

**Acts to Revelation**  
The World of the First Christians

**Session 4 – Saul of Tarsus & The Road to Damascus**

**Session Summary** – Tonight we are introduced Saul and visit his hometown of Tarsus in present-day Turkey. We travel a segment of the Road to Damascus and experience Saul's supernatural encounter with Jesus. We will climb Mount Bental in the Golan Heights of Israel to get a glimpse of Syria, while examining the dramatic transformation of Saul the persecutor to Paul the Apostle. We will end our journey in Caesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea to explore the life and legacy of Herod Agrippa and his persecution of the early church in Judea.

*“As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?’ ‘Who are you Lord?’ Saul asked. ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ he replied. ‘Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’” – Acts 9:3-6*

Damascus is one of the oldest, continuously inhabited cities in the world. It was a cultural and commercial hub for three major trade routes, connecting North Africa, Arabia, and Asia. From Luke's account, we learn that Saul was taken to the house of a man named Judas who lived on Straight Street. This 50-foot wide colonnaded street, also known as the *Decumanus Maximus*, ran east and west through the center of the city for an entire Roman mile. Remarkably, Straight Street still exists today. Some of the Roman columns have been excavated and some still stand amid the modern shops. Other ruins along Straight Street include a theater and a monumental Roman gate.

**Scripture Reading – Acts 9-12**

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What was the special job skill that Saul learned in Tarsus?
2. What happened to Saul on the Road to Damascus?
3. What was the name of the man God used to restore Saul's vision in Damascus?
4. After Tiberius died in 37AD, who followed him as the next Roman emperor?
5. When Herod Agrippa determined to attack Christians, who was his first high-profile victim?

**Scripture for next week – Acts 13:1-12**