

a paper:

THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL IN ACTS

Robert Baral  
12/11/2007 AD

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION – 3 ACCOUNTS OF PAUL’S CONVERSION IN ACTS
- II. “APPARENT” CONTRADICTIONS AND THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE
- III. THE AUTHROSHIP, THEME AND PURPOSE OF ACTS
- IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL
- V. THE CONTEXT AND THE SPEAKER IN ACTS 9
- VI. THE CONTEXT AND SPEAKERS IN ACTS 22
- VII. THE CONTEXT AND SPEAKERS IN ACTS 26
- VIII. A COMPARISON OF PAUL’S CONVESION BEWTEEN ACTS 9, 22 & 26
- IX. THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SEGMENTS OF TEXTS
- X. COMPARING THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR SEGMENTS OF TEXTS
- XI. ANALYZING THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR SEGMENTS OF TEXTS
- XII. DISCUSSION
- XIII. IN CONCLUSION
- XIV. REFERENCES

## I. INTRODUCTION – 3 ACCOUNTS OF PAUL’S CONVERSION IN ACTS

There are 3 accounts of the conversion of Saul the bloody persecutor of The infant Church to Paul the powerful evangelist of The infant Church to the Gentiles recorded in ACTS. There are apparent discrepancies in the 3 accounts in ACTS chapters 9, 22 and 26 which critics of The Bible point to as evidence of outright contradictions within The Texts and thus presumably evidence of disproof of the inerrancy of Holy Scripture. But these are not in truth contradictions, but rather apparent discrepancies that can be rationally explained and understood, thereby preserving the traditional Christian view of the infallibility and Divinely inspired nature of Holy Writ. So we shall see.

Resolving such apparent discrepancies in our comparisons of ACTS chapters 9, 22 and 26 requires us to ask first, “Who is speaking?” and second, “Who is the speaker speaking to and why?” In ACTS 9, we find Luke recording the record of Paul’s conversion in the third person singular – “he.” The persons doing the actions in ACTS 9 are recorded mostly as historical past tense events. In contrast, we find primarily Paul speaking in the first person and in the present tense in ACTS 22 and ACTS 26. Additionally, if ACTS 9 provides us the most thorough historical account of Saul becoming Paul, the discourses of Paul in ACTS 22 and ACTS 26 are in different contexts to different audiences. With this in mind, we will proceed.

## II. “APPARENT” CONTRADICTIONS AND THE INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE

We must first consider the nature of Holy Scripture. Are they mere aspirations of the soul of man GOD-ward? Or are They The unerring and inspired Word of GOD revealed to man? The Catechism of The Catholic Church affirms that GOD is The ultimate Author of Holy Scripture, though holy and inspired men down through the ages are the proximate authors. “The Divinely revealed realities, which are contained and presented in The Text of Sacred Scripture, have been written down under the inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT.”<sup>1</sup>

If we first set firmly that The Holy Scriptures are inerrant in their original Text, then “apparent” contradictions are just that, and in fact are not “substantive.” That is, if we perceive what we call contradictions or errors in The Holy Bible’s Texts, our perception is because of our limited and flawed human understanding. That being the case, we may reasonably expect to resolve such issues, with an adequate humble and pious study of Biblical Texts and related resources as The Spirit of GOD directs us.

As E. A. Litton observes, “That such a substantial... [unerring unity] may and must exist [In Scripture] is an inference from the [unerring] unity of The primary Author, The HOLY SPIRIT: if the human authors, however otherwise differing from each other, derived inspiration from One Source, no real contradiction, none at least affecting essential points, can be supposed possible. Whether the reader discovers this unity or not

---

<sup>1</sup> 1, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 105, p 36. “Dei Verbum 11.” “Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture.”

[in all points], depends more upon his moral and spiritual than upon his literary qualifications.”<sup>2</sup>

As David declares in PSALM 18:30, “As for GOD, His way is perfect: The Word of The LORD is tried: He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him.”<sup>3</sup> The Scriptures are perfect and to be trusted because they are inspired by GOD, Who Himself is all perfect and all truth. And further in PSALM 33:4, “For The Word of The LORD is right; and all His works are done in truth.”<sup>4</sup> The Scriptures can not contain error or what is wrong, because Their Eternal Author contains no error nor imperfection. Of The Bible, as Matthew Henry thus comments, “...We call it The Holy Book, because it was written by holy men, and indited by The Holy Ghost; it is perfectly pure from all falsehood and corrupt intention; and the manifest tendency of it is to promote holiness among men.”<sup>5</sup>

As Saint John declares in JOHN 10:35, “...The Scripture cannot be broken.”<sup>6</sup> As Saint Paul declares in II TIMOTHY 3:16, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”<sup>7</sup> The Holy Writ is as The Sword of GOD, a Divine instrument which He uses to bring the godly man into perfection. As Saint Clement of Alexandria adds, “He, then, who believes The Divine Scriptures with sure judgement, receives in Them The [very] voice of GOD, Who bestowed The Scriptures!”<sup>8</sup>

Saint Peter declares of Holy Scripture in II PETER 1:21, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of GOD spake as they were moved by The Holy Ghost.”<sup>9</sup> So The Catechism continues, “Since therefore all that the inspired authors or sacred writers affirm should be regarded as affirmed by The HOLY SPIRIT, we must acknowledge that The Books of Scripture firmly, faithfully, and without error teach That Truth which GOD, for the sake of our salvation, wished to see confided to The Sacred Scripture.”<sup>10</sup> Saint Clement of Rome calls us therefore “To look carefully into The Scriptures, Which are The true Utterances of The HOLY SPIRIT.”<sup>11</sup>

This is so because The Utterance of GOD from His mouth can only be True, for GOD is all truth. So Moses declares in DEUTERONOMY 32:4, “He is The Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a GOD of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.”<sup>12</sup> Therefore Saint Augustine reminds us, “The one and The same Word

---

<sup>2</sup> 2, Litton, Introduction to Dogmatic Theology, p 25, paragraph 1 – p 26. “The Rule of Faith.”

<sup>3</sup> 3, KJV, PSALM 18:30.

<sup>4</sup> 3, KJV, PSALM 33:4.

<sup>5</sup> 4, Matthew Henry Notes, GENESIS 1:1, paragraph 1. Introduction.

<sup>6</sup> 3, KJV, JOHN 10:35.

<sup>7</sup> 3, KJV, II TIMOTHY 3:16.

<sup>8</sup> 5, Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs, “Scriptures,” section III., “Inspiration of The Scriptures, p 602, 7<sup>th</sup> entry. “Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.464.”

<sup>9</sup> 3, KJV, II PETER 1:21.

<sup>10</sup> 1, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 107, p 37. “Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture.”

<sup>11</sup> 5, Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs, “Scriptures,” section III, “Inspiration of The Scriptures,” p 601, 5<sup>th</sup> entry. “Clement of Rome (c.96, W), 1.17.”

<sup>12</sup> 3, KJV, DEUTERONOMY 32:4.

of GOD extends throughout Scripture, That it is one and The same [Divine] Utterance that resounds in the mouths of all the sacred [human] writers...”<sup>13</sup> Since GOD’s Utterance can only be all Truth, therefore The Holy Write which He inspires via His Spirit can only be all Truth.

Fausset comments, “Rationalists try to disintegrate the parts of The Sacred Volume, but the more they do so the greater is the need for believing in one Divine superintending Mind to account for a unity which palpably exists, though the writers themselves did not design it... Infinite intelligence alone could combine into one the works of men of so various minds and of ages so wide apart as the sacred writers, beginning with Moses the legislator and ending with John the divine.”<sup>14</sup> As Saint Peter, recalling Isaiah,<sup>15</sup> declares in II PETER 1:24-25, “...The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But The Word of The Lord endureth for ever...”<sup>16</sup>

### III. THE AUTHORSHIP, THEME AND PURPOSE OF ACTS

Church Tradition holds Saint Luke to be the human author of both LUKE and ACTS, the internal and external evidence for this showing Church Tradition as “in all probability correct.”<sup>17</sup> Clement of Alexandria in 195 AD recognizes Luke to have written both Books.<sup>18</sup> The ancient Christian Muratorian Text, circa 200 AD, states, “The Third Book of The Gospel is That according to Luke” and “The Acts of The apostles” are comprised by Luke.” While “he himself did not see The Lord in the flesh,” and was thus not an eye-witness of the events recorded in LUKE, of many of the events in ACTS “he was personally present.”<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> 1, Catechism of The Catholic Church, # 102, p 35-36. “CHRIST – The Unique Word of Sacred Scripture.”

<sup>14</sup> 6, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, entry “Bible,” 626.06.

<sup>15</sup> 3, KJV, ISAIAH 40:8, “The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but The Word of our GOD shall stand for ever.”

<sup>16</sup> 3, KJV, II PETER 1:24-25.

<sup>17</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 384, paragraph 1. “The identity of the author.”

<sup>18</sup> 5, Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs, “LUKE,” p 410, 3<sup>rd</sup> entry. “Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E), 2.573.”

<sup>19</sup> 5, Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs, “LUKE,” p 410, 4<sup>th</sup> entry – p 411. “Muratorian Fragment (c. 200, W), 5.603.”

Fausset observes that ACTS is a “continuation of The Gospel as recorded by Luke.” The style is the same from LUKE to ACTS, which “confirms the identity of authorship” of Both as Luke. Both “address to the same person, Theophilus,<sup>20 21</sup> probably a man of rank, judging from the title ‘most excellent.’” If The Gospel of Luke is “the life of JESUS in the flesh,” we may see from the emphasis of ACTS on GOD’s Spirit working through the Apostolic Church to extend The Gospel from Jewish Palestine to the entire Gentile world, why Saint Chrysostom calls Luke’s Second Book “The Gospel of The HOLY SPIRIT.”<sup>22</sup> and “The Book [of] The Demonstration of The Resurrection.”<sup>23</sup>

Guthrie observes the common unity and authorship of The two Books, more correctly LUKE-ACTS.<sup>24</sup> There are certain themes running through the actually one unit work of LUKE-ACTS as recorded by Luke that we should note, which will help us better address our present task. There is “the rejection of The Gospel by the Jews and its reception by the Gentiles.” There is “the [favorable] treatment of The early Church by local and Roman officials.” And there is the question of “... how it came about that The Gospel which began – with the promise of the restoration of The Kingdom to Israel<sup>25</sup> ended with the Gentile church in Rome, distinct from Judaism.”<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>20</sup> 3, KJV, LUKE 1:1-4, “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of The Word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”

<sup>21</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 1:1-5, “The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that JESUS began both to do and teach, Until the day in which He was taken up, after that He through The Holy Ghost had given Commandments unto The Apostles whom He had chosen: To whom also He shewed Himself alive after His Passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to The Kingdom of GOD: And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of The Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of Me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with The Holy Ghost not many days hence.”

<sup>22</sup> 6, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, entry “ACTS,” 70.01.

<sup>23</sup> 8, Clarke’s Commentary and Critical Notes, Volume 5b, ACTS, “Preface to The Acts of The Apostles, p 351.

<sup>24</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 366. “A Gospel of The Spirit.”

<sup>25</sup> 3, KJV, see LUKE 1:32-33.

<sup>26</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 1123-1124, “The Acts of The Apostles, Introduction, Purpose,” paragraph 3.

Luke likely published ACTS within 2 or more years after that of The Gospel of Luke,<sup>27</sup> Jamieson et al places LUKE likely before 50 to 60 AD, and thus ACTS circa 62 or 63 AD.<sup>28</sup> This is significant, neither Book mentioning the monumental event of the destruction of The Temple in Jerusalem in 70 AD,<sup>29</sup> giving us a most vital window into the spread of The Gospel beyond remnant Israel into the Gentile pagan world. Guthrie concurs, observing, “The fall of Jerusalem is nowhere referred to” in LUKE-ACTS.<sup>30</sup> Guthrie notes that Luke consistently paints the impartiality of Roman officials to Christians, “the cause of persecution against The Church is in every case the intrigues of the Jews,” which suggests a time before the persecutions starting under Emperor Nero in 64 AD.<sup>31</sup>

Jamieson et al observe that Saint Luke may well have been first a Gentile convert to Judaism, or at least a Gentile “GOD-fearer,” for he shows “intimate acquaintance with Jewish customs” and excellent “facility in Hebraic Greek.” However, Luke’s “fluency in classical Greek confirms his Gentile origin.” The point in “LUKE-ACTS” at which Luke actually joins the company of Saint Paul is seen in ACTS 16:10,<sup>32</sup> “by his changing from the third person singular (“he”) to the first person plural (“we”). From that time he hardly ever left the apostle till near the period of his martyrdom,”<sup>33</sup> as is attested to in II TIMOTHY 4:11.<sup>34</sup> Saint Irenaeus in 180 AD comments that ACTS “clearly shows that this Luke was inseparable from Paul. He was his fellow worker in The Gospel.”<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 28:30-31, “And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house[ in Rome], and received all that came in unto him, Preaching The Kingdom of GOD, and teaching those things which concern The Lord JESUS CHRIST, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”

<sup>28</sup> 10, Jamieson et al, Critical Explanatory Commentary, p 2046-2047, paragraph 2.

“Introduction, The Gospel According to Luke.”

<sup>29</sup> 6, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, “Jerusalem,” 1947.30- 1947.31.

<sup>30</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 355. “Arguments for a date before AD 64.”

<sup>31</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 360. “The attitude of the state towards The Church.”

<sup>32</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 16:10, “And after he [Paul] had seen The Vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that The Lord had called us for to preach The Gospel unto them.”

<sup>33</sup> 10, Jamieson et al, Critical Explanatory Commentary, p 2046-2047, paragraph 1. “Introduction, The Gospel According to Luke.”

<sup>34</sup> 3, KJV, II TIMOTHY 4:11, “Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for The Ministry.

<sup>35</sup> 5, Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs, “LUKE,” p 410, 2<sup>nd</sup> entry. “Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.437.”

Paul was “the Apostle of the Gentiles” for The Gospel. Luke, a Gentile convert, was his companion for much of his ministry. That LUKE-ACTS should be geared primarily to evangelizing a Gentile audience should thus not surprise us.<sup>36</sup> As Guthrie concludes, it is “Luke’s design to show the unhindered progress of The Gospel” from Jewish Palestine to the entire known Gentile world.<sup>37</sup> The Gentile convert Luke is intimately and actively involved in The Gospel of salvation in CHRIST, of which he partakes, makes great effort to show Paul is as much an Apostle of The Lord to the Gentiles as is Peter, who is the ordained Apostle to the Jews. Thus Luke’s almost exclusive focus on first Peter and then Paul as his Divinely anointed equal in ACTS.<sup>38</sup>

As Fausset observes, “Peter, to whom the keys of The Kingdom of Heaven were given... [opens ACTS] as the central figure... [to both Jews and Gentiles]... [But] Another instrument was needed for evangelizing the world, combining the learning of both Hebrew and Greek, which The Twelve had not, with the citizenship of Rome, the political mistress of the Gentile world; Paul possessed all these qualifications...”<sup>39</sup> Luke then documents the ministry and triumph of JESUS CHRIST in His Person in LUKE to the working and triumph of The HOLY SPIRIT in ACTS. From Peter to Paul, the march of The Gospel is documented by Luke to bring GOD’s salvation to first the Jews and then the Gentiles. As Guthrie says, LUKE-ACTS proclaims “the triumph of Christianity in a hostile world,” the arrival of Paul in Rome at the end of ACTS thus being “a fitting conclusion” to Luke’s Second Book!”<sup>40</sup>

Clarke refers to ACTS as “The Fifth Gospel,” observing that “All the promises which CHRIST gave [in The 4 Gospels] of the gifts and graces of The HOLY SPIRIT are shown here to have been fulfilled in the most eminent manner; and, by the effusion of The HOLY SPIRIT, The Resurrection of our blessed Lord has been fully demonstrated. The calling of the Gentiles is another grand point which is here revealed and illustrated. This miracle..., which had been so frequently foretold by the prophets and by CHRIST Himself, is here exhibited; and by this grand act of the power and goodness of GOD, The Christian Church has been founded and thus The Tabernacle and Kingdom of GOD have been immutably established among men. It is truly a Fifth Gospel, as it contains the glad tidings of peace and salvation to the whole Gentile world!”<sup>41</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> 10, Jamieson et al, Critical Explanatory Commentary, p 2046-2047, paragraph 3.  
“Introduction, The Gospel According to Luke.”

<sup>37</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 360. “The attitude of the state towards The Church.”

<sup>38</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 354, paragraph 1. “Its focus on Peter and Paul.”

<sup>39</sup> 6, Fausset’s Bible Dictionary, entry “ACTS,” 70.05.

<sup>40</sup> 7, Guthrie, New Testament Introduction, p 369-370. “A theological document.”

<sup>41</sup> 8, Clarke’s Commentary and Critical Notes, Volume 5b, ACTS, “Preface to The Acts of The Apostles, p 351-352, paragraph 2.



#### IV. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONVERSION OF SAINT PAUL

That Luke writes of Paul's conversion to CHRIST three times in ACTS reflects the vital importance As Walvoord and Zuck observe, "The conversion of Saul (Paul) is believed by some to be the most important event in The Church since Pentecost. Luke certainly considered Saul's conversion significant, for he recorded it three times in ACTS..."<sup>42</sup> Therefore Luke documents from his sources and research this event most carefully. This was important to Luke personally.

And it is vitally important to The Gospel and The early Church. For if GOD had not sent a Paul to evangelize The New Covenant beyond Palestine, it is very likely that Christianity would have remained a mere sect of Judaism, salvation never extending to all mankind to all the corners of the earth, as The Lord had commanded and ordained in The Great Commission.<sup>43</sup> Paul's involvement and witness as a primary belligerent in Stephen's murder for the sake of CHRIST was providentially used by GOD to prepare Paul to become "The Apostle to The Gentiles."<sup>44</sup>

Saul was present at the martyrdom of Stephen. As Walvoord and Zuck observe, "...Stephen's discourse seemed to have spurred Saul to renewed efforts to stamp out Christianity... If the doctrine propagated by Stephen was correct, then The Law was in jeopardy. So Saul, zealous as he was, went on persecuting The Church..."<sup>45</sup> Luke spells this out clearly in ACTS 8:1-3, "And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against The Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the Apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of The Church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."<sup>46</sup>

But little did Saul then know how the sovereignty of GOD was preparing to mightily use the martyrdom of Saint Stephen to spread The Gospel of CHRIST by dispersing the saints into other lands. And little did Saul then know how stunningly he himself would begin to be remade into The very Likeness of CHRIST! PSALM 2:4-5 declares how The Almighty laughs to scorn the raging of the heathen against His Providence in all times and places, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: The Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in His wrath, and vex them in

---

<sup>42</sup> 11, Walvoord and Zuck, "Bible Knowledge Commentary," p 375, paragraph 1. "C. The Message of Saul ([ACTS] 9:1-31)."

<sup>43</sup> 3, KJV, MATTHEW 28:18-20, "The Great Commission" of The risen CHRIST to The Church, "And JESUS came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in Heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in The Name of The Father, and of The Son, and of The Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always[s], even unto the end of the world. Amen."

<sup>44</sup> 3, KJV, ROMANS 11:13, "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am The Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."

<sup>45</sup> 11, Walvoord and Zuck, "Bible Knowledge Commentary," p 375, paragraph 3. "C. The Message of Saul ([ACTS] 9:1-31)."

<sup>46</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 8:1-3.

His sore displeasure!”<sup>47</sup> We may picture The Lord sitting upon His throne above and sharing with The Hosts of Heaven, “See how this Saul persecutes My saints! Little does he know what road I have laid out for him to walk, that he shall be an instrument in My hands to spread The Gospel throughout the world!”

The Geneva Bible Notes comment, “CHRIST uses the rage of his enemies in the spreading forth and enlarging of His Kingdom. [For] The dispersion or scattering abroad of the faithful is the gathering together of Churches!”<sup>48</sup> The devil and fallen men mean their rage against The Gospel of CHRIST and His saints for evil. But GOD takes the suffering and even martyrdom of His saints and turns it for good for His Glory and for the saving of the lives and souls of many who are dying in darkness! As Matthew Henry observes, persecution of Christians leads to the propagation of Christianity, “It was strange, but very true, that the disciples of CHRIST the more they were afflicted the more they multiplied!”<sup>49</sup>

So Luke documents the martyrdom of Stephen for us as a pivotal event preceding the conversion of bloody Saul into Saint Paul. But for The Grace of GOD, none of us would be saved! As Walvoord and Zuck observe, “The conversion of Saul (Paul) is believed by some to be the most important event in The Church since Pentecost. Luke certainly considered Saul’s conversion significant, for he recorded it three times in ACTS...”<sup>50</sup> Therefore Luke documents from his sources and research this event most carefully. This was important to Luke personally. And it is vitally important to The Gospel and The early Church.

For if GOD had not sent a Paul to evangelize The New Covenant beyond Palestine, it is very likely that Christianity would have remained a mere sect of Judaism, salvation never extending to all mankind to all the corners of the earth, as The Lord had commanded and ordained in The Great Commission.<sup>51</sup> Paul’s involvement and witness as a primary belligerent in Stephen’s murder for the sake of CHRIST was providentially used by GOD to prepare Paul to become “The Apostle to The Gentiles.”

## V. THE CONTEXT AND THE SPEAKER IN ACTS 9

Luke has pieced together for us the results of his thorough inquiries of people and events within The infant Church. The most thorough account of Paul’s conversion is found in ACTS 9. Matthew Henry gives this overview of ACTS 9: “The famous story of St. Paul’s conversion from being an outrageous persecutor of The Gospel of CHRIST to be an illustrious professor and preacher of it. I. How he was first awakened and wrought upon by an appearance of CHRIST Himself to him as he was going upon an errand of persecution to Damascus: and what a condition he was in while he lay under the power of

---

<sup>47</sup> 3, KJV, PSALM 2:4-5.

<sup>48</sup> 12, Geneva Bible Notes, ACTS 8:1-4, notes 1&3.

<sup>49</sup> 4, Matthew Henry Notes, ACTS 8:1-3, Introductory paragraph.

<sup>50</sup> 11, Walvoord and Zuck, “Bible Knowledge Commentary,” p 375, paragraph 1. “C. The Message of Saul ([ACTS] 9:1-31).”

<sup>51</sup> 3, KJV, MATTHEW 28:18-20.

those convictions and terrors (v. 1-9). 2. How he was baptized by Ananias, by immediate directions from Heaven (v. 10-19). 3. How he immediately commenced doctor, and preached The Faith of CHRIST, and proved what he preached (v. 20-22). 4. How he was persecuted, and narrowly escaped with his life (v. 23-25). 5. How he was admitted among the brethren at Jerusalem: how he preached, and was persecuted there (v. 26-30)...”<sup>52</sup>

In ACTS 9, Luke speaks of Paul in the third person, “he.” Luke the has already introduced Saul to us in ACTS 8 as being present and approving of Stephen’s martyrdom for his public profession of faith in JESUS CHRIST in ACTS 8. But Saul was not content to be merely an observer, an encourager and a facilitator of wicked oppression of The Church. He hungered to cause suffering and bring bloody murder to the saints of GOD in CHRIST by his own hand, thinking himself the more pious before GOD for desiring to do so! So Saul equips himself with authority from bent men and is en route to Damascus to persecute and bind Christians even in Gentile cities.

Luke documents in ACTS 9:1-2, “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of This Way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”<sup>53</sup> As John Calvin says, “his hands were once imbued with innocent blood, he proceeded in like cruelty, and was always a furious and bloody enemy to The Church.” It was necessary that Saul was literally knocked of his high horse of haughtiness and self-honor by The Lord Himself, that he be made to cease from his wicked works and turned into a servant of The Cross. Such is GOD’s Grace in CHRIST. “For which cause it was the more incredible that he could be so suddenly tamed. And whereas such a cruel wolf was not only turned into a sheep, but did also put on the nature of a shepherd, the wonderful hand of GOD did show itself therein manifestly!”<sup>54</sup>

Now most men do not require a theophantic manifestation of The Almighty’s Presence to convict us of our sins and lead us to repent. But as great as was Saul’s haughtiness, and for the sake of the great place that The LORD ordained for him to play in evangelizing the world of men with The same holy Gospel of CHRIST which he strove vainly against, The Almighty did this and more in this case! And it is little wonder how zealous Saul became as Saint Paul in boldness and faithfulness for The Gospel of CHRIST. For The Lord appeared visually and spoke audibly to him!

So Luke documents for us in ACTS 9:3-5, “And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a Light from Heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a Voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And The Lord said, I am JESUS Whom thou persecutest...!”<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> 4, Matthew Henry Notes, ACTS 9, Overview, I.

<sup>53</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:1-2.

<sup>54</sup> 13, Calvin’s Commentary, ACTS 9:1-5, p 205, 1.

<sup>55</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:3-5.

Luke records next in ACTS 9:6, “And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do!”<sup>56</sup> The remainder of ACTS 9 may be classified as first, the time in which Saul’s heart, soul and mind were laid bare in the dust of repentance and humility before The Almighty. And second, how The Lord slowly raised him up into newness of life and service for The Cross. For if he had ever come before GOD with dust and ashes upon the head of his soul and his heart clothed in sackcloth for his sins, never had he been slain so low in his fragile and fallen humanity before!

We must be laid low before GOD’s Glory in humble repentance before we can be made fit vessels of His will to do His work! So John Wesley adds, “When GOD suddenly and vehemently attacks a sinner, it is the highest act of Mercy. So Saul, when his rage was come to the height, is taught not to breathe slaughter. And what was wanting in time to confirm him in his discipleship, is compensated by the inexpressible terror he sustained. By this also the suddenly constituted Apostle was guarded against the grand snare into which novices are apt to fall” – pride!<sup>57</sup> So Saul is laid low, blind, fasting, praying and waiting for 3 days upon The Lord.<sup>58</sup>

ACTS 9:10-16 reports The Lord instructing pious Ananias to go to Saul, lay hands upon him in prayer and anoint him in The Faith. Such was the glorious and fearful mission to which Ananias was sent on, that CHRIST revealed to him the purposes of Providence for Saul, “...Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake!”<sup>59</sup> This is a lesson for all men, as Calvin says here of Paul, when we are called by The Lord to be His ‘instrument, that “...men can do nothing, save inasmuch as GOD useth their industry at His pleasure. For if we be [His] instruments, He alone is The Author; the force and power [that enables us] to do [His will as His servants] is in His power alone.”<sup>60</sup>

Luke documents that Ananias obeyed The Lord, went to Saul, laid hands upon him and prayed over him. From ACTS 9:17, “...Brother Saul, The Lord, even JESUS, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with The Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.”<sup>61</sup> So by GOD’s Grace, Saul believed, repented, received The HOLY SPIRIT, was baptized, his sight restored and his strength renewed to be a fit instrument of CHRIST to preach The Gospel.

---

<sup>56</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:6.

<sup>57</sup> 14, Wesley’s Notes on The Bible, ACTS 9:3, p 359.

<sup>58</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:7-9.

<sup>59</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:15-16.

<sup>60</sup> 13, Calvin, Commentary on ACTS, Volume 1, ACTS 9:13-16, p 212, 15.

<sup>61</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:17-18.

Adam Clarke comments, "... [Ananias] appears to have been the chief Christian at Damascus. As baptism implied, in an adult, the public profession of That Faith into which he was baptized, this baptism of Saul proved, at once, his own sincerity, and the deep and thorough conviction he had of The Truth of Christianity."<sup>62</sup> How blessed and favored was Paul, that GOD should so condescend to him as to provide such an encounter with The exalted Son of GOD! And how striking that Paul's conversion follows exactly what Saint Peter, "The Apostle to The Jews," prescribes to his fellow repentant and believing Israelites in ACTS 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in The Name of JESUS CHRIST for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of The HOLY GHOST!"<sup>63</sup>

Next Luke records how Paul immediately began preaching in Damascus "CHRIST in the synagogues, that He is The Son of GOD." And it is not great understatement that Luke records of men in response to Paul's sudden conversion, zealous as he was in all that he did, before a fervent persecutor of the saints of GOD in CHRIST, but now a fervent evangelist for That same Gospel! "But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on This Name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?" None of the Jews in that city could refute The Gospel, Paul showing that JESUS is The Anointed One of The Most High, The Messiah!<sup>64</sup>

Of Luke's notation, that "they were all amazed," Calvin observes, "This is added, that we may know that the power of GOD was acknowledged. For seeing that the zeal of Paul against The Gospel was openly known, they saw no other cause of such a sudden change but the hand of GOD. And, therefore, this is also one fruit of the miracle [of Paul's conversion], that they all wonder at him being made a new man so suddenly, so that his doctrine doth the more move their minds," stir their hearts and convict their souls! Saint Paul now preached with such might in The Lord, that the godly among them "did so profess The Name of CHRIST, that they placed all their hope of salvation in Him!"<sup>65</sup>

ACTS 9:23-25 records that, since the unbelieving Jews could not confound or refute Paul's preaching of JESUS as The CHRIST, they next conspired to silence him by murdering him. Their plans were however made known to Paul, though "they watched the gates day and night to kill him." Even so, "the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket."<sup>66</sup> As the psalmist declares in PSALM 97:10, The LORD "...preserveth the souls of His saints; He delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked!"<sup>67</sup> As Henry observes, "Saul was no sooner a Christian than a preacher, no sooner a preacher than a sufferer; so quickly did he rise to the summit of his preferment.

---

<sup>62</sup> 8, Clarke's Commentary and Critical Notes, Volume 5b, ACTS 9, Verse 18, p 514.

<sup>63</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 2:38.

<sup>64</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:19-22.

<sup>65</sup> 13, Calvin, Commentary on ACTS, Volume 1, ACTS 9:19-25, p 215, 21.

<sup>66</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:23-25.

<sup>67</sup> 3, KJV, PSALM 97:10.

Note, Where GOD gives great Grace He commonly exercises it with great trials,” but then with great deliverance!<sup>68</sup>

Paul writes in GALATIANS 1:17-19, that after his conversion, “Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the Apostles saw I none, save James The Lord’s brother.”<sup>69</sup> Luke is silent of this 3 year period, going to Paul’s journey to Jerusalem to confer with the Apostles in ACTS 9:26-29. There he met with Peter and James. In view of his past life as Saul the persecutor of The Church, it is not surprising that the disciples of CHRIST in Jerusalem “were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.”<sup>70</sup> As Wesley notes, their caution was most reasonable, for “he who has been an enemy to The Truth [of The Gospel of CHRIST] ought not to be trusted till he gives proof that he is changed,” that his conversion is earnest, that his Faith in JESUS as Lord and Saviour is true, that his soul is being washed clean by The HOLY SPIRIT.<sup>71</sup>

But Barnabas, seeing Paul’s earnest conversion by GOD’s hand, “... took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen The Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to Him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in The Name of JESUS.” There Paul associated freely for a time with The Church in Jerusalem, proclaiming The Gospel boldly and disputing with those who resisted GOD’s Grace in CHRIST, in particular the “Grecians.” These were Hellenized Jews, “those who lived in Grecian cities, spoke the Greek language, and used The Septuagint version for their Scriptures.”<sup>72</sup> No doubt The Spirit of GOD moved many to salvation in CHRIST as a result. But others “...went about to slay him.”<sup>73</sup>

## VI. THE CONTEXT AND SPEAKERS IN ACTS 22

Matthew Henry offers this overview of ACTS 22 of Paul: “I. His address to the people, and their attention to it (v. 1, 2). II. The account he gives of himself. 1. What a bigoted Jew he had been in the beginning of his time (v. 3-5). 2. How he was miraculously converted and brought over to The Faith of CHRIST (v. 6-11). 3. How he was confirmed and baptized by the ministry of Ananias (v. 12-16). 4. How he afterwards called, by an immediate warrant from Heaven, to be The Apostle of the Gentiles (v. 17-21). III. The interruption given him upon this by the rabble, who could not bear to hear any thing said in favour of the Gentiles, and the violent passion they flew into upon it (v. 22, 23)...”<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> 4, Matthew Henry’s Notes, ACTS 9, Verses: 23-31, I, 1.

<sup>69</sup> 3, KJV, GALATIANS 1:17-19.

<sup>70</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:26.

<sup>71</sup> 14, Wesley’s Notes on The Bible, ACTS 9:27, p 360.

<sup>72</sup> 8, Clarke’s Commentary and Critical Notes, Volume 5b, ACTS 9, Verse 29, p 518.

<sup>73</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:26-29.

<sup>74</sup> 4, Matthew Henry Notes, ACTS 22, Overview, I-VI.

In contrast to ACTS 9, in ACTS 22 Luke records Paul as speaking in the first person singular, “I.” Here Paul has been arrested and addresses his fellow Jews in Jerusalem. Luke either is recording what Paul later recalled to him, or other eyewitnesses who heard Paul’s words. As The New American Bible comments here, “Paul’s first defense speech is presented to the Jerusalem crowds. Luke here presents Paul as a devout Jew... [verse] (3) and [former] persecutor of the Christian community [verses] (4-5), and then recounts the conversion of Paul for the second time in ACTS...”<sup>75</sup>

There had been an Egyptian Jewish insurrectionist, who according to Josephus was a false prophet that “...in A.D. 54 came to the Mount of Olives promising his adherents that the walls of Jerusalem would collapse at his command. Instead, the Roman army promptly marched on them, killed some and captured others, while the remainder were scattered. The Egyptian escaped.”<sup>76</sup> Luke records that, when the Roman commander saw the tumult and Paul at the center of it, he wrongly assumed him to be this Egyptian rebel. The trouble was in fact due to Greek Jews who recognized Paul in The Temple at Jerusalem and had incited an attack upon him, as we read in ACTS 21:28, “Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and The Law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into The Temple, and hath polluted this holy place.”<sup>77</sup>

The mob in fact drove Paul from The Temple, bringing the city into an uproar, and they set about to murder Paul directly. But as the Roman soldiers led Paul out of the tumult under arrest, Paul turned to the Roman commander and addressed him in Greek, which surprised the officer enough to cause him to allow the prisoner to address his fellow Jews there from the stairs of the fortress. So Luke sets the stage for recording a second time Paul’s conversion, this time allowing Paul to speak in the 1<sup>st</sup> person to an angry mob of his fellow Jews.

So we read in ACTS 21:37-40, “And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers? But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people. And when he had given him licence, Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue...”<sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 22, p 1198. Commentary note, “ACTS 22:1-21.”

<sup>76</sup> 11, Walvoord and Zuck, “Bible Knowledge Commentary,” p 417, paragraph 2. “b. The Defense of Paul ([ACTS] 21:37-22:29).”

<sup>77</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 21:8.

<sup>78</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 21:37-40.

In ACTS 22, Paul testifies of his zealousness for The Law of Moses. He had in fact been educated under “Gamaliel, a doctor of The Law [of Moses, who] had in reputation among all the people”<sup>79</sup> who had cautioned the Sanhedrin against persecuting the Apostles for fear of fighting against GOD in ACTS 5. But Saul, contrary to his then mentor Gamaliel, was possessed by an intense desire to stamp out Christianity. So much so, that as Walvoord and Zuck observe, “...only a radically supernatural transformation could change his viewpoint.”<sup>80</sup> This is exactly what GOD provided for him on the road to Damascus, and this is exactly what he shares with his fellow Jews as recorded by Luke.

So Paul shares with his audience what is immediately relevant to them, leaving out what is not from his conversion experience. He emphasizes his faithfulness to The Almighty and The Mosaic Covenant and reminds the crowd of his formerly zealous persecution of Christians. But then he proclaims that The Lord JESUS CHRIST miraculously convicted him on the road to Damascus. He then declares that GOD had instructed him to leave Jerusalem and to bring The Gospel of salvation to evangelize the Gentiles.

## VII. THE CONTEXT AND SPEAKERS IN ACTS 26

Matthew Henry offers this overview in ACTS 26 of Paul’s account of his conversion and defense: “1. His humble address to King Agrippa, and the compliment he passed upon him (v. 1-3). 2. His account of his origin, and education, his profession as a Pharisee, and his adherence still to that which was then the main article of his creed, in distinction from the Sadducees, the "resurrection of the dead," however in rituals he had since departed from it (v. 3-8). 3. Of his zeal against the Christian religion, and the professors of it, in the beginning of his time (v. 9-11). 4. Of his miraculous conversion to The Faith of CHRIST (v. 12-16). 5. Of the commission he received from Heaven to preach The Gospel to the Gentiles (v. 17, 18). 6. Of his proceedings pursuant to that Commission, which had given this mighty offence to the Jews (v. 19-21). 7. Of the doctrine which he had made it his business to preach to the Gentiles, which was so far from destroying The Law and the prophets that it showed the fulfilling of both (v. 22, 23).”<sup>81</sup>

As in ACTS 22, we again find Paul again speaking in the first person singular “I” in ACTS 26, this time before King Agrippa and Bernice, “brother and sister, children of Herod Agrippa I.” This Agrippa II was “...a petty ruler over small areas in northern Palestine and some villages in Persia.”<sup>82</sup> Wycliffe adds that King Agrippa II “...was entrusted with the important function of the supervision of The Temple treasure in Jerusalem and with the appointment of the high priest...”<sup>83</sup> Festus, the Roman official whose task it was to form the charges against Paul before sending him to appear before

---

<sup>79</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 5:34.

<sup>80</sup> 11, Walvoord and Zuck, “Bible Knowledge Commentary,” ACTS 22:3-9, p 418, paragraph 2.

<sup>81</sup> Matthew Henry Notes, ACTS 26, Overview, I.

<sup>82</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 25, p 1202. Commentary note, “ACTS 25:13.”

<sup>83</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ACTS 25:13, p 1171.



the Roman Emperor - to whom Paul had appealed – states his purpose for bringing Paul before Agrippa and Bernice.<sup>84</sup>

So Luke records in ACTS 25:24-26 how Festus opens the hearing, "...ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write."<sup>85</sup>

The charges of the Jewish authorities against Paul, that he in preaching JESUS as The CHRIST was violating stirring up the people to draw them from The Law of Moses and that worthy of death. Paul had already declared to the Roman official Felix in ACTS 25:8, "...Neither against The Law of the Jews, neither against The Temple, nor yet against Caesar, have I offended any thing at all."<sup>86</sup> Paul offers his defense here as a pious Jew being unjustly persecuted by fellow Jewish sectarian opposition for his faith in the resurrection and eternal life of the just. As The New American Bible comments here, "Paul's final speech in ACTS is now made before a king. In the speech, Paul presents himself as a zealous Pharisee and Christianity as the logical development of Pharisic Judaism..."<sup>87</sup>

What Luke records as the historical flow of events he has pieced together from Paul and other sources in his research in ACTS 9 is thus most comprehensive of Paul's conversion experience, reflected the speakers speaking in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person. In contrast, Paul is recorded mostly as speaking in the 1<sup>st</sup> person in ACTS 22 and ACTS 26 to two different audiences – the first an audience of fellow Jews who wish his death and the second before the ruling Hellenized petty Jewish king and queen, their court and their Roman overseers. We must keep these perspectives in mind as we proceed with this study.

#### VIII. A COMPARISON OF PAUL'S CONVESION BEWTEEN ACTS 9, 22 & 26

Dividing and comparing units of Holy Scripture of the same events found in various Texts of necessity involves some subjectivity. That being said, I divide the conversion events of Saul into 12 units, which I label "A" to "L." In each unit, I look for identical or similar segments of information and Text. Each unit has 3 segments, "1" corresponding to ACTS 9, "2" corresponding to ACTS 22 and "3" corresponding to ACTS 26. In some instances there are 3 segments in each unit, while in others only 2, and in others only 1. Where there is no Scripture Text that corresponds to the unit in question, I label the segment "NONE." In each unit there are thus 3 possible segments. 12 units, each with 3 possible segments, yields 36 segments.

---

<sup>84</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 25, p 1202. Commentary note, "ACTS 25:13."

<sup>85</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 25:24-26.

<sup>86</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 25:8.

<sup>87</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 26, p 1202. commentary note, "ACTS 26:2-23."

The units are as follows: A) SAUL A STRICT JEWISH PHARISEE BEFORE HIS CONVESION: A1 – NONE; A2 - ACTS 22:1-3; A3 - ACTS 26:4-8. B) SAUL GOES TO THE HIGH PRIEST FOR LETTERS TO PERSECUTE THE WAY: B1 - ACTS 9:1-2; B2 - ACTS 22:4-5; B3 - ACTS 26:9-12. C) THE LIGHT AND VOICE OF THE LORD ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS: C1 - ACTS 9:3-6; C2 - ACTS 22:6-8; C3 - ACTS 26:13-18. D) PAULS COMPANIONS RE THE LIGHT AND THE VOICE OF THE LORD: D1 - ACTS 9:7; D2 - ACTS 22:9; D3 – NONE. E) SAUL ARISES BLINDED AND IS LED TO DAMASCUS: E1 - ACTS 9:8; E2 - ACTS 22:10-11; E3 – NONE. F) PAUL NEITHER EATS NOR DRINKS FOR 3 DAYS: F1 - ACTS 9:9; F2 – NONE; F3 – NONE.

Further: G) ANANIAS IS COMMANDED BY THE LORD TO GO TO SAUL: G1 - ACTS 9:10-16; G2 – NONE; G3 – NONE. H) ANANIAS LAYS HANDS ON SAUL, WHO IS FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT: H1 - ACTS 9:17; H2 - ACTS 22:12-13a; H3 – NONE. I) SAUL SEES AND IS BAPTIZED: I1 - ACTS 9:18; I2 - ACTS 22:13b-16; I3 – NONE. J) SAUL STAYS IN DAMASCUS AND BEGINS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL: J1 - ACTS 9:19-22; J2 – NONE; J3 - ACTS 26:19-20a. K) THE JEWS IN DAMASCUS SEEK TO MURDER SAUL AND HE ESCAPES: K1 - ACTS 9:23-25; K2 – NONE; K3 – NONE. L) SAUL GOES TO JERUSALEM TO THE APOSTLES AND PREACHES CHRIST: L1 - ACTS 9:26-29; L2 - ACTS 22:17-21; L3 - ACTS 26:20b-23.

#### IX. THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR CORRESPONDING SEGMENTS OF TEXTS

I now list the 12 units and the actual Texts of each segment. “NONE” indicates that I found no Scripture Text for that unit in the segment considered:

##### A) SAUL A STRICT JEWISH PHARISEE BEFORE HIS CONVESION

###### A1 - NONE

###### A2 - ACTS 22:1-3

1: Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

2: (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith,)

3: I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of The Law of the fathers, and was zealous toward GOD, as ye all are this day.

###### A3 - ACTS 26:4-8

4: My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews;

5: Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

6: And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of GOD unto our fathers:

7: Unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving GOD day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews.

8: Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that GOD should raise the dead?

B) SAUL GOES TO THE HIGH PRIEST FOR LETTERS TO PERSECUTE THE WAY

B1 - ACTS 9:1-2

1: And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of The Lord, went unto the high priest,

2: And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.

B2 - ACTS 22:4-5

4: And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

5: As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished.

B3 - ACTS 26:9-12

9: I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to The Name of JESUS of Nazareth.

10: Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.

11: And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities.

12: Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,

C) THE LIGHT AND VOICE OF THE LORD ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

C1 - ACTS 9:3-6

3: And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:

4: And he fell to the earth, and heard a Voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?

5: And he said, Who art Thou, Lord? And The Lord said, I am JESUS Whom Thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

6: And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? And The Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

C2 - ACTS 22:6-8

6: And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me.

7: And I fell unto the ground, and heard a Voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?

8: And I answered, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said unto me, I am JESUS of Nazareth, Whom thou persecutest.

C3 - ACTS 26:13-18

13: At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.

14: And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a Voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

15: And I said, Who art Thou, Lord? And He said, I am JESUS Whom thou persecutest.

16: But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

17: Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee,

18: To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.

#### D) PAULS COMPANIONS RE THE LIGHT AND THE VOICE OF THE LORD

##### D1 - ACTS 9:7

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

##### D2 - ACTS 22:9

9: And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not The Voice of him that spake to me.

##### D3 - NONE

#### E) SAUL ARISES BLINDED AND IS LED TO DAMASCUS

##### E1 - ACTS 9:8

8: And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.

##### E2 - ACTS 22:10-11

10: And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And The Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do.

11: And when I could not see for The Glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.

##### E3 - NONE

#### F) PAUL NEITHER EATS NOR DRINKS FOR 3 DAYS

##### F1 - ACTS 9:9

9: And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

##### F2 - NONE

##### F3 - NONE

#### G) ANANIAS IS COMMANDED BY THE LORD TO GO TO SAUL

##### G1 - ACTS 9:10-16

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

11: And The Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

12: And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

13: Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem:

14: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy Name.

15: But The Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:

16: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake.

G2 - NONE

G3 - NONE

#### H) ANANIAS LAYS HANDS ON SAUL, WHO IS FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

H1 - ACTS 9:17

17: And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, The Lord, even JESUS, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest

receive thy sight, and be filled with The HOLY GHOST.

H2 - ACTS 22:12-13a

12: And one Ananias, a devout man according to The Law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there,

13: Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight...

H3 - NONE

#### D) SAUL SEES AND IS BAPTIZED

I1 - ACTS 9:18

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

I2 - ACTS 22:13b-16

13b: ... And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14: And he said, The GOD of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see That Just One, and shouldest hear The Voice of his mouth.

15: For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

16: And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on The Name of The Lord.

I3 - NONE

#### J) SAUL STAYS IN DAMASCUS AND BEGINS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

J1 - ACTS 9:19-22

19: And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

20: And straightway he preached CHRIST in the synagogues, that He is The Son of GOD.

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

22: But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at

Damascus, proving that This is [The] very CHRIST.

J2 - NONE

J3 - ACTS 26:19-20a

19: Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto The heavenly Vision:

20a: But shewed first unto them of Damascus and...

K) THE JEWS IN DAMASCUS SEEK TO MURDER SAUL AND HE ESCAPES

K1 - ACTS 9:23-25

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

24: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.

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

K2 - NONE

K3 - NONE

L) SAUL GOES TO JERUSALEM TO THE APOSTLES AND PREACHES CHRIST

L1 - ACTS 9:26-29

26: And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

27: But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the Apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen The Lord in the way, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in The Name of JESUS.

28: And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.

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

L2 - ACTS 22:17-21

17: And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in The Temple, I was in a trance;

18: And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me.

19: And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee:

20: And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

21: And He said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.

L3 - ACTS 26:20b-23

20b: ...[And then shewed unto them also] at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to GOD, and do works meet for repentance.

21: For these causes the Jews caught me in The Temple, and went about to kill me.

22: Having therefore obtained help of GOD, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come:

23: That CHRIST should suffer, and that He should be The First that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.

## X. COMPARING THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR SEGMENTS OF TEXTS

In unit A, “SAUL A STRICT JEWISH PHARISEE BEFORE HIS CONVESION,” we find segment A1 in ACTS 9 silent, while segments A2 in ACTS 22:1-3 and segment A3 in ACTS 26:4-8 record Paul declaring his devout Jewish life and Faith as a Pharisee before and after his conversion experience. So he declares to his fellow Jews in ACTS 22:3, “I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of The Law of the fathers, and was zealous toward GOD, as ye all are this day.”<sup>88</sup> And in ACTS 26:4-5 before the secular rulers Paul states, “My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.”<sup>89</sup> Luke does not need to inform us that Saul was a devout Jewish Pharisee in ACTS 9, for this is already known to us.

In unit B, “ SAUL GOES TO THE HIGH PRIEST FOR LETTERS TO PERSECUTE THE WAY,” we find our control segment B1 in ACTS 9:1-2 documenting Saul’s animosity and persecution for The Way, “And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of The Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of This Way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.”<sup>90</sup> In segments B2 in ACTS 22:4-5 and B3 in ACTS 26:9-12 we find the now converted Paul confessing this commonly known thing before his two different audiences with equal candor and accuracy.

In unit C, “THE LIGHT AND VOICE OF THE LORD ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS,” Luke documents in our control segment C1 in ACTS 9:3-6 the voice from Heaven and the striking Divine light phenomenon, and The Words common to all 3 segments “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?”<sup>91</sup> In segment C2 in ACTS 22:6-8 we find Paul recounting these events directly to the Jewish mob. In segment C3 in ACTS 26:13-18 we find Paul giving a more detailed account of the same events to his more restrained audience. In both speeches Paul recalls the identical words of The risen Lord, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?”<sup>92</sup>

In unit D, “PAULS COMPANIONS RE THE LIGHT AND THE VOICE OF THE LORD,” we find our historical control segment D1 in ACTS 9:7 recording, “And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.” In segment D2 in ACTS 22:9 Paul reports of the light and the voice to the Jewish crowd, “And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of Him that spake to me.” Some claim this as a contradiction, but in fact, there is none. D1 records that Saul’s companions heard a voice but saw no man speaking. D2 records that they saw, not a man, but the light. However, D2 says Saul’s companions did

---

<sup>88</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:3.

<sup>89</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 26:4-5.

<sup>90</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:1-2.

<sup>91</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:4.

<sup>92</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:7; 26:14.

not hear “the voice of Him that spake” to Saul. From D1 we understand they heard a voice. From D2 we understand they simply did not hear The Voice of CHRIST. Segment D3 in ACTS 26 is absent.

In unit E, “SAUL ARISES BLINDED AND IS LED TO DAMASCUS,” we find in our historical control segment E1 in ACTS 9:8 that Saul, having fallen to the ground, when he opened his eyes, his sight was so poor that “he saw no man,” which necessitated that he be “led by the hand... into Damascus.”<sup>93</sup> In segment E2 in ACTS 22:10-11 we find Paul declaring the same events, that “I could not see for The Glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus.”<sup>94</sup> In segment E3 ACTS 26 is silent.

In unit F, “PAUL NEITHER EATS NOR DRINKS FOR 3 DAYS,” we find our historical control segment F1 in ACTS 9:9 reporting that Paul fasted, neither eating or drinking, for 3 days, “And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.”<sup>95</sup> During this time, he was blind. Segments F2 in ACTS 22 and F3 in ACTS 26 are silent.

In unit G, “ANANIAS IS COMMANDED BY THE LORD TO GO TO SAUL,” we find in the historical control segment G1 in ACTS 9:10-16 recording that Ananias was directed by The Lord to go to Saul, that he should prayerfully lay hands upon Saul, that then Saul’s vision would be restored and the purpose of The Lord for his doing so – bringing The Gospel of salvation to the Gentiles. ACTS 9:13-16 records for us, “Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy Name. But The Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My Name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My Name's sake.”<sup>96</sup> Segments G2 in ACTS 22 and G3 in ACTS 26 are silent.

In unit H, “ANANIAS LAYS HANDS ON SAUL, WHO IS FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT,” we find in our historical control segment H1 in ACTS 9:17 the account of Ananias obeying The Lord. He sought out Paul, prayerfully prayed over him, his sight was restored and Paul was now filled with The HOLY SPIRIT. In segment H2 in ACTS 22:12-13a Paul recounts these events to his fellow Jews, adding the important clarification in ACTS 22:12, “And one Ananias, a devout man according to The Law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there.”<sup>97</sup> Segment H3 in ACTS 26 is silent.

---

<sup>93</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:8.

<sup>94</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:11.

<sup>95</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:9.

<sup>96</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:13-16.

<sup>97</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:13.



In unit I, “SAUL SEES AND IS BAPTIZED,” our historical control segment I1 in ACTS 9:18 records that Paul’s vision was immediately restored and that he was baptized. Paul shares these events in his speech to his fellow Jews in segment I2 in ACTS 22:13b-16, adding The Lord’s commission to him by the mouth of Ananias, who said, “...The GOD of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know His will, and see That Just One, and shouldest hear The Voice of His mouth. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on The Name of the Lord!”<sup>98</sup> Segment I3 in ACTS 26 is silent.

In unit J, “SAUL STAYS IN DAMASCUS AND BEGINS TO PREACH THE GOSPEL,” we find the historical control segment J1 in ACTS 9:19-22 that Paul stayed in Damascus for some time, “And straightway he preached CHRIST in the synagogues, that He is The Son of GOD. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on This Name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that This is [The] very CHRIST.”<sup>99</sup> Paul wisely did not declare this to the already enraged Jewish mob he addressed in ACTS 22. And so we find segment J2 in ACTS 22 is silent. Segment J3 in ACTS 26:19-20a, where Paul states his case before the ruling secular authorities, records that Paul confirms only that he was obedient to The Vision and that he preached CHIST in Damascus.

In unit K, “THE JEWS IN DAMASCUS SEEK TO MURDER SAUL AND HE ESCAPES,” we find the historical control segment K1 in ACTS 9:23-25 records Paul’s escape from Jewish opponents in Damascus, “And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him. Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.”<sup>100</sup> Segments K2 in ACTS 22 and K3 in ACTS 26 are silent. That the Jewish mob knew their desire to see Paul put to death was the reason for their tumult. That the secular Jewish and Gentile rulers knew this was the reason Paul stood before them.

In unit L, “SAUL GOES TO JERUSALEM TO THE APOSTLES AND PREACHES CHRIST,” we find the historical control segment L1 in ACTS 9:26-29 recording that Paul preached JESUS as The CHRIST in next in Jerusalem, this after he had met The Apostles of The infant Church there, and how there were those who would slay him for proclaiming salvation to the Gentiles. Paul’s speech to the Jewish crowd in segment L2 in ACTS 22:17-21 ends boldly, “And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in The Temple, I was in a trance; And saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me. And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on Thee: And when the blood of thy martyr

---

<sup>98</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:14-16.

<sup>99</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:20-22.

<sup>100</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:23-25.

Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.”<sup>101</sup> In segment L3 in ACTS 26:20b-23 Paul repeats this material to his royal audience.

#### XI. ANALYZING THE 12 UNITS AND THEIR SEGMENTS OF TEXTS

Under the inspiration of The HOLY SPIRIT, it is reasonable to give both Luke, Paul and The Almighty latitude to vary what is said and what is not said, what events are recounted and what are withheld, in the writing of The Holy Text and the needs of each audience. If we take ACTS 9 as our historical “control” of Paul’s conversion, it being the most comprehensive of the 3 accounts, then it is quite reasonable that we should find only parts of its contents in the 2 situations recorded by Luke when Paul himself addresses different audiences in different situations.

The most seeming apparent discrepancy we may observe is to be found in unit D, “PAULS COMPANIONS RE THE LIGHT AND THE VOICE OF THE LORD.” In segment D1 from ACTS 9:7, the companions of Saul see the light, but hear no voice, “And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.”<sup>102</sup> In segment D2 from ACTS 22:9, the companions of Saul do not see light, but hear the voice, “And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.”<sup>103</sup> Wycliffe offers 2 possible resolutions: First, “the Greek construction in 9:7 is different from that in 22:9. The former statement may mean that they heard a sound and the latter verse that they did not understand its content.” Or second, that “9:7 refers to Saul’s voice speaking to the light; the men heard Saul’s voice but they did not hear the voice speaking from the light to Saul (22:9).”<sup>104</sup>

We have observed that many of the third segments are absent in ACTS 22 as compared with ACTS 9. But as we have seen, not all of what the historical “control” recorded in ACTS 9 records was immediately relevant to Paul’s enraged Jewish audience in ACTS 22. Paul in ACTS 22 stands before his fellow enraged Jews, and as Wycliffe notes, “...was not concerned to give a complete account of his [conversion] experience... He relates another aspect of his experience in Jerusalem that Luke did not record in his earlier account. ACTS 9 says that Paul was sent away from Jerusalem by the brethren to escape a plot to kill him (vv. 28-30). Here [in ACTS 22] Paul tells us that he had left Jerusalem in response to a Word from The Lord. While he was praying in The Temple as a faithful Jew, GOD had warned him in a trance that Jerusalem would not receive his Message and that he therefore should get quickly out of Jerusalem.”<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>101</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:17-21.

<sup>102</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:7.

<sup>103</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 22:9.

<sup>104</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ACTS 9:7, p 1140.

<sup>105</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ACTS 22:17-21, p 1166-1167.

We have observed that many of the third segments are absent also in ACTS 26 as compared to ACTS 9. But we should again not be surprised to read some variations in what Luke records here of Paul's defense before these secular Jewish and Gentile officials. As Wycliffe observes, a central tenant of the Jewish Pharisees was the resurrection of the just. Paul proclaims himself a devout Pharisee and reminds his audience of this central tenant, and that it was an amazing injustice "...that Jews who have hope in the resurrection should accuse Paul for entertaining this very hope" in JESUS CHRIST!<sup>106</sup> Before these rulers, there was no need to refer to Ananias, just as there had been no immediate need to do so in ACTS 22. "Paul therefore attributed his call directly to The Lord without mention of the human agency." He then declares before King Agrippa II the central issue, that salvation is not only for the Jews, but for all the Gentiles also.<sup>107</sup>

## XII. DISCUSSION

That The Words of The risen and glorified CHRIST are recorded by Luke in all three accounts exactly the same reflect the accuracy of Luke's research. So in ACTS 9:4, ACTS 22:7 and ACTS 26:14 we read, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"<sup>108</sup> That Paul would repeat These Words so central to his conversion and work as a servant of CHRIST is not surprising. He would have recounted his conversion experience and The Words of The Lord many times to many people.

As The New American Bible comments here, The Words of CHRIST, coupled with Paul's face-to-face encounter with The risen Son of GOD, "...exerted a profound and lasting influence on the thought of Paul. Under the influence of justification by faith...<sup>109</sup><sup>110</sup> and of the identification of the Christian community with [The risen] JESUS CHRIST"<sup>111</sup> as The very Body of CHRIST<sup>112</sup> We should thus not be surprised that an event so important to Paul and The Church – with the resulting spread of The Gospel beyond Jewish Palestine to the Gentiles throughout the entire world - should not escape the repeated study and documentation of Luke in ACTS three times.

---

<sup>106</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ACTS 26:6-8, p 1172.

<sup>107</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, ACTS 26:16-18, p 1172.

<sup>108</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 9:4, ACTS 22:7, ACTS 26:14.

<sup>109</sup> 3, KJV, GALATIANS 3:11,24, "But that no man is justified by The Law in the sight of GOD, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. Wherefore The Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto CHRIST, that we might be justified by faith."

<sup>110</sup> 3, KJV, ROMANS 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with GOD through our Lord JESUS CHRIST."

<sup>111</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 9, p 1181. Commentary note, "ACTS 9:1-19."

<sup>112</sup> 3, KJV, I CORINTHIANS 12:27, "Now ye are The Body of CHRIST, and members in particular."

Recall also Luke's personal interest here, not only as a missionary companion of Paul and thus an eyewitness of many of his words and deeds, but also in that Luke himself was a Gentile Christian who was keenly aware of the need and joy of the Gentiles receiving The Gospel of CHRIST. So Wycliffe observes that the human author of ACTS and LUKE - as Church tradition teaches and as the internal evidence of ACTS supports - was almost certainly "...Luke, a friend and companion of Paul." The "we" sections in ACTS <sup>113</sup> suggests "...that the author was Paul's companion" who kept and used for This Book "his travel diary as his source."<sup>114</sup>

Wycliffe further notes, "As a companion of Paul, ...[Luke] was in a position to gather firsthand information from The Apostle. Furthermore, since Luke was in Palestine during Paul's Caesarean imprisonment..., <sup>115</sup> he had ample opportunity to gather information about the early days of The Church from eyewitnesses." Luke does not write of all The Apostles, but primarily of Peter and Paul, with mention of James as head of The Jerusalem Church and Council that addressed evangelism to the Gentiles. Luke writes of the salvation in JESUS CHRIST that he himself has been blessed with, that is, the story of "...the extension of The Church from Jerusalem to Rome," expanding from primarily Palestinian Jewish into the entire known Gentile world. Therefore, Luke writes primarily of the two Apostles of equal stature, Peter and Paul. <sup>116</sup>

### XIII. IN CONCLUSION

That there should be 3 accounts of Paul's conversion to CHRIST in ACTS reflects the importance of this event to The Church and the spread of The Gospel to the Gentiles beyond Palestine through primarily Paul's ministries. Luke, the human author of ACTS, was personally aware of the importance of GOD's work in Paul to the Gentiles. As The New American Bible observes, "...That Luke would narrate this conversion three times is testimony to the importance he attaches to it. The first account occurs when The Word is first spread to the Gentiles. At this point, the conversion of the hero of the Gentile mission is recounted. The emphasis in the account is on Paul as a Divinely chosen instrument" <sup>117</sup> of the Lord for evangelizing the Gentiles into The Kingdom of GOD.

We may confidently conclude that there are no actual discrepancies between Luke's 3 accounts of Paul's conversion in ACTS chapters 9, 22 and 26. Different circumstances and different aspects of the same one event are presented. In ACTS 9, Saint Luke, having gathered the historic records and testimonies from Paul himself and elsewhere, gives the fullest account of the conversion of Saul in primarily the third person singular, "He." This we may regard as the "control" account in ACTS of these

---

<sup>113</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 16:10-17; 20:5-21:18; 17:1-28:16.

<sup>114</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 1123, "The Acts of The Apostles, Introduction, Author."

<sup>115</sup> 3, KJV, ACTS 21:18; 27:1.

<sup>116</sup> 9, Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p 1123, "The Acts of The Apostles, Introduction, Purpose," paragraph 2.

<sup>117</sup> 15, NAB, ACTS 9, p 1181. Commentary note, "ACTS 9:1-19."

events.

In ACTS 22 we have The Apostle Paul addressing fellow Jews with select relevant items in his conversion. So Luke records him as speaking in the first person singular, "I." In ACTS 26 Paul addresses a mix of Romanized Jewish rulers and their pagan Roman overseers – royalty and government officials – and so applies many common and also other details to bring a worthy and relevant testimony to that particular audience. And again Luke records Paul in the first person singular, "I."

That all 3 accounts should have so many common units, as we have seen, testify to the accuracy of the events recorded by Luke. That there should be divergences between the 3 records in ACTS are not, as Bible critics who deny the Divinely inspired inerrancy of The Holy Scriptures, would have us believe. In their efforts to soothe their dark consciences that there is no GOD, the better to retain their fallen state of iniquity, they miss the most obvious point of all – that the 3 records of Paul's conversion in ACTS should be received as a mosaic together as one! We may be confident of the accuracy contained Therein and place our trust instead in The Word of The LORD!

#### XIV. REFERENCES

1. "Catechism of The Catholic Church." United States Catholic Conference. Doubleday of Random House, Inc. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland. 1995.
2. "Introduction to Dogmatic Theology – on The Basics of The Thirty Nine Articles." E. A. Litton. Edited by H. G. Grey. Classical Anglican Press, Houston, Texas. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. 2000.
3. "King James Version [Bible]." Bible Works 7. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
4. "Matthew Henry's Notes." Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
5. "A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs." David W. Bercot, Editor. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., Peabody, Massachusetts. 1998.
6. "Fausset's Bible Dictionary." Bible Works 7. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
7. "New Testament Introduction." Donald Guthrie. Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois. 1990, Revised Edition.
8. "A Commentary and Critical Notes [on The Holy Bible]." Adam Clarke. The Bible Truth Forum. Bob Allgood. Pineville, North Carolina. <http://www.bibletruthforum.com>.
9. "The Wycliffe Bible Commentary." Edited by Charles F. Pfeiffer & Everett F. Harrison. The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Moody Press. 3<sup>rd</sup> printing, 1966.
10. "Critical Explanatory Commentary, New Testament." Jamieson, Fausset and Brown. The Bible Truth Forum. Bob Allgood. Pineville, North Carolina. <http://www.bibletruthforum.com>.
11. "The Bible Knowledge Commentary - New Testament Edition." Edited by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Scripture Press Publications Inc., USA. 1983. Ninth printing 1988.
12. "Geneva Bible Notes." Bible Works 7. Bible Works, LLC. Norfolk, Virginia. 2006.
13. "Commentary on ACTS, Volume 1." John Calvin. The Bible Truth Forum. Bob Allgood. Pineville, North Carolina. <http://www.bibletruthforum.com>.

14. "Wesley's Notes on The Bible." John Wesley. The Bible Truth Forum. Bob Allgood. Pineville, North Carolina. <http://www.bibletruthforum.com>.
15. "The New American Bible." National Conference of Catholic Bishops. World Catholic Press. Canada. 1987.