

Paul: Saul the Pharisee / Paul the Christian

- Thorn in the flesh – Bob

Galatians 4:12-20. I entreat you, companions, become as I am, as I am of you. You have not wronged me. You perceive that because of frailty of the flesh, I first announced the good news to you; **though my fleshly problem tested you, you neither despised nor loathed me, rather you received me as a messenger of God**, as Christ Jesus. Where is your sense of goodwill toward me? I witnessed that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and offered them to me. (My translation)

Acts 21:39. Paul replied, “I am a Jew, from **Tarsus** in Cilicia, a citizen of an important city; I beg you, let me speak to the people. (NSRV)

Acts 9:1-9. Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.” The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; so they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. **For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.** (NSRV)

What do these three passages suggest about Paul’s “thorn in the flesh?”

- Jewish Influence on Saul / Paul – Richard+
- Paul’s Creed – Bob

1 Cor. 12:3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says “Let Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say **“Jesus is Lord”** except by the Holy Spirit. (NSRV)

Romans 10:8-9 But what does it say?

“The word is near you,
on your lips and in your heart”

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that **Jesus is Lord** and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (NSRV)