

Jerusalem as a terrorist, a mighty persecutor of Christians. In ACTS 22:4 we read the Apostle Paul in his own words describing his actions at that time in his life: *And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.* No wonder then when we read these three plus years after he was saved that *...they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple...* we can very much appreciate why this was. Luke then tells us the following in ACTS 9:27 & 28 about what happened next. ACTS 9:27 *But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.* 28 *And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.* All of Jerusalem didn't receive Saul of Tarsus with open arms, but there were three who did, Barnabas, Peter, and James the Lord's brother. GALATIANS 1:18 *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.* 19 *But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.* It was with these three that Saul of Tarsus was *...with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.*

Now note the next two verses of ACTS 9. ACTS 9:29 *And he spake boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him.* 30 *Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.* Saul of Tarsus spake boldly there in Jerusalem, and they went about to slay him, so the brethren, probably Peter, James, and Barnabas brought him down to Caesarea, where resided Philip the evangelist. All of these three certainly knew Philip the evangelist, and while they were at Caesarea do you think there was a possibility that they introduced Saul of Tarsus to Philip the evangelist? Remember Philip the evangelist was part of the inner circle (so to speak) of the church at Jerusalem, who back in ACTS 6 was chosen to assist the twelve Apostles of the Lamb with the daily ministration to the Grecian widows. And one would think that Peter would have wanted to visit Philip since he was bringing Saul of Tarsus down to Caesarea to ship him off to Tarsus. And Barnabas wasn't an unknown to Philip the evangelist either, for ACTS 4:36 and 37 inform us: *And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, 37 Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.* Why did Barnabas do this? Because of what is told us in ACTS 4:32-35: *And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.* 33 *And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.* 34 *Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, 35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.* This was why Peter had requested to Paul in GALATIANS 2:10 *...that we should remember the poor.*

So when the brethren, Probably Peter, James, and Barnabas *...brought him* (Saul of Tarsus) *down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus...* in ACTS 9:30 the possibility exists that Philip the evangelist was introduced to Saul of Tarsus at that time. Here again scripture doesn't say one way or the other, for Luke never mentioned it, but the clues are there in scripture. And if you really think about it, it does seem possible that Saul of Tarsus, our Apostle Paul may have first met Philip the evangelist at that time. Thus the Apostle Paul may have also paid a short visit to Philip the evangelist in ACTS 18:22 between his second and third missionary journeys. Again scripture doesn't tell us one way or the other, but by the time Paul, and the eight men traveling with him in ACTS 21 get to Caesarea, Philip the evangelist had them stay with him. Certainly Philip the evangelist knew who the Apostle Paul was, and whether it was by testimony of Barnabas, or Peter, or James, or even Paul himself, by the time of ACTS 21 Philip the evangelist had no problem inviting these nine men to stay at his house for several days!

The whole point of reviewing all of this information is to show the character of Philip; that he was a man of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost like ACTS 6:3 stated, and that he had a heart attitude just like Stephen his coworker, who had stated in his final words here on earth: "Lord lay not this sin to their charge," ACTS 7:60. We mentioned here in Sunday School that both Stephen, and

Philip are like Joseph of Old Testament fame, men with whom we can find no fault; men of honest report just like ACTS 6:3 states. Philip forgave Saul of Tarsus, just like our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did on the road to Damascus. Whether Philip first met Saul of Tarsus in ACTS 9, ACTS 18, or ACTS 21 the results were the same, the born again Saul of Tarsus, who was forgiven all his sins by the Lord Jesus Christ, was welcome in the house of Philip the evangelist. And I can see Philip the evangelist first meeting Saul of Tarsus there in ACTS 9:30 even before he was known as the Apostle Paul. I can see Barnabas, Peter and James as they traveled from Jerusalem with Saul of Tarsus having a discussion as they approached Caesarea telling Saul that Philip now lives here in Caesarea. And I can almost hear them say to each other words to this effect: "We should introduce Philip to the last convert of Stephen." This is sanctified imagination of course, but such an idea was certainly appropriate at that time. And knowing the little we do know about Philip the evangelist, he would have been most receptive to their visit, and the wonder working power of the Lord in these men full of the Holy Ghost would have made their brief visit a time of exceeding great rejoicing. With great rejoicing then we find in ACTS 9:30 that they *...sent him (Saul of Tarsus) forth to Tarsus*. We don't read of Saul of Tarsus again until ACTS 11:25 & 26. As for Philip the evangelist, he was one of the ones who fled Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen escaping the havock then being caused by Saul of Tarsus in ACTS 8:3, and next in ACTS 21 we will find Philip the evangelist welcoming this former terrorist into his own house for several days! This truly is an outstanding example of the love of God being manifested in one man's heart. No wonder we only read of this Philip, Philip the evangelist, sixteen times in scripture, for sixteen is the number of LOVE, and the emphasis of LOVE is the LOVE of God. And recall what the Apostle Paul wrote concerning LOVE in ROMANS 5:5 *...the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us*. The love of God was shed abroad (poured out, exceedingly abundantly more than we could ask or think poured out) in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. 1 JOHN 4:8 and 4:16 tell us God is love, and the full manifestation of the LOVE of God is in those full of the Holy Ghost. Philip the evangelist is an outstanding example of the LOVE of God.

We just mentioned some facts about the love of God, and the Holy Ghost. I want to give you a quick reminder about something we previously briefly mentioned, which, Lord willing, we will discuss further later in this study, and that is Luke wrote more about the Holy Ghost than all the other authors of scripture combined! These facts will no doubt manifest themselves as we continue, but you can get a head start by looking up all the scriptures in which Luke mentions the Holy Ghost in both of his books of scripture. We can safely say the Holy Ghost worked mightily in the life of Luke.

Back to our discussion on Philip the evangelist. ACTS 21:8 *And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. 9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. 10 And as we tarried there many days...* When Paul and Luke and those that were traveling with them came to the house of Philip the evangelist in ACTS 21:8 don't you know that Stephen's name came up somewhere in the conversation? Philip had his memories of Stephen, which included statements that we read earlier in ACTS 6 stating that Stephen was *...a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost...*, and that Stephen was *...full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people*. Paul had his memories of Stephen, which included a word for word recollection the powerful sermon of ACTS 7. Philip had memories of what took place in his life after the death of Stephen, some of which are recorded in ACTS 8, and we spoke about these events earlier. The Apostle Paul also had memories of what happened unto him after the death of Stephen, and how Stephen's testimony lingered daily in Paul's life. And Luke was there intently listening, and taking notes as these two talked about beloved Stephen! Perhaps this was the time when the Holy Ghost first dealt with Luke to document these Holy Ghost events that were being discussed during the few days they were altogether at Philip the evangelist's home.

We are still not through with Philip. After the Apostle Paul left the house of Philip he went up to Jerusalem where a few days later he was arrested. After a short period of time Paul, now a prisoner of the Roman Empire, was transferred to Herod's judgment all back in Caesarea. A short

while later Paul was brought before the governor Felix, where he spoke in his own defense. Then we read in ACTS 24:22 *And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.* 23 *And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.* Who was Paul's acquaintance living there at Caesarea? Was it not Philip the evangelist with whom he stayed in ACTS 21:8? ACTS 24:27 tells us that Paul was kept at Caesarea for two years! This means that Philip had the opportunity to learn first hand the gospel of Paul from Paul's own mouth for two years! Do you think Philip took advantage of this opportunity? Philip had no idea, nor did Paul of how long Paul would be a prisoner at Caesarea. To my way of thinking, I can see Philip making daily visits to Paul in prison, and by doing so Philip learned Paul's gospel. Philip was one of those transition characters who lived through the transition into this church age.

Now let's bring Luke back into this scene. Luke was introduced to Philip in these verses we just examined in ACTS 21:8-10. And Luke was also noted in ACTS 21:10 that *...we tarried there many days...* . Here was one opportunity that Luke had to hear an eyewitness account of what took place in ACTS 6 and 8 from the mouth of Philip. Also during the two years noted in ACTS 24:27 Luke could have further interviewed Philip in the presence of Paul while he was held in Felix's prison.

One more closing thought about Philip. Philip is a great example to us of a New Testament full overcomer. I think that the Holy Spirit left us an example of the fact that Philip ended up in this church age, in catching away Philip from one place and transporting him to another in an instant, a figure of the outward translation that will take place at the end of this church age. {See again ACTS 8:39 & 40}. Philip's name means "lover of horses," showing that he loved the race, and figuratively speaking, the Apostle Paul was one of the best racehorses (if you will) to be associated with. When we get to heaven I am confident that we will see the so called two silent years at Caesarea, which Scofield noted in ACTS 24:27, were not silent years at all. I can picture in my mind nearly daily visit to Paul by Philip the evangelist. Furthermore Luke would of dropped in from time to time, as Luke was still Paul's traveling companion all the way up to the end of Paul's life. And it was during these two so called silent years that Luke would have had his opportunity to interview all of the people left alive at Jerusalem, like Peter, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, who told Luke their eye-witness accounts, and testimonies of what they had experienced in their lives being with Jesus. Luke could have pretty much completed his letter to Theophilus called The Gospel According to St. LUKE during this time period, and perhaps he did.

Back to ACTS 6:5 where we find the seven men full of the Holy Ghost, and wisdom, who were chosen to assist the twelve Apostles. We have now discussed the first two, Stephen, and Philip, whose names are mentioned more than once in scripture. The other five *...Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch...* are only mentioned this one time in scripture. Let's consider Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. He was from Antioch, Syria, so certainly Luke knew him from Antioch, or at least had heard of him. Perhaps he was one of the main links who is connected to the statement found in ACTS 11:19. ACTS 11:19 *Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.* Luke here is connecting the dots from what he wrote in ACTS 8:1 that happened several years earlier about how *...at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.* Now we find some of those scattered abroad had now went *...as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.* So where do you think Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch ended up? Well the scripture doesn't tell us, but I think Luke and Theophilus knew where Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch ended up. My guess is that he ended up back in Antioch the assembly where they were first called Christians according to ACTS 11:26.