



The Apostle Paul, Servant of Christ



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Overview Study Guide

Unit I, Chapter One

"Personal Background"

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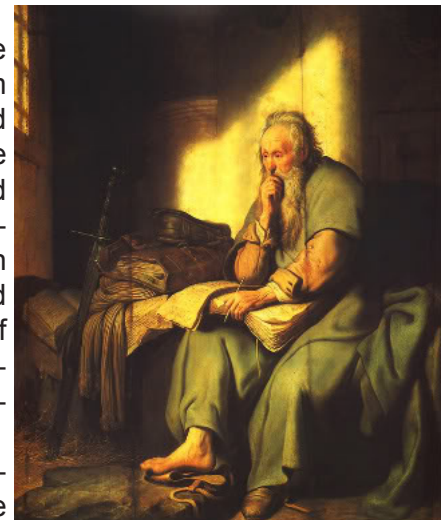
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Introduction

In the desire to get acquainted with the Apostle Paul, we naturally have some questions about his background and heritage. This is very normal from a modern western cultural perspective. The challenge is that the ancient world did not tend to think this way to any significant degree. Especially was this true of ancient Jewish culture. Biographical resumés are a modern device that did not exist in the ancient world! The Jewish interest in the heritage and background of an individual tended to focus on character and behavior, more than personal data. Information about family, birth, education etc. could be shared -- and often was in some of the Greek and Latin writings -- but the providing of such information would be done as it was relevant to some situation the individual found himself in at a point of activity. If personal details were not considered important to the situation, they would not be shared by the individual.

Consequently, questions about the family background of Paul are difficult to answer with much detail. Because of scattered references through the New Testament, some information can be pieced together, however. Often, references to places or individuals give an additional window into the first century world that allows us to learn more details from sources beyond the New Testament. For example, Paul's mentioning that he was a Pharisee¹ and that he had studied with the Jewish teacher Gamaliel² opens up substantial detail, since other ancient sources provide detailed information on these two points. In these two ways, and also supplemented by other means, we can gain a reasonably good understanding of the apostle, but not of everything that we would like to know. For instance, we have no primary source materials that give us a physical description of Paul, and the secondary source is fictional.³

So in this chapter we will probe everything available but be content with the limited information that ex-



¹**Phil. 3:5**, NRSV: "circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; *as to the law, a Pharisee*;"

²**Acts 22:3**, NRSV: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but *brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel*, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today."

³The closest to such comes from the second century apocryphal *Acts of Paul and Thecla* 1:4-7: "he was a man of middling size, and his hair was scanty, and his legs were a little crooked, and his knees were projecting, and he had large eyes and his eyebrows met, and his nose was somewhat long, and he was full of grace and mercy; at one time he seemed like a man, and at another time he seemed like an angel." ["What did Paul the Apostle look like?" R.W. Holmen website]

ists.

I. Unit One: Paul the Person

But let's see what we can learn from information sources out of the ancient world. And then we will assess them against how they have been understood over the centuries since Paul life and died. In this first chapter we will meet Paul the individual, and learn something of his background.⁴ This in turn will set up the two remaining parts on his conversion (chapter two) and his ministry (chapter three).

The goal of *Unit One* is to set the agenda for our study through a quick overview of Paul in terms of him as an individual, then in units two and three as a missionary, and finally as a writer. Thus the first three chapters -- in Unit One -- are introductory by nature. *Unit Two* will go into greater detail about Paul's work as a missionary, and will explore his strategy for planting new churches with possible implications for today. Where did he travel? How did he start new churches? *Unit Three* will provide a more detailed analysis of Paul's letters with conclusions drawn about his religious thinking. What was the Gospel that he preached and wrote about? How did he flesh out the core ideas of the message given him through revelation from Christ? How did he apply this Gospel to daily situations in living?

But first let's see who Paul was? Traditional biographical questions need to be raised, and answers to them sought to whatever extent the information sources provide insights.

1.1.0 Family

What do we know about Paul's family? For most folks in our world, one's family background will tell you a lot about the individual. The available information to us about Paul is very limited, but it does provide something of a glimpse into this man and the influences that shaped him early on in his life.

1.1.1 Parents

Primary Sources:⁵

Phil. 3:4b-6. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: **5 circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews;** as to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.⁶

2 Cor. 11:22. **22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I.**⁷

Secondary Sources:

Acts 23:6. When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, "Brothers, I am a Pharisee, **a son of Pharisees**. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead."⁸

Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus (On Illustrious Men)*⁹ chapter 5. Paul, formerly called Saul, an apostle outside the number of the twelve apostles, was of the tribe of Benjamin and the town of Giscalis in Galilee. When this was taken

⁴One distinctive trait of the approach taken in this study guide will be an intensive focus on interpreting the biblical text materials. Often studies in the life of Paul simply reference scripture texts but pay little serious attention to them apart from lifting out some individual idea contained in the references. Proof texting scripture sometimes commences then resulting erroneous conclusions drawn. We want to avoid such mistakes as we work our way through the study.

⁵All through the study guide, scripture texts -- and other ancient sources -- will be listed under Primary and Secondary Sources as a reminder of the nature of the source material being consulted. Only the writings of Paul in the New Testament will be listed as Primary Sources in keeping with the established trend in modern Pauline studies. Everything else will be grouped as Secondary Sources.

⁶GNT: Εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον· **5 περιτομῇ ὀκταήμερος, ἐκ γένους Ἰσραὴλ, φυλῆς Βενιαμίν, Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων**, κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος, 6 κατὰ ζήλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος.

⁷GNT: 22 Ἑβραῖοί εἰσιν; καὶ γὰρ. Ἰσραηλιταί εἰσιν; καὶ γὰρ. σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ εἰσιν; καὶ γὰρ.

⁸GNT: Γινὸς δὲ ὁ Παῦλος ὅτι τὸ ἐν μέρος ἐστὶν Σαδδουκαίων τὸ δὲ ἕτερον Φαρισαίων ἔκραζεν ἐν τῷ συνεδρίῳ· Ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ Φαρισαῖός εἰμι, **υἱὸς Φαρισαίων**· περὶ ἐλπίδος καὶ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν ἐγὼ κρίνομαι.

⁹*De viris illustribus (On Illustrious Men)* is a collection of short biographies of 135 authors, written in Latin, by the 4th century Latin Church Father Jerome. He completed this work at Bethlehem in 392-3 CE.¹ The work consists of a prologue plus 135 chapters, each consisting of a brief biography. Jerome himself is the subject of the final chapter. A Greek version of the book, possibly by the same Sophronius who is the subject of Chapter 134, also survives. Many biographies take as their subject figures important in Christian Church history and pay especial attention to their careers as writers. It 'was written as an apologetic work to prove that the Church had produced learned men.'² The book was dedicated to Flavius Dexter, who served as high chamberlain to Theodosius I and as praetorian prefect to Honorius. Dexter was the son of Saint Pacianus, who is eulogized in the work.³ ["De viris Illustribus (Jerome)," *Wikipedia.org*]

by the Romans he removed with his parents to Tarsus in Cilicia.

We don't have any direct information about the mother and father of Paul. All that we know is from implications of a few things that Paul himself said. From Paul's own statements in Philippians and Second Corinthians, he was born to Jewish parents. Luke's statement in Acts 23:6, υἱὸς Φαρισαίων, has been mistakenly taken by some as an allusion to Paul's father being a Pharisee. The plural form Φαρισαίων signals clearly that a Hebraist phrase is being used here to indicate that Paul was claiming to be solidly in the tradition of the Pharisees; it implies nothing about his father. The fourth century church father Jerome suggests that Paul's parents moved from Gischala¹⁰ in Galilee to Tarsus soon after the Romans took over control of Palestine just before the beginning of the Christian era. But very few scholars give any validity to this tradition, largely because it would mean moving from rigidly traditionalist Palestine to highly hellenized Tarsus -- a very unlikely move for a traditionalist Jew, and, also more importantly, it is a tradition not found in any of the other church fathers.¹¹



The toga was the characteristic garment of the Roman citizen

Another possible implication from Acts 18:3¹² concerns the trade that Paul used to earn a living from during his missionary travels: **tent-making**.¹³ Usually a Jewish father taught his son to follow in the

¹⁰GUSH-HALAV; GISCHALA. A small town of the Roman period in Upper Galilee, mentioned in the Mishnah among the walled cities from the time of Joshua, son of Nun (Arach. 9:6). The Zealot John, son of Levi, a native of the town, fortified it at his own expense by order of Josephus when Galilee was being prepared for the war against the Romans (Josephus, Antiq. II, 575).

¹¹“Surveys made at the end of the 19th and early 20th century revealed the remains of two synagogues. The village church was built over the remains of one which stands at the highest point on the hill. The other built of large carefully dressed blocks and in a better state of preservation, is beautifully situated near the village spring, overlooking a green valley. The inner dimensions of the building are 46 feet by 50 feet. It had an inner colonnade on three sides of the hall, of which the stylobate and some bases and column drums still remain in position. The main entrance to the building was on the south, the side facing Jerusalem, and was decorated with architectural motifs. Lining the long walls were stone benches to seat the congregation. The lintel of the main entrance, on which an eagle was depicted between wreaths, was found in the debris. On one of the column drums was a Hebrew inscription reading: ‘Jose son of Tanhum made this shrine. Let him be blessed.’ Both buildings are among the early group of synagogues (i.e. they date from the 2nd-3rd centuries AD). The site is identified with el-Jish in Upper Galilee.” [Avraham Negev, “GUSH-HALAV; GISCHALA,” *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*, 3rd ed. (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1996).]

¹¹One possible reason for Jerome adopting the tradition about Paul's parents initially living in Gischala is that this village was located in a part of Palestine that originally belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, from which Paul descended. By his parents having named him Saul in Hebrew after the best known member of that tribe, King Saul, such a connection evidently appealed to Jerome as proof of the correctness of the residency in Gischala.

¹²Acts 18:1-3, NRSV: 1 After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. 2 There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, 3 and, because **he was of the same trade**, he stayed with them, and they worked together—**by trade they were tent makers**.

GNT: 18.1 Μετὰ ταῦτα χωρισθεὶς ἐκ τῶν Ἀθηνῶν ἦλθεν εἰς Κόρινθον. 2 καὶ εὐρών τινα Ἰουδαῖον ὀνόματι Ἀκύλαν, Ποντικὸν τῷ γένει, προσφάτως ἐληλυθότα ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας καὶ Πρίσκιλλαν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ διὰ τὸ διατεταχέναι Κλαύδιον χωρίζεσθαι πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ἀπὸ τῆς Ῥώμης, προσῆλθεν αὐτοῖς, 3 καὶ **διὰ τὸ ὁμότεχνον εἶναι** ἔμενεν παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ ἠργάζετο, **ἦσαν γὰρ σκηνοποιοὶ τῇ τέχνῃ**.

¹³“Scholars are divided over the kind of material on which Paul worked. Many scholars from earlier generations suggested it was the rough cloth made of goats' hair, known as cilicium, which took its name from Paul's native province, Cilicia. Understandably, they have readily connected this local cloth with the Cilician Paul's 'tent making,' suggesting he may have learned this trade as a youth in Tarsus.

“A majority today, however, noting that cilicium was used widely for purposes other than tent making, and that the patristic interpretations of *skēnopoios* point in the direction of leather goods, believe that tents were generally made of leather (Hock 1980, 20–21). It is now held that the material with which Paul worked was leather. ‘Tent making’ may have taken its name from its primary task but have included manufacture and repair of a range of leather and woven goods. A problem with this view, however, is that if the tanning of leather was a despised trade among the Jews (Jeremias, 303–12), would not any kind of leather working have shared the same reputation? Moreover, the staining of hands through this work may have rendered Paul unacceptable in the upper-class circles in which he sometimes moved (e.g., Acts 17:12, 19; 19:31; Rom 16:23; but cf. ‘these hands’ of Acts 20:34).

“Aquila and Priscilla, tent makers recently arrived in Corinth after Claudius' expulsion of the Jews from Rome, appear to have been entrepreneurial manufacturers and traders in tents and related goods, who moved from city to city. At least, so far as the meager evidence about them goes, we see them first in Rome, next in Corinth (see Corinthians), then in Ephesus and finally again in Rome (Acts 18:1–3, 26; Rom 16:3–4). Each of the places Paul is known to have ‘worked’—Thessalonica, Corinth or Ephesus—was a great urban center. Why would tents be needed in these well-developed cities? The many travelers to these great cities may have purchased, as well as sought the repair of, tents and similar items as they passed through. Sailors in these port cities would also have lived in tents while on shore. It is possible that ‘tent makers’ may have manufactured and repaired various kinds of booths, canopies and awnings for city use.” [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 926.]



same trade as he, so the son could make a living in his adult life. But also to be a teacher among the Pharisees meant that one had to have a ‘secular’ trade as his means of making a livelihood. Paul, however, only mentions that he made his living by using his hands,¹⁴ in a pattern similar to Acts 20:34-35.¹⁵ Thus we cannot be certain whether Paul learned this skill from his father, or while he was studying to be a Pharisee in Jerusalem. Tarsus is a better guess, though.

A second possible implication about his parents relates to Paul’s claim to **Roman citizenship**. In Acts 22:23-28, Luke asserts that Paul was born a Roman citizen.¹⁶ Luke will also stress Paul’s Roman citizenship¹⁷ in several other places: Acts 16:35-39¹⁸; 25:7-12¹⁹;

¹⁴1 Cor 4:12; 9:1–18; 2 Cor 6:5; 11:23, 27; 1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8.

¹⁵Acts 20:34-35, NRSV: 34 You know for yourselves that *I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions*. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.

GNT: 34 αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι *ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὖσι μετ’ ἐμοῦ ὀπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί*. 35 πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν Μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν.

¹⁶Acts 22:23-28, NRSV: 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. 25 But when they had tied him up with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, “Is it legal for you to flog **a Roman citizen who is uncondemned?**” 26 When the centurion heard that, he went to the tribune and said to him, “What are you about to do? **This man is a Roman citizen.**” 27 The tribune came and asked Paul, “Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?” And he said, “Yes.” 28 The tribune answered, “It cost me a large sum of money to get my citizenship.” Paul said, “**But I was born a citizen.**”

GNT: 23 κραυγαζόντων τε αὐτῶν καὶ ῥιπτοῦντων τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ κονιορτὸν βαλλόντων εἰς τὸν ἄερα, 24 ἐκέλευσεν ὁ χιλιάρχος εἰσάγεσθαι αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν παρεμβολήν, εἶπας μᾶστιξις ἀνετάξεσθαι αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιγνῶ δι’ ἣν αἰτίαν οὕτως ἐπεφώνουν αὐτῷ. 25 ὡς δὲ προέτειναν αὐτὸν τοῖς ἱμάσιν εἶπεν πρὸς τὸν ἐστῶτα ἑκατόνταρχον ὁ Παῦλος· *Εἰ ἄνθρωπον Ῥωμαῖον καὶ ἀκατάκριτον* ἔξεστιν ὑμῖν μᾶστιξιν; 26 ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ ἑκατοντάρχης προσελθὼν τῷ χιλιάρχῳ ἀπήγγειλεν λέγων· Τί μέλλεις ποιεῖν; *ὁ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος Ῥωμαῖός ἐστιν*. 27 προσελθὼν δὲ ὁ χιλιάρχος εἶπεν αὐτῷ· Λέγε μοι, σὺ Ῥωμαῖός εἶ; ὁ δὲ ἔφη· Ναί. 28 ἀπεκρίθη δὲ ὁ χιλιάρχος· Ἐγὼ πολλοῦ κεφαλαίου τὴν πολιτείαν ταύτην ἐκτησάμην. ὁ δὲ Παῦλος ἔφη· *Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ γεγέννημαι*.

¹⁷“The biblical case for Paul’s legal standing as a Roman citizen rests primarily on three texts in Acts. Paul’s mention of the Roman citizenship he and Silas enjoyed provides the context for their release from jail in Philippi (Acts 16:37–39). Then at the end of his speech before the people in Jerusalem, Paul’s citizenship is once again helpful in allowing for his protection by the Roman garrison from the angry crowd (Acts 22:25–29). At his hearing in Caesarea before Festus over two years later, after Festus offered to conduct a full trial back in Jerusalem, Paul used his right as a Roman citizen to reject the offer and to appeal for trial before Caesar (Acts 25:7–12). Agrippa II mentions this appeal to Festus after Paul testifies before them (Acts 26:32).” [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 140.]

¹⁸Acts 16:35-39, NRSV: 35 When morning came, the magistrates sent the police, saying, “Let those men go.” 36 And the jailer reported the message to Paul, saying, “The magistrates sent word to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace.” 37 But Paul replied, “They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, **men who are Roman citizens**, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves.” 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that **they were Roman citizens**; 39 so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

GNT: 35 Ἡμέρας δὲ γενομένης ἀπέστειλαν οἱ στρατηγοὶ τοὺς ῥαβδούχους λέγοντες· Ἀπόλυσον τοὺς ἄνθρώπους ἐκεῖνους. 36 ἀπήγγειλεν δὲ ὁ δεσμοφύλαξ τοὺς λόγους τούτους πρὸς τὸν Παῦλον, ὅτι Ἀπέσταλκαν οἱ στρατηγοὶ ἵνα ἀπολυθῆτε· νῦν σὺν ἐξελεθόντες πορεύεσθε ἐν εἰρήνῃ. 37 ὁ δὲ Παῦλος ἔφη πρὸς αὐτούς· Δεῖραντες ἡμᾶς δημοσίᾳ ἀκατακρίτους, *ἀνθρώπους Ῥωμαίους ὑπάρχοντας*, ἔβαλαν εἰς φυλακὴν· καὶ νῦν λάθρα ἡμᾶς ἐκβάλλουσιν; οὐ γάρ, ἀλλὰ ἐλθόντες αὐτοὶ ἡμᾶς ἐξαγαγέτωσαν. 38 ἀπήγγειλαν δὲ τοῖς στρατηγοῖς οἱ ῥαβδούχοι τὰ ῥήματα ταῦτα· ἐφοβήθησαν δὲ ἀκούσαντες ὅτι *Ῥωμαῖοὶ εἰσιν*, 39 καὶ ἐλθόντες παρεκάλεσαν αὐτούς, καὶ ἐξαγαγόντες ἠρώτων ἀπελθεῖν ἀπὸ τῆς πόλεως.

¹⁹Acts 25:7-12, NRSV: 7 When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. 8 Paul said in his defense, “I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor.” 9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, “Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?” 10 Paul said, “**I am appealing to the emperor’s tribunal; this is where I should be tried.** I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know. 11 Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. **I appeal to the emperor.**” 12 Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, “**You have appealed to the emperor;** to the emperor you will go.”

GNT: 7 παραγενομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ περιέστησαν αὐτὸν οἱ ἀπὸ Ἱεροσολύμων καταβεβηκότες Ἰουδαῖοι, πολλὰ καὶ βαρῆα αἰτιώματα καταφέροντες ἃ οὐκ ἴσχυον ἀποδείξει, 8 τοῦ Παύλου ἀπολογουμένου ὅτι Οὔτε εἰς τὸν νόμον τῶν Ἰουδαίων οὔτε εἰς τὸ ἱερόν οὔτε εἰς Καίσαρά τι ἤμαρτον. 9 ὁ Φῆστος δὲ θέλων τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις χάριν καταθέσθαι ἀποκριθεὶς τῷ Παύλῳ εἶπεν· Θέλεις εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀναβάς ἐκεῖ περὶ τούτων κριθῆναι ἐπ’ ἐμοῦ; 10 εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Παῦλος· *Ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος Καίσαρος ἐστὼς εἰμι, οὐ με δεῖ κρίνεσθαι*. Ἰουδαίους οὐδὲν ἠδίκησα, ὡς καὶ σὺ κάλλιον ἐπιγινώσκεις. 11 εἰ μὲν σὺν ἀδικῶ καὶ ἄξιον θανάτου πέπραχά τι, οὐ παραιτοῦμαι τὸ ἀποθανεῖν· εἰ δὲ

26:32.²⁰ Because Paul never mentions having Roman citizenship in his own writings, some scholars question whether or not he possessed it, largely because it is not found in any primary source. But these objections have been effectively answered by other scholars, making it entirely likely that Paul did possess Roman citizenship.²¹ The implication of his Roman citizen, obtained at birth (Acts 22:28), is that he gained it because his father was a Roman citizen.²² How his father acquired Roman citizenship, especially while living in one of the provinces, is unknown,²³ but from Roman sources it is virtually certain that when a person was born a citizen of Rome, he gained such from his father.

From his Jewish parents Paul gained his **Hebrew name**, Saul (*Hebrew*: שׂוּל), after King Saul in the Old Testament.²⁴ In his own writings, the apostle always identifies himself by his Greek name, Paul (Παῦλος, which in Latin would have been *Paullus*).²⁵ One easily wonders why parents would name a son after a king with a fail- οὐδέν ἐστιν ὃν οὗτοι κατηγοροῦσίν μου, οὐδεὶς με δύναται αὐτοῖς χάρισσασθαι· **Καίσαρα ἐπικαλοῦμαι**. 12 τότε ὁ Φῆστος συλλαλήσας μετὰ τοῦ συμβουλίου ἀπεκρίθη· **Καίσαρα ἐπικέκλησαι, ἐπὶ Καίσαρα πορεύσῃ**.

²⁰Acts 26:32, NRSV: Agrippa said to Festus, “This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to the emperor.”

GNT: Ἀγρίππας δὲ τῷ Φῆστῳ ἔφη· Ἀπολεύσθαι ἐδύνατο ὁ ἄνθρωπος οὗτος εἰ μὴ ἐπέκκλητο Καίσαρα.

²¹“Arguments advanced against Paul’s Roman citizenship, most recently by Stegemann, have been soundly answered by Hengel. Roman historians also accept Paul’s citizenship as most probable. According to traditions preserved in Jerome (*Philemon commentary*; *Vir*. 5) and Photius (*Quaest. Amphil.* 116), Paul’s parents were carried off as prisoners of war from the Judean town of Gischala to Tarsus. Presumably enslaved to a Roman, they were freed and granted citizenship. The rights of a Roman citizen included *provocatio* (the right to appeal after trial), *muneris publici vacatio* (exemption from imperial duties such as military service), and the right of an accused citizen to choose either a local or a Roman trial. A right that was usually (but not always) honored in the provinces was that Roman citizens were exempt from flogging. The best explanation for Paul’s silence about his Roman citizenship in Philippi until after his scourging (Acts 16:22–23) is that he wanted to follow Jesus in suffering (Phil 3:10–11; Col 1:24; 2 Cor 4:7–10; 6:4–10). It is likely that there were other occasions also in which Paul kept silent and so surrendered this Roman right (2 Cor 11:25). When Paul did claim Roman citizenship (Acts 16:37; 22:25–28), it is most likely that he produced as evidence a birth certificate or certificate of citizenship, which Roman citizens carried with them.” [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 140.]

²²“Paul inherited Roman citizenship at birth: his father or grandfather may have been so honored for conspicuous services rendered to a military proconsul such as Pompey or Antony. Paul would have been registered as a Roman citizen by his father at the public record office in Tarsus.” [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 682.]

²³A very late church tradition preserved by Jerome in the fourth century in his commentary on the letter to the Philippians (v. 23) and by Photius in the ninth century in his *Quaest. Amphil.* 116 express the belief that Paul’s parents had been taken captive at Gischala by the Romans and then transported to Tarsus as slaves. Later they were able to gain their freedom and subsequently their citizenship. But how is not indicated.

Assessment of this tradition was made extensively about a century ago by Theodor Zahn [NKZ 15 (1904) 23-34; *Introduction to the New Testament* (Eng. translation 1909) 1:47-51, 67-70] who viewed the tradition positively. Some more recent scholars have followed Zahn including H. Lietzmann, *An die Korinther I/II* (1969) 150; M. Adinolfi, *Ant* 41 (1966); K. Haacker, *ThBeitr* 6 (1977) 5; W. Grundmann, *Die frühe Christenheit und ihre Schriften* (1983) 33; W. Feneberg, *Paulus der Weltenbürger* (1992) 13-15.

The unanswered problem here is that the Galilean campaign by the Roman general Varus in 4 BC is the most likely historically identifiable possibility for this enslavement [see G. Kehnscherper, *TU* 86 (1964) 419-421 for a defense of this] and this would hardly work chronologically with the timing of Paul’s assumed birth in Tarsus as a Roman citizen about the same general time. To be sure, Jewish disturbances that the Romans crushed in Palestine after Pompey’s conquest of it in 63 BC could have provided an earlier occasion for Paul’s parents being taken captive and then shipped to Tarsus. But speculation is the only option possible here.

²⁴The name Saul, Σαούλ Saoul, is used to designate the apostle in only by Luke in Acts 7:58, 8:1, 3; 9:4, 8, 11, 17, 22, 24; 11:25, 30; 12:25; 13:1, 2, 7, 9; 22:13, 26:14. Apart from the last two references containing Paul’s speech recounting his conversion, Luke ceases to designate the apostle as Saul in 13:9 [Saul, also known as Paul,...]. From that point on he calls the apostle by his Greek name, Paul. Although unclear, it appears that when Paul and Barnabas started out on the first missionary journey Luke decided to switch over to Paul’s Greek name, rather than continue using his Hebrew name.

²⁵“The name of the apostle Paul (Παῦλος is probably his Roman *cognomen*: so Harrer) occurs 157 times in the NT. 127 of these are in Acts 13–28, and 11 in the post-Pauline letters (2 in Ephesians, 8 in Colossians, 2 in 2 Thessalonians, 3 in the Pastorals, and 1 in 2 Peter). Paul mentions his own name 19 times in his letters (once in Romans, 8 times in 1 Corinthians, twice each in 2 Corinthians and Galatians, once in Philippians, twice in 1 Thessalonians, and 3 times in Philemon), with 7 of these at the beginning of the letters (Παῦλος ... ἀπόστολος: Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1 [in post-Pauline letters: Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1; Titus 1:1]; without ἀπόστολος in Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 1:1; Phlm 1 [in a post-Pauline letter: 2 Thess 1:1]). Emphatic ἐγὼ Παῦλος draws attention either to the apostle’s authority in paraclesis (2 Cor 10:1; Phlm 9), or to the uniqueness of his proclamation (Gal 5:2; cf. Eph 3:1; Col 1:23), and appears further in organizational notices (1 Thess 2:18) and in conclusions to letters (1 Cor 16:21; Phlm 19; cf. Col 4:18; 2 Thess 3:17). Paul also mentions his own name 6 times (with other names) in the dispute with the Corinthian groups (1 Cor 1:12, 13 bis; 3:4, 5, 22). In contrast, his Jewish name → Σαῦλος is used only in Acts (15 times), as is also the case (only in the voc.) with its Hebrew form Σαούλ (9 times). Acts 13:7 mentions the Roman proconsul Sergius Paulus (→ 6).” [Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, vol. 3, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-), 59.]

ing track record in history, although the common connection to the tribe of Benjamin was the most likely motivation.²⁶

We have absolutely no knowledge of when and where the apostle's parents may have died. Nor is there any data suggesting whether or not they were still living when Paul became a Christian. And whether or not he had opportunity to influence them to turn to Christ. Although these are questions of interest to us today, the ancient writers, including Paul himself, had no interest in raising such questions. Nothing in ancient church tradition makes mention about the religious situation of his parents outside of being strict Jews.

1.1.2 Siblings

Secondary Source:

Acts 23:16. Now the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush; so he went and gained entrance to the barracks and told Paul. [Ἀκούσας δὲ ὁ υἱὸς τῆς ἀδελφῆς Παύλου τὴν ἐνέδραν παραγενόμενος καὶ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν παρεμβολὴν ἀπήγγειλεν τῷ Παύλῳ.]²⁷

What we do have is slight reference to a mentioning of a sister and her son, Paul's nephew, in Acts 23. This is the only mentioning of any brothers or sisters of Paul in the biblical materials. Luke does not mention either the sister or the nephew by name. What we do learn from this is that his sister and her son were living in Jerusalem at the time of Paul's arrest in the late 50s.²⁸ They were sympathetic to Paul. And when the nephew learned from Jewish leaders about a plot to kill Paul, he immediately went to the Roman authorities in Jerusalem to report it in an effort to save his uncle's life.²⁹ Whether this implies that his sister and nephew were Christians or not is unclear from Luke's reference. What the scripture text does suggest to us is that God had plans for Paul to

²⁶In spite of the use of both Saul and Paul in the New Testament, several uncertainties about Paul's official name remain. As Andreas J. Köstenber [*The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 387-388] notes, "Ancient Romans were formally designated by a *praenomen* (first name), *nomen* (family name), father's *praenomen*, Roman tribe, and *cognomen* (extra name like the modern middle name) in official documents. Roman citizens had to register with the government using the *tria nomina* consisting of the *praenomen*, *nomen gentile*, and *cognomen*. The NT refers to the apostle only informally as 'Paul' or 'Saul.' Paul was the apostle's *cognomen*; Saul was his Hebrew name. The name 'Paul' was common in the Roman world (Acts 13:7) and meant 'small' in Latin. Later traditions probably inferred that Paul was short from the meaning of his Latin name, but one cannot determine Paul's stature from the name since the name was given to him at his birth." For a detailed discussion of Paul's name see C. Hemer, "The Name of Paul," *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985): 179-183.

²⁷Acts 23:16-22, NRSV: 16 Now the son of Paul's sister heard about the ambush; so he went and gained entrance to the barracks and told Paul. 17 Paul called one of the centurions and said, "Take this young man to the tribune, for he has something to report to him." 18 So he took him, brought him to the tribune, and said, "The prisoner Paul called me and asked me to bring this young man to you; he has something to tell you." 19 The tribune took him by the hand, drew him aside privately, and asked, "What is it that you have to report to me?" 20 He answered, "The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul down to the council tomorrow, as though they were going to inquire more thoroughly into his case. 21 But do not be persuaded by them, for more than forty of their men are lying in ambush for him. They have bound themselves by an oath neither to eat nor drink until they kill him. They are ready now and are waiting for your consent." 22 So the tribune dismissed the young man, ordering him, "Tell no one that you have informed me of this."

²⁸Perhaps not accidentally Luke mentions in Acts 6:9 that a synagogue of freedmen existed in Jerusalem that included members from Cilicia (Tarsus): "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." (ἀνέστησαν δὲ τινες τῶν ἐκ τῆς συναγωγῆς τῆς λεγομένης Λιβερτίνων καὶ Κυρηναίων καὶ Ἀλεξανδρέων καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ Κιλικίας καὶ Ἀσίας συζητοῦντες τῷ Στεφάνῳ.) At minimal this indicates that Jews from Tarsus did live in Jerusalem during this time. We have no way of knowing whether Paul's sister and nephew were connected to this synagogue or not.

²⁹"This third plot by 'the Jews' against Paul (cf. 9:23; 20:3; also 9:29; 20:19) is by far the most meticulously planned and elaborately described; it includes over forty conspirators (23:13, 21), a full-fast oath (vv. 12, 14, 21), conspiracy with the 'chief priests and elders' (v. 14; 25:15; also 4:23; 22:30; 25:2), and repeated references to their determination to kill Paul (23:12, 14, 15, 21, 27).

"Following the typical Lucan pattern, intensified efforts to resist the gospel are met with even more dramatic forms of deliverance (see commentary above on 5:17-26). In this case, the plot is aborted by the combined efforts of a lad (23:18), identified as Paul's nephew (v. 16), and a friendly Roman tribune who is finally willing to deploy half the city's garrison to foil the plot (vv. 23-24).

"The proper interpretation of these events for readers is provided in the letter from the tribune to the governor (vv. 26-30). Even though the tribune's recounting of the events in the Temple courtyard (21:30-36) is bent in his own favor (23:27), all the important (Lucan) elements of the story are included: (1) primary responsibility for the hostile actions against Paul lies with 'the Jews' (v. 27; 9:23, 29; 21:11, 27, 36); (2) Roman soldiers have shown proper respect for a Roman citizen—Romans as allies of Christians (22:24-29; also 16:38-39; 18:12-17); (3) Romans have followed proper procedures, attempting to determine precisely the nature of the charges against the accused (23:28; 22:24, 30; 25:26) and ordering his accusers to face him directly (23:30; Deut. 19:16-19); (4) it is essentially an internal conflict within Judaism concerning 'questions of their law' (Acts 18:14-15; 25:18-20)—Christians are to be seen as continuous with Judaism and therefore entitled to Roman rights extended to Jews; and (5) unqualified declaration of Paul's innocence, certainly with respect to a capital offense (23:29; see Introduction)." [James Luther Mays, Publishers Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Commentary* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1996), Ac 23:12.]

travel to Rome, and that He had the ability to use a concerned nephew to make sure that plan was carried out.

1.1.3 Relatives

Primary Sources:

Romans 16:7, 11-12, 21. 7 Greet **Andronicus and Junia, my relatives** who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.... 11 **Greet my relative Herodion.** Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.... 21 Timothy, my co-worker, greets you; **so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives.**³⁰

In his greetings to various individuals in the church at Rome, Paul mentions six possible relatives of his who were living either there in Rome or in Corinth when he wrote this letter from Corinth in the mid-50s of the first century. These are identified uniformly as συγγενεῖς μου, “my relatives.” The question here is just what did Paul mean? A blood relative? Or, a fellow countryman? The most literal meaning of συγγενής, ἐς, is ‘blood-relative.’³¹ The uncertainty here arises because in Romans 9:3, Paul uses the adjective συγγενής, ἐς to refer to his fellow countrymen, rather than a blood relative.³² A few scholars take the meaning in 9:3 to also apply to the three uses in chapter sixteen. But since the early history of interpretation of Romans onward, the term in chapter sixteen has consistently been understood to refer to blood relatives of Paul. The exact nature of this kinship is unclear. These people could have been cousins or aunts/uncles. We just don’t know with certainty.



Andronicus and Junia, Ἀνδρόνικος and Ἰουνία.³³ This husband and wife were living in Rome at the writ-

³⁰GNT: 7 ἀπάσασθε Ἀνδρόνικον καὶ Ἰουνίαν τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναϊχμαλώτους μου, οἵτινες εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, οἳ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ.... 11 ἀπάσασθε Ἡρωδιῶνα τὸν συγγενὴ μου. ἀπάσασθε τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ναρκίσσου τοὺς ὄντας ἐν κυρίῳ. 12 ἀπάσασθε Τρυφαιναν καὶ Τρυφῶσαν τὰς κοπιώσας ἐν κυρίῳ. ἀπάσασθε Περσίδα τὴν ἀγαπητὴν, ἥτις πολλὰ ἐκοπίασεν ἐν κυρίῳ.... 21 Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος ὁ συνεργός μου, καὶ Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου.

³¹συγγένεια, ἡ, (συγγενής) *sameness of descent or family, relationship, kin*, Eur., etc.: c. gen. kin, relationship with or to another, ἡ ξ. τοῦ θεοῦ Plat.; also, ἡ πρὸς τοὺς παῖδας ζ. Isocr.

2. *ties of kindred, family connexion, influence*, Plat.

II. *ones kin, kinsfolk, kinsmen*, Eur.; in pl. *families*, Dem.

συγγενής, ἐς, (γίγνομαι) *born with, congenital, natural, in-born*, Pind., Aesch.; συγγενεῖς μῆνες *the months of my natural life*, Soph.:—so in Adv., συγγενῶς δύστηνος *miserable from my birth*, Eur.

II. *of the same kin, descent or family with another, akin to him*, τινὶ Hdt., Att.:—absol. *akin, cognate*, Trag., etc.:—as Subst. a *kinsman, relative*, τινος of another, Ar., Plat.:—in pl., οἱ συγγενεῖς *kinsfolk, kinsmen*, Hdt., etc.:—τὸ συγγενές, = συγγένεια, Aesch., etc.; εἰ τούτῳ προσήκει Λαῖφ τινος if this man had any *connexion* with Laius, Soph.

2. metaph. *akin, cognate, of like kind*, Ar., Plat.

III. at the Persian court, συγγενής was a title bestowed by the king as a mark of honour (like Cousin), Xen. Hence συγγενικός [H.G. Liddell, *A Lexicon: Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1996), 752.]

³²1. **belonging to the same extended family or clan, related, akin to** (Pind., Thu. et al.; also Ath., R. 20 p. 73, 17 τὸ συγγενές) in our lit. only subst. In the sing., masc. (Jos., Vi. 177; Just., A I, 27, 3) **J 18:26** and fem. (Menand., Fgm. 929 K.=345 Kō.; Jos., Ant. 8, 249) **Lk 1:36** v.l. (for συγγενίς). Predom. pl. (also Demetr.: 722, 1, 13 and 18 Jac.) οἱ συγγενεῖς (the dat. of this form, made on the analogy of γονεῖς ... γονεῦσιν, is συγγενεῦσιν [a Pisidian ins: JHS 22, 1902, p. 358 no. 118; 1 Macc 10:89 v.l.] **Mk 6:4; Lk 2:44** [both passages have συγγενέσιν as v.l., the form in Diod S 1, 92, 1; OGI 177, 7: 97/96 B.C.; UPZ 161, 21: 119 B.C.; PTebt 61, 79; 1 Macc 10:89; Jos., Vi. 81, Ant. 16, 382]; B-D-F §47, 4; W-S. §9, 9; Mlt-H. 138; Thackeray 153) Lk 2:44; 21:16. W. gen. (B-D-F §194, 2) **Mk 6:4; Lk 1:58; 14:12; Ac 10:24.**

2. **belonging to the same people group, compatriot, kin**, ext. of 1 (Jos., Bell. 7, 262, Ant. 12, 338) οἱ συγγενεῖς μου κατὰ σάρκα **Ro 9:3** (of Andronicus and Junia; on the latter s. Ἰουνία and EEpp, in Handbook to Exegesis of the NT, ed. SPorter '97, 49f); cp. **16:7, 11, 21.**—B. 132. DELG s.v. γίγνομαι. M-M. TW. Spicq.

[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), 950.]

³³Andronicus is a Greek name found frequently, but here obviously of a presumably Hellenized Jew (cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 13.75, 78) (BGD SH). Ἰουνίαν has usually been taken in the modern period as Ἰουνιᾶν = Junias, a contraction of Junianus (so RSV, NEB, NIV, NJB). But the simple fact is that the masculine form has been found nowhere else, and the name is more naturally taken as Ἰουνίαν = Junia (Lampe 139–40, 147 indicates over 250 examples of ‘Junia,’ none of Junias), as was taken for granted by the patristic commentators,

ing of the letter. Paul provides some details about them that have generated considerable discussion over the past couple of centuries. In addition to being kinsmen (τοὺς συγγενεῖς μου), they are called συναιχμαλώτους μου, which means “my fellow prisoners.” At some point previously they had been under arrest along with the Apostle Paul. Where that happened is not indicated; Clement of Rome at the end of the first century claims that Paul was imprisoned seven times during his life (cf. 1 Clem. 5:5³⁴). By the time of the writing of this letter the only imprisonments of Paul identified were at Philippi (Acts 16:22-40) and Ephesus (1 Cor. 15:32). But in 2 Corinthians 6:5 and 11:23, both written before Romans, Paul mentions ‘imprisonments’ (ἐν φυλακαῖς)³⁵ clearly signaling several had already taken place. Which one of these Andronicus and Junia shared with Paul is unknown.

Paul also mentions that this husband and wife “were in Christ before I was” (οἱ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ). They had converted to Christ before Paul became a Christian. How much sooner is unknown. Some speculate that they may have been at Pentecost in Jerusalem where they came to Christ, since both names and kinship connection to Paul signals their Jewish background. The controversial reference to them by Paul is οἵτινες εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις. This can have one of two meanings: 1) “outstanding in the eyes of the apostles,” or 2) “prominent among the apostles.” Two controversial aspects surface here, if the more likely 2) meaning is adopted. First, the term ‘apostle’ is being used to designate a wider circle of Christian leaders than the original Twelve.³⁶ Secondly, and more troublesome to some interpreters is that Junia, clearly a woman, is included in this circle of leaders.³⁷ But one cannot deny the prominent role that women were playing in the various house churches that Paul greets in this chapter.³⁸ Thus relatives of the apostle were contributing significantly to the cause of Christ. Whether or not this couple should be considered ‘apostles’ in some meaning of the term ἀπόστολος cannot be determined with full certainty and clear understanding.³⁹ What is clear, however, is the

and indeed up to the Middle Ages. The assumption that it must be male is a striking indictment of male presumption regarding the character and structure of earliest Christianity (see, e.g., Schlatter, Lietzmann, Althaus, Gaugler, Michel, Murray, Schlier). But see Lagrange, Barrett, Cranfield, Wilckens, and Brooten, ‘Junia.’ *The most natural way to read the two names within the phrase is as husband and wife* (cf. v 3). The name probably indicates a slave origin (Lampe, ‘Sklavenherkunft’). συγγενεῖς = ‘fellow countrymen,’ that is, Jews (see on 9:3); that συγγενής is simply a variation on ἀγαπητός = φίλος (TDNT 7:741–42) is unlikely (see further on 16:11). In view of the tensions within Rome, the prominence given to these Jewish Christians would not be without significance (cf. Michel). συναιχμαλώτος means ‘fellow prisoner,’ as in Col 4:10 (Aristarchus) and Philem 23 (Epaphras). The reference will hardly be metaphorical (despite TDNT 1:196–97); but which of Paul’s several imprisonments is in view is left unclear (2 Cor 6:5; 11:23; 1 Clem 5.6).” [James D. G. Dunn, vol. 38B, *Word Biblical Commentary : Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 894.]

³⁴“By reason of jealousy and strife Paul by his example pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After that *he had been seven times in bonds*, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, had preached in the East and in the West, he won the noble renown which was the reward of his faith,” [First Clement, *Early Christian Writings* at <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/1clement-lightfoot.html>]

³⁵“Paul employs several words to speak of prison and being a prisoner. He can speak of ‘chains’ (*desmoi*, always plural in Paul), by which he means ‘imprisonment.’ He frequently refers to them as ‘my chains’ (Phil 1:7, 13, 14, 17; Col 4:18) and sometimes uses them to speak of his situation ‘in prison’ (Philem 10, 13; 2 Tim 2:9). In 2 Corinthians, when speaking of his afflictions as an apostle, he refers to being *en phylakais*, ‘in prison’ (2 Cor 6:5; 11:23). In Ephesians 6:20 and 2 Timothy 1:16 the apostle’s imprisonment is indicated by the word *halysis*, ‘chain,’ and in Colossians 4:3 Paul speaks of being ‘bound’ (*dedemai*).” [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 753.]

³⁶Michael Bruer and Daniel Wallace in “Was Junia Really an Apostle? A Re-examination of Rom. 16:7” attempt to reassess the phrase ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις primarily in light of meaning 1) over meaning 2). Their approach is interesting but falls prey to the same criticism they level at scholars adopting meaning 2) favoring this ancient couple being ‘apostles’: a bias in favor of women in leadership roles. They both come out of a theological tradition with even stronger pre-conceived bias against women in leadership roles in the church.

³⁷“Andronicus and Junias are also *outstanding among the apostles*,³⁰ which might mean that the apostles held them in high esteem or that they were apostles, and notable apostles at that. The former understanding seems less likely; it ‘scarcely does justice to the construction in the Greek’ (Harrison).³¹ It is fairly clear from the New Testament that there was a wider circle of apostles than the Twelve, and it would seem that this couple belonged to that wider circle. Some find an argument from this that Junias was masculine, holding that a woman could not be an apostle, but we should bear in mind Chrysostom’s comment: ‘Oh! how great is the devotion of this woman, that she should be even counted worthy of the appellation of apostle!’³²” [Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 534.]

³⁸“Cranfield comments on Paul’s view of women: ‘That Paul should not only include a woman (on the view taken above) among the apostles but actually describe her, together with Andronicus, as outstanding among them, is highly significant evidence (along with the importance he accords in this chapter to Phoebe, Prisca, Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis, the mother of Rufus, Julia and the sister of Nereus) of the falsity of the widespread and stubbornly persistent notion that Paul had a low view of women and something to which the Church as a whole has not yet paid sufficient attention.’” [Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), fn. 32, 534.]

³⁹That the New Testament uses ἀπόστολος with multiple meanings is clear from the definitions of the Gingrich - Danker Greek

significant contribution to the work of the Gospel that they had made by the time of the writing of Paul's letter.

Herodion, Ἡρωδῖα τὸν συγγενῆ μου. We know almost nothing about this individual. If συγγενῆς is taken as meaning 'fellow Jew' then Paul only knew this person by name, and the possibility that he belonged to the 'household of Aristobulus (v.10), a grandson of Herod the Great who lived in Rome the latter years of his life.⁴⁰

Lexicon:

ἀπόστολος, ου, ὁ (s. ἀποστέλλω). In older Gk. (Lysias, Demosth.) and later (e.g. Posidon.: 87 Fgm. 53 p. 257, 21 Jac. [Strabo 3, 5, 5]) ὁ ἄ. is a naval expedition, prob. also its commander (Anecd. Gr. 217, 26). τὸ ἀπόστολον with (Pla., Ep. 7, 346a) or without (Vi. Hom. 19) πλοῖον means a ship ready for departure. In its single occurrence in Jos. (Ant. 17, 300; it is not found elsewh. in Jewish-Gk. lit.) it prob. means 'sending out'; in pap mostly 'bill of lading' (s. Preisigke, Fachwörter 1915), less freq. 'certificate of clearance (at a port)' (BGU V §64 [II A.D.] = Gnomon des Idios Logos). It can also be 'letter of authorization (relating to shipping)': Mitt-Wilck. I/2, 443, 10 (15 A.D.); PHerm 6, 11f (cp. Dig. 49, 6, 1 litteras dimissorias sive apostolos). In contrast, in isolated cases it refers to persons who are dispatched for a specific purpose, and the context determines the status or function expressed in such Eng. terms as 'ambassador, delegate, messenger' (Hdt. 1, 21; 5, 38; Synesius, Providence 2, 3 p. 122a ἀπόστολοι of ordinary messengers; Sb 7241, 48; BGU 1741, 6 [64 B.C.]; 3 Km 14:6A; Is 18:2 Sym.). Cp. KLake, The Word A.: Beginn. I 5, '33, 46–52. It is this isolated usage that is preferred in the NT w. nuances peculiar to its lit. But the extensive use of ἀποστέλλω in documents relating to pers. of merit engaged in administrative service prob. encouraged NT use of the noun, thus in effect disavowing assoc. w. the type of itinerant philosophers that evoked the kind of pejorative term applied by Paul's audience **Ac 17:18**.

1. of messengers without extraordinary status *delegate, envoy, messenger* (opp. ὁ πέμψας) J 13:16. Of Epaphroditus, messenger of the Philippians **Phil 2:25**.—**2 Cor 8:23**.

2. of messengers with extraordinary status, esp. of God's **messenger, envoy** (cp. Epict. 3, 22, 23 of Cynic wise men: ἄγγελος ἀπὸ τ. Διὸς ἀπέσταλται).

a. of prophets **Lk 11:49; Rv 18:20**; cp. **2:2; Eph 3:5**.

b. of Christ (w. ἀρχιερέως) **Hb 3:1** (cp. ApcEsdr 2:1 p. 25, 29 T.; Just., A I, 12, 9; the extra-Christian firman Sb 7240, 4f οὐκ ἔστιν θεὸς εἰ μὴ ὁ θεὸς μόνος. Μααμετ ἀπόστολος θεοῦ). GWetter, 'D. Sohn Gottes' 1916, 26ff.

c. but predominately in the NT (of the apologists, only Just.) of a group of highly honored believers w. a special function as God's envoys. Also Judaism had a figure known as apostle (πῶς; Schürer III 124f w. sources and lit.; Billerb. III 1926, 2–4; JTruron, Theology 51, '48, 166–70; 341–43; GDix, ibid. 249–56; 385f; JBühner, art. ἄ. in EDNT I 142–46). In Christian circles, at first ἄ. denoted one who proclaimed the gospel, and was not strictly limited: Paul freq. calls himself an ἄ.: **Ro 1:1; 11:13; 1 Cor 1:1; 9:1f; 15:9; 2 Cor 1:1; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Ti 1:1; 2:7; 2 Ti 1:1; Tit 1:1**.—1 Cl 47:1. Of Barnabas **Ac 14:14; 15:2**. Of Andronicus and Junia (less prob. Junias, s. Ἰουνία) **Ro 16:7**. Of James, the Lord's brother **Gal 1:19**. Of Peter **1 Pt 1:1; 2 Pt 1:1**. Then esp. of the 12 apostles οἱ δώδεκα ἄ. (cp. ParJer 9:20; AscIs 3:21; 4:3) **Mt 10:2; Mk 3:14; Lk 22:14** (v.l. οἱ δώδεκα); cp. **6:13; 9:10; 17:5; Ac 1:26** (P-HMenoud, RHPR 37 '57, 71–80); **Rv 21:14**; PtK 3 p. 15, 18. Peter and the apostles **Ac 2:37; 5:29**. Paul and apostles Pol 9:1 (cp. AcPlTh Aa I, 235 app. of Thecla). Gener. the apostles **Mk 6:30; Lk 24:10; 1 Cor 4:9; 9:5; 15:7; 2 Cor 11:13; 1 Th 2:7; Ac 1:2; 2:42f; 4:33, 35, 37; 5:2, 12, 18, 34 v.l., 40; 6:6; 8:1, 14, 18; 9:27; 11:1; 14:4; 2 Pt 3:2; Jd 17; IEph 11:2; IMg 7:1; 13:2; ITr 2:2; 3:1; 7:1; IPhd 5:1; ISm 8:1; D ins; 11:3, 6. As a governing board, w. the elders **Ac 15:2, 4, 6, 22f; 16:4**. As possessors of the most important spiritual gift **1 Cor 12:28f**. Proclaimers of the gospel 1 Cl 42:1f; B 5:9; Hs 9, 17, 1. Prophesying strife 1 Cl 44:1. Working miracles **2 Cor 12:12**. W. overseers, teachers and attendants Hv 3, 5, 1; Hs 9, 15, 4; w. teachers, preaching to those who had fallen asleep Hs 9, 16, 5; w. var. Christian officials IMg 6:1; w. prophets **Eph 2:20**; D 11:3; Pol 6:3. Christ and the apostles as the foundation of the church IMg 13:1; ITr 12; 2; cp. **Eph 2:20**. οἱ ἄ. and ἡ ἐκκλησία w. the three patriarchs and the prophets IPhd 9:1. The Holy Scriptures named w. the ap. 2 Cl 14:2 (sim. ApcSed 14:10 p. 136, 17 Ja.). Paul ironically refers to his opponents (or the original apostles; s. s.v. ὑπερλίαν) as οἱ ὑπερλίαν ἄ. the super-apostles **2 Cor 11:5; 12:11**. The orig. apostles he calls οἱ πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἄ. **Gal 1:17**; AcPlCor 2:4.—Harnack, Mission 4 I 1923, 332ff (Eng. tr. I 319–31). WSeufert, D. Urspr. u. d. Bed. d. Apostolates 1887; EHaupt, Z. Verständnis d. Apostolates im NT 1896; EMonnier, La notion de l'Apostolat des origines à Irénée 1903; PBatiffol, RB n.s. 3, 1906, 520–32; Wlh., Einleitung 2, 1911, 138–47; EBurton, AJT 16, 1912, 561–88, Gal comm. 1921, 363–84; RSchütz, Apostel u. Jünger 1921; EMeyer I 265ff; III 255ff. HVogelstein, Development of the Apostolate in Judaism, etc.: HUCA 2, 1925, 99–123; JWagenmann, D. Stellg. d. Ap. Pls neben den Zwölf 1926; WMundle, D. Apostelbild der AG: ZNW 27, 1928, 36–54; KReingstorff, TW I 406–46 (s. critique by HConzelmann, The Theol. of St. Luke '60, 216, n. 1), Apost. u. Predigtamt '34; J-LLeuba, Rech. exégét. rel. à l'apostolat dans le NT, diss. Neuchâtel '36; PSaintyves, Deux mythes évangéliques, Les 12 apôtres et les 72 disciples '38; GSass, Apostelamt u. Kirche ... paulin. Apostelbegr. '39; EKäsemann, ZNW 40, '41, 33–71; RLiechtenhan, D. urchr. Mission '46; ESchweizer, D. Leben d. Herrn in d. Gemeinde u. ihren Diensten '46; AFridrichsen, The Apostle and His Message '47; HvCampenhausen, D. urchrstl. Apostelbegr.: StTh 1, '47, 96–130; HMosbech, ibid. 2, '48, 166–200; ELohse, Ursprung u. Prägung des christl. Apostolates: TZ 9, '53, 259–75; GKlein, Die 12 Apostel, '60; FHahn, Mission in the NT, tr. FClarke, '65; WSchmithals, The Office of the Apostle, tr. JSteely, '69; KKertelge, Das Apostelamt des Paulus, BZ 14, '70, 161–81. S. also ἐκκλησία end, esp. Holl and Kattenbusch; also HBetz, Hermeneia: Gal '79, 74f (w. additional lit.); FAgnew, On the Origin of the Term ἀπόστολος: CBQ 38, '76, 49–53 (survey of debate); KHaacker, NovT 30, '88, 9–38 (Acts). Ins evidence (s. e.g. SIG index) relating to the verb ἀποστέλλω is almost gener. ignored in debate about the meaning of the noun.—DELG s.v. στέλλω A. EDNT. M-M. TW. Spicq. [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), 122.]**

⁴⁰“ἀσπάσασθε Ἡρωδῖα τὸν συγγενῆ μου, 'greet my kinsman Herodion.' Herodion is clearly a Jew (on συγγενῆς see 16:7). The name strongly suggests a freedman of one of the Herod family (freedmen and enfranchised foreigners took their patron's name [OCD 721a]). The fact that Paul mentions Herodion immediately after the members of the household of Aristobulus can certainly be regarded as support for the above suggestion (see on 16:10) regarding Aristobulus (Lightfoot, SH, Michel, Cranfield; against Käsemann). Whether

But if συγγενής means ‘kinsman’, then we are looking at another relative of the apostle who was living in Rome at the time of the writing of this letter.

Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου. Here the vantage point shifts. These are now sending greetings to the Roman Christians through Paul from Corinth, along with several other individuals (cf. vv. 21-23). Lucius comes from Latin, and may possibly be the same person as Lucius of Cyrene in the church at Antioch (cf. Acts 13:1). It is hardly likely that this Lucius is Luke the physician, although many have so understood the name.⁴¹ Jason was also at Corinth, and may well have been the same Jason in Thessalonica who opened his home to Paul and Silas (cf. Acts 17:7) and later faced synagogue opposition.⁴² If such is the case, then συγγενής is better taken to mean ‘fellow Jew’ rather than ‘kinsmen.’ Sosipater is most likely a long spelling of the shorter Sopater, a name mentioned in Acts 20:4. If the connection is correct, then this resident of Beroea, who accompanied Paul on the second missionary journey, is now in Corinth, and also is a fellow Jew rather than a relative of Paul’s. On the other hand, if οἱ συγγενεῖς μου here means ‘my relatives’, then all three men are distinct from others with the same or similar names, but are serving Christ in the church at Corinth where Paul was staying during the time of the writing of this letter. Certainty eludes us here as to the precise identification of these men, apart from the fact of their participation in the Corinthian church sufficiently to have their names included in sending greetings to the church at Rome.

Beyond the specific mentioning of his sister and nephew in Acts, Paul may or may not have alluded to other family members in the greeting section of Romans. If these six individuals were indeed blood relatives living in both Rome and Corinth, it would suggest that Christianity did penetrate extensively into Paul’s extended family. And that at least one couple, Andronicus and Junia, became Christians before Paul did.

1.2.0 Birth and Childhood

Secondary Texts:

Acts 9:11, NRSV: The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul...”⁴³

the use of συγγενής means that only those so designated were Jews (Andronicus, Junia, Herodion; but what then of Aquila, Mary, and Rufus?), or that the only thing Paul knew of Herodion was the fact of his being a Jew (whereas in other cases he had other descriptive phrases at hand and did not need to mention this) remains unclear.” [James D. G. Dunn, vol. 38B, *Word Biblical Commentary: Romans 9-16*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 896.]

⁴¹“The name Lucius is a Latin Praenomen common throughout the Roman world. It is one of the Latin equivalents for the shortened Greek name *Loukas* (cf. *Loukanos*), ‘Luke,’ as is apparent from two inscriptions referring to a family who put up memorials in honor of the god Men Ascaenus at Antioch in Pisidia. The son’s name is given as Loukas in one and as Loukios in the other (Cadbury 1920–33: 491). Some authors from patristic times to the present have identified Lucius of Cyrene with Luke the evangelist and companion of Paul (see Cadbury 1920–33: 494). For example, Ephraem of Syria adds ‘and Luke the Cyrenean’ after ‘Mark’ in Acts 12:25 (Armenian Comm. on Acts 12:25–13:3), thus suggesting such an identification (Fitzmyer *Luke I–IX AB*, 47). Also, the Western text (D) for Acts introduces the first ‘we’ passage at Acts 11:28, implying that the author (Luke) was present in Antioch. This too has led to an identification of Luke with the Lucius present at Antioch in Acts 13:1.

“The Lucius of Rom 16:21 has likewise been identified from the early Christian period to the present with Luke the evangelist. Origen was aware of some who made such an identification (Comm. in Rom. 10.39). If so, Luke would then be a kinsman of Paul, and thus a Jewish Christian. Though this is possible, the problem, as Fitzmyer (43) remarks, ‘is to explain why Paul would refer to Luke there as Loukios, when he elsewhere uses Loukos of him’ (Philemon 24; Col 4:14; cf. 2 Tim 4:11).

“While it is true that Lucius and Lukas can be used interchangeably, an identification of Lucius (of Cyrene) with Luke the evangelist and companion of Paul is unlikely because: (1) Lucius was a very common name; (2) the author of Acts, who does not identify himself elsewhere in the narrative, would be unlikely to present himself with the robust description of ‘teacher and prophet’ in Acts 13:1; (3) Lucius of Cyrene was probably a Jewish Christian, and Luke the evangelist was probably a gentile Christian; and (4) a tradition from the end of the 2d century (Ancient Greek Prologue) is that Luke was a Syrian, native to Antioch.”

[David Noel Freedman, vol. 4, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 396-97.]

⁴²“Although the commonality of the name argues against too readily equating this Jason in Corinth with Jason of Thessalonica, in fact it is probable that the two were the same person (Cranfield *Romans ICC*, 805–6). The association of Jason with Sosipater in Rom 16:21 when read in conjunction with Acts 20:4 suggests the link. Among those who travel with Paul after he leaves Corinth according to 20:4 are said to be Sopater of Beroea and various Thessalonians (Jason is not one of those named, however). Since Sopater’s name is a shortened form of Sosipater and his town, Beroea, was located near Thessalonica, it seems that Sosipater and Jason of Rom 16:21 were in fact companions from Beroea and Thessalonica respectively. On this supposition, Rom 16:21 adds to what can be known of Jason of Thessalonica from Acts 17:5–9 that he was definitely a Jew and that at some point in the years following the Thessalonian church’s founding, he apparently left to travel or move with Paul to Corinth.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 3, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 649.]

⁴³GNT: ὁ δὲ κύριος πρὸς αὐτόν· Αναστὰς πορεύθητι ἐπὶ τὴν ῥύμην τὴν καλουμένην Εὐθείαν καὶ ζήτησον ἐν οἰκίᾳ Ἰούδα Σαῦλον ὀνόματι Ταρσέα,...

Acts 21:39, NRSV: Paul replied, “I am a Jew, **from Tarsus in Cilicia**, a citizen of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people.”⁴⁴

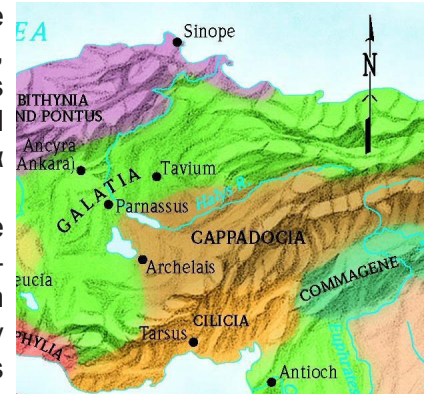
Acts 22:3, NRSV: Then he said: 3 “I am a Jew, **born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city** at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today...”⁴⁵

Acts 26:4, NRSV: All the Jews know my way of life **from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem.**⁴⁶

No where in his letters does Paul specify where he was born, but Luke clearly places Paul’s birth in Tarsus in the Roman province of Cilicia. To be sure, nothing in Paul’s letters would raise questions about the accuracy of Luke’s specification, and Paul’s autobiographical statement in Galatians 1:21 would point this same direction: “Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia,…” (ἔπειτα ἦλθον εἰς τὰ κλίματα τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Κιλικίας.).

The **date of Paul’s birth** can only be approximated. The estimated date ranges run from 4 to 14 AD, but numerous difficulties are present with such efforts.⁴⁷ The best estimates seem to be sometime between 5 and 10 AD. With his death taking place in the mid-60s of the first century, he lived approximately sixty years before martyrdom at the hands of Emperor Nero. About half of his life was spent as a Christian in service to Christ.

The **childhood of Paul** also is not absolutely clear, in large part because of a statement by Luke in one of Paul’s speeches in Acts 22:3: “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but **brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel**, educated strictly according to our ancestral law, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today.”⁴⁸ What is implied by ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ is debated.⁴⁹ This statement suggests that at some point Paul moved from Tarsus to Jerusalem in order to continue his education with the Jewish scribe Gamaliel. But when? As a small child? Or as a youth in his late teens to early twenties? The participle ἀνατεθραμμένος from ἀνατρέφω can mean either physical nurture that parents would provide, or spiritual and mental nurture that a teacher would provide.⁵⁰ The reference to Gamaliel as his teacher clearly favors the second



⁴⁴GNT: εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Παῦλος· Ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος μὲν εἰμι Ἰουδαῖος, **Ταρσεὺς τῆς Κιλικίας**, οὐκ ἀσήμου πόλεως πολίτης· δέομαι δέ σου, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι λαλήσαι πρὸς τὸν λαόν.

⁴⁵GNT: καὶ φησὶν· 3 Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος, **γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῶ τῆς Κιλικίας, ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ** παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ, πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἀκριβειαν τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου, ζηλωτὴς ὑπάρχων τοῦ θεοῦ καθὼς πάντες ὑμεῖς ἐστε σήμερον,

⁴⁶GNT: **Τὴν μὲν οὖν βίωσίν μου τὴν ἐκ νεότητος τὴν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς γενομένην ἐν τῷ ἔθνει μου ἐν τε Ἱεροσολύμοις** ἴσασι πάντες Ἰουδαῖοι,...

⁴⁷“The events mentioned in Acts 7 may have occurred as early as A.D. 31 if Jesus’ death took place during the Passover of A.D. 30. On the other hand, if Jesus’ death is dated in the year 33 then those events could have taken place no earlier than 34, but no later than 37. (Second Cor 11:32, 33 states that when Paul escaped from Damascus that city was being ruled by the Nabataean king Aretas, who died in the year 40. Since, according to Gal 1:17, 18, Paul left Damascus three years after his conversion, the year 37 must be regarded as the latest possible date for Stephen’s death.)

“Using the year 34 as an approximate date for the time when Saul is described as a ‘young man,’ and assuming that Saul was no older than 30 years at that time, then it can be concluded his birth took place no earlier than A.D. 4. And since it is very unlikely that he was younger than 20, A.D. 14 can be set as the latest possible date for his birth. This conclusion is supported by the knowledge that Paul studied under the famous Gamaliel I (Acts 22:3), who according to some scholars became a member of the Sanhedrin about A.D. 20. If Paul was 15 years old when he entered the school, the range of A.D. 4–14 for his birth fits all the information available. So it can be said with a degree of accuracy that Saul was born in the city of Tarsus about A.D. 9, but any estimates about his age should allow a leeway of 5 years either way.” [Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1621.]

⁴⁸GNT: Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος, γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῶ τῆς Κιλικίας, **ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ**, πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἀκριβειαν τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου, ζηλωτὴς ὑπάρχων τοῦ θεοῦ καθὼς πάντες ὑμεῖς ἐστε σήμερον,

⁴⁹“Moreover, according to Acts 22:3, he was actually brought up in Jerusalem (possibly in his sister’s house, cf. Acts 23:16), and some scholars infer from that statement that Paul was brought up in a totally Jewish environment from earliest childhood.” [Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1622.]

⁵⁰“**ἀνατρέφω** 1 aor. ἀνέθρεψα, mid. ἀνεθρεψάμην. Pass.: 2 aor. ἀνετρέφην; pf. ἀνατέθραμμαι (s. τρέφω; Aeschyl. et al.; LXX, Joseph.) to provide nurture

1. of physical nurture *bring up, care for* (X., Mem. 4, 3, 10 et al.; PLips 28, 12 et al. since III B.C.; Wsd 7:4) of the infant Moses **Ac 7:20** (cp. Jos., Ant. 9, 142; Eutecnius 4 p. 41, 18 Διόνυσον ἐκ τοῦ κιβωτίου δεξάμενος ἀνεθρέψατο). Of Jesus **Lk 4:16** v.l., where it may also have sense b. Pass. be nourished, of the worm generated within the body of the phoenix 1 Cl 25:3.

2. of mental and spiritual nurture *bring up, rear, train* (Epict. 2, 22, 26; 3, 1, 35; Herodian 1, 2, 1; 4 Macc 10:2) ἀνεθρέψατο αὐτὸν ἑαυτῇ εἰς υἱόν she brought him up as her own son **Ac 7:21** (Jos., Ant. 2, 232). ἀνατεθραμμένος ἐν τ. πόλει ταύτῃ **22:3** (WvanUn-

meaning of the verb. Now the issue is how old was Paul when he went to Jerusalem? The statement in Acts 26:4 indicates that Paul lived in Jerusalem τὴν ἐκ νεότητος, that is, 'from his youth.' This would favor the idea that Paul was sent by his parents in his teen years to Jerusalem to study with Gamaliel, and possibly to live with his sister there (cf. Acts 23:16).

A larger question is what was it like to live in either Tarsus or Jerusalem in these days?

1.2.1 Tarsus. This Hellenistic city certainly was not a boring place to live in the first Christian century.⁵¹ The city, with possibly as many a half a million people, was located on the eastern side of a flat plain near the Cilician Gates. This narrow pass contained a major road coming from Asia in the west and going eastward into Syria and Mesopotamia. It lay some 16 kilometers north from the coast along the river Cydnus. This location turned the city into a strategic post of commerce coming from the Fertile Crescent in the east and headed westward to Rome. The East met the West at Tarsus. Not only did trade provide wealth for the city, but it was known for its *Cilicium*, a type of felt cloth from the hair of the shaggy black goats herded on the plain of Cilicia. This may have provided the trade of 'tent-making' for Paul since this cloth was used for the making of tents, but it is not certain that Paul learned his craft from this. The city went back in time to the Assyrians in the Old Testament era to approximately the seventh century BC. Greek ways blossomed in Tarsus from the successors of Alexander the Great, especially the Seleucid rulers. Evidence suggests the presence of a large community of Jews in the city by the beginning of the Christian era.



Tarsus Mountains



One notable event in Tarsus was when Cleopatra sailed up the Cydnus River to meet Julius Caesar in the city in 42 BC, who in celebration of his initial meeting with this Egyptian queen declared the city as a 'free city,' meaning it was exempted from having to pay taxes to the Romans. By the beginning of the Christian era, Tarsus had become a 'university city' with the philosophical schools there surpassing those in Athens in size and influence.⁵² Philosophers also served as city leaders for much of this period. The city enjoyed luxury and wealth, so much so that Philostratus in the third century suggests in his *Apollonius of Tyana* biography that the young first century philosophy student Apollonius was so struck by the extreme wealth and frivolity of the residents that he moved to a nearby village to live while studying in the city so as not to be 'contaminated' by their wealth.

When Paul said in Acts 21:39, "I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city" (Ταρσεύς τῆς Κιλικίας, οὐκ ἀσῆμου πόλεως πολίτης), he indicated that not only did he possess Roman citizenship, but

nik, Tarsus or Jerusalem ᾽62). Of Mary ἡ ἀνατραφεῖσα εἰς τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων brought up in the holy of holies GJs 13:2; 15:3. ἐν ναῶ κυρίου in the Lord's temple 19:1.—Spicq."

[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), 74.]

⁵¹"In the first century, Tarsus was the chief city of the province of Cilicia in the eastern part of Asia Minor. Although about 16 km. (10 mi.) inland, the city was a major port having access to the sea by way of the Cydnus River, which flowed through it. Just to the north of Tarsus towered the lofty, snow-covered Taurus Mountains, which provided the timber that formed one of the principal objects of trade for Tarsian merchants. An important Roman road ran north out of the city and through a narrow passage in the mountains known as the "Cilician Gates." Many an ancient military struggle was fought at this mountain pass. Tarsus was a frontier city, a meeting place for East and West, a crossroad for commerce that flowed in both directions by land and sea. Tarsus had a prized heritage. Fact and legend intermingled to make its citizens fiercely proud of its past. The Roman general Mark Antony granted it the status of *libera civitas* ('free city') in 42 B.C. Thus, though part of a Roman province, it was self-governing, and not required to pay tribute to Rome. The democratic traditions of the Greek city-state had long been established in Paul's day." [J.I. Packer, Merrill Chapin Tenney and William White, *Nelson's Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 553.]

⁵²Of the three centers of Greek education in that era -- Athens, Tarsus, and Alexandria -- only Alexandria had the larger library. Both Tarsus and Alexandria surpassed Athens in library holdings and educational influence. See Jerome Murphy-O'Conner, "Paul Growing Up in Tarsus," at http://www.biblical.ie/courses/Origins/JMOC_Tarsus.htm#Tarsus.

additionally he possessed official citizenship of Tarsus.⁵³ This suggests that his father was a long time, and well established, citizen of Tarsus. And most likely was a man of considerable wealth, who sought all possible advantages for his son. Growing up in the city, Paul would have experienced all the cultural diversity and excitement that permeated this large metropolitan cross-roads city.⁵⁴

1.2.2 Jerusalem. Probably while in his late teens or early twenties, Paul was sent to Jerusalem by his father to study with the highly revered Jewish teacher Gamaliel.⁵⁵ This would have been sometime around 15 to 20 AD.

At that point in time, Jerusalem⁵⁶ was a major city in the southeastern part of the eastern Mediterranean

⁵³“The city (polis) was a political entity among the Greeks, and citizenship involved jealously guarded privileges. Thus in Athens in the 5th century B.C. only the children of two freeborn Athenians ranked as citizens: the child of an Athenian father and a non-Athenian mother was excluded from the register of Athenian citizens (Arist. Ath. Pol. 26). Paul was obviously proud of his status as a citizen of Tarsus, ‘no mean city’ (Acts 21:39). He was evidently born into a family which possessed the citizenship. For inclusion on the Tarsian citizen roll a property qualification of 500 drachmae had been fixed, perhaps ca. 30 B.C. by Athenodorus (Dio Chrys. *Or.* 34.23). Paul’s Tarsian citizenship, however, was not nearly so important in the world of his day as his Roman citizenship by birth, i.e., by inheritance from his father (Acts 22:28).” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 1048.]

⁵⁴The Greek orator, Dio Chrysostom (ca. 40 - ca 120 AD), in his *Discourses* 33 - 42 praises the residents of Tarsus for retaining the eastern custom of veiling women in public, but criticizes them for preferring Phoenician music, the ‘punk rock’ music of the ancient world with its loud almost meaningless sounds and the high emotions connected to its performance.

⁵⁵“A Pharisaic member of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem who was widely respected for his learning in Torah (Acts 5:34). At first glance, the name Gamaliel—now attributed to a rabbi of the 1st century—might seem to function differently in the NT than it did in the OT. He plays a crucial role in the proceedings against the apostles. As a result of Sadducean jealousy at the apostles’ reputation for healing, they have been put in jail, only to be released by an angel (vv 12–20). Once the Sanhedrin convenes, their officers eventually track the apostles down in the Temple, and set them before the council (vv 21–27a). The high priest demands to know why the apostles persist, despite prior warning, to teach in Jesus’ name; they reply that obedience is owed to God, rather than people, and accuse the Sanhedrin of murdering the savior (vv 27b–32). Condemnation to death at that moment seems certain (v 33), but Gamaliel intervenes and cautions restraint. His standing in the Sanhedrin is assumed to be great, in that he commands the apostles to be put outside for a brief time (v 34c). He then urges caution, on the grounds that the movements of Theudas and Judas the Galilean had come to nothing: The apostles also will fail, if their movement is of men (vv 35–38). If their movement is of God, Gamaliel argues that the Sanhedrin would be unable to prevail, and rebellious even to try (v 39). Having been convinced by Gamaliel’s arguments, the Sanhedrin releases the apostles with a mere beating, and repeats the old command, not to speak in Jesus’ name (v 40, cf. 4:17). The second (and last) mention of Gamaliel occurs in Acts 22:3, within a speech of Paul, in which the apostle claims to have been instructed at the feet of Gamaliel with an exact knowledge of the ancestral law.

“Superficially, there is a degree of verisimilitude in Gamaliel’s portrait in Acts. The Pharisees in general are described by Josephus as combining a view of fate with that of the freedom of human will, a philosophical compromise which may also be said to animate Gamaliel’s position in Acts (cf. Ant 13.5.9 §171–73; JW 2.8.14 §162–63; Neusner 1987: 279, 282; and Bruce 1982: 68 n. 5). Moreover, Gamaliel himself occupies a position of such prominence in Rabbinica, that his implicit status in Acts appears plausible. *Soṭa* 9.15 has it that ‘When Rabban Gamaliel the elder died, the glory of the law ceased and purity and abstinence died’ (Neusner 1984: 33, 34). In that the interpretation of the Torah (in its fullest sense), keeping purity and maintaining dietary discipline were programmatically typical of Pharisaism (cf. Neusner 1987: 290), Gamaliel appears as a paradigmatic figure within the movement. For that reason, his decision that a Targum of Job was to be buried within a construction of the Temple (Sabb. 115a, cf. Neusner 1984: 53–54, cf. 37, 38, 42) was representative of the emerging attitude towards the Targumin among the rabbis: Targum, as the product of a discipline between Bible and Mishnah (cf. Sipre Deut 161) was to be orally promulgated (cf. Meg. 4.4), and yet disposed of as Scripture when it was written. The rabbinic ambivalence in regard to the medium of the Targumin is what resulted in their consignment to writing at a much later stage.”

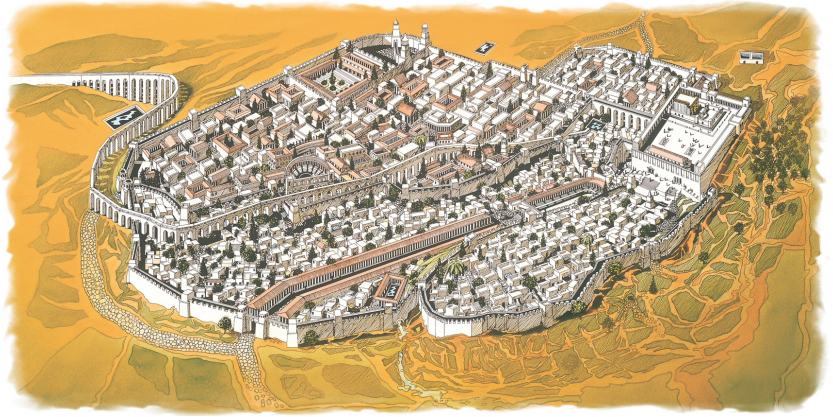
[David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 904.]

⁵⁶The name “Jerusalem” has prompted a variety of spellings both in the ancient and the modern world, largely based on differing ideas of the meaning of the term and its etymological origin. The article “Names of Jerusalem,” Wikipedia. org provides helpful details on this:

Jerusalem

- * Arabic أم يروشليم *Uršālīm, Ūršalaym (Ūrušālīm, Ūrušalaym)*
- * Biblical Hebrew ירושלים *Yerushalaim* probably “Heritage of Shalem” or “Heritage of the Complete”
- * Aramaic ירושלים *Yərūšəlem*
- * Biblical Greek Ἱερουσαλήμ *Hierousalēm, Ierousalēm, Ἱεροσόλυμα Hierosolyma, Ierosolyma*
- * Biblical Latin *Hierosolyma Ierusalem*
- * Tiberian Hebrew ירושלים / ירושלים *Yərūšālāim / Yərūšālāim*
- * Standard Hebrew ירושלים *Yerushalayim*
- * Old Norse *Jorsala*
- * Russian Иерусалим / *Iyerusalim*
- * Lithuanian *Jeruzalė / Yāruzal’eh*

Sea region.⁵⁷ When Herod the Great died in 4 BC, his kingdom was divided by the Romans into three regions and each was given to one of his sons.⁵⁸ Herod Archelaus, the oldest son, was given Judea, Samaria, and Idumea. But because of his ineptness, the Romans removed him from power in 6 AD.⁵⁹ From 6 to 41 AD, military governors appointed by Rome administered Roman policy over Judea and Jerusalem. Unfortunately, a succession of incompetent procurators were appointed and then soon removed.⁶⁰ Assuming that Paul arrived in Jerusalem sometime between 15 and 20 AD, Valerius Gratus (15-26 AD), the first appointee by Emperor Tiberius, was in charge of Judea and Jerusalem.⁶¹



* Spanish Jerusalén

Jerusalem is the name most commonly used in the Bible, and is the preferred name in Jewry and the Western World. Its Arabic counterpart, **Ūršalīm**, is the term used by the government of Israel in Arabic, and by Arabs in certain historic or Biblical contexts. Its first recorded Hebrew mention was found in *Khirbet Beit Lei*.

A Midrashic explanation of the name relates it to the *yir'eh* from the name **Adonai-yir'eh** ("The Lord sees", Vulgate Latin *Dominus videt*) given to Moriah by Abraham and the name Salem. Other midrashim say that Jerusalem means "City of Peace", **Shalom**.^[6]

The Midrash teaches that there are seventy names for Jerusalem.^[7]

The Greek form **Hierousalēm** with the rough breathing (h sound) not derived directly from the Hebrew pronunciation, indicates a reinterpretation of the first syllables as the Greek *hierō* meaning holy.^{[8][9]} Similarly the Old Norse form **Jorsala** lacking the m sound of the Hebrew indicates an reinterpretation of the last syllables as the Old Norse toponym ending *-sala* denoting a hall or temple.

⁵⁷“Jerusalem reached its zenith when Herod the Great transformed the Hasmonean city into a capital worthy of his kingdom. The scale of Herod’s projects dwarfed those of all his predecessors and can still be seen throughout Jerusalem today. Herod’s successors expanded the suburbs northward to include Bezetha, but the Jerusalem of Jesus’ day essentially was that created by Herod the Great. In addition to the vast amount of archaeological data retrieved in the last two decades, we also have the eyewitness accounts of Jerusalem in the first century A.D. written by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37 to ca. A.D. 100) and descriptions of the temple found in the Jewish Mishnah to aid in our reconstruction of the city. Josephus’ *Jewish Wars* (Books V–VI) give lengthy descriptions of Jerusalem.” [Thomas V. Brisco, *Holman Bible Atlas*, Holman Reference (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 228.]

⁵⁸This division of his territory was according to the will that Herod left. But with some Jews rebelling against this division because of their passionate hatred of Herod and his family, Emperor Augustus reluctantly ratified Herod’s will and Roman troops dispatched from Syria by Varus, the Roman general, enforced the terms of the will upon the territory with some modifications to it.

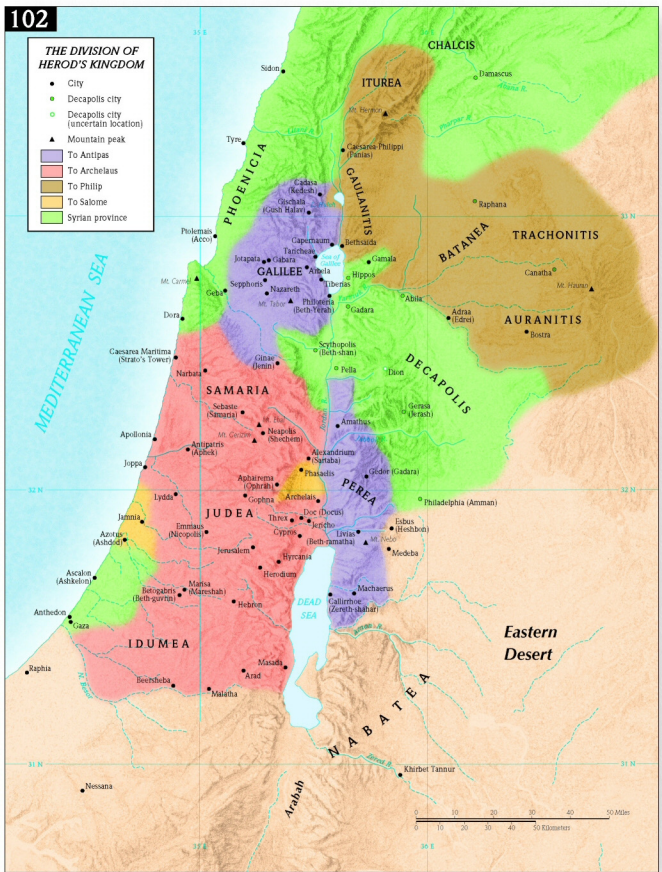
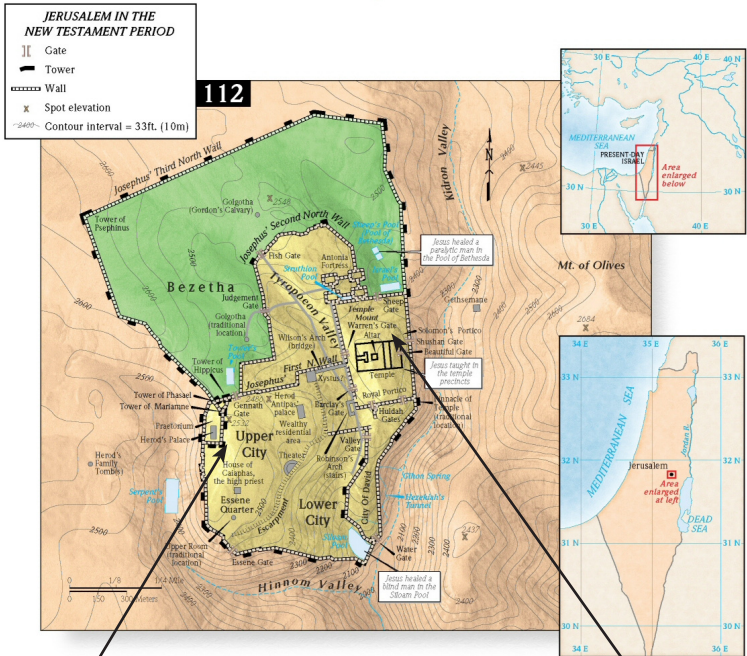
⁵⁹“Archelaus, who inherited his father’s ruthlessness but not his statesmanship, proved so intolerable to his subjects in Judea and Samaria that after 9 years they threatened revolt if he were not removed. Augustus accordingly removed him in A.D. 6 and banished him to Gaul. His principality was transformed into a Roman province.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 97.]

⁶⁰The list is extensive:

Name:	Dates (AD)	Appointed By Roman Emperor:
Coponius	6-9	Augustus
Marcus Ambibulus	9-12	Augustus
Annius Rufus	12-15	Augustus
Valerius Gratus	15-26	Tiberius
Pontius Pilate	26-36	Tiberius
Marcellus	37	Vitellius, Legate of Syria
Marllus	37-41	Caligula

⁶¹Considerable confusion exists over the proper title of these governors between the Latin terms *Praefectus* (Prefect) or *Praetor* (Procurator; ἐπίτροπος). Of the three procurators mentioned in the NT -- Pontius Pilate (Matt. 27:11), Felix (Acts 23:24), Festus (Acts 24:27) -- they are termed ἡγεμόνος (governor) by the NT writers, not quite the same term as ἐπίτροπος that was normally used in Greek. A part of the difficulty is that terminology in Latin changed from the time of Emperor Claudius (41 - 54 AD) from *Praefectus* to *Praetor* in reference to the administrators in Judea. Both terms, however, had multiple meanings and neither carried with it the clear implication of governmental and especially military authority. These men were simply administrators of policy determined by the emperor, since Judea was an imperial province under the direct control of the emperor. Additionally, they normally were answerable to the military general for the eastern empire based in Syria.

“The first provincial governor of Judea was Coponius. Between A.D. 6 and 41 he and his successors appear to have been called prefects. This is Pontius Pilate’s designation in the Caesarea inscription which bears his name; if Tacitus, writing ca. 115–17, calls



Herod's Palace
 Antonia's Fortress
 Perhaps the most notable action by Gratus was the appointment of Caiaphas (18 - 36 AD) as high priest in 18 AD after he removed Simon, son of Camith. These Roman administrators over Judea from the outset in 6 AD established their headquarters at Caesarea Maritima on the Mediterranean coast, and would travel to Jerusalem only on special occasions, such as some of the major religious festivals like Passover. In Jerusalem they made Herod's palace their residence, although some evidence exists to suggest that Antonia's Fortress near the temple was their administrative residence.

The city normally had between twenty-five thousand and sixty thousand residents, according to various estimates. But at the major festivals, the crowds of pilgrims coming to worship in the temple could swell those numbers to almost three million people. The gathering of such large numbers of restless Jews in Jerusalem on such occasions made the Romans very nervous. Their usual response was to bring in several thousand Roman soldiers from the military districts across the eastern Mediterranean region during those times for crowd control.

For Saul of Tarsus, to live in Jerusalem during these days was to be immersed in all the chaotic turmoil of Jerusalem under the foreign rule of the Romans, while being administered locally by the Sanhedrin which was made up largely of Sadducees, who tended to work cooperatively with the Romans. But the Pharisees and other Jewish groups bitterly opposed the presence of the Romans and actively sought to undermine their control at every opportunity. Saul had come from a much larger city, Tarsus, with greater wealth and stability, and it was a totally Hellenized city and culture. Jerusalem, on the other hand, was Jewish down to its toes, and being in Judea it was religiously conservative to the extreme. Economically, everything revolved around the temple, and the economy of all Judea was based on the temple in Jerusalem. And Saul was preparing for service to God as a Pharisee under the instruction of one of the most prestigious Jewish teachers of that day. His sister and her family lived in the city, and she most likely provided Saul his place to live while studying in the city.

1.3.0 Education

Primary Sources:

Phil. 3:4b-6. If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; **as to the law, a Pharisee**; 6 **as to zeal, a persecutor of the church**; **as to righteousness under the law, blameless.**⁶²

him a procurator (Ann. 15.44.4), that may be because the later governors of Judea (44–66) were called procurators.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 97.]

⁶²GNT: Εἰ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον· 5 περιτομῆ ὀκταήμερος, ἐκ γένους Ἰσραὴλ, φυλῆς Βενιαμὴν, Πᾶρισηαῖος, 6 ὡς πρὸς ζῆλον, ὡς πρὸς δικαιοσύνην ὑπὸ τοῦ νόμου, ἀμωλύτος.

Gal. 1:13-14. 13 You have heard, no doubt, of my earlier life in Judaism. I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it. 14 *I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors.*⁶³

Secondary Texts:

Acts 21:39, NRSV: Paul replied, “I am a Jew, *from Tarsus in Cilicia*, a citizen of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people.”⁶⁴

Acts 22:3, NRSV: Then he said: 3 “I am a Jew, *born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our ancestral law*, being zealous for God, just as all of you are today....”⁶⁵

Acts 26:4, NRSV: All the Jews know my way of life *from my youth, a life spent from the beginning among my own people and in Jerusalem.*⁶⁶

When one speaks of education in the ancient world, a single generalized description is utterly impossible. Roman education was one thing; Greek education another, and Jewish education completely different from either of these. This is true at many levels: how long it lasted, where it took place, who did the teaching, what was taught, the principles of teaching, et als. The public school systems in the western world bear almost no resemblance to any of the educational approaches in the ancient world. Only the most general of comparisons between then and now can be made.⁶⁷

One of the unsettled issues here is how much education Paul received in Tarsus, in contrast to that which he received in Jerusalem. And how much difference between the two would have existed. These issues revolve around differing interpretations of Acts 22:3 and 26:4, as a starting point.⁶⁸ Underneath these questions

Ἐβραῖος ἐξ Ἐβραίων, **κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος**, ὁ κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος.

⁶³GNT: 13 Ἠκούσατε γὰρ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀναστροφὴν ποτε ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ, ὅτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ἐδίωκον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἐπόρθουν αὐτήν, 14 **καὶ προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς συνηλικιώτας ἐν τῷ γένει μου, περισσοτέρως ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεων.**

⁶⁴GNT: εἶπεν δὲ ὁ Παῦλος· Ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος μὲν εἰμι Ἰουδαῖος, **Ταρσεὺς τῆς Κιλικίας**, οὐκ ἀσήμου πόλεως πολίτης· δέομαι δέ σου, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι λαλήσαι πρὸς τὸν λαόν.

⁶⁵GNT: καὶ φησὶν· 3 Ἐγὼ εἰμι ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος, **γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῷ τῆς Κιλικίας, ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ, πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν τοῦ πατρῶου νόμου**, ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων τοῦ θεοῦ καθὼς πάντες ὑμεῖς ἐστε σήμερον,

⁶⁶GNT: **Τὴν μὲν οὖν βίωσίν μου τὴν ἐκ νεότητος τὴν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς γενομένην ἐν τῷ ἔθνει μου ἐν τε Ἱεροσολύμοις ἴσασι πάντες Ἰουδαῖοι...**

⁶⁷This raises serious objections to many of the web sites on education in the Roman empire. Many of these transform the ancient patterns into a modern American school structure for the sake of communication to children who are the targeted audience. The result often is a highly distorted presentation of what it was like to attend school in ancient Rome.

⁶⁸“In a recent translation of a Dutch monograph one may read the interesting argument that St. Paul had not merely been educated in Jerusalem, but even brought up there—and not in Tarsus, as is more generally supposed.

“Tarsus was a Hellenistic city, and it is often assumed that it was here that the apostle derived whatever Hellenistic elements are to be found in his writings. If St. Paul was exclusively brought up and educated in Jerusalem many influences which might otherwise seem to be Greek in his thought must be explained entirely within the possibilities of Judaism.

“The argument turns mainly upon two passages in the Acts of the Apostles.

“(1) In the first (22:3), all seems to depend on the right connotation of the words, ‘this city.’ Is it Jerusalem or Tarsus? But first, van Unnik has a suggestion concerning the correct method of punctuation. He rejects the method of the A.V., which has become standard, followed by Westcott and Hort and even by the R.S.V. in recent times: ‘I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers.’ Such a punctuation suggests that although the apostle was a native of Tarsus, he had been brought up and educated in Jerusalem under Gamaliel’s care. Van Unnik thinks it unlikely that Gamaliel would have ‘brought up’ Saul, understanding that word correctly, and prefers a punctuation which links the education closely with Gamaliel, like that of the N.E.B. “‘I am a true-born Jew,’ he said, ‘a native of Tarsus in Cilicia. I was brought up in this city, and as a pupil of Gamaliel I was thoroughly trained in every point of our ancestral law.’” From this translation it is still not clear (as in the Greek) whether ‘this city’ ought to refer to Tarsus or Jerusalem.

“Unless ‘this city’ refers to Tarsus, St. Paul contradicts what he is reported as saying to Claudius Lysias, when he emphasized his origin in the Greek city of Tarsus and on the basis of so respectable an association, political and cultural, he had begged leave to address the crowd (Acts 21:39). Moreover, if the punctuation suggested by van Unnik is accepted it seems to me that the words ‘brought up’ go very closely with the word ‘Tarsus,’ for we may render the sentence thus: ‘I am a Jew, born at Tarsus in Cilicia and brought up in this city; I was trained, under Gamaliel, in exact knowledge of our ancestral law’ (Knox version). Here we are following both the punctuation and sense of the Latin text, according to the Sixtine and Clementine Vulgate: ‘ego sum vir Iudaeus, natus in Tarso Ciliciae,



**Ancient Greek student
taken from a vase**

is a deeper theological and historical issue. Until the middle of the twentieth century, Pauline scholarship -- almost completely centered in Europe and especially among the Germans -- worked off the assumption that the dominant outside influence on Paul's thinking was Hellenism. Thus in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Paul was interpreted against the backdrop of the Greco-Roman mystery religions, Greek philosophy, especially Platonism etc. The Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria (20 BC - 50 AD) was seen as the background model for understanding Paul. Allowance was made for his Jewish ethnic birth, but little room was given to it as the dominant influence shaping his thinking. One of the foundations for this view was the contention that Paul grew up and was educated in Tarsus, an academic center for the spread of Hellenism in the eastern Mediterranean world.⁶⁹ Further supposed support was seen in the assumption that Paul was reared in Hellenistic Judaism at Tarsus, which was seen by scholars in this modern era as under heavy influence from Greek culture.⁷⁰ But the intensive research begun after WWII has increasingly demonstrated that even traditionalist Judaism (Hebraistic Judaism in contrast to Hellenistic Judaism) was heavily influenced by Greek thinking by the beginning of the Christian era. Thus, to draw such sharp lines of distinction between strict Jewish teaching and Greco-Roman influences cannot be sustained any longer with the evidence now available. W.D. Davies fired the beginning salvo by breaking down this partition wall between Judaism and Hellenism. Scholars since the late 1940s have continued to dismantle this wall from a variety of angles, theological, historical, sociological etc. Pauline scholarship today tends to have a much more balanced view of both the Greek and the Jewish streams of influence on Paul's thinking.



If our earlier assumption is correct that Paul was sent by his father from Tarsus to Jerusalem in his late teens to early twenties, then both streams of educational background play roles in shaping the religious thought of the Apostle Paul. And thus some attention to both needs to be given.

What was it like to 'go to school' as a young Jewish boy in Tarsus at the beginning of the Christian era? In Tarsus, the young boy Saul found himself living in a culturally diverse world with competing and conflicting ideas being advocated. From his own words in Phil. 3:5 ("5 circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews"), he clearly indicates that his parents were practicing Jews who adhered to the guidelines of the Torah in the raising of their children. Thus, his early education was Jewish but was done in a Greek and Roman setting; that is, a hellenized Jewish education carried out in one of the larger nutritus autem in ista civitate, secus pedes Gamaliel eruditus iuxta veritatem paternae legis.' Notice the pronoun *ista*, meaning 'that' and making the reference to Tarsus rather definite. Against a punctuation like this it must be admitted that the pattern of participial clauses is such that they usually precede the words with which they are associated: this means that the participle 'brought up' ought to be associated closely with 'at the feet of Gamaliel,' after which there would be a comma. However, we must not argue from a hypothetical pattern, since there is no consistent pattern throughout St. Luke's writing; a very large number of passages might be quoted to illustrate that St. Luke does not invariably place the participle first in its phrase (e.g. Acts 1:3.15 2:33 bis 3:2.26 6:1 7:9 8:3 10:9. 23 11:12 13:39 14:11. 13. 17 15:5. 21 16:25. 37 18:18 19:34. 40, 21:15. 24. 26). Therefore the phrasing, 'at the feet of Gamaliel educated,' is stylistically possible for St. Luke.

"As far as 22:3 is concerned, the evidence does not require that 'this city' must refer to Jerusalem. Tarsus has just been mentioned, and the clause containing 'this city' goes all the closer with it, if van Unnik's punctuation is adopted, and we read: 'I am a Jew born at Tarsus in Cilicia and brought up in this city. At the feet of Gamaliel I was educated according to the strict manner of the Law of our fathers.' So the argument that Tarsus played no part in the early education and training of the apostle lacks conviction.

"(2) The second passage is Acts 26:4. 'All Jews know my manner of life from the very beginning, as a child, both among my own nation and in Jerusalem.' Does 'my own nation' refer to the Jews in general or to the people of Cilicia where he was born? The latter is more natural, in view of the contrasting phrase, 'and in Jerusalem.' For this reason, van Unnik seeks to establish a different translation ('among my own nation, including Jerusalem'), avoiding the contrast that the word 'and' would imply."

[Nigel Turner, *Grammatical Insights into the New Testament*. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1966), 83-84.]

⁶⁹Often this included the denial of the accuracy of the Acts material as a reliable record of Paul's life. Thus Acts scholarship during this same modern period tended to center on how bad a historian Luke was -- against the modern standards of history writing. Therefore the two reference in Acts 22 and 26 could easily be rejected as having no historical validity.

⁷⁰I have already addressed the two contemporary biases that largely motivated these conclusions: 1) the wide spread anti-Semitism in Europe at that time, and 2) the anti-Catholic attitudes of Protestants, especially German Lutherans, that prevailed also during this era. One should note that post-WWII Europe has largely reversed itself at these two points with extensive implementation of Christian-Jewish dialogues and Protestant-Catholic dialogues. But the roots of a Hellenistic Paul still remain in place for much European scholarship. Partly, this is coming from the Lutheran tradition of Law verses Gospel out of Martin Luther's teaching. Paul's break with the "Law orientation" of his Pharisee days was complete, and the option was a "Gospel of grace orientation" that mystical religious experience in the Greek mystery cults provided for him.

cities in the empire that prized education much more than the average city did. Trying to understand the details of this atypical situation is indeed challenging. Methodologically one must sketch out the generalized patterns from available sources, and then look for hints of influence from his schooling in his writings.

When the effort is made to characterize the education experience of young boys⁷¹ at the beginning of the Christian era, only a very few traits were universal and the specific nature of the educational experience was largely determined by the ethnic group the youngster belonged to. Among the generalized characteristics⁷² one central pattern dominated virtually all first century cultures: (1) no public schools existed; everything was private; and educational opportunities were available primarily to the wealthy. (2) Also the family, and in particular the father, bore primary responsibility for the education of the sons. From the time of classical Greece in the fourth century BC, 'schools' outside the home became increasingly the center of education.⁷³ The Babylonian exile of the Jewish people was the turning point when education activities moved outside the home to the emerging synagogue where Jewish scribes did the teaching.⁷⁴ (3) Central to education universally in that world was rote memorization of the materials. Hearing ideas was primary and took priority over seeing ideas (reading - writing). The ability to verbally repeat and then to explain what had been heard stood at the top of the learning model.⁷⁵ This did not eclipse the teaching of reading and writing, but oral skills were more important than visual skills educationally. (4) The use of physical punishment and force was present in all ancient methods of education.⁷⁶ Beatings etc. by teachers and others with authority over students were common place and understood to be a key motivating factor in successful learning. This extended from the home where such was normal also.



1.3.1 Hellenistic Education. Greek schools developed before Roman schools did, and became a primary model for Roman schools.⁷⁷ The role of the father remained

⁷¹Young girls in Roman culture on rare occasions received formal education, but it was not wide spread. Young females in Greece and among the Jews typically had less opportunity for formal education than did Roman girls.

⁷² "In the Greco-Roman world there was no public system of education. Families paid fees for the education of their youth, either at home by tutors or in a teacher's private school. Curriculum was established by convention, and the methods used and the authors studied were rarely changed. Primary education focused on reading and writing skills. Secondary education concerned the seven liberal arts: grammar, rhetoric, dialectic, arithmetic, music, geometry and astronomy. Study of the professions of medicine and architecture was also available. In Greece philosophy was the pinnacle of education, while in Rome it was rhetoric, which prepared the student for public life in law and politics. In Greece the seven liberal arts continued to be the core of education, while in Rome grammar and rhetoric became the more narrow focus, with the other liberal arts being subordinate and studied for utilitarian reasons from Greek tutors. The Hellenistic age witnessed the separation of education into the three stages of primary, grammar and rhetoric. Education became specialized, with grammar, rhetoric, mathematics and philosophy being taught in separate schools.

"Jewish education was instituted in part as a response to the influence of Hellenism. It was centered on learning to read and memorizing the Torah and the oral tradition. Teachers came from within Judaism. Education culminated in an apprenticeship for a trade rather than rhetorical instruction. The religious life of the Jews was also an important tool of education."

[Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, *Dictionary of New Testament Background : A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).]

⁷³Thus the home was basically responsible to τρέφειν (nurture) the child, but society assumed the responsibility to παιδεύειν (educate) the child, which was closely linked to πολιτεία (citizenship) responsibilities.

⁷⁴"After the period of Ezra, there arose a new profession, that of the scribe (sōpēr), the teacher in the synagogue." [D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 292.

⁷⁵"Methods of instruction were largely by repetition; the Heb. verb *šānā*, 'repeat', came to mean both 'learn' and 'teach'. Mnemonic devices such as acrostics were therefore employed. Scripture was the textbook, but that other books were not unknown is evidenced by Ec. 12:12. The value of rebuke was known (Pr. 17:10), but an emphasis on corporal chastisement is to be found in Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus. But discipline was much milder in Mishnaic times. Until comparatively late times, it was customary for the pupil to sit on the ground at his teacher's feet, as did Paul at Gamaliel's (Acts 22:3). The bench (*sapsāl*) was a later invention." [D. R. W. Wood and I. Howard Marshall, *New Bible Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 293.]

⁷⁶"Most children remembered the discipline of their early school days. While Quintilian disapproved of flogging (*Inst.* 1.1.20; 2.15–19; 3.6–18), brutality was the rule. In the 3d century B.C.E. Herodas (*Mime* 3) vividly depicted a school flogging with a bull-tail lash, and at the end of the 4th century C.E., floggings provided Augustine with the most vivid memories of his schooling (*Conf.* I.14). As for Jewish Hebrew schools, the 2d-century Mishnaic ruling of Abba Saul absolving a teacher who beats a pupil to death speaks for itself (m. Mak. 2:2; cf. *b. Sukk.* 29a)." [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 314.]

⁷⁷"In the world of the NT, educational theory and practice were essentially Hellenistic. The Greco-Roman world had settled into a single, universal educational system that was to dominate the ancient scene until the barbarian overthrow of the West and the Muslim conquest of the East. One should not see this system as a corruption of education in classical Athens but rather as the culmination of its development. Nor should education in the Latin West be viewed as developing out of Roman educational practice in early republican

dominate in that he had control over the education of his sons, and was expected to teach vocational skills to his sons even though they were being educated outside the home.⁷⁸ Vocational training was not a part of formal education outside the home for young boys.

The Greco-Roman system was divided into three stages: primary, secondary, and advanced schools.⁷⁹ Notable at the beginning of the Christian era was the beginning decline of emphasis on physical training, which had been prominent in the Greek tradition,⁸⁰ and also of the teaching of music.⁸¹

Students began **primary school** at seven;⁸² for many, **grammar school** came after **reading school**.⁸³ Study at this level in the grammar school focused on four subjects: **textual criticism** (*diorthōtikon*), which stressed having an error free hand copied text from the teacher's text. Next was **reading aloud** (*anagnōstikon*), giving emphasis to not only correct pronunciation but to meter and genre, since the texts were written without spacing between words and punctuation marks. This also included the memorization of the texts being studied.

times. Rather, late republican and imperial Roman educators simply adopted the main tenets of the Hellenistic system with Latin added to the curriculum and with less emphasis on physical training. Even Jewish Hebrew schools were not immune to the pervasive Hellenistic influence, and one can easily interpret rabbinic education as the Jewish adaptation of Hellenistic educational methods and curricula.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 312.]

⁷⁸“A few municipalities like Miletus and Teos of Asia Minor undertook the support of official primary and secondary schools. They hired the teachers but paid them only slightly more than skilled workers. Elsewhere schools were private affairs, commonly small and inadequate, and often with only one teacher. Such teachers depended on meager, sometimes unpaid fees for their living and tended to be socially despised. Classrooms consisted of whatever space was available, perhaps some curtained-off place at the market.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 313.]

⁷⁹“Ancient education progressed in three stages: primary, secondary, and advanced. Relatively few reached the advanced stage. Primary education, however, was widespread and not limited to freeborn males. Girls frequently attended school along with their brothers (Dittenberger 1960: no. 573 [9]); and in the case of slaves, many of them also necessarily received at least some education in order to perform tasks commonly assigned to them. In the Greco-Roman world of the NT, even the poor felt the need for reading skills. In fact, Martial, the late 1st-century Latin epigrammatist, could joke about a poor cobbler whose parents tried to save money by teaching him to read themselves (*Epigrammaton libri 9.73.7*). Even the strict Christian Tertullian recognized that the need for literacy might require Christians to attend pagan schools (*De Idololatria* 10). He did so even though pagan classrooms were decorated with representations of various gods and in spite of the fact that the students in these classrooms were expected, even compelled, to take part in pagan religious festivals.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 313.]

⁸⁰“The decline in the importance of physical education should not be exaggerated. In NT times, it still played a significant role in all levels of education, particularly in the East. Physical training was centered in the gymnasium, which was often an extensive complex. The typical gymnasium generally contained a sand-covered courtyard (*palaestra*) for physical exercises and a stadium. In addition, the complex included a lecture hall and hot and cold baths, as well as rooms for storing oil and dust, for working out on the punching bag, and for massage. Athletes performed in the nude, a fact which helps explain the negative attitude of traditional Jews toward the gymnasium (cf. 2 Macc 4:12, 14). The major sports were pankration (a combination of wrestling, boxing, and kicking), boxing (cf. 1 Cor 9:26), and the pentathlon (which included running, long jumping, discus throwing, javelin throwing, and wrestling). Much is known about how wrestling was taught, and part of a handbook has been found which tells an instructor how to put two wrestlers through their paces (Townsend 1971: 143–44).” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 313.]

⁸¹“One reason for the decline in music was that real proficiency in musical performance was becoming the province of uncultured professionals. Even as early as 43 B.C.E., Sallust (*Cat.* 25.2, 5) casually refers to a lady who is able to ‘play the lyre and dance better than necessary for a virtuous woman.’” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 313.]

⁸²“Students began their primary schooling at the age of seven and attended two institutions, the reading school (*didaskaleion*) and the *palaestra*, which at the primary stage was usually a private institution separate from the municipal gymnasium. Originally children spent all morning at the *palaestra* in physical education, but by NT times they were only spending the latter part of the morning there (Lucian, *Am.* 44–45; Par. 61) with the rest of the day in the *didaskaleion*. Still the Greek emphasis on physical training remained strong and exercised an influence even where Latin was spoken (Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.11.15).

“Of special importance for primary education was the *paidagōgos*, a person whose position has no modern equivalent. The *paidagōgos* was the slave who accompanied a child to school and his role tended to be that of a male nursemaid. It is to this custodian that Paul compared the law in Gal 3:24. The *paidagōgos* was not the teacher. The teacher was a *grammatistēs*, known in Latin as a *litterator* or a *ludi magister*, whose main job was teaching children to read aloud (cf. Acts 8:28, 30) and to write.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 313.]

⁸³“After the reading school, students might choose to enter a grammar school to study the classics under a *grammatikos* or *kritikos*. Homer held first place among Greek writers, followed by Euripides, Menander, and Demosthenes. Among Latin writers, Virgil was first, followed by Terence, Cicero, and Horace. This pattern molded one's thinking. Students tended to remember the authors they had studied, and Christians were no exception. Thus, Clement of Alexandria in his *Exhortation to the Greeks* cited Homer far more than any other pagan author (39 times), with Euripides placing second (9 times).” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 314.]

Thirdly was **exegetical** (*exēgētikon*), which involved interpretation and translation of the classical Greek texts into the contemporary Koinē Greek. Memorization of a type of catechismal summary was included. Fourthly was **evaluative** (*kritikon*), where the moral implications of the text were drawn out and memorized. Allegorical interpretation of the classics were commonly used to make the moral conclusions from the earlier classical Greek writers. Equally important in the **secondary education** was learning how to write Greek (and Latin) in the style of the classical writers, whose works were considered to be the only worthwhile writings to be studied. Beyond these two emphases, other subjects could be included but difference of opinion about which ones was present in the ancient world.⁸⁴

The **third stage of education** for a select few, who completed the first two levels, included a variety of specialized programs of study. Included among these were rhetoric, one of the philosophies, medicine, law, military training et als.⁸⁵ This lasted any where from one year to three years normally. It could take place in a ‘school building’ or by listening to the lectures of philosophers and teachers elsewhere in the city. These might give regular lectures in a location in the city which was their home, or they might simply be passing through the town and would provide opportunity for residents to hear them at rented lecture halls. In places like Alexandria, Athens, and Tarsus, established schools existed where students could extend their education in specified programs of study on different topics. Tarsus focused mainly on the study of philosophy.

Unfortunately archaeological work in Tarsus is somewhat limited, and we do not have a lot of details regarding the particular situation educationally that existed in the city at the beginning of the Christian era. Enough is known, however, from the literary sources to understand that Tarsus placed very high value on Hellenistic education and had established itself as a leading center for philosophical training. Perhaps Paul’s experience in the synagogue school in Tarsus⁸⁶ did incorporate at least the primary and perhaps the secondary levels of training

⁸⁴“All the subjects studied in Hellenistic and Roman schools were collectively known as the *egkyklios paideia*, the ancient equivalent of the “liberal arts.” Apart from reading and composition, opinions differed over what other subjects should be studied. Quintilian’s list is typical. He included music and more mathematics (Inst. 1.10.1–49). Music was largely musical theory. Mathematics on this level included geometry (Euclid), astronomy, and numbers; and numbers included not only arithmetic but also the aesthetic properties of numbers, e.g., perfect numbers and friendly numbers (Nicomachus of Gerasa, Ar. I.14.1–1; 17.3–5). In fact, Nicomachus of Gerasa composed a whole Pythagorean theology of arithmetic (*Theologoumena Arithmētichēs*) on the mystical property of numbers.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 314.]

⁸⁵“After secondary school, young Greeks of good family commonly rounded off their education in an institution known as the *ephēbeia*. Many others chose the serious study of rhetoric. Somewhat fewer chose to study one of the philosophies. Other options were the study of medicine or law. In NT times, Rome was the center for legal training (Aulus Gellius, NA 13.13.1), although in the later empire Constantinople and particularly Berytus (modern Beirut) eclipsed Rome in this area. The great centers for the study of medicine included Alexandria, Cos, Pergamum, Smyrna, Corinth, and Ephesus. These centers commonly had medical teachers loosely organized into a kind of medical faculty. At Ephesus the association (*synedrion*) of physicians used to sponsor yearly medical competition with contests in various aspects of the field (Keil 1905: 128–29). Such organizations, however, were no guarantee of reliable medical practice. Standards varied. A physician might have finished grammar school and then studied for many years at one of the major medical centers; but humble apprenticeships were more the rule, apprenticeships as short as six months (Galen, *Opera* [Kuhn ed.], vol. 1, pp. 82–83; vol. 10, pp. 4–5). Thus the NT reference to “Luke the beloved physician” (Col 4:14) tells little about his education and training.

“More important in the ancient world were the Hellenistic *ephēbeia* and its Roman equivalent, the *collegia juvenum*. Originally an instrument of military training, by Hellenistic times the *ephēbeia* had become an exclusive municipal male finishing school housed in the gymnasium where future aristocrats (*ephēboi*) leisurely pursued their studies with an emphasis on physical education. Apart from athletics, learning as not rigorous. Even though various grammarians, rhetoricians, and philosophers offered courses on a variety of subjects and even though the students usually had a library available, the time for study was relatively short. Students on the island of Chios were serving three years in the *ephēbeia* (Dittenberger 1960: no. 959), but one or two years was more the norm, with much of that time spent at the *palaestra* and the *stadium*. The importance of the *ephēbeia* lay, however, not in its curriculum, but in its social significance. Study in the *ephēbeia* certified that one was truly civilized (i.e., Hellenized) and was essential for full social and political acceptance. Thus, according to 2 Macc 4:9, 12, the high priest Jason established ‘a gymnasium and *ephēbeion*’ in Jerusalem to demonstrate his Hellenism.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 314–15.]

⁸⁶It is entirely possible that Paul received his primary (and maybe secondary) schooling in one of the Greco-Roman schools rather than a synagogue school (a possible implication of Acts 21:39), since many Jewish boys especially in the Diaspora went this direction. But Paul’s words in Phil. 3:5 would tend to point toward a synagogue education instead:

Throughout the world of the NT many Jews received a standard Hellenistic education. They had accepted much of the culture surrounding them and were anxious for their children to share in the benefits which this culture offered. Thus it is not surprising that the edict of the Emperor Claudius to the Alexandrians (41 C.E.) represents a situation in which some Jews had enrolled their children as *ephēboi* while others were attempting to do so, and Alexandria was not a special situation. Lists of *ephēboi* containing Jewish names have been found throughout the Hellenistic Roman world (Applebaum 1974–76: 446–48). There were other Jews, however, who preferred a Hebrew education. They had their children learn Scripture and Jewish tradition rather than Homer along with the rest of the *egkyklios paideia*.

that were standard in the Greco-Roman pattern and were heavily influential on the Jewish system of education. He would have finished these two levels of training by his mid to late teens. So at that point his father decided that he needed to continue more advanced training in Jerusalem under the instruction of the leading Jewish scribe of the day, Gamaliel. And dad possessed the necessary social status as an official citizen both of Tarsus and Rome, along with the finances, to make it happen.

1.3.2 Jewish Education

The Jewish education of Paul possibly took place in two segments. The first part of it very likely happened in a Jewish synagogue in Tarsus, and the second part in Jerusalem under the guidance of Gamaliel. These phases would have had many things in common, but also would have been very distinct from one another.

1.3.2.1 As a Jewish boy

By the beginning of the Christian era, Jewish education outside the home centered in the synagogue.⁸⁷ Whereas the Greek focus was on the classical Greek writers, the Jewish focus was on the Hebrew Bible, especially the Torah in the books of Moses. Increasingly, as we are discovering, this did not automatically exclude the study of Greek and Latin along with the classical philosophers. But this Hellenistic aspect was secondary, and not always present.⁸⁸ But the Hellenistic influence on Jewish education in the ancient world is clear.⁸⁹

The Jewish **primary school** (*bēt sēper* or *bēt sōpēr*) had a curriculum similar to the Greek schools except that the language was Hebrew rather than Greek. The Hebrew Bible was the text book rather than the Greek classical writers.⁹⁰ The **secondary school** (*bēt midrāš*) centered its study on the oral Torah, which contained the scribal interpretations developed over the years up to the time of the student. These were oral in form and not written until well after the first Christian century. They had two parts: the *Midrash*, which was something of a scripture commentary; and the *Mishnah*, which was a topical arrangement of these traditions. This oral Torah was what Paul meant by “the traditions of my fathers” in Gal. 1:14. His stated zeal in defending them points strongly to his having reached at least the Jewish secondary school level of training. The **third stage** of the educational process involved the student studying more advanced topics in the Torah as a student of some well

[David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 315-16.]

⁸⁷“Jewish Hebrew schools apparently arose after Hellenistic schools were well established. The earliest reference to a Hebrew secondary school is provided by Ben Sira at the beginning of the 2d century B.C.E. (Sir 51:23), but there is little evidence for the existence of Hebrew primary schools until the 1st century C.E. (see j. Ketub. 8.11 [32c]). In fact they were probably not widespread until the middle of the next century (*b. B.Bat.* 21a; cf. *b. Sanh.* 17b [Bar.]). Perhaps one reason for the relatively late development of Hebrew primary schools was the biblical injunction to teach children Scripture at home (Deut 4:9; 6:7; 11:19). In any case, at home or in school, Jewish boys learned to read well enough to take part in synagogue services (cf. Luke 4:16–20; Josephus, *AgAp* 1.60). There is also some evidence for teaching Torah to Jewish girls since the Mishnah (*Soṭa* 3.4) records a controversy on the subject between Ben Azzai and R. Eliezer around the end of the 1st century C.E. Ben Azzai argued that one is obligated to teach a daughter Torah, but the conservative R. Eliezer replied that to teach a daughter Torah was to teach her immorality.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 316.]

⁸⁸“The other special area of Jewish education involved the study of Greek, although the place of Greek in rabbinic education is difficult to determine. In spite of the many rabbinic warnings against Greek wisdom, there is little evidence of an absolute ban against the language itself. Some knowledge of Greek was necessary for communicating with the civil government and the world at large. Although it is unlikely that Greek found a regular place in rabbinic schools, there is evidence that some who chose a traditional Jewish alternative to Hellenistic schools still achieved a certain proficiency in Greek.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 317.]

⁸⁹“Since ancient Jews and Greeks lived in relatively close proximity, it is not surprising to find elements of Hellenistic education in Jewish schools; and these similarities existed not only in Greco-Roman Jewish communities like the one in Rome where synagogue teachers were called grammatei, but even in rabbinic circles. It can hardly be a coincidence that Hebrew and Greek teachers used quite similar methods for teaching the alphabet and that rabbinic principles of scriptural interpretation had their Hellenistic counterparts (see Liebermann 1962: 47–82). In addition, rabbinic education took place in three stages that parallel the three in Hellenistic education (.Abot 5.21).” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 316.]

⁹⁰“Like their Greek and Roman counterparts, Jewish students in Hebrew school began with the alphabet, which they learned to recite forward and backward (*b. Šabb.* 31a). After learning the alphabet, they proceeded directly to the reading of the biblical text. There was no intermediate study of syllables because Hebrew lacked written vowels; and since one could scarcely sound out vowelless words, reading was necessarily a matter of memory. Other differences from Greek schools arose from various precepts regarding the copying and general use of Scripture, e.g., the prohibition of copying Scripture from dictation. Besides the reading and probably the writing of Scripture, these Jewish elementary students learned to recite essential parts of the Jewish liturgy as well as how to do targum (‘translation’) in areas where Aramaic was spoken.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 316.]

known Jewish teacher, such as Gamaliel like Paul did (cf. Acts 22:3).⁹¹ In addition to the option of training with a Jewish scribe, numerous opportunities were available to listen and learn from a wide variety of Jewish teachers during the weekly sabbath services in the synagogues, and also on special holiday services in both the synagogues and the temple in Jerusalem.⁹²

Paul had the opportunity to study in Jerusalem with the Jewish scribe Gamaliel.⁹³ Gamaliel the Elder, as he was called, exhibited less rigid legalism and more compassion toward the poor, women and others in Jewish society. As the grandson of Hillel, the founder of one of the two leading scribal schools of Judaism in the first Christian century, his heritage was one of more 'progressive' interpretation of the Torah.⁹⁴ Apart from the two mentions of him in Acts by Luke (5:34, 22:3), virtually everything we know about him comes from the Jewish Talmud that represents Jewish traditions compiled in written form some three to four centuries after the first Christian century.⁹⁵ His passionate commitment to the oral Torah is probably behind Paul's vigorous rejection of it after becoming a Christian but having been similarly committed to it as a Pharisee (Gal. 1:13-14). Perhaps also some of the balance in Paul's teachings about Haustafeln duties between members of the household and the male leader of the home have roots in influence from Gamaliel. The limited data prevents detailed assessment of the relationship between Paul and Gamaliel, but sufficient signals in Paul's writings along with Luke's references in Acts affirms the existence of the relationship. These must have been exciting days for the young Saul from Tarsus to be living in the City of Zion



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⁹¹The contention that Paul's writings do not reflect this more advanced level of training and thus cast doubt on the accuracy of Acts 22:3 is unconvincing. Cf. David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 316.

The counter argument to this rather weak 'argument from silence' is that had Luke deliberately misrepresented what Paul said to the angry crowd in Jerusalem, the people would have immediately recognized the lie and pounced on Paul even harder -- something that Luke could not have ignored in his account. Too much indication of his integrity in telling the story of Paul is present in his narrative.

⁹²"Not all traditional Jewish education involved formal study. On Sabbaths and holidays Jewish scholars regularly preached in the synagogues and in doing so reached a large audience. There is some doubt about just where these homilies fitted into the liturgy (i.e., whether they introduced Scripture readings or came after them), but their popularity is undisputed. In time such homilies, or outlines for them, were arranged according to the order of the lectionary and strung together to form homiletic Midrashim. These preachers would have resembled Greek philosophy lecturers, except that the Jewish teachers were more popular and probably exercised more influence." [David Noel Freedman, vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 316.]

⁹³"Rabbi Gamaliel I, son of Simon and grandson (according to the Talmud) of Rabbi Hillel (founder of the more liberal of the two main schools of the Pharisees, Shammai being the other). Although an alternate tradition makes Gamaliel the son of Hillel, the Talmud is surely to be preferred on this point. A member of the Sanhedrin and a teacher of the law (Acts 5:34), he was known in rabbinical writings as Gamaliel the Elder to distinguish him from his grandson, Gamaliel II. He was the first of seven successive leaders of the school of Hillel to be honored with the title Rabban ("Our Rabbi/Master"). While believing the law of God to be divinely inspired, Gamaliel tended to emphasize its human elements. He recommended that sabbath observance be less rigorous and burdensome, regulated current custom with respect to divorce in order to protect women, and urged kindness toward Gentiles. Scholarly, urbane, a man of great intellect, he studied Greek literature avidly. What we know of his tolerance and cautious spirit is entirely in keeping with the account of his appeal in the Sanhedrin to spare the lives of Peter and his companions (Acts 5:33-39). [Geoffrey W. Bromiley, vol. 2, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Revised (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988; 2002), 393-94.]

⁹⁴"When Peter and the other apostles were brought before the enraged and threatening council in Jerusalem, Gamaliel, who was highly respected by the council, offered cautionary advice that probably saved the apostles' lives in that situation (Acts 5:27-40). During that period in Israel a number of rabbinical schools evolved. Two of the most influential were the rival Pharisaic schools of Hillel and Shammai. Both of those teachers had vast influence on Jewish thinking. Hillel's school emphasized tradition even above the Law. Shammai's school preserved the teaching of the Law over the authority of tradition. Hillel's school was the most influential, and its decisions have been held by a great number of later rabbis. Traditionally Gamaliel is considered to be the grandson of Hillel, and was thoroughly schooled in the philosophy and theology of his grandfather's teaching. Gamaliel was a member of the Sanhedrin, the high council of Jews in Jerusalem, and served as president of the Sanhedrin during the reigns of the Roman emperors Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius. Unlike other Jewish teachers, he had no antipathy toward Greek learning. The learning of Gamaliel was so eminent and his influence so great that he is one of only seven Jewish scholars who have been honored by the title 'Rabban.' He was called the 'Beauty of the Law.' The Talmud even says that 'since Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the Law has ceased.'" [Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 838.]

⁹⁵The early church tradition, mainly from Clement of Alexandria in *Recognitions* i.65, that Gamaliel became a Christian and was baptized by both Peter and Paul is romantic fiction with no factual basis at all. He remained steadfastly loyal to Judaism and the Mish. Sotah (ix.15) comment gives the more reliable assessment: "Since Rabban Gamaliel the Elder died there has been no more reverence for the law, and purity and abstinence died out at the same time."

with the temple, and to experience the atmosphere of this center of Judaism that attracted pilgrims from all over the empire.

1.3.2.2 As a young Pharisee. Both Paul and Luke clearly indicate that Paul's religious orientation in Judaism was that of a Pharisee.⁹⁶ What did that mean?⁹⁷ By the beginning of the Christian era, the Pharisees represented a movement inside Judaism known for passionate commitment to the preservation of the interpretive traditions associated with the Torah.⁹⁸ As one of the four major religious groups⁹⁹ inside Judaism by Paul's time, neither they nor any of the other three groups commanded devotion from large segments of the Jewish people. Increasingly with the widely acknowledged work of two modern Jewish rabbis, Neusner and Rivkin, the limited influence of the Pharisees on Jewish life prior to 70 AD with the destruction of the temple is being affirmed by scholars,¹⁰⁰ in contrast to earlier assessments of widespread impact.¹⁰¹ The numbers of Pharisees were always small and many associations¹⁰² of Pharisees functioned, but they did command the respect of the general population as being experts in interpreting the Law of Moses. Their focus was primarily on ritual purity, tithes, food laws, and Sabbath and festival observance. These regulations defined the boundaries of holiness for the land and the Jewish people.¹⁰³ By largely positioning themselves as subordinate officials between the masses

⁹⁶Cf. Philippians 3:2-7; Galatians 1:13-14; 1 Cor. 15:9; 2 Cor. 11:22; Rom. 9:3-5; Acts 22:3, 26:4.

⁹⁷“Although the name of the Pharisees and the main sources about them have been known for about two thousand years, scholars are only now beginning to reconstruct the group's aims and history. From the rise of critical scholarship on this matter in the nineteenth century until the 1960s, there was a growing consensus on some issues and growing disagreement on others. It was broadly agreed, for example, that the Pharisees formed the core of the rabbinic movement, so that first-century Pharisaic perspectives could be read out of rabbinic literature — even though that was admittedly published only in the third to sixth centuries and later. Most scholars also held that the Pharisees dominated Jewish society, having supplanted the priests, who had long since ceased to be effective leaders. The Pharisee-sages were the authorized teachers of Jesus' time, exercising their influence through the Sanhedrin, the synagogues (held to be Pharisaic institutions, over against the temple) and the schools.” [Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, *Dictionary of New Testament Background : A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).]

⁹⁸“The Pharisees (Latin *pharisæus*, -i; from Hebrew תַּפְרֻשִׁים, *pērūšīm*, pl. פְּרֻשֵׁי; *pārūš*, meaning “set apart”, Qal passive participle of the verb פָּרַשׁ, *pārāš*[1][2], through Greek φαρισαῖος, -ος *pharisaios*[3]) were at various times a political party, a social movement, and a school of thought among Jews during the Second Temple period beginning under the Hasmonean dynasty (140–37 BCE) in the wake of the Maccabean Revolt.” [“Pharisees,” Wikipedia.org at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharisee>.]

⁹⁹Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, and an anti-Roman revolutionary movement including the Sicarii and the Zealots.

¹⁰⁰“Studies of the Pharisees in the last century have been beset with a number of political and methodological problems. Jewish interpretations of the programs of the Pharisees and Sadducees have often been covertly influenced by modern conflicts between traditional and progressive Jews. Many Christian accounts of the Pharisees have been vitiated by either uncritical acceptance of the anti-Jewish polemics of the NT or modern anti-Semitism. Apologetic defenses of the Pharisees by both Jewish and Christian scholars have distorted or romanticized the Pharisees and separated them from their historical context. Many traditional and historical studies of the Pharisees have been marred by an uncritical acceptance of some or all of the sources (Josephus, NT, rabbinic literature) without sophisticated interpretation of the purpose, date, and natures of each. The fragmentary nature of the texts referring to the Pharisees has prompted scholars to harmonize the sources with one another, to fill in gaps with very speculative hypotheses, and to create historically unproven accounts of their origin, nature, history, teaching, and goals. Lack of evidence about the Pharisees and great discord over related issues such as the nature of Second Temple Judaism, its thought, laws, practices, and social structure, have joined to produce a welter of unproven theories concerning every aspect of the Pharisees' thought and history.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 289.]

¹⁰¹The problem is with sources, all of which are secondary. Each has its own agenda: Josephus, the New Testament, and the Rabbinic literature. “Because we have no surviving text written by a committed Pharisee and no archaeological finds that mention Pharisees, the reconstruction of their aims and views must depend on the writings of the third parties mentioned. Because none of these outsiders was primarily interested in explaining who the Pharisees were, we must be careful to interpret their evidence against their motives and larger contexts.” [Stanley E. Porter and Craig A. Evans, *Dictionary of New Testament Background : A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*, electronic ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000).]

¹⁰²“The Babylonian Talmud quotes the well-known list of seven types of Pharisees as a comment on *m. Soṭa* 3:4 (*b. Soṭa* 22b): “There are seven types of Pharisee, the *sykmy* Pharisee, the *nyqpy* Pharisee, the *qwez* Pharisee, the *mdwky* Pharisee, the Pharisee (who says) Let me know my duty and I will do it, the Pharisee from love, the Pharisee from fear.” The transliterated words are all obscure, but all are meant pejoratively. The Babylonian Talmud explains all five etymologically, but the Palestinian Talmud, which cites the list in two places (*j. Soṭa* 5:7 [20c]; *j. Ber.* 9:5 [13b]), gives different explanations.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 300.]

¹⁰³“When the Mishnah and Tosefta are analyzed using Neusner's method (the logic of Mishnah's argument and the attested attributions), by far the largest body of law which can be somewhat reliably assigned to the early and mid-1st century concerns ritual purity, tithes, food laws, and Sabbath and festival observance (1981: 45–75). These laws set out an agenda of holiness for the land and people. We do not know for certain who developed these laws dating from before the destruction, but the usual hypothesis, that it was the Pharisees who bequeathed these laws to the first generation of rabbis after the destruction of the Temple, is most probable. The gospel evidence of Pharisaic interest in purity and food and Josephus' claim that the Pharisees had their own interpretation of some Jewish laws

of Jewish people and the ruling leadership, they were able to leverage influence beyond their numbers with their reform agenda.¹⁰⁴

Saul of Tarsus, as a young man, became a part of this exciting movement to change Judaism for the better, in the midst of all the political complexities that dominated the day in Jerusalem. His passion was for preserving the understood best of the Jewish religious heritage that was continually seeking to re-apply the Law of Moses to his day by carefully defined principles of interpretation; this drove him to vigorously oppose any and all who seemed to threaten this. And that included Christians who appeared to be a radical Jewish movement with dangerous messianic beliefs regarding their founder, a Jewish peasant from Galilee. By vigorously persecuting this group in Jerusalem, the young Pharisee began rapidly making a name for himself among the Jewish authorities in the city. When word of this movement being in Damascus came to Jerusalem, Saul saw an opportunity for further advancement in Phariseeism by gaining permission to travel there in order to oppose this heretical group.

But little did he realize what would happen before he entered the city.

Conclusion

With this material we are introduced somewhat to the person who started out being known by with the Hebrew name Saul and ended up with the Greek name Paul. The challenge in getting acquainted with him as a flesh and blood human being is that of sources. None of the ancient sources, either primary or secondary, supply us with a lot of information. But interestingly, enough is given so that we can learn a lot more about him than we perhaps know about some of our neighbors who live down the street from us. Hopefully from the above sketch of his background, Paul has become a real person rather than a somewhat romanticized heroic figure out of the ancient past. Often in western culture our heroes take on mythical traits that make them less and less human. And subsequently less real and approachable. Over the years of ministry, I have discovered that the Apostle Paul have been given some of those traits in the minds of Christians. His writings are read and studied. But the ideas in the text are snatched out of the scripture and set in a modern context so much so that we know little about the one who penned them. Sometimes then his ideas are not correctly understood and the voice of Paul turns into the voice of a modern preacher preaching in the name of Paul, with a voice we may or may not like to hear.

The historical reality is that Saul of Tarsus who became the Apostle Paul was a real person with a fascinating family heritage that played an enormous role in shaping who he was as Christ's servant for over three decades. We would like to know more details about his parents, as well as his brothers and sisters, since only glimpses are provided in the sources. But he lived and worked in an interesting period of history. Through God's grace, his ministry not only became a vehicle for God to change the lives of hundreds of people that he came in contact with. But also his ministry has profoundly shaped the contours of Christianity for over two thousand years. Even western culture has been greatly impacted by his thought.

And still he remains something of a mystery that continues to motivate some of the most brilliant minds in our world today to scrutinize his writings in the continuing effort to understand him and his significance to our world. In our study of Paul, we become a part of that ongoing effort to know this man better and to learn from him.

converge with Neusner's analysis of early mishnaic law." [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 299.]

¹⁰⁴“Though some Pharisees were part of the governing class, most Pharisees were subordinate officials, bureaucrats, judges, and educators. They are best understood as retainers, that is, literate servants of the governing class, who had a program for Jewish society and influence with both the people and their patrons. When the opportunity arose, they sought power over society. This means that their organizations cannot be viewed as a monastic-like community or withdrawn sect which demands primary and total commitment from every member. It is most likely that Pharisees were active in a number of occupations and roles in society and were bound together by certain beliefs and practices and by endeavors to influence social change.” [David Noel Freedman, vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1996), 302.]



For Reflection and Further Study¹⁰⁵

1. Describe Paul's family. Then reflect a bit on the importance of family influences shaping a person's life. Finally consider your own family. How has it shaped your life?
2. Where was Paul born and where did he grow up? How did that impact his life? Apply these questions to your life.
3. From the listing of rights gained as a Roman citizen, identify which of those rights Paul exercised in four separate situations described in Acts:

Rights given

The rights available to individual citizen of Rome varied over time, according to their place of origin, and their service to the state. They also varied under Roman law according to the classification of the individual within the state. Various legal classes were defined by the individual legal rights that they enjoyed. However, the possible rights available to citizens with whom Roman law addressed are:

- * **Jus suffragiorum:** The right to vote in the Roman assemblies.
- * **Jus honorum:** The right to stand for civil or public office.
- * **Jus commercii:** The right to make legal contracts and to hold property as a Roman citizen.
- * **Jus gentium:** The legal recognition, developed in the 3rd century BC, of the growing international scope of Roman affairs, and the need for Roman law to deal with situations between Roman citizens and foreign persons. The jus gentium was therefore a Roman legal codification of the widely accepted international law of the time, and was based on highly developed commercial law of the Greek city-states and of other maritime powers.[3] The rights afforded by the jus gentium were considered to be held by all persons, regardless of citizenship.
- * **Jus connubii:** The right to have a lawful marriage with a Roman citizen, to have the legal rights of the paterfamilias over the family, and to have the children of any such marriage be counted as Roman citizens.
- * **Jus migrationis:** The right to preserve one's level of citizenship upon relocation to a polis of comparable status. For example, members of the cives romani (see below) maintained their full civitas when they migrated to a Roman colony with full rights under the law: a colonia civium Romanorum. Latins also had this right, and maintained their jus Latii if they relocated to a different Latin state or Latin colony (Latina colonia). This right did not preserve one's level of citizenship should one relocate to a colony of lesser legal status; full Roman citizens relocating to a Latina colonia were reduced to the level of the jus Latii, and such a migration and reduction in status had to be a voluntary act.
- * The right of immunity from some taxes and other legal obligations, especially local rules and regulations.[4]
- * The right to sue in the courts and the right to be sued.
- * The right to have a legal trial (to appear before a proper court and to defend oneself).
- * The right to appeal from the decisions of magistrates and to appeal the lower court decisions.

A Roman citizen could not be tortured or whipped, nor could he receive the death penalty, unless he was found guilty of treason. If accused of treason, a Roman citizen had the right to be tried in Rome, and even if sentenced to death, no Roman citizen could be sentenced to die on the cross. Roman citizenship was required in order to enlist in the Roman legions, but this was sometimes ignored. Non-citizens joined the Auxilia and gained citizenship through service.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁵A section in each chapter will offer opportunities to apply some of the concepts treated in the discussion. Of course, these are optional learning activities. But I do want to challenge you the reader to begin applying appropriate skills in furthering their understanding of Paul.

¹⁰⁶"Roman Citizenship: Rights given," *Wikipedia.org* at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_citizenship#Rights_given.

Acts 16:35-39 NRSV: 35 When morning came, the magistrates sent the police, saying, "Let those men go." 36 And the jailer reported the message to Paul, saying, "The magistrates sent word to let you go; therefore come out now and go in peace." 37 But Paul replied, "They have beaten us in public, uncondemned, **men who are Roman citizens**, and have thrown us into prison; and now are they going to discharge us in secret? Certainly not! Let them come and take us out themselves." 38 The police reported these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that **they were Roman citizens**; 39 so they came and apologized to them. And they took them out and asked them to leave the city.

Acts 22:23-28 NRSV: 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. 25 But when they had tied him up with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who was standing by, "Is it legal for you to flog **a Roman citizen who is uncondemned?**" 26 When the centurion heard that, he went to the tribune and said to him, "What are you about to do? **This man is a Roman citizen.**" 27 The tribune came and asked Paul, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" And he said, "Yes." 28 The tribune answered, "It cost me a large sum of money to get my citizenship." Paul said, "**But I was born a citizen.**"

Acts 25:7-12 NRSV: 7 When he arrived, the Jews who had gone down from Jerusalem surrounded him, bringing many serious charges against him, which they could not prove. 8 Paul said in his defense, "I have in no way committed an offense against the law of the Jews, or against the temple, or against the emperor." 9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, asked Paul, "Do you wish to go up to Jerusalem and be tried there before me on these charges?" 10 Paul said, "**I am appealing to the emperor's tribunal; this is where I should be tried.** I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you very well know. 11 Now if I am in the wrong and have committed something for which I deserve to die, I am not trying to escape death; but if there is nothing to their charges against me, no one can turn me over to them. **I appeal to the emperor.**" 12 Then Festus, after he had conferred with his council, replied, "**You have appealed to the emperor;** to the emperor you will go."

Acts 26:32 NRSV: Agrippa said to Festus, "This man could have been set free **if he had not appealed to the emperor.**"

4. Summarize Paul's education experiences as a boy in Tarsus and as a young man in Jerusalem. How does Paul's education compare to yours? Both in terms of content and especially in terms of impact on how you live.