalem to speak boldly in the name of the Lord (9:28) and had engaged in disputation with the Hellenists (9:29). In the narrative as presented to us in Acts this provides the necessary link with the present passage: Barnabas knew Saul to be not only a bold evangelist but one who specialized in dealing with Hellenists. This would constitute good reason for Barnabas's visit to Tarsus to seek out (ἀναζητῆσαι; according to MM 32f. the word is used for searching for human beings, with an implication of difficulty (so Delebecque 57); here only in Acts; in the rest of the NT only Lk. 2:44, 45) Saul. There are however problems in this simple connection; they may be said to focus on the word Hellenist. This (see above) seems to be used in different senses in the two passages and one or both may be Luke's own creation; there is also 6:1 to bear in mind, and the fact that Luke (see the notes on ch. 15 in Vol. II) seems to hold the view that Paul and Barnabas at the Council represented the 'Hellenist' position (the position of Stephen). That there was a special relation between Paul and Barnabas, however, is not to be doubted; the evidence of Acts (which includes the account, unlikely to be invented though possibly modified, of a rift between the two, 15:36-41) is supplemented by that of the epistles; see 1 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 2:1, 9; cf. Col. 4:10. Gal. 2:13 is particularly important: even Barnabas was carried away. This verse also connects both men with Antioch. That the connection between Saul, Barnabas, and Antioch existed is certain; if it did not come about in the way described by Acts we do not know how it originated.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 554.]

καὶ ἐνιαυτὸν ὅλον συναχθῆναι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ καὶ διδάξαι ὄχλον ἱκανόν, χρηματίσαι τε πρώτως ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητὰς Χριστιανούς, *So it was that for an entire year they met with the church and taught a great many people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called “Christians.”* The grammar construction of the Greek, ἐγένετο... συναχθῆναι... καὶ διδάξαι ὄχλον ἱκανόν, is difficult,¹⁶³ and consequently the Western text tradition of Acts has a variety of alternative readings seeking to clarify the meaning.¹⁶⁴ Essentially Luke says two central things happened (ἐγένετο) during the year following Paul’s arrival in Antioch: συναχθῆναι ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ, *they met with the church*, and διδάξαι ὄχλον ἱκανόν, *taught a great many people*. First, Paul and Barnabas established close links to the Christian community in Antioch. The verbal expression συναχθῆναι is inclusive of participating in meetings, establishing friendships, and a variety of actions connected to developing strong relationships.¹⁶⁵ Included in this was the opportunity to give instruction (διδάξαι) to large numbers of believers in the community.¹⁶⁶ Mostly likely, both Paul and Barnabas did considerable evangelization of non-converts during this year, but Luke’s emphasis here is on their work helping the church grow spiritually as a foundation to the continued outreach into the city.

One interesting consequence of this disciplining ministry by these two leaders was that Christianity received its name from non-believers in the city: χρηματίσαι τε πρώτως ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ τοὺς μαθητὰς Χριστιανούς, *and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called “Christians.”* That this came as an outcome of Paul and Barnabas’ ministry there is made clear by the adverbial result function of the Aorist infinitive χρηματίσαι, *so that the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch*. The term Χριστιανούς,¹⁶⁷ *Christians*, evidently was given to the group by out-

¹⁶³In the present reading of the text, the two infinitives συναχθῆναι and διδάξαι are infinitival subjects of the finite verb ἐγένετο, thus rendering the idea ‘to be assembled’ and ‘to teach’ ‘happened.’ Therefore the ‘subject’ of the two infinitives is the relative pronoun αὐτοῖς, which Luke typically places in the middle just before the connector καὶ. The ‘them’ refers back to Paul and Barnabas. The associative instrumental (sometimes labeled associative dative) ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ completes the linkage embedded in **συναχθῆναι** between these two leaders and the several house church groups designated under the collective label ἐκκλησία. These two leaders also taught ὄχλον ἱκανόν, *a large crowd*. Unclear in the present structure of the text is whether meeting with the church and teaching a large crowd reflects two perspectives on a single activity, or two separate activities in different locations. Probably, although not certain, the sense is they met with the believers and taught them in large numbers.

¹⁶⁴“The D-Text thus began with the statement that Barnabas learned that Saul was (still) at Tarsus and thus why he should have gone there in quest of him.³⁷ Rather than say ‘found and took’ as if Saul were a passive object, this edition describes an encounter in which Barnabas ‘begged’ Saul to come to Antioch, promoting the image of Paul as fully independent and not subordinate to Barnabas. If some form of συγγέω were part of the D-Text, it transferred to Syrian Antioch what readers learn about this person elsewhere: wherever he went, there was a stir.³⁸ The ‘shortcomings’ corrected by the D-Text may point to the source, which, although it probably did not have Barnabas fetch Saul from Tarsus,³⁹ would be expected to note Paul’s originally subordinate status.⁴⁰ The meaning of συναχθῆναι (‘to be gathered’) in v. 26b is troublesome.⁴¹ The narrator may be attempting to indicate, without undue emphasis, the collaboration of the two in mission⁴² rather than record their reception by the community.⁴³ The close of Acts 11:26 implies that the missionary labors of Barnabas and Paul in Antioch were so successful that the movement gained public recognition. The word ‘Christians’ supplies an impressive close to this terse narrative.⁴⁴” [Richard I. Pervo and Harold W. Attridge, *Acts : A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 294.]

¹⁶⁵“The meaning of συναχθῆναι is disputed. Schille (264) says that it ‘meint terminologisch den Gottesdienst’; cf. the word Synagogue. Begs. 4:130 suggests the meaning ‘were entertained’—as guests; cf. Mt. 25:35ff.; Deut. 22:2. This translation Haenchen (363) describes as impossible; it is not easy to see why. The fact is that the church (so far as it is described in other NT documents) was a body both social and liturgical. Nothing is more natural than that Saul and Barnabas should be given board and lodging by their fellow Christians and should also join them in their meetings. They were ‘hospitably received in the Ecclesia’ (F. J. A. Hort, *The Christian Ecclesia*, 1914, 61). συναχθῆναι and διδάξαι must be taken as constative aorists, looking at the year’s work as a single whole. See M. 3:72; BDR § 332:2, n. 3 (‘Auch wiederholte Handlungen stehen im Aorist, wenn die Wiederholung summiert und begrenzt ist’); Zerwick § 253.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 555.]

¹⁶⁶ὄχλον ἱκανόν, large crowd, in v. 26 is best taken with the same meaning as ὄχλος ἱκανός in v. 24 which specifies a large number of people coming into the Christian faith. This is contrary to Howard Marshall’s observation: “The work that Barnabas and Paul did in Antioch is described as teaching the church, but this could refer to evangelism as well as to the up building of existing converts.” [I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 214.]

¹⁶⁷Χριστιανός, οὗ, ὁ (formed like Ἡρωδιανοί [q.v.] or Καισαριανοί Epict. 1, 19, 19; s. TMommsen, Her 34, 1899, 151f; Dssm., LO 323 [LAE 377]; Hahn 263, 9; B-D-F §5, 2. On the Pompeian ins CIL IV 679, the reading of which is quite uncertain, s. VSchultze, ZKG 5, 1881, 125ff. On the spelling Χρηστιανός **Ac 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16** [all v.l.]; AcPl Ha 9, 19 [cp. Just., A I, 4, 5]; s. FBlass, Her 30, 1895, 465ff; Harnack, SBBerlAk 1915, 762; B-D-F §24; Mlt-H. 72) **one who is associated w. Christ, Christ-partisan, Christian** (so also Lucian, Alex. 25; 38, M. Peregr. 11; 12; 13; 16; Tacitus, Ann. 15, 44; Suetonius, Nero 16; Pliny the Younger, Ep. 10, 96, 1; 2; 3 al., also in Trajan’s reply; ApcSed prol.; Ar., Just., Ath.; s. Hemer, Acts 177) **Ac 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pt 4:16** (JKnox, JBL 72, ’53, 187–89); IEph 11:2; IMg 4; IRo 3:2; IPol 7:3; MPol 3; 10:1; 12:1, 2; D 12:4; PtK 2 p. 15, 8; τῶν Χρ. Dg 1:1. Without the art. 2:6, 10; 4:6; 5:1; 6:1–9. πολλοὺς Χρ. ActPl Ha 9, 19.—As an adj. χριστιανός, ἡ, ὄν: ἡ χριστιανὴ τροφή ITr 6:1.—For inscriptions s. esp. EGibson, The ‘Christians for Christians’ Inscriptions from Phrygia ’78; New Docs 128–39.—RLipsius, Über den Ursprung u. ältesten Gebr. des Chris-

siders, and probably with a negative intent behind it.¹⁶⁸ The label has affinity with other somewhat similar patterns in the ancient world, but also has several distinctives.¹⁶⁹ The significance of Luke's introducing the term here is to call attention that beginning at Antioch the Christian movement began distinguishing itself from Judaism. The other labels for the Christian movement in Acts, especially up to this point in Luke's story, do not specifically set Christianity apart from Judaism as a separate religious movement; but the word Χριστιανός, **Christian**, clearly does just this. But for the early church to adopt this title for themselves would take until the beginning decades of the second century.

At some point during this year (Ἐν ταύταις δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις), other believers arrived from Jerusalem with a forecast of dire events lying ahead for the world: Ἐν ταύταις δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις κατήλθον ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων προφῆται εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν, **At that time prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.** One should note the typical Jewish expression κατήλθον, **came down**, actually indicated a 300 mile journey north of Jerusalem. The religious mind-set used here was reflected in Jewish tradition that going toward Jerusalem from any direction was always 'going up' because the temple where God dwelt on earth was in the city. And conversely departing from Jerusalem was always 'going down' because one was going away from where God was.



These men are referred to as προφῆται, prophets,¹⁷⁰ but we only know about one

tennamens, Prog. Jena 1873; Zahn, Einl. II 3 41ff; FKattenbusch, Das apostol. Symbol II 1900, 557ff; JDaniels, De Naam ΧΡΙΣΤΙΑΝΟΙ: De Studiën 76, 1907, 568–80; JLeCoultre, De l'étymologie du mot 'Chrétien': RTP 40, 1907, 188–96; AGercke, Der Christenname ein Scheltnamen: Festschr. z. Jahrhundertfeier d. Univers. Breslau 1911, 360ff; Harnack, Mission I 4 1923, 424ff; EPeterson, Christianus: Miscellanea Giov. Mercati I '46, 355–72; EBickerman, HTR 42, '49, 109–24; JMoreau, La Nouvelle Clío 4, '50, 190–92; HMattingly, JTS 9, '58, 26–37 (cp. the term Augustiani); CSpicq, StTh 15, '61, 68–78 (cp. the adj. Ciceronianus=of or belonging to Cicero: Sen., Con. 7, 2, 12).—DELG s.v. χρίω. M-M. EDNT. TW. Sv.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1090.]

¹⁶⁸The verb χρηματίζω is not the usual verb for naming or calling by a name. When used with this meaning, the tone of the naming is negative rather than either neutral or positive:

χρηματίζω (χρηῖμα) fut. χρηματίσω (χρηματιῶ LXX); 1 aor. ἐχρημάτισα.; pf. inf. κεχρηματικέναι Job 40:8. Pass.: 1 aor. ἐχρηματίσθη; pf. κεχρημάτισμαι (Hdt. et al.; ins, pap, LXX, EpArist, Philo, Joseph.; Ath.). . . .

2. to take/bear a name/title (as so and so), **to go under the name of**, act., but freq. rendered as pass. in Engl. tr.: **be called/named, be identified as** (Polyb. 5, 57, 2; Strabo 13, 1, 55; Plut., Ant. 941 [54, 9]; Philo, Deus Imm. 121, Leg. ad Gai. 346; Jos., Bell. 2, 488, Ant. 8, 157; 13, 318, C. Ap. 2, 30; SIG 1150, 4 Καικίλιος ὁ χρηματίζων Βούλων; POxy 268, 2 [58 A.D.]; 320; APF 4, 1908, 122 V, 15 and oft. in pap) μοιχαλὶς χρηματίσει *she will be called an adulteress* **Ro 7:3**. ἐγένετο . . . χρηματίσαι τοὺς μαθητὰς Χριστιανούς *it came to pass . . . that the disciples got the name Christians* **Ac 11:26**.—Mlt-H. 265 holds that 1 and 2 are two entirely distinct words; that 1 comes fr. an equivalent of χρησμός 'oracle', and 2 fr. χρήματα 'business'.—DELG s.v. χρῆμα. Frisk s.v. χρή. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1089.]

¹⁶⁹“The advent of the adjective ‘Christian’ (v. 26d)⁴⁵ marks the followers of Jesus as a body recognized by outsiders as distinct from Judaism.⁴⁶ ‘Christian’ is a Greek word of Latin form and Semitic background and thus, like the inscription on the cross (John 19:19–20), encapsulates the cosmopolitan background of emergent Christianity.⁴⁷ Adjectives of this sort were commonly applied to adherents of a person, such as Julius Caesar or Herod (see Mark 3:6; 12:13).⁴⁸ Outsiders are more likely than insiders to coin such nicknames.⁴⁹ E. A. Judge says that such adjectives were not applied to followers of a god. This form ‘classifies people as partners of a political or military leader, and is mildly contemptuous.’⁵⁰ The earliest occurrences of ‘Christian’ are attributed to outsiders (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet 4:16)⁵¹ or are applied by outsiders (Josephus *Ant.* 18.64; *Tacitus Annals* 15.44; *Pliny Letters* 10.96–97). As a self-designation, the name first emerges in Ignatius (e.g., Eph. 11:2) and Did. 12:4.

“The evidence indicates that the designation ‘Christian’ probably had its origin in popular usage and became the official legal designation sometime before 110 CE, quite possibly a good decade earlier. Since neither Paul nor any other writer of the first two generations uses this term, it is rather unlikely that this label first emerged in Antioch during the 30s and 40s CE. The terms ‘Christian’/‘Christianity’ erupted in the 90s and later in writings linked in one way or another to Rome, Antioch, or Asia Minor. On linguistic grounds, Rome may be the most likely place of origin, but Antioch is possible. This boast could come from the gentile missionary source, which would therefore be dated c. 90–100 in the form available to Luke.”

[Richard I. Pervo and Harold W. Attridge, *Acts : A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, Hermeneia--a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 294-95.]

¹⁷⁰“One important feature of the early church was the activity of prophets, charismatic preachers who might be attached to a local church or engaged in an itinerant ministry (13:1 note).¹⁸ Their functions were various and included both exhortation and foretelling of the future; they may well have given expositions of the Old Testament, using their spiritual insight to show how its prophecies were being fulfilled in the events connected with the rise of the church. Their activity was connected with the new sense of inspiration associated with the gift of the Spirit to the church. There is nothing surprising about such men coming from Jerusalem to Antioch (although Haenchen, p. 376, is most perplexed by them). We learn, however, nothing about the purpose or results of their visit except for the fact that one of them, named Agabus (he reappears at 21:10), forecast a famine that would extend over all the world, i.e. the Roman Empire.”

of them (εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν) who was named Ἄγαβος, **Agabus**. With the trip being very lengthy, these men had some specific purpose in mind for making such a long trip, although Luke does not provide it for his readers. Agabus shows up twice in the pages of the New Testament: Acts 11:28 and 21:10. In both instances he functions as a prophet who predicts a future event; first the famine (11:28) and Paul's arrest in Jerusalem (21:10-12) when Paul came through Caesarea on his way to Jerusalem at the end of the third missionary journey.

Luke makes a rather astounding statement in 11:28, **One of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine over all the world; and this took place during the reign of Claudius**, ἀναστὰς δὲ εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν ὀνόματι Ἄγαβος ἐσήμανεν διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος λιμὸν μεγάλην μέλλειν ἔσσεσθαι ἐφ' ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην· ἧτις ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου. The prediction was made of a severe famine, and Luke's side note indicates that it did happen in the reign of Claudius. The huge historical difficulty here is that no such empire wide famine ever took place during the entire existence of the Roman empire! So what was Luke referring to?¹⁷¹ The action of the church in Antioch to send a relief offering to believers in Judea strongly points to a localized famine in southern Palestine,¹⁷² which the Jewish historical Josephus does describe as happening in the mid-forties.¹⁷³ Much more likely, Luke's term ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην should be understood as hyperbole carrying the sense of a very severe famine; such meanings for similar phrases are documented in ancient literature.

Curiously, Luke indicates that the timing of the famine was ἧτις ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Κλαυδίου, **during the reign of Claudius**. He was the Roman emperor from 41 to 54 AD, which provides some signaling of time period here. Additionally, the pericope of 12:20-23 that describes Herod's death,



[I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 215.]

¹⁷¹“Famine is an enduring human problem.⁶⁶ A worldwide famine would be a disaster of apocalyptic proportions. Prophetic oracles are fond of οἰκουμένη (‘worldwide’),⁶⁷ and prophecies of widespread famine are typical items in lists of the afflictions that will signal the end.⁶⁸ The obvious difficulty in this passage is that Agabus predicts universal famine while the response appears to address a local famine in Palestine. There is ample evidence for local famines in the eastern Mediterranean in the late 40s (during the reign of Claudius).⁶⁹ Those seeking a historical basis will refer to this data, downgrade ‘famine’ to ‘food shortage,’ and discard the ‘hyperbole’ of v. 28.⁷⁰ Data could probably be found for most regions in one period or another, and one must, in any case, ask what useful information has been preserved when these deductions have been made.⁷¹ Bruce Winter concludes: “And, as he reflected on the duration and intensity of local shortages in the Claudian principate known to him, the author of Acts concluded that it was a fulfillment of the prophetic word to which Christians in Antioch responded appropriately.”⁷²” [Richard I. Pervo and Harold W. Attridge, *Acts: A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, Hermeneia—a critical and historical commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 296-97]

¹⁷²“through the Spirit predicted that there was going to be a severe famine all over the world. Lit., ‘throughout all the inhabited (earth)’ (οἰκουμένη), on which see Luke, 400; cf. O. Michel, TDNT, 5.157. The term occurs elsewhere in Luke 2:1; 4:5; 21:26; Acts 17:6, 31; 19:27; 24:5. Torrey (*Composition and Date*, 21) maintains that οἰκουμένη is a Lucan mistranslation of Aramaic ‘ar’ā’, ‘the land,’ meaning Judea. If so, then it might more easily refer to the famine noted in Josephus (see below). But the matter is not so simple, because a ‘worldwide famine’ seems to be a literary hyperbole used in speaking of a severe famine and shortage of food. An inscription from Asia Minor (CIG 3973:5–6) also speaks of ‘a famine in the land, flesh-eating, terrible, and bearing inescapable death, [that] gripped the whole world’ (kosmon epeschē[th]e panta). See B. W. Winter, “Acts and Food Shortages,” *The Book of Acts in Its Graeco-Roman Setting* (BAFCS 2), 59–78, esp. 65–67.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 481.]

¹⁷³“But as to Helena, the king’s mother, when she saw that the affairs of Izates’s kingdom were in peace, and that her son was a happy man, and admired among all men and even among foreigners, by the means of God’s providence over him, she had a mind to go to the city of Jerusalem, in order to worship at that temple of God which was so very famous among all men, and to offer her thank offerings there. So she desired her son to give her leave to go thither: (50) upon which he gave his consent to what she desired very willingly, and made great preparations for her dismissal, and gave her a great deal of money, and she went down to the city of Jerusalem, her son conducting her on her journey a great way. (51) Now her coming was of very great advantage to the people of Jerusalem; for whereas a famine did oppress them at that time, and many people died for want of what was necessary to procure food withal, queen Helena sent some of her servants to Alexandria with money to buy a great quantity of corn, and others of them to Cyprus, to bring a cargo of dried figs; (52) and as soon as they were come back, and brought those provisions, which was done very quickly, she distributed food to those that were in want of it, and left a most excellent memorial behind her of this benefaction, which she bestowed on our whole nation; (53) and when her son Izates was informed of this famine, he sent great sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem. However, what favors this queen and king conferred upon our city Jerusalem, shall be further related hereafter.”

[Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996). S.V. *Antiquities of the Jews*, 20.51-53]

after unleashing intense persecution on believers in Jerusalem (12:1-19) during this same general period of time, provides further dating about Herod Agrippa I, (Ἡρώδης Ἀγρίππας), who reigned over Judea, Galilee, Batanaea, and Pera and died in 44 AD according to Josephus, the Jewish historian of the first century. Thus this event, along with Herod's death, took place during the 40s of the first century, and prior to 44 AD.

The response of the Christian community in Antioch, made up now of both Jews and non-Jews, was to send a relief offering to Judea: 29 τῶν δὲ μαθητῶν καθὼς εὐπορεῖτό τις ὥρισαν ἕκαστος αὐτῶν εἰς διακονίαν πέμψαι τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ ἀδελφοῖς· 30 ὁ καὶ ἐποίησαν ἀποστείλαντες πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους διὰ χειρὸς Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Σαύλου, 29 The disciples determined that according to their ability, each would send relief to the believers living in Judea; 30 this they did, sending it to the elders by Barnabas and Saul. Regarding the offering some insights emerge that are important.¹⁷⁴ **First**, the Christian community (τῶν μαθητῶν), rather than just the leaders, made the determination (ὥρισαν) to collect an offering and to send it to the churches in Judea. **Second**, each individual (τις ὥρισαν ἕκαστος αὐτῶν) contributed to the collection out of their own resources according to what they felt they could give. Interestingly, the pattern of giving at Antioch is somewhat different than it was earlier in the Jerusalem church (cf. 2:44, 4:32, 34-37).¹⁷⁵ **Third**, the approach used here by the church will become something of a model that Paul will use extensively later on in his ministry in the mid-50s when the massive relief offering is collected from the churches established on the second missionary journey in order to give assistance to these same Jewish Christian churches in Judea a second time. Paul's detailed description in 2 Corinthians eight and nine reflect similar principles in collecting this later offering.¹⁷⁶ In both instances, the additional benefit of these offerings beyond providing material relief was to help forge a closer connection between the dominantly, if not exclusively, Jewish oriented churches of Judea with these churches that were becoming dominantly non-Jewish in their membership.¹⁷⁷ The emerging crises over how Jews and non-Jews could work along side one another within the church was somewhat defused by these expressions of generosity from the Gentile churches to their Jewish brothers in Judea. **Fourth**, this relief offering by Christians at Antioch for Jewish Christian broth-

¹⁷⁴“The portrayal of wealth in this unit reflects one half of the larger picture found elsewhere in Luke-Acts. The evangelist gives a two-sided portrayal. On the one hand, Luke sometimes depicts wealth in negative terms. Acts 1:18 says Judas's betrayal of Jesus was for money (Luke 22:5-6). In 5:1-11, Ananias and Sapphira lie to the Holy Spirit because of money. Simon the magician seeks the ability to impart the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands in exchange for money (8:18). In 16:16-24, the Philippian owners of a divining slave girl cause Paul and Silas to be thrown into prison over their loss of gain. Acts 19:23-41 tells how the silversmiths in Ephesus riot over the threat to their income. Felix, in 24:26, keeps Paul in prison in hopes that he will be given a bribe. Throughout Acts the author says in effect that a concern for money to the point of valuing it above all else is a primary trait of a godless individual and a fallen world (cf. Luke 12:13-15, 16-21, 22-34; 16:13, 19-31; 18:18-23, 24-25; 1 Tim 6:10; Polycarp, To the Philippians 4:1).

“On the other hand, Luke sometimes depicts wealth in positive terms. Private property is assumed (Acts 2:45; 4:37; 5:4; 11:29). Nevertheless, property ownership and rights are subordinated to human need within the community of disciples. Since property is an extension of one's personality, to commit oneself to others in a community involves sharing of wealth. That this happened in Jerusalem (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32, 34, 35, 36-37; 6:1-6; 11:27-30), Luke believes, fulfills the highest hopes of the Jews and ideals of the Greeks and Romans. It is this aspect of the Lukan portrayal of wealth that one finds in vv. 27-30. The purpose of the sharing in 11:27-30 is the furtherance of unity in the Messianist community (cf. Isa 58:7).”

[Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 106-07.]

¹⁷⁵“There is no longer any suggestion of pooling capital (as at 2:44f.; 4:32, 34-37; 5:1-11). The Christians were engaging in business and some at least were prospering (εὐπορεῖτο, *had plenty*). καθὼς is used in the sense of measure: *in proportion as any prospered*. Earlier usage has εὐπορεῖν, later (as here) εὐπορεῖσθαι. D improves a rather clumsy construction: οἱ δὲ μαθηταὶ καθὼς εὐποροῦντο ...” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, The international critical commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: T&T Clark., 2004), 565.]

¹⁷⁶In addition to 2 Cor. 8:1-7, 12-15, 9:6-15, there is also 1 Cor. 16:1-4. All of these texts define the guidelines being followed for this later offering and reflect the same basic principles indicated by Luke that the church at Antioch followed with this first offering.

¹⁷⁷The older contention by many scholars that Luke confused these two relief offerings and consequently invented this first one is completely unwarranted and groundless. Much of this has been generated from a perceived contradiction between Luke describing three visits of Paul to Jerusalem (Acts 9, 11, 15) whereas Paul only describes two visits (Gal. 1:18-2:10). This tendency rests on the false assumption that both writers are working off a modern historical set of guidelines with chronological concerns high on their list of priorities. Careful study of both Acts and Paul's biographical statements in his letters reveals that neither Paul nor Luke had much interest in providing a chronological narrative of Paul's activities. Both writers are highly selective in which events they choose to include in their narratives. One clear illustration of this is the huge gaps in Luke's narration about Paul's relationship both in personal visits and in letters with the church at Corinth. See my “Paul's Relation to the Corinthian Believers: A Reconstruction,” at cranfordville.com for details.

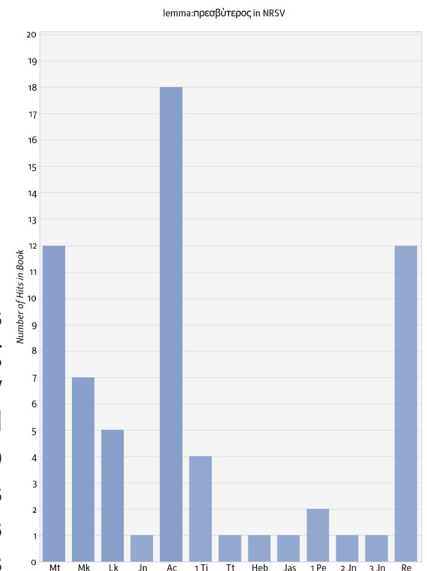
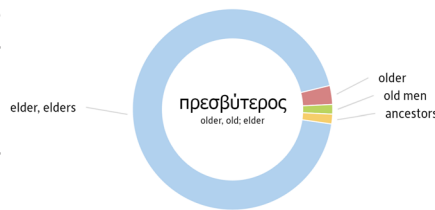
“According to Haenchen, the tradition about Paul's collection (Gal 2:10, etc.) had been fused with that of his trip with Barnabas (Acts 15; Gal 2:1).⁸ Luke found the tradition in this form and tied it to the prophecy of Agabus.”

[Hans Conzelmann, Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 91.]

ers in Judea came out of a long standing Jewish tradition of compassionate care for one another inside Jewish society. The poor and the needy among Jews were given substantial support over the centuries from the time of Moses onward, and this stood in stark contrast to the way other peoples treated such individuals in the ancient world. In massive extreme needs, rich rulers would give out some assistance largely to keep down unrest that would threaten their control over the people. But the Jewish people distinguished themselves in the ancient world by their care for the needy. The Acts six episode of the widows in the early church represents the beginning Christian application of this Jewish heritage to Christians in need. Now the emerging Gentile branch of the Christian community picks up on this heritage and seeks to give care to fellow Christians who are suffering and in need of basic living supplies, who are Jewish.

The situation of the Christian communities in Judea through the forties and fifties of the first Christian century seems to have been somewhat precarious.¹⁷⁸ The region did suffer, sometimes heavily, from periodic famines during this period,¹⁷⁹ as the Jewish historian Josephus reflects in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (especially book 20, chapter 2). In addition, the Jewish Christian community there came under increasing pressure from the Jewish authorities as a deviate branch of Judaism that needed to be forcibly brought back into the fold of traditional Judaism. This was fueled in part by the rising nationalistic tendencies starting to crank up with the unrest that sparked the Zealot Revolt¹⁸⁰ first in Galilee and it would eventually consume all of Palestine by the mid to late sixties with the destruction of both the temple and the city of Jerusalem as the climax in the late sixties.

Another helpful insight from Luke's narrative is the way he addresses the leaders of the Judean churches. He refers to them as τοὺς πρεσβύτερους, **the elders**. Only the leaders in Judaism have been addressed as πρεσβύτεροι up to this point (cf. Acts 4:5, 8, 23; 6:12). But from this point forward in Acts πρεσβύτεροι will point to Christian leaders (cf. Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18), the only exception being 23:14; 24:1, and 25:15 where the reference is Jewish instead of Christian. Whereas in a Jewish reference the pattern often is 'chief priests and elders' (οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι), in a Christian reference in the early church it frequently is 'apostles and elders' (οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι). Both the Jewish and the early Christian linking of the twin terms underscores a shared leadership orientation in both groups. The term πρεσβύτερος in the New Testament is a dominantly Lukan word with 23 of the 66 instances in Luke and Acts, as reflected in the chart on the right. Although the term πρεσβύτερος literally is an adjective meaning 'older,' the vast majority of uses in the New Testament reflect a technical meaning of 'leader' either in Judaism or Christianity. Scattered ancient documents suggest that in both Jewish and the surrounding cultures the term as a leadership designation was not exclusively connected to age, although in general the ancient world combined age and wisdom in assuming that better leadership would



^{178c}Such an act of fellowship was calculated to strengthen the bond of a common faith which linked the totally Jewish-Christian church of Jerusalem with the mainly Gentile-Christian church of Antioch. The Jerusalem church in the apostolic age appears to have suffered from chronic poverty; this helps to explain why its members, or an influential group of them, were called “the poor” (Heb. *hā’ ebyônîm*, whence the later “Ebionites”).” [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988).]

^{179c}Grain shortages were frequent in the Roman world of the first century AD. Seneca, writing about problems in Rome in AD 40–41 under Caligula, says, “We were threatened with ... lack of provisions ... very nearly at the cost of the City’s destruction and famine and the general revolution that follows famine” (*Brevity of Life* 18.5). During much of the reign of Claudius, evidence suggests that there were serious shortages in general (Suetonius, *Claudius* 18.2; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43; Dio Cassius 60.11) and in the East in particular. In AD 46 or 47, under the procurator Tiberius Julius Alexander, there was famine in Judea. Helena, Queen of Adiabene, visited Jerusalem to find the inhabitants dying. She sent to Cyprus for dried figs and to Egypt for grain (Josephus, *Antiquities* 3.15.3 §§ 320–21; 20.2.5 §§ 51–52). When her son was informed of the famine, he sent great sums of money to the principal men of Jerusalem (*Antiquities* 20.2.5 § 53). ‘All over the world’ in Agabus’s prophecy is poetic hyperbole (v. 28b; cf. 17:6; 24:5). The famine was extensive but not empire-wide. That Agabus correctly foretells the coming famine lays the foundation for the readers’ confidence in his words later in Acts (21:10–11).” [Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts : A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 105-06.]

¹⁸⁰For a historical survey of the periodic attempts of this radical Jewish party to purge the Promised Land of all non-Jewish elements during this general period, see “Zealotry in Jewish History,” Wikipedia.org.

come from older individuals who also exhibited wisdom. Young men could function as a πρεσβύτερος in some leadership situations.¹⁸¹

What Luke reflects in 11:30 with the first Christian designation for the term is an acknowledgement that by the early to mid-forties the early church was moving from the exclusive apostolic leadership of the church in Jerusalem to a shared leadership pattern between the apostles and the elders. How much earlier this leadership pattern had emerged is not clear, since Christian leadership references in Acts through chapter eleven designate the apostles as sole leaders. Peter's pattern of itinerate ministry, as reflected in chapters ten and eleven, may very well signal the shift of roles for the apostles and imply the emergence of πρεσβύτεροι as local leaders.

Paul and Barnabas, as representatives of the church in Antioch, delivered the relief offering to these leaders of the various church groups in Judaea. One would suspect that the offering was taken initially to Jerusalem, where it was then divided up for distribution in the other churches scattered across the province of Judea.

Between the trip of Barnabas and Paul to Jerusalem (11:19-30) and their evident return to Antioch from Jerusalem (12:25), Luke inserts the narrative about the emergence of a new type of persecution of Christians in Jerusalem, that initiated by the Roman government authorities (cf. 12:1-24). One of the original Twelve, James the brother of John, is arrested and executed by Herod Agrippa I (41 - 44 AD) according to Luke (12:1-5). He moved against Peter also with the same intention, but God intervened and rescued Peter rather miraculously (12:6-19), who then went into hiding (either in Jerusalem or perhaps in another city¹⁸²) until Herod returned back to Caesarea, the Roman governmental headquarters for this region. Then Luke provides an account of Herod's death in Caesarea as a punishment from God (12:20-23).¹⁸³

¹⁸¹“Esp. important for bibl. usage is the fact that in the constitution of Sparta πρέσβυς occurs as a political title to denote the president of a college: τῶν ἐφόρων, IG, 5, 1, 51, 27; 6, 552, 11; νομοφυλάκων, 6, 555b, 19; βιδέων (ephebes), 6, 556, 6; συναρχίας (assembly of magistrates), 6, 504, 16. Quite independent is the use of πρεσβύτεροι as a title in Egypt inscr. and pap. (Ptolemaic and imperial period).⁴ Here committees and colleges of various kinds are entitled πρεσβύτεροι: the freely elected board of associated national husbandmen (πρεσβύτεροι γεωργῶν), BGU, I, 85, 9 ff.; P. Tebt., I, 13, 5; 40, 17 f.; 43, 8; 50, 20; P. Gen., 42, 15; P. Lond., II, 255, 7, also corporations: πρεσβύτεροι τῶν ἄλτροκόπων (guild of millers in Alexandria, 6 πρεσβύτεροι with a ἱερεὺς at their head, 3rd cent. B.C.).⁵ πρεσβύτεροι also appear in village government: πρεσβύτεροι τῆς κόμης.⁶ They have administrative and judicial functions. Their number varies (2, 4, even more than 10). Their period of office is limited to a year. It is important that πρεσβύτεροι is also a title among the priests of the ‘great god Socnopaios’ (BGU, I, 16, 5 f.). The ref. is to an executive committee of 5 or 6 members alternating each yr. and charged with supervision of the finances and negotiations with the authorities. **The members are not old men (the text speaks of presbyters of 45, 35 and 30 yrs. of age).**⁷ Rather different are the richly attested πρεσβύτεροι of Gk. societies.⁸ Here the word is not a title; the πρεσβύτεροι are not office-bearers but senior groups of various kinds (as distinct from junior groups), cf. the ὑμνωδοὶ πρεσβύτεροι of an inscr. found in Radanovo⁹ and the many clubs of men belonging to the senate.¹⁰ Elsewhere πρεσβύτεροι is used to denote the age of one guild as compared to a younger one:¹¹ σύνοδο· τῶν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ πρεσβυτέρων ἐγδοχέων (carriers), Ditt. Or., I, 140, 7 ff.: πρεσβύτεροι γέρδιοι (weavers)¹² or τέκτονες πρεσβύτεροι.¹³” [*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Gerhard Friedrich, electronic ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 6:653.]

¹⁸²“he departed and went off to another place. I.e., he left Jerusalem for security, perhaps to a hiding place in some other city of the Roman Empire. What is meant by ‘another place’ has been the subject of much speculation. It is thought to be a Lucan way of saying that Peter made his way to Rome, which he does not want to mention, because it will be the hero of the second part of Acts who will bring testimony to Rome. It has often been so interpreted (e.g. Eusebius, HE 2.14.5). There is no guarantee that traditional interpretation is correct. Actually Peter seems to have become a traveling apostle (see 1 Cor 9:5; Gal 2:11) who reappears in Jerusalem in chap. 15 for the ‘Council.’ Where he has been in the interval is anybody’s guess. For Foakes-Jackson, Peter would have gone to Mesopotamia (Peter, 117), for Osborne, to the eastern diaspora centered in Edessa (“Where”).” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 489-90.]

¹⁸³Josephus also provides an account of Herod's death in the *Antiquities of the Jews*, 19.8.2 §343-352, which differs somewhat from Luke's account:

(343) Now, when Agrippa had reigned three years over all Judea, he came to the city Cesarea, which was formerly called Strato's Tower; and there he exhibited shows in honor of Caesar, upon his being informed that there was a certain festival celebrated to make vows for his safety. At which festival, a great multitude was gotten together of the principal persons, and such as were of dignity through his province. (344) On the second day of which shows he put on a garment made wholly of silver, and of a contexture truly wonderful, and came into the theatre early in the morning; at which time the silver of his garment being illuminated by the fresh reflection of the sun's rays upon it, shone out after a surprising manner, and was so resplendent at to spread a horror over those that looked intently upon him; (345) and presently his flatterers cried out, one from one place, and another from another (though not for his good), that he was a god; and they added, “Be thou merciful to us; for although we have hitherto revered thee only as a man, yet shall we henceforth own thee as superior to mortal nature.” (346) Upon this the king did neither rebuke them, nor reject their impious flattery. But, as he presently afterwards looked up, he saw an owl sitting on a certain rope over his head, and immediately understood that this bird was the messenger of ill tidings, as it had once been the messenger of good tidings to him; and fell into the deepest sorrow. A severe pain also arose in his belly, and began in a most violent manner. (347) He therefore looked upon his friends, and said, “I whom you call a god, am commanded presently to depart this life; while Providence thus reproves the lying words you just now said to me; and I, who was by you called immortal, am immediately to be hurried away by death. But I am bound to accept of what Providence

Following Luke's summarizing statement in v. 24, "But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents" (Ὁ δὲ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤϋξανεν καὶ ἐπληθύνετο),¹⁸⁴ the reference to Barnabas and Paul is inserted in v. 25: Βαρναβᾶς δὲ καὶ Σαῦλος ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ πληρώσαντες τὴν διακονίαν, συμπαραλαβόντες Ἰωάννην τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Μᾶρκον.

Then after completing their mission Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark.

The very unusual aspect of this statement is the prepositional phrase εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, which seems incorrect for describing a trip from Jerusalem to Antioch. This bothered copyists of the New Testament who often changed the phrase to read 'from Jerusalem' using either ἀπὸ or ἐξ.¹⁸⁵ This puzzling expression has prompted all kinds of attempted explanations.¹⁸⁶ If εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ is taken with the participle πληρώσαντες, the reading becomes, "in

allots as it pleases God; for we have by no means lived ill, but in a splendid and happy manner." (348) When he said this, his pain was become violent. Accordingly he was carried into the palace; and the rumor went abroad everywhere, that he would certainly die in a little time. (349) But the multitude presently sat in sackcloth, with their wives and children, after the law of their country, and besought God for the king's recovery. All places were also full of mourning and lamentation. Now the king rested in a high chamber, and as he saw them below lying prostrate on the ground, he could not himself forbear weeping. (350) And when he had been quite worn out by the pain in his belly for five days, he departed this life, being in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and in the seventh year of his reign; (351) for he reigned four years under Caius Caesar, three of them were over Philip's tetrarchy only, and on the fourth he had that of Herod added to it; and he reigned besides those, three years under the reign of Claudius Caesar: in which time he reigned over the forementioned countries, and also had Judea added to them, as also Samaria and Cesarea. (352) The revenues that he received out of them were very great, no less than twelve millions of drachmae. Yet did he borrow great sums from others; for he was so very liberal, that his expenses exceeded his incomes; and his generosity was boundless.

[Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1996).]

"Josephus's account differs from that in Acts 12:20–23 in several ways. (a) In Acts, the occasion is a delegation from Tyre and Sidon; in Josephus, it is a festival in honor of Caesar. (b) In Acts, Herod's oration brings acclamation (would the auditors of Acts have heard echoes of Nero's obsession with his "divine" voice [Tacitus, *Annals* 14.15.8; 16.22.1], which flatterers praised [Dio Cassius 62.20.4–6—"the One who is from the beginning of time! Augustus! Divine voice! Blessed are those permitted to hear you!"]?); in Josephus, it is his silver suit. (c) In Acts, worms eat Herod; in Josephus, he dies of a pain in his belly. The two accounts are similar in that they both attribute Herod's death to his not rejecting the acclamation of divinity.

"The story in Josephus belongs to the Gattung of the humiliation of a self-deifying ruler. The account in Acts 12:20–23 is a synthesis of two genres: (a) the humiliation of a self-deifying ruler (cf. vv. 22, 23a) and (b) the ignominious death of a persecutor of God's people (cf. v. 23b). The two genres need explanation."

[Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 110–11.]

¹⁸⁴One should note a pattern here with the summary statement: when the church was relieved of its persecutors, it began to grow and expand dramatically. Suffering faithfully through periods of severe hardship prepared it to rapidly grow once it was past the hardships. Cf. 6:7 and 19:20 for similar terminology.

¹⁸⁵{C} εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ κ B 81 1409 Byz [L P] *Lect^{pt}* syr^{hmg} slav Chrysostom^{mss} // ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ D Ψ 36 181 307 453 610 614 1678 *Lect^{pt}* it^{ar, c, d, dem, gig, ph, ro} vg cop^{bo, meg} Chrysostom^{ms} // ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ P⁷⁴ A 33 2344 cop^{samss} eth Chrysostom // ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν (E 1175 ἀπό for ἐξ) 945 1739 1891 (I 1178 ἀπό for ἐξ) I^{AD} it^{e, p, w} syr^p cop^{sa}

[Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini et al., *The Greek New Testament*, Fourth Revised Edition (With Apparatus); The Greek New Testament, 4th Revised Edition (With Apparatus) (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; Stuttgart, 2000; 2009).]

¹⁸⁶Many attempts have been made to account for the origin of the reading εἰς in this verse. The natural impression one gets when reading the section 11:27 to 13:1 is that 11:30 refers to the arrival of Paul and Barnabas at Jerusalem and that 12:25 ought to tell of their departure from Jerusalem. On the one hand, all the canons (rules) of textual criticism favor the more difficult reading εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, supported by the earliest and best witnesses. Furthermore, the easier reading is both divided against itself (ἀπὸ and ἐξ), and is also unlikely to be original since it is not the common usage of Acts to specify the place from where return is made (1:12 is the only such instance of the twelve occurrences of the verb ὑποστρέφειν in Acts).

"On the other hand, as Westcott and Hort declare, 'εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ, which is the best attested and was not likely to be introduced, cannot possibly be right if it is taken with ὑπέστρεψαν' ('Notes on Select Readings,' p. 94). Their conclusion is that the passage contains a primitive error that has infected all existing witnesses, and they propose that the order of words be changed to read ὑπέστρεψαν τὴν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ πληρώσαντες διακονίαν ('having fulfilled their mission at Jerusalem they returned').

"Various other attempts have been made to explain the reading in the text, including the view that the text originally read ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ (from Jerusalem) and that a copyist wrote εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν (to Antioch) in the margin and then later another copyist substituted the comment in the margin for the reading in the text. But when Ἀντιόχειαν was corrected to Ἱερουσαλὴμ, the preposition εἰς was left in the text. Others have suggested that the original text had no preposition at all. Still others have suggested that the aorist participle πληρώσαντες should be translated 'in order to fulfill' rather than 'when they had fulfilled,' but this interpretation requires that the aorist participle συμπαραλαβόντες be translated in a way that is not grammatically possible.

"Perhaps the best solution is to follow the reading in the best manuscripts and place a comma after ὑπέστρεψαν and take εἰς as the Hellenistic Greek equivalent of ἐν, so that the meaning would be 'Barnabas and Saul returned [ὑπέστρεψαν], after they had fulfilled at [εἰς] Jerusalem their mission, bringing with them John whose other name was Mark.' This is the solution followed in NJB: 'Barnabas

Jerusalem having completed their ministry...".¹⁸⁷ This resolves the problem with the statement adequately and within the framework of ancient Greek grammar, and fits the very obvious contextual meaning very well.¹⁸⁸

Lest this difficulty obscure more important insights here, we should note a couple of important things that Luke says with this statement, and what he does not say. First, it is not clear at all if Paul and Barnabas were in Jerusalem during this outbreak of persecution by Herod that led to James' death and Peter's arrest. If they were, then they experienced directly the hardships the believers in Jerusalem were suffering. Also, chronologically this would put them in Jerusalem no later than 44 AD, the year of Herod's death that can be determined with confidence from Josephus' account. But Josephus' account of the severe famine in Palestine comes a year or so later, suggesting that Barnabas and Paul may have been in Judea shortly after Herod's death.¹⁸⁹ Clearly Luke's insertion of the return of these two missionaries back to Antioch is motivated more by literary concerns than by chronological interests.¹⁹⁰ He wants the two back in Antioch, and also for John Mark to be in Antioch, before he can narrate the details of the first missionary journey beginning in 13:1.

Additionally, Luke gives no signal of how long they were in Jerusalem. If the atmosphere was already tense prior to their arrival as is probable, the likelihood is that they did not stay very long; just long enough to deliver the offering to James and the other pastoral leaders in the city and to arrange for its distribution to all the churches of Judea. Thus their visit there most likely was only a few days in length. If, as is more likely, they came shortly after Herod's death, they still did not tarry long once their mission of delivering the offering was completed.¹⁹¹ The needs at Antioch were compelling for them to return back there as quickly as possible.

What Luke does say, however, is that this relief offering was considered as *διακονίαν*, *ministry*. The labeling of a relief offering as *διακονία*, *ministry*, is consistent with the use of the term elsewhere in the New Testament to refer to tangible actions to help others as ministry.¹⁹² The Christian community in Antioch reached out to their spiritual brothers and sisters in Judea to provide monetary assistance during a time of urgent need.

Second, Luke states that John Mark who was living in Jerusalem at that time joined the group as they returned back to Antioch: *and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark, συμπαραλαβόντες Ἰωάννην τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Μάρκον*. From the pages of the New Testament, we learn that he was the son of a Mary whose home in Jerusalem was a meeting place for believers in the city (Acts 12:12), the cousin or nephew of Barnabas

and Saul completed their task at Jerusalem and came back ...' (similarly FC and TOB).

NRSV translates the reading in the text as 'Then after completing their mission Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem ...,' but most other translations follow one of the variant readings: "from Jerusalem" (RSV, NIV, REB, TEV)."

[Roger L. Omanson and Bruce Manning Metzger, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament: An Adaptation of Bruce M. Metzger's Textual Commentary for the Needs of Translators* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006), 247-48.]

¹⁸⁷Greek adverbial modifiers normally appear in front of what they modify more often than after it.

¹⁸⁸"The best manuscripts read 'to,' not 'from,' Jerusalem, but that would scarcely make sense. Clearly, the two were returning from Jerusalem to Antioch and were set for the following narrative, which took place in Antioch (13:1-3). The NIV has chosen, as most translations do, to follow the more poorly attested reading 'from Jerusalem,' since the context seems to demand it. Another solution, however, is to put the phrase 'to Jerusalem' with 'ministry,' a construction found elsewhere in Luke-Acts. The translation would then read, 'Barnabas and Saul returned, having finished their ministry to Jerusalem.'¹⁶⁴" [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, electronic ed., Logos Library System; *The New American Commentary* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2001), 286.]

¹⁸⁹"Barnabas and Saul's famine-relief visit from Antioch to Jerusalem was related in 11:30 by way of completing the account of Agabus's prophecy and the Antiochene Christians' response to it. The response took the form of weekly contributions, and some time elapsed before the collection was complete and the need arose in Judaea. By the time Barnabas and Saul went to Jerusalem, Agrippa was dead. Their return, though not their setting out, is related in chronological order." [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 243.]

"Acts 12:1-24 is sandwiched in between the departure of Barnabas and Saul for Jerusalem (11:30) and their return (12:25). If the famine earlier predicted by Agabus (11:28) occurred in AD 46-47, the events of ch. 12 take place prior to (so 12:1-19) and during AD 44 (so 12:20-23), the year Herod died." [Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 107.]

¹⁹⁰Although many commentators list 12:25 with the verses that precede it -- ultimately 12:1-24 -- this statement of Luke actually functions as a header to 13:1-3. The unfortunate chapter division, which was made in the 1500s AD, leaves a wrong impression about literary units of materials.

¹⁹¹Once Herod died, leaving a political vacuum in Palestine for the Roman government for a period, Emperor Claudius appointed Cuspius Fadus (44-46) to be the military governor, a *Procurator*, over Judea, and he brought general peace to Judea during his two plus year reign.

¹⁹²Note especially **Acts 6:1**. *Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food.*

Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν ἐγένετο γογγυσμὸς τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους, ὅτι παρεθεωροῦντο ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ αἱ χήραι αὐτῶν.

(Col. 4:10; ὁ ἀνεψιὸς Βαρναβᾶ), and was closely associated with Peter (1 Peter 5:13; Μάρκος ὁ υἱὸς μου).¹⁹³ He would become a part of the missionary team on the first missionary journey to be launched from Antioch.

Thus in summary at this point in Luke's narrative, we see Paul brought to Christ in dramatic fashion outside Damascus. He immediately began preaching Christ from a Christian perspective in Damascus then for about three years in Arabia. His first trip to Jerusalem as a Christian for two weeks brought him limited contact with the leadership of Christianity (Peter and James) and additional opportunity to preach Christ in the city. In all three places, however, Paul met vicious opposition from his fellow Jews, many of whom knew him earlier as a persecutor of Christians. His trip through Syria on his way home to Tarsus in Cilicia gave him opportunity to preach Christ as well and to interact with Christian communities north of Palestine. And the period of several years in Tarsus gave him the same opportunity. But to this point the target group of his preaching had been fellow Jews. When Barnabas came over to Tarsus and enlisted his help at Antioch, a turning point in his ministry was reached. At Antioch already growing numbers of non-Jews were responding to the preaching of the Gospel. There Paul began to realize the initial stage of his calling to become a missionary to the Gentiles. The uncertainty about how to handle these non-Jews coming into the faith would continue to grow, but by the mid 40s the dire physical needs of the Christian communities in Judea through a severe famine provided opportunity for the church at Antioch to reach out positively in concrete ministry with a relief offering for them. Paul and Barnabas take the offering as representatives of the church. But upon delivering the offering they returned back to Antioch without spending much time in Jerusalem and Judea. The needs in Antioch continued to grow with the expansion of the Gospel there.

4.3.0 Preparing to Serve in Missions

From these beginning years after conversion comes the question of how did Paul prepare himself for his ministry calling to preach the Gospel to Gentiles? Several answers to this question have surfaced over the centuries, but few of them are based on concrete evidence from scripture.

The church fathers beginning in the second century falsely developed the tradition that the three years spent in Arabia constituted a period of solitary reflection and further revelation from Christ to Paul as the heart of his preparation to preach the Gospel. But, as we have already seen, such a myth assumes a later standard of Christian understanding wrongly imposed on Paul in the first century. Paul, from every signal provided in scripture, was actively preaching the Gospel in the Jewish communities scattered across the towns of the Decapolis during that time. This is the only way to account for the severe hostility against Paul by King Aretas that Paul describes in 2 Cor. 11:30-33.

Some might be tempted to assume that God gave Paul a complete understanding of the Gospel in the Damascus road encounter with the risen Christ. But clear signals come from Paul that he continued to learn more about the Gospel and about Christ consistently throughout his entire ministry. Note his declaration toward the end of his life of needing still to learn more about Christ: ["I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead."](#)¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³Additionally he is identified by early church tradition as the author of the second gospel, largely out of his close association with Peter over the years, who provided Mark the life story of Jesus for his gospel narrative.

¹⁹⁴Better understood in the larger context of **Phil. 3:7-16**

7 Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. 8 More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. **10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, 11 if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.**

12 Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. 13 Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. 16 Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.

7 Ἀλλὰ ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἤγημαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. 8 ἀλλὰ μενούσῃ καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω 9 καὶ εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, 10 τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ κοινωνίαν παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, 11 εἴ πως κατακτήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν.

12 Οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἢ ἤδη τετελείωμαι, διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω, ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ. 13 ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ

The understanding of the Gospel that Paul received did not come in its entirety to him at his conversion. Paul developed his understanding consistently over the span of his entire ministry. Additionally, as he indicates in 1 Cor. 15:3, he gained a considerable amount of insight from other believers, especially the apostolic leaders in Jerusalem: “For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ...”¹⁹⁵ Thus a lot of what Paul learned about the Gospel came as “on the job training” and from conversations with other believers.

Also very important to not overlook are the many years of formal education and training that Paul gained at the feet of the Jewish scribe Gamaliel (cf. Acts 22:3). In the ancient world, this was the equivalent more or less to a modern university degree at least at the bachelor’s and master’s levels, and probably including the doctoral level. Paul had studied with one of the leading Jewish scribes of the first century from the time of his early teen years until well into his twenties, and perhaps most of the way through his twenties. So he had close to a decade or more of university level studies ‘under his belt’ before he met Christ. And the heart of this training would be central to his work as a preacher of the Gospel. It centered on learning the Hebrew scriptures, how to properly interpret them, and especially how to communicate that understanding in teaching and preaching. A lot of the focus on communication was how to defend one’s interpretation against opposing viewpoints.

And from Paul’s own indications in Gal. 1:13-14 and Phil. 3:4-6 we have a clear picture of a young Jewish man whose superior skills from his education were enabling him to rapidly become an acknowledged Jewish leader in his day. His passionate zeal for his Jewish heritage that motivated the intense persecution of Christians both in Jerusalem -- and intended for Damascus as well -- gave him connections to and recognition by the highest Jewish authorities in Jerusalem in the twenties and early thirties of the first century (Acts 22:5). Plus, it established his reputation among the citizens of Jerusalem as a genuine patriot for the Jewish culture, as is implied in Acts 24:9 and 26:24. Thus when Paul became a Christian the intensity of hostility against him was unusually high because the Jewish leaders and others felt they had lost a valuable young leader who could have carried on the efforts to keep Judaism free from contamination by false teaching.

Beyond this is the preparation for a ground breaking kind of Christian ministry that came out of his distinctive cultural heritage as a Hellenistic Jew. Even though his grounding in Judaism was very conservative from the time he was in Jerusalem, his having been raised in Tarsus saturated his life and thinking with very progressive ideas that were much broader in their scope. Training in the Greek language, and in Greek ways of thinking, from his beginning education in one of the most influential centers of Greek learning and culture in the ancient world provided him with an outlook that could understand the ways of the non-Jewish Roman world of his day. He reflects some of that in his writings, as is illustrated by his quote of the Greek philosopher Epimenides in Titus 1:12.¹⁹⁶ Paul’s early childhood years were in Diaspora Judaism that had to learn to cope with being Jewish in a non-Jewish world.

ἐμαυτὸν οὐ λογιζομαι κατειληφέναι· ἐν δέ, τὰ μὲν ὀπίσω ἐπιλανθανόμενος τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος, 14 κατὰ σκοπὸν διώκω εἰς τὸ βραβεῖον τῆς ἄνω κλήσεως τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 15 ὅσοι οὖν τέλειοι, τοῦτο φρονῶμεν· καὶ εἰ τι ἑτέρως φρονεῖτε, καὶ τοῦτο ὁ θεὸς ὑμῖν ἀποκαλύψει· 16 πλὴν εἰς ὃ ἐφθάσαμεν, τῷ αὐτῷ στοιχεῖν.

¹⁹⁵**1 Cor. 15:1-11.** 15.1 Now I would remind you, brothers and sisters, of the good news that I proclaimed to you, which you in turn received, in which also you stand, 2 through which also you are being saved, if you hold firmly to the message that I proclaimed to you—unless you have come to believe in vain.

3 *For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ* died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, 4 and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. 6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. 8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. 9 For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. 10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me has not been in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them—though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me. 11 Whether then it was I or they, so we proclaim and so you have come to believe.

15.1 Γνωρίζω δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, ὃ καὶ παρελάβετε, ἐν ᾧ καὶ ἐστήκατε, 2 δι’ οὗ καὶ σώζεσθε, τίνι λόγῳ εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν, εἰ κατέχετε, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ εἰκὴ ἐπιστεῦσατε.

3 *Παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν* ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, 4 καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη, καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, 5 καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα· 6 ἔπειτα ὤφθη ἐπ’ ἀνὰ πεντακοσίους ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ, ἐξ ὧν οἱ πλείονες μένουσιν ἕως ἄρτι, τινὲς δὲ ἐκοιμήθησαν· 7 ἔπειτα ὤφθη Ἰακώβῳ, εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν· 8 ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερ εἰ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὤφθη κάμοι. 9 ἐγὼ γὰρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃς οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανὸς καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ· 10 χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὃ εἰμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσώτερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ σὺν ἐμοί. 11 εἴτε οὖν ἐγὼ εἴτε ἐκεῖνοι, οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεῦσατε.

¹⁹⁶**Titus 1:12.** It was one of them, their very own prophet, who said, “Cretans are always liars, vicious brutes, lazy gluttons.”

εἶπεν τις ἐξ αὐτῶν, ἴδιος αὐτῶν προφήτης, Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσταί, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί·

The profile about Paul's training to be a missionary that emerges from the New Testament is of an individual who had received one of the finest educations available to Jewish young men in that day. His cultural background and early education in Diaspora Judaism at Tarsus gave him a broader understanding of life that included non-Jewish ways of thinking. All of this would come together well as Paul added to this background a growing understanding of the Gospel that he felt deeply called to proclaim after his conversion.

Out of this then comes another question: Is Paul a paradigm for modern missionaries? Most missionary sending agencies require years of theological training before appointment to a missionary field of service.¹⁹⁷ Is it possible -- or even preferable -- for new converts to be launched immediately into ministry service, in light of Paul's experience? Paul's advice to the Ephesian churches in 1 Timothy 3:6 that no new convert should be chosen to lead a church would argue against assuming that preparatory training is unimportant. Once a clear picture of Paul's own background emerges we began sensing the critical role of formal training and preparation for missionary service.

Paul implies as much in his lengthy discourse in Rom. 10:5-21.

5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11 The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13 For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved."

14 But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15 And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" 16 But not all have obeyed the good news; for Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?" 17 So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.

18 But I ask, have they not heard? Indeed they have; for "Their voice has gone out to all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world." 19 Again I ask, did Israel not understand? First Moses says, "I will make you jealous of those who are not a nation; with a foolish nation I will make you angry." 20 Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me." 21 But of Israel he says, "All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people."

5 Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει ὅτι τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου ὁ ποιήσας ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτῇ. 6 ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει· Μὴ εἴπησιν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· Τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν· 7 ἢ· Τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν. 8 ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; Ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν, ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν. 9 ὅτι ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃς ἐν τῷ στόματί σου κύριον Ἰησοῦν, καὶ πιστεύσῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ· 10 καρδίᾳ γὰρ πιστεύεται εἰς δικαιοσύνην, στόματι δὲ ὁμολογεῖται εἰς σωτηρίαν· 11 λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή· Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ κατασχευθήσεται. 12 οὐ γὰρ ἐστὶν διαστολή Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλήνου, ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς κύριος πάντων, πλουτῶν εἰς πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλουμένους αὐτόν· 13 Πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν ἐπικαλέσῃται τὸ ὄνομα κυρίου σωθήσεται.

14 Πῶς οὖν ἐπικαλέσονται εἰς ὃν οὐκ ἐπίστευσαν; πῶς δὲ πιστεύσωσιν οὐ οὐκ ἤκουσαν; πῶς δὲ ἀκούσωσιν χωρὶς κηρύσσοντος; 15 πῶς δὲ κηρύξωσιν ἐὰν μὴ ἀποσταλῶσιν; καθὼς γέγραπται· Ὡς ὠραῖοι οἱ πόδες τῶν εὐαγγελιζομένων τὰ ἀγαθὰ. 16 ἀλλ' οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ· Ἡσαΐας γὰρ λέγει· Κύριε,

¹⁹⁷Note the variations of patterns in the US and Europe. The *United Methodist Church* has a formal list of "Qualifications for Missionary Service" that their *General Board of Global Ministries* follows: <http://new.gbmg-umc.org/missionaries/applications/qualifications/>. Normally at least a bachelor's degree from a university is the minimum requirement from the educational aspect. The *International Mission Board* of the *Southern Baptist Convention* has an extensive set of training requirements that are discussed by the FAQ page on their website. A different approach with different requirements is found at the *Cooperative Baptist Fellowship* website under "Serve": <http://www.thefellowship.info/Serve>. The *Indigenous Missionary Project* of the *European Baptist Federation* has a much more flexible set of training requirements: <http://www.ebf.org/imp/>. These requirements apply for service in Europe, Asia, and Africa where the EBM (*European Baptist Mission*) sponsors missionaries. Most of the Baptist denominations in Europe are a part of the EBM, a branch of the EBF, and support missionary work through this sending agency.

These are but a few examples of church denominational missionary sending agencies in North America and Europe. Although individual requirements will vary from group to group, a core set of training requirements that are generally similar will be found across the spectrum of sending agencies.

A very practical set of guidelines is proposed by David Peach at "How to Become a Christian Missionary: Following God's Call," at *What Christians Want to Know* .

τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν; 17 ἄρα ἡ πίστις ἐξ ἀκοῆς, ἡ δὲ ἀκοὴ διὰ ῥήματος Χριστοῦ.

18 Ἀλλὰ λέγω, μὴ οὐκ ἤκουσαν; μενοῦνγε· εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν ἐξῆλθεν ὁ φθόγγος αὐτῶν, καὶ εἰς τὰ πέρατα τῆς οἰκουμένης τὰ ῥήματα αὐτῶν. 19 ἀλλὰ λέγω, μὴ Ἰσραὴλ οὐκ ἔγνω; πρῶτος Μωϋσῆς λέγει· Ἐγὼ παραζηλώσω ὑμᾶς ἐπ' οὐκ ἔθνει, ἐπ' ἔθνει ἀσυνέτω παροργιῶ ὑμᾶς. 20 Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει· Εὐρέθην ἐν τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ζητοῦσιν, ἐμφανῆς ἐγενόμην τοῖς ἐμὲ μὴ ἐπερωτῶσιν. 21 πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ λέγει· Ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν ἐξεπέτασα τὰς χεῖράς μου πρὸς λαὸν ἀπειθοῦντα καὶ ἀντιλέγοντα.

Verses fourteen and fifteen in this lengthy argument for a mission to the Gentiles in addition to Israel become more relevant to our concerns here. Paul adamantly makes the point that those preaching the Gospel must be sent by God to preach this salvation message of faith in Christ. His ministry reflects and exemplifies this principle. Foundational to the training and other preparation is the clear sense of a divine ministry calling and commissioning. Without such, all the training in the world will not enable one to serve effectively.

Conclusion

What then can we learn from Paul's experience that is relevant to the preparation for missionary service in today's world? Let me suggest some insights that may very well trigger other insights for you.

First, very foundational is the principle that God desires to -- and will -- use every aspect of our background and training for missionary service. If Paul's experience teaches us anything, it is that missionary service will draw upon every existing skill and aspect of our heritage in order to serve effectively. His formal training as a Pharisee was critically important to his Christian missionary service. It gave him a deep knowledge of scriptures, a set of foundational interpretive skills, and extensive training for communicating and defending his religious convictions. Without such formal training Paul would have been hard put to be able to present the Gospel not only to Jewish audiences but also to non-Jewish audiences such as the one at Athens (cf. Acts 17:16-34).

The modern missionary needs a foundational religious training in order to do his or her job effectively. As is recognized by most missions sending agencies, the extent of this training may vary depending on the targeted area of service. But at the very center of doing missionary service is communicating the Gospel. And the missionary needs to have a clear understanding of that message before heading out to a field of service.

Beyond formal training, preparation for missionary service in Paul's example touches on who we are culturally and otherwise. Having grown up in Diaspora Judaism prepared Paul for ministry to non-Jews much better than Peter's background in Galilee. And this against the background of the Jewish culture in Galilee being much more progressive and open minded toward non-Jews than was true for one having grown up in Judea. Peter struggled greatly over relating to non-Jews well into his ministry as the episodes with Cornelius (Acts 10:1-48) and the stinging rebuke of him by Paul at Antioch later on (Gal. 2:11-14) reflect. To his credit he learned from each failure and developed greater skills in preaching the Gospel to non-Jews, especially outside Palestine, as his first letter reflects in the introduction (1 Pet. 1:1-2). But Paul's Diaspora Jewish background equipped him to relate to non-Jews much more easily, as is implied in Gal. 2:1-10, esp. vv. 6-9).

Most modern missionary sending agencies make sincere efforts to place the potential missionary in a area of ministry that will enable maximum use of the talents, background, and training of the individual. Sometimes this involves extensive psychological testing, and always includes deep consultation with experienced missionary leaders. Through a process of discussion, reflection and self analysis the individual can gradually come to a clearer understanding of the kind of service and where that service is to be located. Although at times painful and perhaps even disappointing, the missionary candidate can enter into missionary service from such analysis with a much greater confidence that his/her service will be productive for the Kingdom. Additionally, missionary sending agencies are generally sensitive to the success / failure rates of new missionaries. They have a stewardship responsibility to the denomination, the missionary candidate, and to God to not place individuals in fields of service where failure is virtually certain. Pragmatically, by the time a new missionary is ready to begin ministry in a field of service, several thousands of dollars have been invested in that person and his/her success as a missionary. It is not good stewardship of God's money to invest it where failure is virtually certain.

Second, we should move into missionary service and preparation for it only on the basis of a clear calling from God. From the very beginning of his ministry calling Paul had the understanding that his mission in life was to bring the Gospel to non-Jews. This did not exclude preaching the Gospel to Jews. In fact the first decade or so of his Christian life his preaching was solely to Jews. It was not until Barnabas enlisted his help at Antioch that Paul began preaching the Gospel to non-Jews. The first phase of his preaching was in part designed by God to prepare him for the ultimate realization of the divine calling as a missionary to Gentiles. And this preparatory period was at least the first ten years of his Christian ministry, and perhaps longer.

And even when he arrived at Antioch in the middle forties, the church had already broken ground for Christian ministry to non-Jews with a rapidly expanding number of Gentiles coming into the church. Thus Paul's beginning experience in relating the Gospel to non-Jews came in an easier atmosphere with such was already accepted and was without the huge controversies that would eventually develop over non-Jews in the Christian faith.

What we can detect from this is that the Lord carried Paul step-by-step into the full realization of ministry. Careful analysis of the scriptures reveals clearly that God didn't dump him into a sea of Gentiles two days after his conversion at Damascus. He started out using his interpretive skills with the Hebrew Bible preaching the Gospel to Jews. He learned how to deal with rejection of his message in the context of preaching to Jews. His determination to serve was tested and strengthened during his days of preaching to Jews. And when the Lord was ready for him to begin working with Gentiles, He placed Paul in a Christian community where such was already accepted and welcomed. Paul did not have to blaze new, highly controversial trails until God had thoroughly tested and prepared him over a long period of time.

The lesson from this for us today is that of patience. When we sense missionary calling from God, it may be several years before that calling is fully realized. I firmly believe that Paul's experience teaches us that God has a tailor made plan of preparation for each person to get him or her ready for the realization of His calling to missionary service. And when one compares Paul's experience to that of Peter and the other apostles, such a principle becomes even more obvious. Peter went through many ups and downs serving God in Jewish communities in Palestine for many years, before he was ready to venture out of Palestine to other parts of the Mediterranean world in ministry. And his path was very different from that of Paul's.

Third, an important insight from Paul's preparatory training for missionary service is that of learning to be faithful in service wherever and at whatever stage God puts us. Paul did not say to God a few days after his conversion, "Now you said I was to preach to the Gentiles, so I am just going to wait until You send me to the Gentile world before I start preaching." To the contrary, Paul began serving the Lord immediately after his conversion and remained faithful to serve through the various stages of preparatory training all the way to the ministry at Antioch. He tried to seize every opportunity to serve Christ, even though his opportunities were not within the framework of his ultimate calling for quite a number of years.

We make a huge mistake if we interpret God's calling in such a way that we don't feel obligated to serve until we can fully realize that calling after preparatory training. Christian conversion and ministry obligation are 'hand in glove' aspects and belong together in an inseparable bond. If God chooses to put us in ministry away from our homeland -- the essential definition of missionary -- then all He is doing is shifting the geography of our ministry, not starting our ministry. We should already be doing ministry as a believer. God makes us a missionary solely by shifting the geographical location of that ministry. Not by giving us a ministry to do. He did that at conversion and expects us to be carrying it out whatever the geography. Paul's experience drives this home powerfully. And the supplementary principle is that later ministry to the Gentiles was shaped and determined in part by his beginning ministry to the Jewish population.

My prayer for you as you work through these materials is that God may grant you insight into how to serve Him better. Should God shift the geography of your present ministry as a believer, may that ministry continue right on in faithfulness and under the blessings of our Lord.