

The Jews Religion

(Galatians 1:13)

Paul speaks of his childhood and education in the Jews Religion. He was born in the prominent city of Tarsus as a Roman citizen with the name of Saul from the Jewish tribe of Benjamin. He had excelled in the religion of the Jews, far above many of his peers. He had studied under the Rabbi Gamaliel who was considered to be the greatest authority of the Jews Religion in his day.

Saul had obtained a seat on the Sanhedrin Counsel at some point after the death of Jesus. He was not present when the counsel had voted for the death of the false Messiah from Nazareth, but now the counsel was concerned with the Sect of the Nazarenes which claimed that a resurrection had occurred.

Saul was commissioned by the counsel with papers of authority to bring to justice any of the blasphemers from the sect of the Nazarenes. He had been very successful in Judea where many were stoned to death leaving widows and orphans for the early Church community to care for. He claimed that the risen Jesus had apprehended him on a journey to Damascus and commissioned him to be an Ambassador.

Saul immediately became the poster child of the Nazarenes, having been the chief leader in the Jews religion and persecuting the Church so fervently. His testimony of seeing Jesus alive was the most powerful that the Church had ever had because prior to Saul only Disciples were making the claim, now a chief adversary from the Jews religion was confirming the Resurrection.

His testimony of the Resurrection was very difficult to give. It was somewhat like that of a person today who claims to have seen an UFO. It will be welcomed by those who have seen, but doubted by others.

Saul was not welcomed by those who had seen because they feared it might be a trick to deceive them and he was not welcomed by those who had commissioned him because it meant that they were in error. As time passed and Saul's testimony proved to be authentic he was received in the Jewish Church with great honor.

In those days in that ministry to the Church, Saul did not teach (or preach as we perceive it) doctrine or exhort or challenge. He simply gave his testimony of seeing the risen Christ and used the Bible to support the claims of Jesus. It would be years before he would be a Pastor with the responsibility for the lifestyle of Christians.

He would not have presumed to explain any of the Doctrines of Christ which had been taught by Jesus to his Disciples. He would not use John 3:16, or the Sermon on the Mount, or The Beatitudes or any of the Jesus parables. He could only quote Moses and the Prophets to support the Messianic claims of Jesus. He could not interpret the teaching of Jesus for the behavior and lifestyle of Christians because he never heard Jesus teach.

The four Gospel accounts on the life and teachings of Jesus were not written until after Paul died. Therefore, Paul could not use them to support and verify his teaching to the church. The text for Paul's preaching was found in Moses and the Prophets, not in the Four Gospels. Paul professed no knowledge in the Historical Jesus, rather in the Resurrected Christ

If Saul was advertised in those days by the Church it probably was, Come and Hear the Great Rabbi from Tarsus Give His Famous Testimony FROM THE SANHEDRIN TO THE SAVIOR

By the time that Saul had seen the Risen Jesus there were many thousands of Jews that believed but they had never seen the Risen Christ. Only a few hundred had actually seen him and they were all His Disciples before the Crucifixion. As Saul would go to the churches he would rarely encounter someone like himself who had actually seen the Risen Christ.

One who had actually seen the Risen Christ would be honored and sought after much like a community in Rockwell, New Mexico would highlight the one or two who actually saw the UFO and get all of their information from their testimony.

Saul's claim put him on a par with the eyewitness Apostles in the Church. In fact, it put him ahead of them because no one had seen Jesus since He left in a cloud to reign on God's right hand over three years before.

The Pentecostal Church had very few eyewitnesses and the years have seen their decline, plus the entrance of thousands into the Church at Pentecost and afterwards made an eyewitness to be a rare thing in the Jewish Church of Saul's day. The Church had never heard anyone claim to have seen Jesus since ten days before Pentecost. This makes the sighting by Saul to be unique among believers and a source of Revival in Messianic Hope. It also qualified Saul to be an Apostle of Christ.

Prior to Pentecost the Church chose Mathias for Apostleship and required that he be an eyewitness. Later when the Church chose Deacons they were only required to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

Saul's encounter with the Risen Christ qualified him for Apostolic ministry as an eyewitness to the Resurrection, but it was difficult for Saul to authenticate his Apostleship because there were no witnesses to it. There were witnesses by other Apostles to the Apostleship of Peter, James and John, etc. but there were no witnesses to the Apostleship of Saul.

There were others present when Jesus appeared to commission the Eleven who later commissioned Mathias. But Paul said that they had not commissioned him.

Paul insisted that he had The First Commission ever given to send an apostle to the world and was personally called and sent by Jesus himself. There would be others to follow Paul with the Gospel but there were none that went before him. Previous apostles had a different commission and a different Gospel to a different people.

When the leadership passed from Moses to Joshua or David to Solomon or Saul to David there were witnesses, but Saul of Tarsus is like Abram of Ur. The calling is original and there is no predecessor, or forerunner as in a race where something is received from someone running before your time. As Abram was first to receive the world promise so Paul is the first to reveal it. As Abram received the promise from God, so did Paul learn of it's fulfillment from God.

When Abram received The Promise, it was to be fulfilled by Jesus in the distant future. When Paul received his gospel, it was the Good News of God's faithfulness to keep His promise and give life to the world that had perished in Adam.

When God made the promises to Abraham He would have been entering the land at about the same place where Saul was (near Damascus) when he claimed that he was called to reveal that Jesus of Nazareth was in the promise made to Abraham.

At that time and for many years Abraham was in uncircumcision but already an heir to a promise that would benefit the world when fulfilled by God's son from a daughter of Abraham many years in the future.

Saul a teacher of the Jewish religion would later become Paul a teacher of Christianity to the heathen religions of the world.

The religion of Saul which was the religion of the Jews had resulted from Moses confirming the blessing of Abraham to the nation, but the religion of Paul resulted from Jesus confirming the blessing of Abraham to the world.

Saul of Tarsus received his Apostleship from Jesus himself and he never presumed to be a teacher to other Apostles or to the Pentecostal Church.

Saul, the Jewish Rabbi, was a Roman citizen from Tarsus, a very prominent city in Asia. His Roman name was Paul and this became his Apostolic name when he became a Gentile (Rabbi) teacher.

As long as he was just a witness to the Jews about the Resurrection it was natural for Jews to call him Saul but when he becomes a teacher in the Gentile Church it is natural that these Romans would call him Paul.

Had he become a teacher in the Pentecostal Jewish Church he would have retained the name given to him when he was circumcised (christened) and whereby he was certified a Rabbi in the Jews Religion. He could never have used his Gentile name in such a ministry.

He was very highly qualified by Gamaliel to teach the Jews Religion but never became a Jewish Teacher in the sect of the Nazarenes. He could never have taught alongside and with the original Apostles because they were taught by Jesus not Gamaliel.

All of the Pentecostal Apostles to the circumcision had apprenticed under Jesus and referred to His teachings for all doctrine, while Paul had apprenticed under Gamaliel without any Christian teaching whatever. Therefore, when he became a teacher to the Gentiles he could only refer to Moses and the Prophets and the teaching of Jesus from Heaven, not his earthly teaching.

All the other Apostles were taught by Jesus before he died, Paul never knew Jesus in the flesh, but was taught by Jesus after He arose. All of Paul's knowledge in the Christian faith came by revelation to him from Jesus many years after the Resurrection. The Gospel accounts of Jesus as a suffering servant were not written in Paul's lifetime.

Paul apprenticed under Jesus as King and Luke gives us the history of the first forty years of the Messianic Reign of Christ in Acts.

Saul gave up his Rabbi certificate, denied his circumcision and went to the Gentiles to preach the Gospel, not to baptize into the Jewish faith.

Paul cut all ties with Saul and went down every Roman road preaching Good News in the Crucifixion of the Jewish Messiah, a mystery for every Jewish Christian. The Pentecostal Apostles were Eyewitnesses to the Crucifixion as well as the Resurrection and they had not seen any Good News when Christ was Crucified. Saul had indeed witnessed the Resurrection but now Paul the Apostle who never knew Jesus in the flesh is preaching a Gospel which is a mystery to those who were eyewitnesses to the Crucifixion.

Paul's Gospel was to become the Gospel of God to everyone even the Jews who by circumcision were heirs to the Messianic promise.

Paul found an inheritance for both Jew and Gentile in God's promise to Abram in uncircumcision and identified the seed as Jesus who died on the cross to ransom mankind from his fall into death through Adam's sin.

This is how Christianity was able to get out of the Jew's religion and become a world wide religion for people of all ethnicity.

This Gospel made the heirs of promise to be anyone that inherited death from Adam, whether a Jew or a Gentile. It made the Gospel to be resurrection from Death and Life with God.

Paul was not giving to the Gentiles what belonged to Jews alone. He was giving to the Dead the life which God promised and provided in Christ for all the Dead in Adam that are justified.

Religion, race and gender avail nothing. Believing is all that is required for justification. Abram is proof that man is justified in God's sight strictly on the basis of faith. ###