

# Choices Make A Difference

International Bible Lesson

Acts 26:19-32

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*“Having therefore obtained help of God, I [Paul] continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come” (Acts 26:22—KJV).*

*“But to this very day I [Paul] have been helped by God, and so I stand here giving my witness to all, to small and great alike. What I say is the very same thing which the prophets and Moses said was going to happen” (Acts 26:22—GNB).*

*“To this day I [Paul] have had help from God, and so I stand here, testifying to both small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place” (Acts 26:22—NRSV).*

Jesus called Paul to serve as an apostle and tell others about salvation from sin and eternal life through Him. Paul could have continued “to kick against the goads” (Acts 26:14). Instead, Paul chose not to be “disobedient to the heavenly vision” (Acts 26:19). Though Paul worked hard making tents to support himself and suffered much abuse, including imprisonment for teaching about Jesus, he remained obedient to God and received help from God in every situation (Acts 26:22). On at least on occasion, after being stripped, flogged, and jailed, with God’s help his suffering led a jailer and his family to believe in Jesus and be baptized (Acts 16:20-40).

Paul did not blindly follow visions and dreams. Paul tested everything he experienced, heard, or thought using a factual, objective, standard of measurement, the Hebrew Scriptures. He believed and taught, “what the prophets and Moses said would take place” (Acts 26:22). With help from God, when Paul carefully compared what the Bible taught with what Jesus said and did, he concluded that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of God. Rather than teach false expectations about the Messiah, Paul referred back to the Bible to prove that Jesus the Messiah had to proclaim the truth to both Jews and Gentiles, suffer, and become the first to rise from the dead (Acts 26:23). With the help of God, Paul concluded these facts about Jesus and chose to obey Jesus in everything, teaching what Jesus taught to everyone, to both small and great, when in danger and whenever among friends.

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## Thinking Further

1. What are some things that can happen to a person if they choose to disobey Jesus and the Scriptures?
2. Why did Paul make his defense both from his experience and from the Scriptures.
3. Explain why Paul insisted that people “should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance” (Acts 26:20)?
4. Why did Paul insist that he preached “nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would take place” (Acts 26:22)?
5. How did Paul respond when Festus called Paul “insane”?

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