

THE R.U.S.H. BIBLE STUDY

THE LIFE OF THE APOSTLE PAUL



KNOW WHAT YOUR TALKING ABOUT FAST



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Romans supplement: The Life of the Apostle Paul.

APPROXIMATE TIMELINE: APOSTLE PAUL'S PHYSICAL BIRTH TO FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY

2 A.D. His Physical Birth in Tarsus Saul's (Paul's) was born in the city of Tarsus to an Israelite family of the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5). He is circumcised on the eighth day; in compliance with the law of God (Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3, Philippians 3:5).

*⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee;
Philippians 3:5*

12 to 15 A.D. Religious Training in Jerusalem Saul's family sends him to Jerusalem to be taught in a Pharisaic Rabbinical school. The school is led by the well-respected Rabbi Gamaliel (see Acts 5:34)

³⁴ But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time.

Acts 5:34



who personally teaches the future apostle (Acts 22:3).

"I am a Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but having been brought up in this city, having been instructed at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strictness of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God just as you all are today,

Acts 22:5

32 A.D.

Martyrdom of Stephen Stephen is stoned to death for his testimony about the Lord Jesus (Acts 6-7). He is one of the first servants appointed by the early church (Acts 6:1-6) to minister to the widows. A zealous Saul (Paul) consents to and witnesses Stephen's death (Acts 7:58 - 8:1).

⁵⁸ And when they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he was calling out and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he  fell asleep. Acts 7:58-8:1



33 A.D.

The Conversion of Saul: His Spiritual Birth Saul requests and receives, from the High Priest, permission to go to search for those who believe in the Lord Jesus. He is given the authority to arrest anyone who attends a Synagogue and professes belief in "the Way." Those arrested are to be taken back to Jerusalem for trial and punishment (Acts 9:1-2). As Saul approaches the city, a burst of light suddenly appears and causes him to fall to the ground (Acts 9:3-4). He then hears the voice of the Lord Jesus asking why he is persecuting Christ (Acts 9:4). Blinded, he is led to Damascus where his repentance leads to his repentance, as he is healed, baptized, and follows Christ wholeheartedly (Acts 9:4-18).



33 to 36 A.D. Paul is taught by the Lord Jesus Christ After his conversion and then fleeing Damascus due to persecution (Acts 9:20-25), Paul spends 3 years in Nabataean Arabia. Some biblical scholars believe that God gave him 3 years there because the original 12 had 3 years with Jesus. Paul was given his 3 years to learn directly from the Lord Jesus face to face. (1 Corinthians 15:8, Galatians 1:11-12, 15-18).

⁸ and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

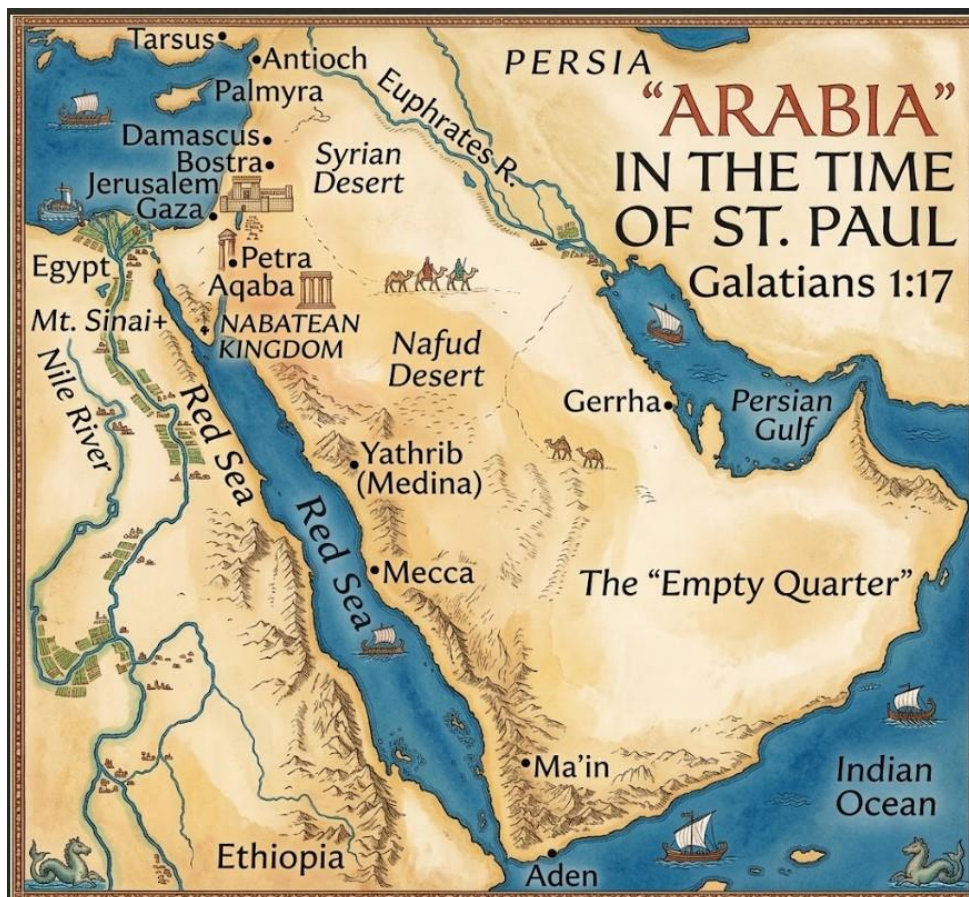
1 Corinthians 15:8

¹¹ For I make known to you, brothers, that the gospel which I am proclaiming as good news is not according to man. ¹² For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:11-2

¹⁵ But when God, who had set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased ¹⁶ to reveal His Son in me so that I might proclaim Him as good news among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, ¹⁷ nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me, but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. ¹⁸ Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to ^[b]become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days.

Galatians 1:15-18



36 A.D.

Paul's First Visit to Jerusalem after His Conversion to Christ After three years in Arabia, Paul journeys back to Damascus (Galatians 1:17). He then travels to Jerusalem and stays almost two weeks (Acts 9:26, Galatians 1:18-19).

Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to ^[a]become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. ¹⁹ But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. Galatians 1:18-19

Paul's preaching angers some Jews to the point where they plot to take his life (Acts 9:29).



²⁹ And he was talking and arguing with the Hellenistic Jews, but they were attempting to put him to death. Acts 9:29

He is soon sent by church brethren to Caesarea and back home to Tarsus (Acts 9:30).

³⁰ But when the brothers learned of it, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him away to Tarsus. Acts 9:30

36 to 40 A.D.

Staying Home in Tarsus Apostle Paul stays in his hometown of Tarsus for four years.

40 to 41 A.D.

Growth in the Antioch Church

Men from Cyprus and Cyrene travel to Antioch of Syria and to reach out to Gentiles concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God blesses their efforts and a great number of people become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11:20-21).

²⁰ And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the LORD Jesus. ²¹ And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord. Acts 11:20-21

Barnabas travels to Tarsus to seek Paul's help with teaching the newly converted Syrian Antioch Gentiles. They journey from Tarsus back to Antioch and stay in the city for an entire year (Acts 11:25-26).

Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul:

²⁶ And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. Acts 11:25-26

42 A.D.

A Famine is Prophesized

God, in Antioch, reveals through the Prophet Agabus that a 3-year famine will occur (Acts 11:27-28).

And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch.

²⁸ And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Acts 11:27-28

44 A.D.

Famine relief to Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas escort food and relief supplies to Jerusalem, after which they return to Antioch (Acts 12:25).

²⁵ And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled their ministry, and took with them John, whose surname was Mark. Acts 12:25

44 to 46 A.D.

Apostle Paul's First Missionary Journey begins

Paul and Barnabas are ordained by the church as the two are set apart for the work the Lord had for them to accomplish (Acts 13:1-3).

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

² As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. ³ And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. Acts 13:1-3



1st Missionary Trip 45-49AD

From Syrian Antioch Paul, Barnabas and John Mark begin the first missionary journey (Acts 13:4-52, 14:1-25). They travel to Salamis on the island of Cyprus. After preaching the gospel they walk to Paphos on the other side of the island. In Paphos the evangelistic team meets with the island's governor and his friend Elymas, a sorcerer. Paul, after Elymas tries to prevent the governor from receiving and accepting the gospel message, renders the sorcerer blind through a miracle (Acts 13:6-12).

⁶ And when they had gone through the isle unto Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew, whose name was Barjesus:

⁷ Which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of God.

⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for so is his name by interpretation) withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith.

⁹ Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.

¹⁰ And said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?

¹¹ And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand.

¹² Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord. Acts 13:6-12

John Mark Returns to Jerusalem

Paul, Barnabas, and Mark sail to Perga. After docking, John Mark leaves and returns to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13).

¹³ Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem. Acts 13:13

The two evangelists leave Perga and go to Pisidian Antioch where they are rejected. In Antioch Paul and Barnabas attend a synagogue where the apostle powerfully preaches the gospel (Acts 13:16-41). Although many in the city initially believe what is taught, they are soon turned against the gospel by some Jews who do not believe Jesus is the Messiah (Acts 13:42).

⁴² And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath. Acts 13:42

The evangelists are thrown out of the area and travel to Iconium. As his custom was Paul preaches in a local synagogue. Once again, sadly, unbelieving Jews stir up many in the city to oppose the truth. After learning of a plot to have them stoned to death, the two preachers flee to Lystra (Acts 14:1-6).

And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

² But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren. ³ Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

⁴ But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles. ⁵ And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them, ⁶ They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: Acts 14:1-6

Honored then Stoned, In Lystra Paul heals a crippled man. Those who see the miracle are so amazed that they try to worship the evangelists like gods (Acts 14:6-13)!

They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about: ⁷ And there they preached the gospel. ⁸ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

⁹ The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, ¹⁰ Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

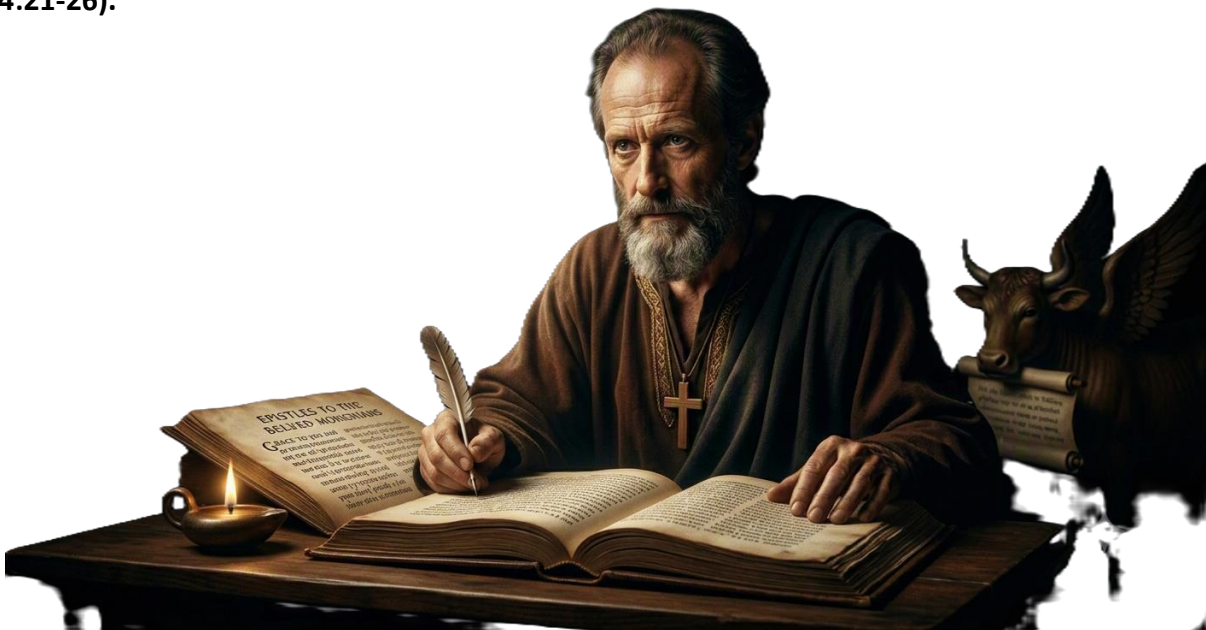
¹¹ And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. ¹² And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. ¹³ Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

Soon, however, Jews from other areas come to the city in order to cause trouble for the two apostles. The crowds are stirred up against Paul and attempt to stone him to death. After the stoning, his “dead body” is dragged out of Lystra.



He miraculously regains consciousness and re-enters the city. The next day he and Barnabas travel to Derbe (Acts 14:19-20).

A few more cities: Paul and Barnabas preach the gospel in Derbe then retrace their steps back through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. They ultimately arrive back at Syrian Antioch (Acts 14:21-26).



It is after this point in his life as Paul would go to Corinth that he would write the Romans this letter in 57 A.D.



Second Missionary Journey: Circa A.D. 49 – 52

Scripture: Acts 15:36 – 18:22 Core Details: Paul partnered with Silas, traveling through Asia Minor and crossing into Europe after receiving the Macedonian call. They planted major churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth.



Third Missionary Journey: Circa A.D. 53 – 58

Scripture: Acts 18:23 – 21:17 Core Details: This trip focused heavily on Ephesus, where Paul stayed for about three years. He revisited Greece before returning to Jerusalem, where he was arrested.

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Fourth Missionary Journey: Circa A.D. 62 – 67

Scripture: Titus 1:5, 3:12; 1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 4:13, 20
Core Details: Not recorded in Acts, this journey is pieced together from his later letters after his release from his first Roman house arrest (Acts 28). He left Titus in Crete, Timothy in Ephesus, and traveled toward Macedonia and possibly Spain before his final arrest and martyrdom.

He is believed to have been beheaded during Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus reign, which spanned from 54-68 AD.





Paul's Tomb

The Burial (c. A.D. 64–67): Following his martyrdom by beheading under Emperor Nero, church tradition holds that Paul's body was buried about two miles away in a Roman burial ground along the Via Ostiensis (Ostiense Way). The land belonged to a Christian woman named Lucina, who provided the plot.

The Basilica: In the 4th century, Emperor Constantine built the first church directly over the grave site. Over centuries of rebuilding, the main altar has always remained positioned precisely over the ancient tomb.

Archaeological Findings: In 2006, Vatican archaeologists excavated beneath the altar and unearthed a massive marble sarcophagus dating to the late 4th century. It sits beneath a stone slab bearing the ancient Latin inscription: *PAULO APOSTOLO MART* ("*To Paul, Apostle and Martyr*"). A small window-like opening was built below the altar so that visitors can view the tomb directly.

Scientific Testing: In 2009, the Vatican announced that a small probe inserted into the sarcophagus collected bone fragments, purple linen cloth, and gold threads. Carbon-14 dating confirmed that the bone fragments belonged to someone who lived between the 1st and 2nd centuries, strongly reinforcing the traditional claim.



The Abbey of the Three Fountains (Abbazia delle Tre Fontane) is located in Rome, Italy, at the spot historically known as *Aquae Salviae*. According to Christian tradition, this is the exact location where the Apostle Paul was beheaded around A.D. 64–67 under the reign of Roman Emperor Nero.

The Miracle of the Three Fountains

Because Paul was a Roman citizen, Roman law dictated that he be executed by decapitation rather than crucifixion. Church tradition holds that when his head was severed, it bounced three times on the sloping ground. At each spot where it struck, a natural spring miraculously welled up:

- **The first spring flowed with warm milk**
- **The second spring flowed with blood**
- **The third spring flowed with pure water**
-

Today, three distinct fountains stand at varying elevations within the main church on the property, marking these precise locations.

Key Historic Sites on the Abbey Grounds

The serene, eucalyptus-lined abbey complex contains three separate churches, each holding deep historical significance:

Church of San Paolo alle Tre Fontane (St. Paul at the Three Fountains): This is the exact site of the martyrdom. Rebuilt in 1599, the church houses the three historic fountains, which were sealed off in 1950 to preserve the water quality. Inside, visitors can see the ancient marble column to which Paul was allegedly bound during his execution.



Church of Santa Maria Scala Coeli (Holy Mary of the Staircase to Heaven): Built over an ancient cemetery, this church gets its name from a vision seen by St. Bernard, who witnessed souls ascending to heaven via a ladder. Its crypt holds the remains of thousands of early Christian martyrs and Roman soldiers who converted to Christianity.



Church of Saints Vincent and Anastasius: Built in the 7th century, this is the largest and oldest church on the grounds. It features stunning, austere medieval architecture and houses the remains of St. Anastasius.



