

Kids' Chronicle

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BY CINDY BASSETT

The amazing story of Paul

"You're very troubled tonight, Ananias," Benjamin remarked. "The church in Damascus is gaining more new followers everyday. Why are you so downcast?"

Ananias sighed heavily. "The stoning of the deacon, Stephen, in Jerusalem was just the beginning of the trouble. The high priest there has ordered a house search and arrest of all followers of Jesus."

"Stephen's death was a terrible tragedy," Benjamin agreed. "But if it weren't for those who fled here, we might never have learned about Jesus."

Ananias nodded. "Yes, that's true," he said.

"Well, what is it then?" Benjamin asked.

"Paul, a leading Pharisee in Jerusalem, has gotten authorization letters to arrest the people who came here."

After Benjamin left, Ananias sat alone and told God everything that was on his mind. But when he heard God speaking to him in his heart, he was astounded.

"Ananias, go at once to the house on Straight Street that takes in lodgers," the Lord told him. "You will find Paul lying there blinded. I am going to restore his sight through you."

"But, Lord, Paul is here to arrest everyone who trusts in you!" Ananias cried.

"Just keep trusting me, too," the Lord replied.

Ananias was surprised when the innkeeper brought him in to see Paul. "He has refused to eat or drink anything for three days," the innkeeper said. "The soldiers who brought him here say he was struck blind on the road as they were coming toward the city."

As soon as the innkeeper left the room, Paul spoke in a voice barely above a whisper. "I have hurt Jesus by what I did to his followers. Jesus asked me: 'Paul, Paul, why are you persecuting me?'"

"And now Jesus has sent me to heal you," Ananias said as he placed his hands over Paul's eyes. "Your life will be all different now."

Paul could see immediately. He wanted to go out to the streets in Damascus to tell his story right away. But Ananias insisted that he eat and rest for a few days.

When Paul first told the amazing story, even some of Jesus' followers didn't believe him. But his speech was so powerful that soon many people decided to join the church.

The Jewish leaders in Damascus were furious when they heard about



Illustrations by Kathy Welsh

Paul. "This man must be crazy! Paul came here to arrest these people and now he joins them!"

They issued a warrant for Paul's arrest and posted guards by the city gates. But late one night, the followers hid Paul in a grain basket and lowered him through an opening in the city walls.

"Goodbye, my friend," Ananias said to Paul. "I have learned much from you about how God answers prayers."

Read More About It: Book of Acts, Chapter 9:1-25.

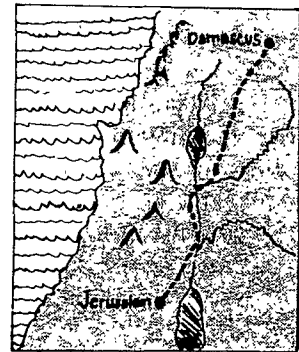
Q & A

1. Did God answer the prayer of Ananias?
2. When you have a big problem, how should you pray about it?

The Bible Times

35 A.D.

DAMASCUS — Jewish leaders have issued a warrant for the arrest of Paul, a leading Pharisee from Jerusalem. According to the officials, "Paul has violated our law by preaching that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Paul had arrived in the city two weeks ago with papers from Caiaphas, the high priest in Jerusalem, authorizing Paul to arrest the followers of the prophet Jesus, who was executed some time ago. Jesus' followers had fled to Damascus after one of their leaders was stoned to death in Jerusalem. The Temple police who accompanied Paul claim that, while approaching the city, he was suddenly thrown off his horse and blinded. Since then, however, other sources have reported seeing Paul speaking throughout Damascus and suffering no apparent vision problems.



King Solomon's Wisdom



"Every word of God proves true. He defends all who come to him for protection."
Proverbs 30:5

Talking to God

Dear Jesus,
Help me to pray with faith that you will answer me.

"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people carry out their wicked schemes."
Psalms 37:7

Unscramble the code

Paul was sad when he realized that that his actions against the followers had hurt Jesus. Decode what Jesus said about how we treat other people. Each number stands for a different letter of the alphabet: 1 = A; 2 = B; 3 = C, etc. Answer on page 2.

9 20-5-12-12 25-15-21 20-8-5

20-18-21-20-8. 1-14-25-20-8-9-14-7 25-15-21

4-9-4 6-15-18 1-14-25 15-6 13-25

16-5-15-16-12-5, 25-15-21 1-12-19-15

4-9-4 6-15-18 13-5."

Bible Trivia

When Paul returned to Jerusalem, many of Jesus' followers were still afraid of him. Who became Paul's friend and took him to meet the apostles?

Send answers to *Catholic Courier Bible Trivia*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your name and address with your entry.

All entries must be received by Sept. 10, 1992. A winner will be selected at random from all the correct entries submitted. The winner will be notified by mail and receive a gift, courtesy of Trans.

Last month's trivia answer: Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas were the other six chosen to be deacons with Stephen.

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