

The City of Damascus

Part 2

Review: City of Damascus – Pt. 1

- Very old city located about 150 miles north east of Jerusalem.
- Mentioned early in the Bible – Gen. 14:15; 15:2
- In O.T. it was an enemy city of God's people
- Significance: Naaman the leper healed by God was from Damascus, Syria, and became example of cleansing by grace through faith
 - He was hostile toward God but had God's grace revealed to him by slave girl
 - His reception of grace required faith enough to seek it out in Israel
 - He had to receive grace on God's terms—obedience of faith
 - He obeyed and God's grace was applied, and he was cleansed of his leprosy
 - He became a worshipper of Jehovah

N.T. Damascus

- Was previously destroyed in 732 B.C. by the Assyrians in fulfillment of prophecy – Isa. 17:1; Amos 1:4-5; Jer. 49:26-27
- Rebuilt and gained prominence under Babylon, Persia, Greece, the Seleucids, and Rome
- In A.D. 37 Aretas, king of Arabia, gained control of Damascus, which had a large population of Jews with numerous synagogues – 2 Cor. 11:32-33
- The gospel was apparently quite successful among the Jews living there.



Event 2: The Conversion of Saul on the road to Damascus

Acts 9, 22

Saul—A Man Like Naaman

- Saul, though a Jew, was very hostile toward God's people, the church – Acts 7:57-58; 8:1, 3
- He sought to conduct raids upon God's people – Acts 9:1-2
- He was hostile because he was ignorant of God's ways – 1 Tim. 1:13-14
- His *thoughts* of how the things of God should be almost cost him his cleansing – Acts 26:9-11

Saul—An Example of God’s Grace Bestowed by Faith

- Saul’s conversion ***began*** when Jesus appeared to him, revealing the means of God’s grace – Acts 9:3-5
- Saul would receive grace only if he *sought* it – Acts 9:6, 8
- Saul could only receive grace on God’s terms—*obedience of faith*
 - He had to accept his role as one **bearing the name of Christ**, while **suffering** for it – Acts 9:10-16; Acts 22:14-15
 - He had to be **baptized** to **wash away his sins** (be cleansed) that he might also **receive the Holy spirit** – Acts 9:17-18; 22:16; 9:9
 - He **obeyed**, was **baptized**, and was **cleansed** of sin, and became a disciple – Acts 9:18, 20; Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:37-39

Conclusion

- Like Naaman, Saul's cleansing by grace through faith shows us that to be cleansed...
 - One must *hear* and *learn* of God's grace – Jn. 6:44-45
 - One must be willing to *seek* grace on God's terms—obedience of faith – Acts 22:16
- To encourage you, consider Paul's words concerning his salvation – 1 Tim. 1:15-16
- God will bestow His saving grace on you if you will obey in faith today, repenting, confessing Christ, and being baptized for forgiveness of your sins.