

The Legend (maybe) of Paul (Saul) of Tarsus

Why was Paul Chosen to minister to the Gentiles?



What follows is the gleanings from legends, stories and actual documentation (The Bible & Ancient writings). Some of this work may be fictional or it may be fact, and some will definitely differ to conventional views from some institutional religions. The thing is God knows and will determine what is revealed and what is not (and whether it matters)..

Compiled by Ian Childs www.childs.au/index.html

In about 5 A.D. in Tarsus, Mersin Province, Turkey (Asia Minor) – this was a culturally rich metropolis in the Cilicia region Sha'ul was born to an unknown Hebrew father (who came from Gischala Judea in upper Galilee) and his mother Precilla of Tarsus, Mersin Province, Turkey.



Precilla became a widow shortly after Saul's birth and then married Quintus Cornelius Pudens (Pudentianna) who came from Gordium (modern day Yassihuyuk, Polatli, Ankara, Turkey) and who was the Roman Tribune of Cilicia (the region stretching from the Mediterranean to the Taurus

Mountains) and this is attributed as to where Saul gained his Roman Citizenship which allowed him to later skillfully navigate the complexities of the Greco Roman world.

Precilla and Quintus had another son in 15 A.D. named Rufus and Saul's stepbrother and who latter had his own role in establishing the Gospel message.

Saul was sent to Jerusalem (to something like a boarding school) where he was under the tutelage of *Rabban Gamaliel* who was a highly esteemed Pharisee and the leading authority in the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem. As a student, Saul was educated at the feet of Gamaliel in the strict observance of the Mosaic Law, the Torah as well as Jewish tradition which he used latter to explain the Gospel message and relevance.



Of note – It was Gamaliel who was mentioned in Acts 5:34~39 as the wise Pharisee who advised the Sanhedrin to leave the apostles alone, arguing that if their movement was of human origin, it would fail, but if from God, they could not fight it.

Now Saul's stepfather Quintus moved to Rome with Paul's mother Precilla taking with them Rufus. Quintus Cornelius Pudens (Pudentianna) became a Roman Senator, and the family had a home and extensive landholding in and around Rome.



He became the lead persecutor on behalf of the Jewish Sanhedrin of the followers of Christ.



Saul then had his confrontation with Jesus on the road to Damascus in Acts 9:3~20.

This event completely redefined his existence. He totally abandoned persecution and with equivalent zeal became the most fervent defender of the Gospel with Sha'ul changing his name to the Latin variation "Paul".

After this (based on Galatians and Acts) he preached the Gospel in Damascus. In Galatians 1:17 & 18 we have him going to Arabia before returning to Damascus and then going to Jerusalem. He then returned to Tarsus before Barnabus came and got him and they went on to Antioch to begin what were to be the first of his three missionary journeys which accrued to some 16,000km and establishment of at least 14 Churches.

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His writings formed a foundation for helpful guidance both in ministry and the structure of Believer Communities.

Acts 13 & 14

We have Antioch in Syria which was the 3rd largest city in the Roman Empire, then on to Salamis in Cyprus where they were assisted and joined by John Mark (said to be the cousin of Barnabus), then on to Patmos where the Governor Sergius became a believer.



From Patmos on to Pamphylia (in Turkey) with John Mark leaving them at Perga and returning to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabus then went on to Pisidian Antioch where they were initially welcomed into the Synagogue with the Gospel, but the Jewish leaders soon stirred up opposition, and it was here that Paul decided to preach to the Gentiles.

Luke tell us in Acts that the Gentiles welcomed the Gospel message and the word spread throughout the whole region and they continued until the Jewish leaders had them expelled. See Acts 13:49 & 50.

Driven out of Pamphylia, Paul & Barnabus travelled to Iconium (modern day Konya) and once more they started at the Synagogue but as support for their message grew, so also did opposition and eventually they became aware of a plot to have them stoned, so they left and journeyed to Lystra in Lycaonia. When Paul healed the lame man, they called Barnabus Zeus and Paul Hermes with the Priest from the temple of Zeus bringing bulls and wreaths as sacrifices to them. Paul and Barnabus rebuked them and redirected all praise to God.



Jews from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium had followed them, where they stirred up local opposition convincing the locals to stone Paul, which they did then dragged him out of the city. When the believers gathered about him, he arose and returned to the City which confounded those who stoned him as they thought he had died.

Next Paul went to Derbe in Lycaonia where many believed (Acts 14:21).

They then did a return journey back the way they had come to Antioch in Syria via Lystra, Iconium, Pisidian Antioch, and Perga, then to Attalia (new) then by boat back to Antioch. In each City they encouraged those who believed.

Acts 16:23~20:38

Paul's original plan for his next journey was to rerun the first trip and strengthen and encourage these communities they'd formed, informing them of the rulings by the Council of Jerusalem in respect to Gentile believers.

Whist Barnabus wanted to have John Mark join them, Paul didn't agree – so Barnabus and John Mark journeyed back to Cyprus, whist Paul hooked up with Syllas and went a separate way, first going back to Derbe and Lystra plus picking up another companion, Timothy.

As the local Jews in Phrygia had a hard time accepting Timothy due to his being an uncircumcised Greek, to appease them, Timothy was circumcised. From Phrygia they went to Galatia and from Galatia via the border of Mysia to Troas. It was here that Paul was joined by Luke and it was there he experienced the vision of the man from Macedonia begging him to come. So, they all went across the Aegean Sea via the Island of Samothrace before landing in Neapolis and overland to Philippi where they found Lydia at the City Gate. She heard and believed taking Paul to baptise her household, with Paul using her home as base whist in Philippi.

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It was in Philippi that Paul confronted the spirit filled slave woman fortune teller who had been following him about. In frustration he cast out the spirit and earned the wrath of her owner, who had lost their income source. This owner convinced the magistrate to have Paul and Silas flogged and imprisoned. Then that night an earthquake occurred and the prisoners' chains fell off plus the cell doors were opened. Their Jailer thought that they'd escaped but instead they stayed, they shared with him the Gospel Message and he believed, then took them home and had his whole household baptised. The next day the order for their release came and they returned to Lydia's house. Paul then declared his Roman Citizenship to the Magistrate who had had them beaten and imprisoned without trial, which caused significant fear to the authorities.

They then went to Troas, Amphipolis, Apollonia then Thessalonica, where Paul presented the Gospel in the Synagogue and over the next few weeks many believed while still others were outraged by it. Fearing for Paul, the believers sent them on to Berea. Again, many heard and after examining the scriptures in support of Paul's claims, many believed but some of those from Thessalonica who were still outraged had followed Paul and stirred up opposition so that Paul was escorted out of Macedonia to Athens (then in Achaia) whilst Silas and Timothy remained in Berea.



In Athens Paul basically waited around for Silas, Timothy and others to join him, he debated with philosophers in the synagogue and in the marketplace. Here is where he preached about the "unknown God" who died and rose from death redeeming believers. After establishing a group of believers in Athens he headed to Corinth.



Now Corinth was the most prominent city in the Empire second only to Rome. It was a commercial hub where the produce from Asia had to be funnelled to get to Rome, as well as the area being a major primary producer. Here Paul stayed with fellow tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla and every sabbath preached to Jews and Greeks in the local Synagogue. Silas and Timothy caught up to Paul here and Paul focussed his message on testifying Jesus as Messiah to the Jews. When this was opposed, Paul left the Synagogue and focussed upon the Greeks until the Jews of Corinth bought Paul before the Governor, who told the Jews off and told them to stop bothering him. For 18 months Paul stayed with his base at the home of Aquila and Priscilla. Whilst there he was purportedly visited by his Stepbrother Rufus with his wife Claudia who told him of their home with his mother that was in Rome.

Leaving an established community in Corinth, Paul went through the Port City of Cenchreae and sailed with his companions across the Aegean Sea to Ephesus where he dropped off Aquila and Priscilla who yearned to establish a community of believers there. He then set sail for the port of Caesarea and then by land on to Jerusalem.

On arriving in Jerusalem he found the believers in dire straits needing financial support and so immediately set out again to raise welfare funds, first to Antioch then working his way West through the Regions of Galatia and Phrygia including Derbe, Lystra and Iconium – then to Ephesus where he'd left Aquila and Priscilla where he found that a man named Apollos had been preaching a distorted version of the Gospel, so when Paul arrived he taught the Ephesians the difference between water baptism and spiritual baptism.

Having sent gifts from these churches back to Jerusalem, for 3 months Paul taught in the Synagogue and when people started to criticise Christianity he left and began holding discussions in the lecture hall. Staying and preaching in Ephesus for 2 years, healing and driving out evil spirits.

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At about this time a prominent silversmith named Demetrius saw that the Gospel message was taking a toll of his business making idols, so he rallied the other craftsmen to seize 2 of Paul's companions and brought them to the Theatre. A city official finally stepped in and dispersed the crowd or be charged with rioting.

It was also at Ephesus that Paul was physically beaten - this time he did not raise his Roman Citizenship, and this was probably associated with the turmoil caused by the poisoning first of the Emperor Claudius by his wife Julia Agrippa the younger as well as her organising the assassination Marcus Junius Silanus the Roman Pro Consul for Asia to eliminate any opposition to her son Nero becoming Emperor (*Julia Agrippa "the younger" feared Silanus might take vengeance for his brother and his being a direct descendant of Augustus made Silanus a threat*).

After things settled, Paul headed to Macedonia, eventually arriving in Greece where he stayed 3 months. He intended to sail back to Syria but on learning of a plot against him, decided on another lap through Macedonia. Along the way he was joined with and met many of the communities of believers that had been established. He had companions from Berea, Thessalonica, Derbe and the province of Asia with these believers going ahead of Paul to Troas whilst Paul stayed briefly in Philippi and then joined them.



Paul then stayed in Troas for a week and the night prior to his leaving a young man who was sitting at the upper room window fell asleep and fell to his death. Paul ran out, wrapped in his arms and declared he was alive, and he was, Paul then returned to the upper room and continued his talk.

From Troas Paul walked to Assos and sailed to Mitylene, he sailed past Ephesus stopping in Miletus where he met the leaders of the Ephesus Church encouraging them and warning of false teaching. He then stopped briefly in Kos, Rhodes, and Patara before heading across the Mediterranean Sea to Phoenicia arriving in Tyre, where Paul was warned not to return to Jerusalem, which he ignored. From Tyre to the Port of Ptolemais and then to Caesarea and here a prophet warned him that he would be bound by the Jews in Jerusalem and handed over to the Romans. He went on to Jerusalem and this all occurred.

In 58 A.D. Paul was imprisoned in Caesarea for 2-years. He then exercised his rights as a Roman Citizen to appeal to Caesar, so he was shipped, bound for Rome, from Adramyttium in the care of Roman Centurion Julius of the Augustan Regiment and accompanied by Luke and Aristarchus, at Myra the group transferred to an Alexandrian grain ship going to Rome. The Captain ignored Paul's warnings about the dangerous sailing conditions and then the ship encountered a violent storm which broke it apart off the coast of Malta. Despite the destruction of the ship, all 276 persons aboard reached land safely with Paul then spending the next 3-months on Malta and it was here that Paul was unaffected after being bitten by the poisonous snake and whilst there he also performed healings. Their escort finally found passage to the Port of Puteoli where Paul was taken to Rome.



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Whilst in Rome Paul was allowed to reside with his *stepfather* Senator Quintus Cornelius Prudens (Pudentianna) his *mother* Prescilla, step brother Rufus¹ Prudens (Pudentianna), his wife Claudia (*she was born 35 A.D. in Trevan, Llanilid, Glanmorganshire, Wales*) and her brother Linus ap Cardog who was Duke of Siluria Ewyas.



King Coelwyn² ap Cardog of Siluria Ewyas and his wife Queen Cartismandua [Brigantes] also visited whilst Paul was interred, receiving the Gospel message and believed (these two returned to Wales as believers and established communities of believers throughout their Welsh Kingdom).

Paul shared the Gospel Message in Rome with many who believed and they established their meeting place at the Villa of Quintus and Prescilla with Paul declaring Linus ap Cardog as the first Bishop of Rome. Shortly after the community was visited by Simon Peter of Galilee who endorsed Linus and baptised Quintus, Prescilla, Rufus and Claudia.



Following his 2-years of this house arrest in Rome, Paul again got to Journey around the Mediterranean Region between 62 and 65 A.D. preaching, teaching and encouraging. Paul seems to have journeyed to Spain (according to Clement) and back to Crete, then on to Nicopolis in late 65 A.D. It was in Nicopolis where Paul wrote his letter back to Titus at Crete and his first letter to Timothy at Ephesus.

According to Roman history, Emperor Nero was in Nicopolis in 66 A.D. as a participant in the Actian Games which were rigged to ensure he won every event he competed in. Did Paul voice about Nero's cheating? Was Paul arrested there and brought back to Rome? We don't know, but we do know that shortly following the Actian games Paul was arrested, (2 Timothy 4:6-8) placed in Mamertine Prison and condemned to death. Nero who was set against any who professed a loyalty to any but himself and was especially against this Christian movement who he blamed for undermining his authority. The prison dungeon was called the Tullianum which was a rounded subterranean chamber about 7m in diameter accessed through a hole in its ceiling



So on 29th June 67 A.D. According to Clement, Dioysius, Eusebius and Tertullian, Paul was executed by a Roman Soldier by beheading as a death befitting of a Roman Citizen. Records indicate that Paul was known personally by Nero.



Paul's body was taken to the family tomb of Matrona Lucilla on the Osian Way and it was there that the Emperor Constantine had the first Church built there and latter his remains were exhumed and placed in the Church crypt – the Church is now known as the Basilica of St Paul outside the walls.

A little while latter 68 A.D. Paul's stepfather and mother were martyred during Nero's purge against Christians along with St. Peter who was using their house as his base and meeting place for the believing community.

The family built the "Catacomb of Priscilla" for their internment and later family members were laid to rest there when they passed.

¹ 2 Timothy 4:21 & Romans 16:13

² Christian Saint and in the line of Pendragon of Great Britain (descendant of King Arthur)

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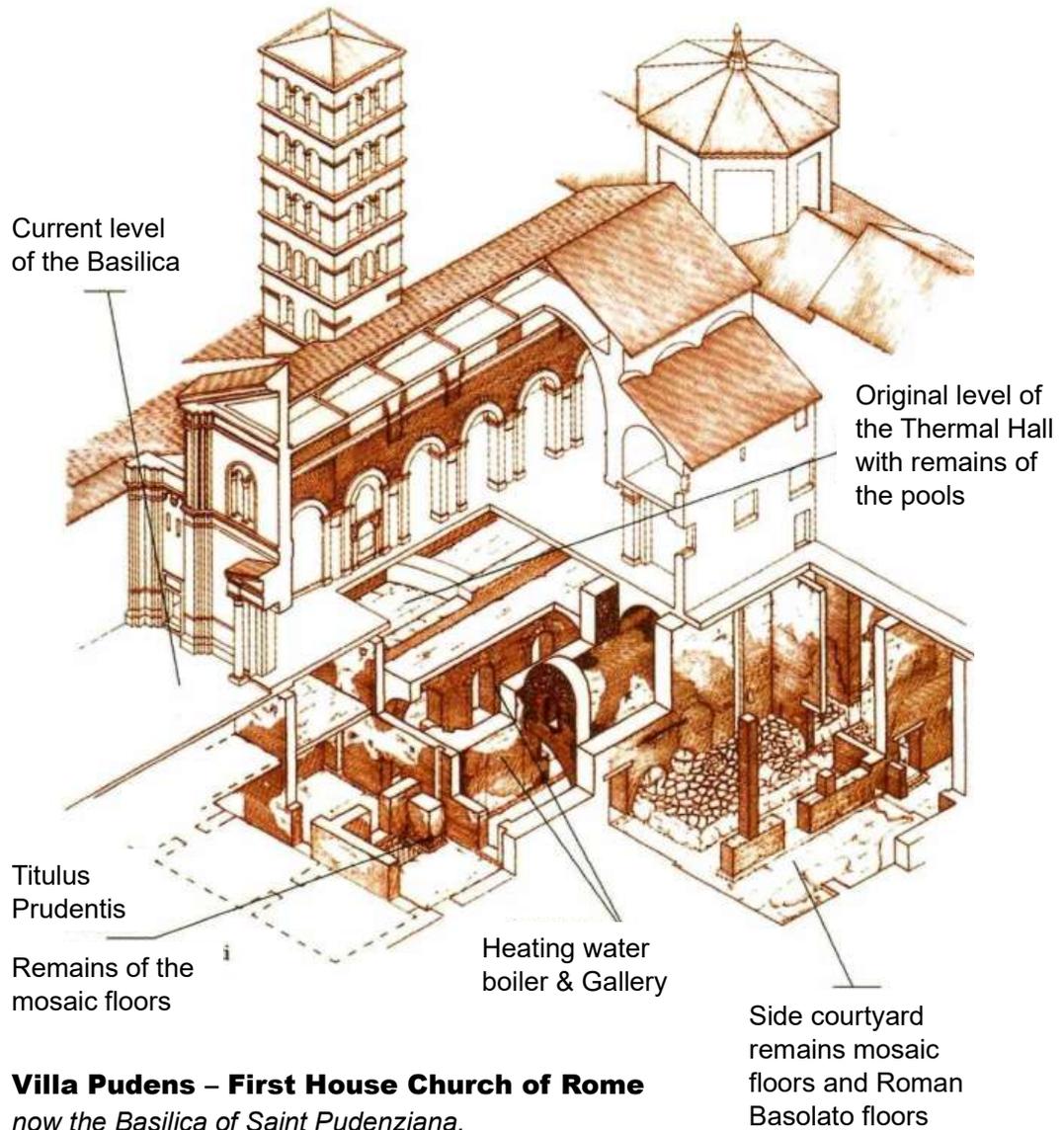
Rufus Pudens and Linus' sister Claudia retained ownership of the property and Linus continued as First Bishop of Rome (appointed by St. Paul and endorsed by St. Peter) to lead the believers from that house until his arrest and martyrdom in 76 A.D. whereupon he was replaced by Clement as Bishop.

Note that this significantly differs to the view of the latter Roman Church in that they claim the line of Bishops to Rome was Peter, then Clement, then Linus and as to Linus they claim his origins to be Rome rather than Wales.

Rufus and Claudia continued to provide their Villa for the believing community then in the 96 A.D. purge they were martyred with their son Timotheus Pudens and daughter Prudentiana.



Their son Novatus then continued to operate the home as a Church and place of support for meetings of believers, and this was the first Church of Rome. Novatus died in 151 A.D. and the home/ church passed to his sister Praxedes who continued that support until her death in 165 A.D.



*All of Paul's warnings about those who add to and corrupt the message were gradually eroded and **the Church deceived** and distorted Gospel Truth.
Don't blame Christ for the iniquities done in his name..*