

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Was Saul Saved On The Road To Damascus?

By Donnie V. Rader

A very popular concept among religious people is that Saul of Tarsus was saved on the road to Damascus. The argument is that he was saved by faith on the road before he reached Damascus where he was baptized.

Some Of The Arguments

1. *Saul was a brother in Christ before baptism.* One of the arguments that our friends make is that Ananias called Saul, “**Brother Saul**” (Acts 22:13), thus he was a brother in the Lord before he was baptized. However, “**brother**” does not always mean a brother in Christ, but one who is a kinsman. Peter called murderers “**brethren**” before they repented (Acts 2:29; 3:14, 17). Stephen called the mob that stoned him “**brethren**” (Acts 7:2).

2. *Saul was born again out of due time when he saw the Lord (1 Cor. 15:8), thus saved on the road.* Look closely at this text: “**Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.**”

It doesn't say that he was born again or even that he was born. It says, “**as by one born out of due time.**” he text is not talking about his salvation, but his being a witness of the resurrected Lord. He saw the Lord, as one who was born out of due time.

3. *God would not appear to a sinner calling him to be an apostle and preach.* Hence, the argument says that Saul was saved when God appeared to him.

If this argument proves anything it proves that Saul was saved before faith. For, the Lord appeared to him before he believed on the Lord. It would also prove salvation before and without repentance for he had not repented when the Lord appeared to him. If God could choose Jeremiah before his birth (Jer. 1:5), why not Saul before his spiritual birth?

Other arguments are made that we do not have space to develop and answer. However, in answering any of these arguments, we must remember that whatever conclusion we draw must harmonize with what Acts 9 and other texts say about Saul's conversion (Acts 22; 26).

If Saul Was Saved On The Road To Damascus...

If Saul was saved on the road, as the claim is made, the following are consequences of that conclusion.

1. *Sins were not washed away.* For, Ananias said, “**And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord**” (Acts 22:16). He was commanded to be baptized to wash away his sins. That was in Damascus. Thus, if he was saved on the road before reaching Damascus, he was saved while still in his sins.

2. *He was the most miserable saved man.* For three days he was blind and didn't eat or drink anything (Acts 9:9). That is a far cry from the story of the Ethiopian treasurer who immediately went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39).

3. *The Lord didn't know it.* If he was saved, the Lord didn't know it for he told Saul to go into the city and he would be told what to do (Acts 9:6).

4. *Ananias didn't know it.* If he was saved on the road, Ananias, the preacher that God sent, didn't know it, for he told him to be baptized and wash away his sins (Acts 22:16).

5. *Saul didn't know it.* If he was saved on the road, Saul himself didn't know it for he did exactly what Ananias had commanded (Acts 22:16).

Thus, those who know that Saul was saved on the road, know something that Ananias, Saul and God himself didn't know.

What Did Saul Do To Be Saved?

Saul did what every other convert to the Lord did, or else God would be a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11).

Thus, if others had to repent and be baptized (and they did, Acts 2:38; Acts 8:12, 38) Saul did too. Saul...

1. *Believed on the Lord.* The fact that he went into the city as the Lord instructed him (Acts 22:11) tells us that. Furthermore, we find him preaching that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20). Thus, he believed as the Lord commanded in the great commission (Mark 16:16).

2. *Repented of his sins.* This is evidenced by his fasting and prayer when he arrived in Damascus (Acts 9:9, 11).

3. *He was baptized.* He was told to be baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16). He immediately was baptized (Acts 9:9).

Since confession of faith is essential according to Romans 10:9-10, we know he confessed his faith in the Lord as the Eunuch did (Acts 8:37).

Saul was not saved on the road to Damascus! – *El Bethel Church of Christ*, Articles for Study. ■

Why Send Ananias?

By John Isaac Edwards

Acts 9:10-11 reports where the Lord sent Ananias to Saul of Tarsus. If some things said today are true, this would not have been necessary. Why send Ananias...

If too bad to be saved? Saul was among the worst! (Acts 7:58; 22:20; 8:3; 22:4; 1 Tim. 1:5).

If saved by grace alone, without doing anything? No need to send Ananias, if Saul was already saved by grace alone, and there was nothing for him to do!

If saved by prayer? No need for Ananias to go, if saved by prayer, “*...for, behold, he prayeth*” (Acts 9:11)!

If saved by zeal? Saul “*...was zealous toward God...*” (Acts 22:3). It must take more than being zealous, otherwise, why send Ananias?

If saved by a good conscience? No need to send Ananias, if one can just let his conscience be his guide. Saul “*...lived in all good conscience...*” (Acts 23:1).

If saved by being religious? Saul was a religious man (Gal. 1:13-14; Phil. 3:5; Acts 26:5).

If saved by keeping traditions? Saul was “*...zealous of the traditions of my fathers...*” (Gal. 1:14).

If saved without being baptized? Ananias was sent to tell Saul what he **must do** (Acts 9:6; 22:10). He was told, “*...arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins...*” (Acts 22:16).

Strange language, if baptism isn't required! — *Terre Haute church of Christ*, newspaper articles. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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