

## **Paul's Death:**

Whether or not Paul was executed, nothing is known about him after about AD 62. It is generally assumed that he was put to death in Rome in the course of Christian persecution which marked the reign of Nero (AD 54-68).

**Conspiracy in Jerusalem ( 9)**

## **Did Paul Invent Christ?.**

**1-Paul apparently never met the historical Jesus** but had a direct acquaintance with his brother James whom he met twice in Jerusalem. This means that Paul was personally convinced of the historicity of Jesus who was his contemporary.

**Conspiracy in Jerusalem (10-14)**

## **2-Paul is Confused with Saul**

Acts despite a fundamental unity of style indicating a single authorship, actually puts together two different categories of information about the career of Paul. An indirect one (second hand) and a direct one (first

hand). *Possibly Acts confuses the identity of Paul with Saul.* What the book of Acts says about Paul is not entirely correct. Paul says something about him while Acts says something else. In fact the book of Acts is a continuation of one of the Gospels, that of Luke. The author of Acts was also the author of Luke and this author spoke profusely of the life and career of Jesus, as the other Gospel authors did while Paul said so little about the subject.

**Conspiracy in Jerusalem (15-17,22)**

### **3- His Gospel Was His Invention**

The Gospel Paul preached, he claimed, was the “authentic one” because it was “not of human origin”. He said “it was Jesus Christ himself who revealed it to me”> (Galatians 1:11-12).

**Conspiracy in Jerusalem (24-25)**

**Paul and James:**

That James was the brother of Jesus there can be no doubt. The Jewish historian Josephus , who was his contemporary, spoke of his execution in Jerusalem in AD 62 identifying him as “ the brother of Jesus called Christ”. Paul himself met James at least twice in Jerusalem disagreeing with him on both occasions on certainly on a major point of doctrine.: whether or not Gentile converts to the new Christian faith should first be circumcised to become acceptable as Israelites. Acts in turn makes several references to James as the Jerusalem apostle who spoke with most authority and who was apparently deferred to as the leader of the community.

Paul’s reference to James as the Lord’s brother is in Galatians 1:15-23).

**Conspiracy in Jerusalem ( 17-18, 25)**

**Reconciliation between Paul and James:**

**3**

The Jerusalem opposition to Paul continued for fourteen years. When settlement was finally reached it did not result in unification of their different preaching but only in formal parting of ways in which each side promised to respect the independent of the other (Galatians 2:6-10). Ultimately the rumors about the conflict found their way into the book of acts where they became immortalized as part of the Christian canon. Here the mention of Paul's visit to Arabia was omitted or perhaps deliberately suppressed.

#### **Conspiracy in Jerusalem ( 31-32)**

### **Beginning of his Preaching**

#### **Career:**

Paul wrote that God “ chose me even before I was born...and when he decided to reveal his Son to me, that I might preach the Good News about him to the Gentiles I did not go to anyone for advice, nor did I go to Jerusalem to see those who were apostles before me. In stead I went

at once to Arabia, and then I returned to Damascus. It was three years later that I went to Jerusalem to obtain information from Peter, and I stayed with him for two weeks". ( Galatians 1:15-23). Paul did not visit Jerusalem again until fourteen years later. (Galatians 2:1)

### **Conspiracy in Jerusalem (25,27)**

### **Arabia:**

During the time of Paul, Arabia as a geographical term had two different connotations. Roman Arabia started in Damascus which was governed by the agent of a King Aretas (Arabic *al-Harith*) the Nabatean Arab King of Petra whom the Romans recognized as a client. Beyond the Nabatean kingdom the vast peninsula of Arabia stretched all the way south to the Indian Ocean. The Greek geographer Strabo, tells us that the western parts of this peninsula, called today the Hijaz, formed an Arabian Kingdom or

principality which was tributary to Petra. Further south lay the Yemen ruled since 115 BC by the dynasty of Himyar which was to last until the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD. Scholars assumed that the Arabia Paul visited was Roman Arabia – the territory south of Damascus, including modern Jordan. [But Salibi is not convinced]. Being in Damascus Paul did not have to “go” (he was there). Clearly where he went lies beyond Roman Arabia, probably the Hijaz or the Yemen. The Arabian Jews probably knew something extremely important about Jesus himself and his mission which Paul wanted to learn from them first hand before embarking on his own apostolic work. Paul must have had suspicion that James, Peter, and John and their party were covering up some secret. What is this secret that lies in Arabia which could only be learnt from Arabia?. Could it be that the Jerusalem apostles and also Jesus

himself must have been in Arabia at some point?. . Perhaps they were Arabian Israelites who came from there. And if Paul wanted to learn something about Jesus in Arabia, it was something that he preferred to remain silent about for he said nothing special about the subject in his epistles.

#### **Conspiracy in Jerusalem (27-30)**

#### **Paul's Writings:**

They are older than the oldest known Gospels. Paul did not believe all the stories about Jesus circulated in his time by the apostles in Jerusalem.

Scholars today commonly concede that the Gospels were written to prove that the historical Jesus was in fact the expected Israelite Messiah, or Christ, rather than provide an accurate biography. It is for this reason that it is replete with references to prophecies from the Israeli Scriptures -the Old Testament.

