



The City of Tarsus

Tarsus was the city where Paul the Apostle (Saul) was born, a city located in south-central Turkey, 20 kilometers inland from the Mediterranean Sea. It still exists in Turkey today.

During the time of the New Testament, the great trade routes that led east and west passed through Tarsus. These routes, along with access to the Mediterranean, made Tarsus an important stop for many people.

As well as being a wealthy city, Tarsus was also known for its great schools.¹

Because Paul was born there, he was at one time referred to as "Saul of Tarsus,"² even though he spent most of his youth in Jerusalem, where he was a student of Gamaliel.³ Paul returned to Tarsus after his conversion.⁴ Eight years later, Barnabas traveled to Tarsus to meet with Paul and they left together for Antioch.⁵

Paul was a Jew, but was also considered a Roman citizen due to how Roman emperors had granted citizenship to some of the citizens of Tarsus.⁶

Footnotes:

¹ Acts 21:39

² Acts 9:11

³ Acts 22:3

⁴ Acts 9:30

⁵ Acts 11:25–26

⁶ Acts 22:24–29



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