

Paul Follower of Jesus



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by

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Paul's Early Days

There was once a little boy whose name was Saul. He lived in a busy town called Tarsus, not far from the seaside.

Saul was not a naughty boy. In fact, he believed he was very good. He knew there is a God, and was proud he was a Jew, one of God's chosen people. But there was something very, very sad. Saul did not love Jesus.

As he grew up, Saul heard about Jesus. But he was angry. He did not like Him. He did not believe He was God's Son and he did not like those who loved Jesus. He hated them.

So what do you think he did? It was terrible. When he became a man, he did everything he could to hurt the Christians, those who were followers of Jesus. He tried to get them put in prison – and prisons were not nice places in those days. Often they were cold and dark and miserable.

But something worse! He was glad when they were killed. What had they done wrong? Nothing. They just believed Jesus was God's Son and loved Him.

Have you heard of Stephen? He was a really good Christian man, but Saul's friends were cruel to him. Stephen loved Jesus; but they threw big stones at him till he fell down dead. And what do you think Saul did? He



helped them. He looked after the clothes of these wicked men who were throwing stones at poor Stephen.

But before Stephen died, he looked up to heaven and said he could see Jesus there. He even prayed for the cruel people who were killing him.

We wonder what Saul thought? Some nasty pricking thoughts about it all! But can you believe it? He still wanted to go on, fighting against Christian people.

But now something amazing! Saul was going to be a follower of this Jesus that he hated, and he would travel all over the world telling people what a wonderful Person Jesus is.

But first of all, something must happen, mustn't it? Saul's life must be changed. But it seemed impossible. Saul loving and following Jesus? God was going to do it. For God can do anything, however impossible.

You can read about this in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 7, verses 54 to 60, and chapter 8, verses 1 to 3.



Paul's Conversion

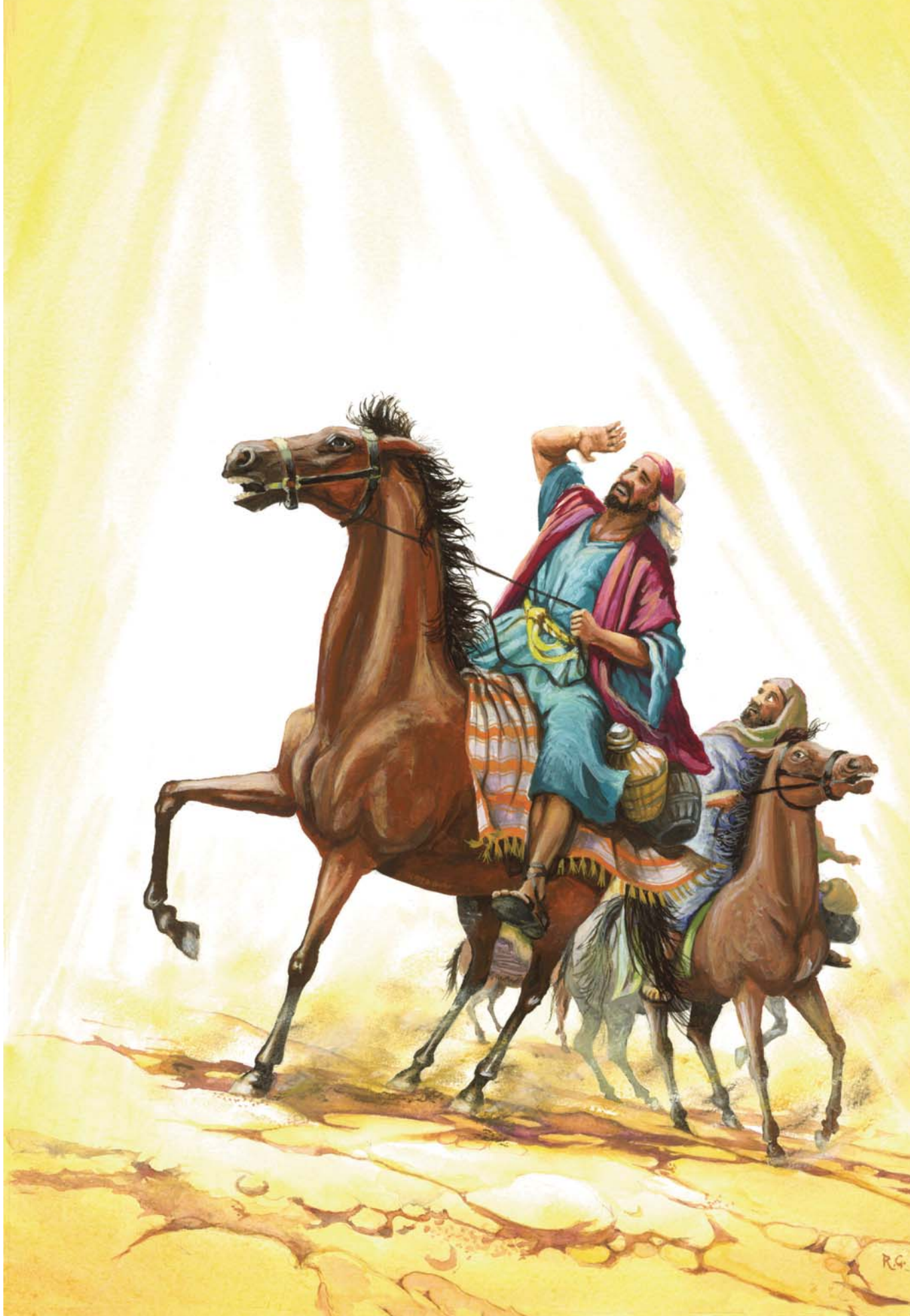
Where are all these people going? They are travelling along an old road from Jerusalem to a place called Damascus. It was a long, lonely road. How they were travelling we do not know – perhaps on horses or camels, or some walking. But we know they were going to get hold of the Christians there, tie them up and throw them into prison.

And who is that at the front? Saul – and you can tell he is very angry. He would like to kill the lot of them! And he thought he was serving God!

But something wonderful is about to happen – a miracle. A bright, dazzling light is shining in the sky, brighter than the sun. Saul falls down, helpless. He is blind.

But a noise can be heard. What is it? The people think it is thunder, but Saul can hear a voice. It is the voice of God. It is speaking to him. It says, “Saul, Saul.” It asks him, “Why are you persecuting ME?” Saul knows it is God’s voice. He is frightened. He cries, “Who art Thou, Lord?”

And then Saul received the biggest shock of his life. The voice says, “I am Jesus.” So Jesus is God! The one he hates and has been fighting against is God.

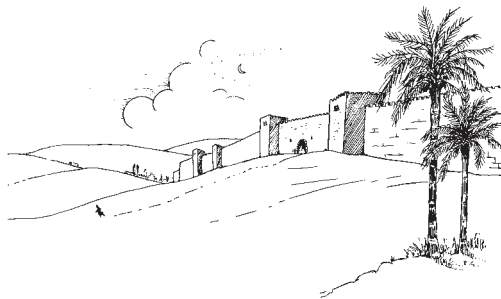


Saul's life was never the same again. God's grace had changed it. What do you think? Do you think Saul still went on to seize hold of the followers and friends of Jesus, and put them in prison? Never!

Shaking, terrified, Saul asked what he must do. And the voice of Jesus from heaven told him to go into the city of Damascus, and he would find out. So he got up from the ground. But he could not see, so someone had to hold his arm and lead him into the city.

What had happened? Saul was one whom God had chosen, and now God's almighty grace had changed his life – for ever. Even his name was changed to Paul. There never was a more loving follower of Jesus than God's servant Paul.

You can read about this in Acts, chapter 9, verses 1 to 9 (and also chapter 22, verses 3 to 11, and chapter 26, verses 4 to 21).



Preaching About Jesus

In the old city of Damascus lived a man named Ananias. He was one of God's people. He was a Christian.

One day he could hear God speaking. But he was amazed! God was telling him to go and find a man called Saul. And He told him where to find him.

Poor Ananias was terrified. He knew all about Saul. He was coming to seize hold of Ananias and his friends, and throw them into prison. "Not Saul?" thought Ananias.

But God said, "Yes. I have chosen him. He is different. He is going to be a preacher. He is sorry for what he has done."

So Ananias quickly did what God had told him. He went and found Saul. And he spoke so kindly to him.

Poor Saul! How sorry he is for his sins! But now he knows who Jesus is, and he is trusting Him. Jesus has forgiven him. Now Ananias puts his hands on Saul's head and, wonderful, he can see again.

Immediately he is baptized – to show that his life is changed: he now knows and loves the Lord Jesus.

As soon as he can go out, he tells people that Jesus is the Son of God. He knew that, didn't he? He had looked up and seen Him in heaven and heard His voice.