

Ichthus Newsletter

Joel ben Joses, once a cynical investigative journalist, now a convinced believer.

To the brothers and sisters in Christ in Damascus, greetings and peace.

About five years ago, for the Galilean Gazette, I investigated the crucifixion at Passover of Jesus of Nazareth, in Jerusalem. Three days later, as the Jews count, He rose from the dead. Then, I was one of 500 who saw and listened to him. I was utterly convinced that Jesus is the Messiah, and my Lord, so I have dedicated my talents to him. This meant leaving the area, for one where my testimony might be more acceptable. Incredibly, I am now a Church leader, still writing, but this time for Jesus.



My dear friends, be warned. Saul the young Pharisee is on his way to you, breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. Although Saul was born a Roman citizen in Tarsus, his parents brought him up in the strict Jewish tradition. He was shocked by what he considered Stephen's blasphemy.

"You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the holy Spirit! Your fathers even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous one. And now you have betrayed and murdered Him".

The religious leaders were furious, and when Stephen full of the Holy Spirit, told them he could see Jesus standing at the right hand of God, They went completely over the top. First they covered their ears (none so deaf as those who won't hear). Then, yelling at the tops of their voices, they dragged him out of the city and stoned him, with Saul giving official approval.

Now Saul has plunged into a rampaging destruction of this *"blasphemous church"*, organising house raids to flush out followers of the Way, throwing them into prison. Many

families have fled from Jerusalem, remembering that the Lord Jesus said He would be with them always.

Saul is obsessed with stopping the new " Way" of Jesus from taking hold in Damascus. He knows that nothing will stop it spreading through the caravan trade routes far and wide. The Sanhedrin want it stopped at all costs. My friends in the Way, you are in **great danger** as soon as that man sets foot in your beautiful city. Consider moving out until Saul's passion for persecution dies down . He will exhaust himself eventually. In the meantime, fast and pray for him to surrender himself to the Lord. **Nothing is impossible with the Lord God.**



Your brother in Christ, Joel ben Joses .