



From
Tarsus
To

Jerusalem

A Note From the Author

For more than 30 years I have been a serious student of Scripture. In 1986 I developed a special interest in understanding the cultural setting of the Bible and made many trips to this fascinating part of the world seeking to better understand it.

It has been my privilege to walk many of the ancient roads, climb numerous Biblical mountains, and visit most of the cities mentioned in Scripture.

After years of research and study I wrote and produced my first series on the Biblical World. **“Amazing Discoveries In The Sands Of The Past”** focused on how archaeology sheds light upon the Bible.

“In The Footsteps of Paul” is the latest installment in this series. For it I traveled to Turkey, Israel, Syria, Jordan, Greece and Italy tracing Paul’s footsteps, seeking a deeper understanding of the message he proclaimed in cities like Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse and Rome.

Each episode has a four-color study guide designed to review and broaden your understanding of the material presented and make personal application of the teachings.

May your walk with the Lord be deepened and enriched as the result of studying the life of the Apostle Paul and may God bless and enrich your faith as you follow **“In The Footsteps of Paul.”**

Acknowledgments

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A very special thanks to my wonderful wife Helen and incredible children Stephen and Stephanie for encouraging me on this journey and sharing me with Paul.

This series is dedicated to two men who shaped and inspired my sense of exploration and learning. To Pastor O. J. Mills, for encouraging me to have a love for a deeper study of Scripture. And to Dr. William Shea for opening doors to the incredible world of the past and guiding me in my understanding of it.

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Tony Moore at Laodicea

From Tarsus To Jerusalem

The New Testament registers over _____ miles that Paul traveled in the first century proclaiming the eternal good news that Jesus was the Christ! We begin our journey where the apostle was born.

According to Acts 21:39 Paul was not born in Palestine but in Tarsus. This was no ordinary city; it was the capital of the Roman province of _____.

This city's claim to fame was its unique location. It was built at the outlet of the _____ River on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea and was the terminus for the great road traversing Asia Minor from the distant Euphrates River. Tarsus is located on the southeastern coast of modern _____ and is one of the few ancient cities bearing the same name in modern times that it did then.

The river, fed by the snows of the _____ Mountains to the north, carved a gorge through the rocky heights. This canyon provided the only pass through the mountains for hundreds of miles. The pass is still known today as the _____ Gates. It dictated the direction of the highway providing the only outlet for the goods of Asia Minor to the southern border on the Mediterranean. The major export from the mountains was _____, or cilium. The cloth woven from this was the finest material in the world for making tents.

Locate and label Tarsus on the map found on page 8.

Who was Paul?

When we first encounter him in Acts 7:58 he is not called Paul, but is identified as a young man named _____. This was his Hebrew name, in honor of Israel's first _____. Why did his family choose this name versus the more illustrious David? Romans 11:1 identifies his tribal background, shedding light on this question. King David was from the tribe of _____; King Saul was from the tribe of _____.

When did God first call him for his tremendous ministry to the Gentiles (see Galatians 1:15)? _____



Praying at the Western Wall

Philippians 3:4-6 provides greater detail into his family origins:

1. He was an _____.
2. From the tribe of _____, Jacob's only son born in the land of promise.
3. A _____ of _____.
4. He was a Pharisee, one of the strictest sects of the Jews. Pharisee means 'separated one' and there were only about _____ of them in New Testament times.

Paul grew up living in three worlds

1. His _____ world was by the strictest standard Jewish.
2. The cultural and business context of the city in which he grew up was _____ and he was thoroughly familiar with it. He could easily move in the world of business and commerce. He might even have traded in goat hair, the raw material for manufacturing tents, versus actually sewing them.
3. Being born a _____ citizen guaranteed him tremendous privileges. He had the right to travel throughout the empire without being questioned. And as a citizen, he could never be _____.

What languages might Saul have spoken?



Praying at the Western Wall

Saul was sent to Jerusalem to complete his education. He would have sailed from Tarsus to the Judean port of _____, the greatest port on the eastern Mediterranean. This port, built by _____ the Great, was named in honor of Caesar and was located 50 miles from Jerusalem. Locate this city and Jerusalem on the map on page 8.

A pilgrimage to Jerusalem was the ultimate desire for Jews in his day and ours. The psalmist summed it up well when he wrote: **“If I forget you, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither away; let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you, if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest joy”** (Psalm 137:5 & 6 N.E.B.).

Modern Jerusalem

Arriving

in the holy city, he would have been dazzled by the beauty of the Temple of YAHWEH recently rebuilt by King Herod; it was the _____ location in Judaism.



Model of Herod's Temple

There were four major sects of Judaism in Saul's day

1. The wealthy, aristocratic _____ held the keys to power in the Temple.
2. The Hellenistic _____ compromised their faith by mixing it with Greek culture.
3. The scrupulous _____ attempted to obey every detail of the Mosaic Law.
4. The _____ withdrew from society and lived a communal life in the desert.

According to Acts 22:3 Saul was trained by _____, grandson of the greatest rabbi of the era, Hillel. They were Pharisees who believed in the Scriptures and held to the hope of the _____ of the _____.

At the time of prayer Saul would have worn the liturgical vestments—the _____ or prayer shawl—and would have put on the _____, the leather straps worn on the forehead and arm containing a copy of the law.

According to Galatians 1:14, Saul was extremely _____ for the traditions of the fathers. While his teacher Gamaliel didn't take a direct stand against the teachings of Jesus (Acts 5:34-39), Saul believed the message of the new reformer threatened the very foundation of the traditions of the fathers.

He was commissioned by the _____ priests, who were largely Sadducees, to root out the followers of the Nazarene. In Galatians 1:13 he wrote: **“For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it!”**

Yet the followers of Jesus increased every day. Even a large number of _____ became followers of the Way (Acts 6:7). A Greek-speaking Jew named Stephen performed great wonders among the people. When a disturbance broke out and no one could refute Stephen's arguments, he was dragged before the _____. Condemned to death, he became the first Christian martyr mentioned in Scripture. He was taken through the 'Lion's Gate,' known today as 'Saint Stephen's Gate,' into the _____ Valley and stoned. As Stephen was dying, he asked the Lord to _____ those who were executing him.

As he was dying he saw the Son of Man _____ at the right hand of God.

According to Hebrews 1:3, Jesus _____ at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Why the difference in these passages? _____



The Stoning of Stephen

Acts 8:1-3 notes Saul was present and how the execution began a wave of _____ . After this, Saul was sent to _____ with orders to destroy the Christian community there. He left Jerusalem with officers of the temple for the 150-mile walk to this city.

Saul, the Pharisee or “separated one,” walked alone during the seven-day journey, allowing time for contemplation and meditation. Over the miles he must have thought of _____. Why had his face lit up so brightly when he was killed? Why did he ask his Lord to forgive his executioners for taking his life? As he walked, he began to entertain the questions: “Could it be that Stephen was right? Could it be that Jesus is the Messiah?”

Saul would soon discover the answer to this question, as we shall see in the next episode.

Personal Application

Where was Jesus in Stephen’s greatest time of need? _____

Stephen died without knowing of Saul’s subsequent conversion. Why should this bring us hope and encouragement to remain faithful in our witness? _____

What comfort does this story bring about praying for others? _____

Each study guide in this series, will provide an opportunity for you to explore in Scripture one or more themes presented in the episode. Exploring the Word On Your Own is found on page 8 of this study guide and is designed to enrich your study experience.

As he was dying in the Kidron Valley, Stephen saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. In this study you will explore the Word to understand why he used this unusual title to refer to Jesus.

1. How did Jesus identify Himself in Matthew 8:20? _____
Over 80 times in the New Testament, Jesus referred to Himself this way. What is unusual about this title?
2. In Matthew 26:63, while on trial before the Sanhedrin, Jesus remained silent until the high priest asked if He was the Christ (Messiah), the Son of God. How did Jesus answer in verse 64? _____ How did He identify Himself? _____
4. How did the high priest react in verse 65? _____
5. Jesus actually quoted the great Messianic prophecy of Daniel 7:13, applying it to Himself. How did the prophet describe His coming in this passage? _____
6. While in vision on the island of Patmos, John saw a vision of Jesus. How did the prophet describe Him in Revelation 1:12-16? _____
7. What is Jesus doing in this passage? _____

The Son of Man was not a humble statement, but a high and exalted Messianic title! In our next episode Saul encounters this Messiah on the Damascus road and his life is changed.

