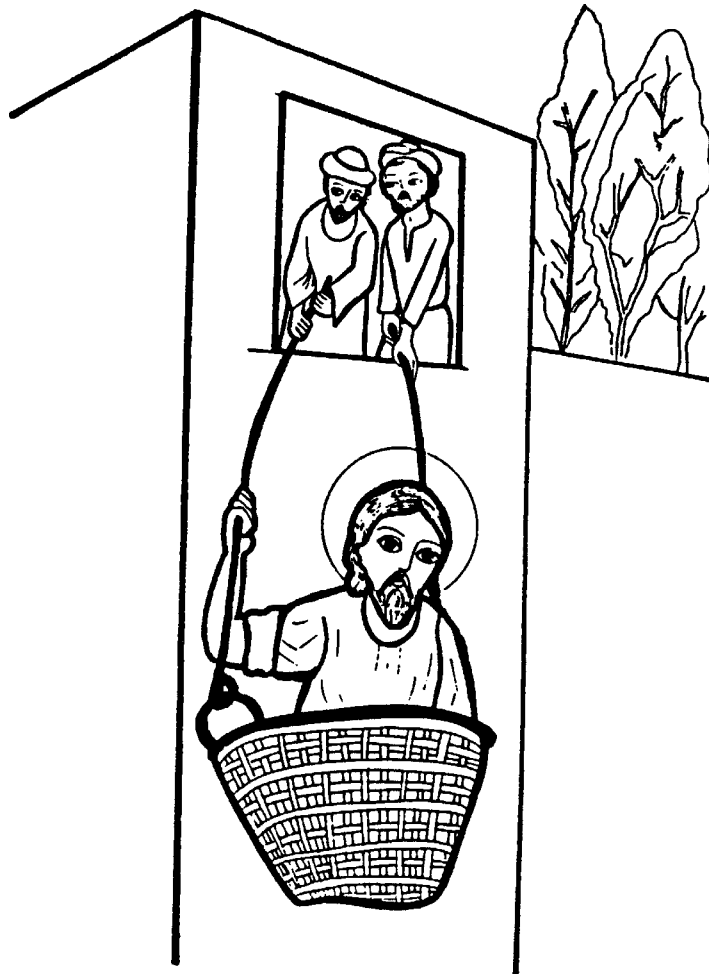




Saint Paul

The Apostle
Part III





Saul, the Persecutor of the Church

Written by: Father Tadros Malaty

In Jerusalem

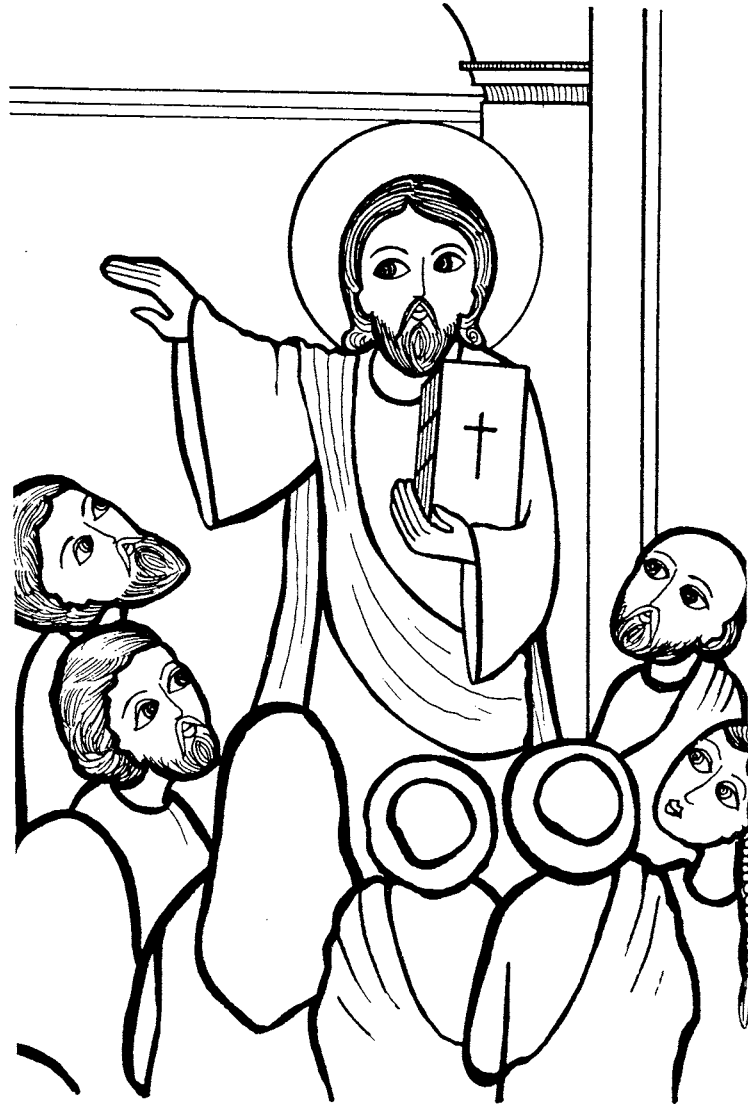
Three years later, Saul returned to Jerusalem, a totally new man. He did not return, as all thought, dragging the believers in chains; but as a flying bird, joyful with the Lord Jesus Christ his Savior!

Outside Jerusalem did Saul steadily walk towards Golgotha, and at the site of the Holy Cross he bowed down and shed a lot of tears, tears of sadness because he had persecuted the Savior, and tears of joy because the Holy Cross attracted him to faith.

He went into the city and in every street and every corner he had a memory, of how he used to drag men and women and children to prison.

The leaders of the Jews heard that Saul had returned to Jerusalem, and that he joined the Christians, therefore they loved him no more. Also Saul found







great difficulty getting close to the Christians, who could not believe that he had become a real and true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ!

In a house of one of the believers, there was a group of them talking about Saul. One of them said, “Have you heard what happened today?” Another asked, “What?”

Then the former said, “Saul of Tarsus wanted to get into our gathering place, and he was alone, which was unusual of him...no soldiers or leaders accompanied him...Many people saw that, and then they ran away, but he shouted and said, “Do not be afraid, I will never think of hurting you! I believed in the Lord Jesus as the Christ and the Savior...He is truly the Son and Word of God!

One of the people interrupted him saying, “Did they believe him or maybe this is a trap that he made to trap us in!” The first man replied, “No...Barnabas the Apostle proceeded before the people and said to them, ‘Be not afraid! He has truly become Christian! Listen to him, he will tell you the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in his life and service in Damascus...The Jews in Damascus want to behead Saul! He is totally regretting whatever he had previously done to us!’

The people were amazed when they heard this Good News, and were anxious to see Saul and listen to him.

Saul kept doing his apostolic work, and God gave him grace in the eyes of many people, particularly the Gentiles (the non-Jews).

The Jews felt his danger and they tried to kill him. The believers discovered this, and took him to Caesarea, then sent him to Tarsus in a boat.

(The Holy Book of Acts, 9)