

# Acts 22:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day.

## Analysis

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**Born in Tarsus**—Paul claims both Jewish purity and Roman citizenship (21:39). Tarsus was a major intellectual center, suggesting elite education. **At the feet of Gamaliel** (παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιήλ) —Studying 'at the feet' indicated formal rabbinic discipleship. Gamaliel I was the most respected Pharisee of his generation (Acts 5:34-39), grandson of Hillel, whose moderate wisdom had earlier spared the apostles' lives.

**Perfect manner of the law** (ἀκρίβειαν τοῦ πατρώου νόμου) —The Greek 'akribēia' means exactness, precision, strictness. Paul wasn't a casual Jew but a zealous Pharisee who kept the law meticulously (Philippians 3:5-6). His persecution of Christians stemmed not from ignorance but from informed conviction that this sect was heretical. Christ didn't save a nominal Jew but transformed a passionate opponent.

## Historical Context

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Studying under Gamaliel (ca. AD 22-30) placed Paul at Judaism's intellectual apex. Gamaliel taught in Jerusalem, making Paul a product of the Holy City's rabbinic schools despite his Diaspora birth. This training made Paul uniquely qualified to explain how Jesus fulfilled Torah and Prophets.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. How does Paul's impeccable Jewish pedigree strengthen his testimony that salvation is by grace through faith, not law-keeping?
2. What 'credentials' from your pre-Christian life has God redeemed for gospel purposes?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἐγώ μὲν είμι ἀνὴρ Ἰουδαῖος γεγεννημένος ἐν Ταρσῷ  
I verily am a man which am a Jew born in Tarsus  
G1473 G3303 G1510 G435 G2453 G1080 G1722 G5019

τῆς Κιλικίας ἀνατεθραμμένος δὲ ἐν τῇ πόλει ταύτῃ  
a city in Cilicia brought up yet in city  
G3588 G2791 G397 G1161 G3588 G4172 G3778

παρὰ τοὺς πόδας Γαμαλιὴλ πεπαιδευμένος κατὰ  
at the feet of Gamaliel and taught according  
G3844 G3588 G4228 G1059 G3811 G2596

ἀκρίβειαν τοῦ πατρώου νόμου ζηλωτὴς ὑπάρχων  
to the perfect manner of the fathers of the law zealous and was  
G195 G3588 G3971 G3551 G2207 G5225

τοῦ θεοῦ καθὼς πάντες ὑμεῖς ἔστε σήμερον·  
toward God as all ye are this day  
G3588 G2316 G2531 G3956 G5210 G2075 G4594

## Additional Cross-References

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**Acts 9:11** (Parallel theme): And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

**Acts 5:34** (Word): Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;

**Acts 26:5** (Parallel theme): Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.

**Acts 21:39** (Parallel theme): But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people.

**Acts 21:20** (Word): And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law:

**2 Corinthians 11:22** (Parallel theme): Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

**Deuteronomy 33:3** (Word): Yea, he loved the people; all his saints are in thy hand: and they sat down at thy feet; every one shall receive of thy words.

**Luke 10:39** (Word): And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

**2 Kings 4:38** (Parallel theme): And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.

**Acts 6:9** (Parallel theme): Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen.