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## Paul

Paul was the great New Testament apostle to the Gentiles. He lived during and shortly after the days when Jesus Christ walked the Earth. The Gentiles were the Israelite tribes who migrated north and west of Judea/Palestine going mostly into Europe. Paul's Israelite name was Saul. He was of the tribe of Benjamin of the House of Israel. (Philippians 3:5)

Before Paul became a Christian he was responsible for much of the persecution against Christians on the part of the Jewish Temple Priests whom the Romans had given consent to handle religious matters in that locale. In fact, up until his conversion Paul hated the Christians and felt that ridding the land of them was doing a work for God.

On his way to Damascus with some companions is when his conversion took place. Sun worship at high noon was in vogue among the various corrupt religious cults of Paul's day including the superstitious mixed Jewish creed and Roman beliefs of that time. The false prophets in the days of Elijah the prophet called on their god at high noon with extreme zeal (I Kings 18:20) Although the account doesn't directly tell us, Paul was probably noting some type of high noon religious prayer (or awareness at least) because Jesus Christ appeared out of heaven to him at this hour and greatly out-shined the noon day Sun to make a clear impression upon Paul as to Christ's sovereignty as the true supreme living divinity. (Acts 9:3)

Paul was so overwhelmed with the vision that he fell to the ground and asked who the appearance was. Christ spoke to Paul and said *“I am Jesus whom thou art persecuting: it is hard for thee to kick against the (goad) pricks.”* (Acts 9:5) Paul received his calling from Christ to be converted to HIM, and Paul was then blind for three days until he came to the house of Ananias, a devout Christian, where Paul received his sight again, was gifted with the Holy Spirit into his heart, and was afterward baptized.(9:17,18)

It was after this conversion that Paul carried forth the message of the Gospel of Christ with even more energy than which he had persecuted the Christians. He engaged in great journeys to travel to the nations (Gentiles) outside of Judea in order to reach those dispersed tribes of Israel and tell them that The Messiah (Jesus) had indeed come.

Paul met with massive resistance from the Jewish leaders who had even plotted Paul's death because of his testimony for Christ. (Acts 23:12). Likewise, Paul received 39 lashes with a whip on five occasions from the Jews for preaching the word of salvation of Jesus Christ. (II Corinthians 11:24) These trials however did not dissuade Paul from his mission and calling He received from Christ. Paul was used of God to lead many to the glorious salvation of the Only Begotten Son of God – Jesus, the Christ, our King.