

When God Rewrites Your Map

Acts 9:1-31

*As a kid what did you want to do/be when you grew up?

- I wanted to play/coach ball. (I have gotten to do that.)

*When I was 17 God called me into youth ministry. Not something that I really even thought about doing. Nor something I thought I could do.

God rewrote my map. We will revisit this story later.

From what I can tell Saul wanted to be a top Pharisee. It seems that everything he did was to climb the Pharisaical ladder.

Saul's credentials:

Acts 22

-Born in Tarsus, a city of Rome, modern day Turkey. He was multilingual.

-A Roman citizen by birth.

-Formal Rabbinic Education under Gamaliel, a highly respected Pharisee and teacher of the law.

He was the one who told the other leaders to let the disciples go, because if what they are doing is of God we can not stop them, in Acts 5.

Acts 23

-His father was a Pharisee.

Phil 3

-A Hebrew of Hebrews.

-Circumcised on the 8th day.

-Of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin.

-In regard to the law, a Pharisee, zealous for the traditions of his ancestors.

-Righteousness based on the law, faultless.

Acts 9:1-31

vs 1-2 Saul gets permission from high priests to go up to Damascus to try and shut down this upstart church there by any means necessary. To Saul this is a “righteous” mission. In his mind if he does this he is almost guaranteed to get a seat at the “head table”.

vs 3-6 He encounters Jesus on the way. (We have talked about this before, I preach after Easter about Jesus meeting the disciples while they were on their way.)

Jesus told him to go into the city, the same city he was heading towards, you will be told what you must do.

vs 7-9 For 3 days he waits for an answer, and on top of that he is blind.

3 days, in darkness, a death in a sense. Jesus was dead for 3 days.

God doesn't just rewrite Saul's map here, He totally blows up Saul's map.

vs 10-19 Ananias, a disciple in Damascus, was called by God to go to Saul. Not an easy call, knowing who Saul was.

Saul is to be My chosen instrument to carry My name to the Gentiles, Kings and the people of Israel. It will not be easy - he will suffer for My name.

Ananias calls Saul his brother, and then laid hands on him so that Saul could see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

God was rewriting Saul's map - calling him to something new.

vs 19-22 He spent several days in Damascus with the disciples, preaching Jesus and growing in power. He has been studying the scriptures since he was a kid.

vs 23-25 His life was in danger, so they sent him back to Jerusalem.

God again is rewriting Saul's map. Literally.

vs 26-29 Of course the disciples in Jerusalem were weary of Saul and would not let him into their circle, some of them had witnessed what he had done before. However there was one disciple who dared to risk his life, Barnabas. Barnabas believes what has happened to Saul and brings him into meet with the disciples. Barnabas must have carried a lot of spiritual weight for the disciples to listen to him.

He stayed with them for a while in Jerusalem.

vs 30-31 Once again Saul's life was in jeopardy, so the disciples sent him to Tarsus.

God again is rewriting Saul's map, moving him again.

The church enjoyed peace, was strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit. And the church grew in numbers.

I have never thought of myself more like Paul than working on this message.

The summer before my Senior year of High School God rewrote my map and called me into youth ministry.

Since then God has continued to rewrite my map.

- I have had the privilege to serve at 9 churches.

- Many joys and many heartaches.

- I have served in roles of pastoring : youth, worship, assistant, lead, planting, online, connections pastor.

- With all of this our family has moved 13 times, in 9 different communities. Destiny went to 7 different schools before she graduated high school.

- Several of these moves had no guarantee of pay. In fact 7 of those churches were no pay or less than \$500 a month.

-I wanted to stay in youth ministry for life, that was in fact what God had first called me into.

-In December 2008 we made the decision to follow God's lead to move to Atkinson, NE to serve as youth pastor at the Wesleyan Church there. We were feeling good about this move and felt like we would be there a while, so we put an offer in on the house we were renting.

-In the Fall of 2009 I took time to fast and pray about the direction of the youth ministry.

-As I sought the Lord for direction for the youth, I got nothing for the youth, what I got was for me.

-God was calling me to something different. It was still unclear what that was. A friend was praying and fasting with me and confirmed that God was drawing me to something new.

-I called my DS Phil Harrison, who invited me to a conference at Celebrate Church in Sioux Falls, SD.

-While there I went to the youth ministry break out, hoping that God would show me my next step in youth ministry. As I sat there I felt something die inside of me.

-At the next main session. God started growing something new in me.

-I still didn't know what that meant or what direction I was supposed to go. All I knew was He was calling me into something new.

-I wanted to jump - but Amber wanted to wait. So we waited about 4 months before we let the church know. Through all of this our offer on the house fell through. And we continued to serve for another 6 months.

-All the while God was continually showing me more and more of this something new.

-I would like to tell you that at the end of that 6 months that we were full throttle into this new thing. We weren't.

-We wouldn't fully see this new thing for 2 more years and 3 moves. All through we continued to serve where we were.

-In the fall of 2012 we planted The Pulse of Salina - a house church - the new thing that God was drawing me into.

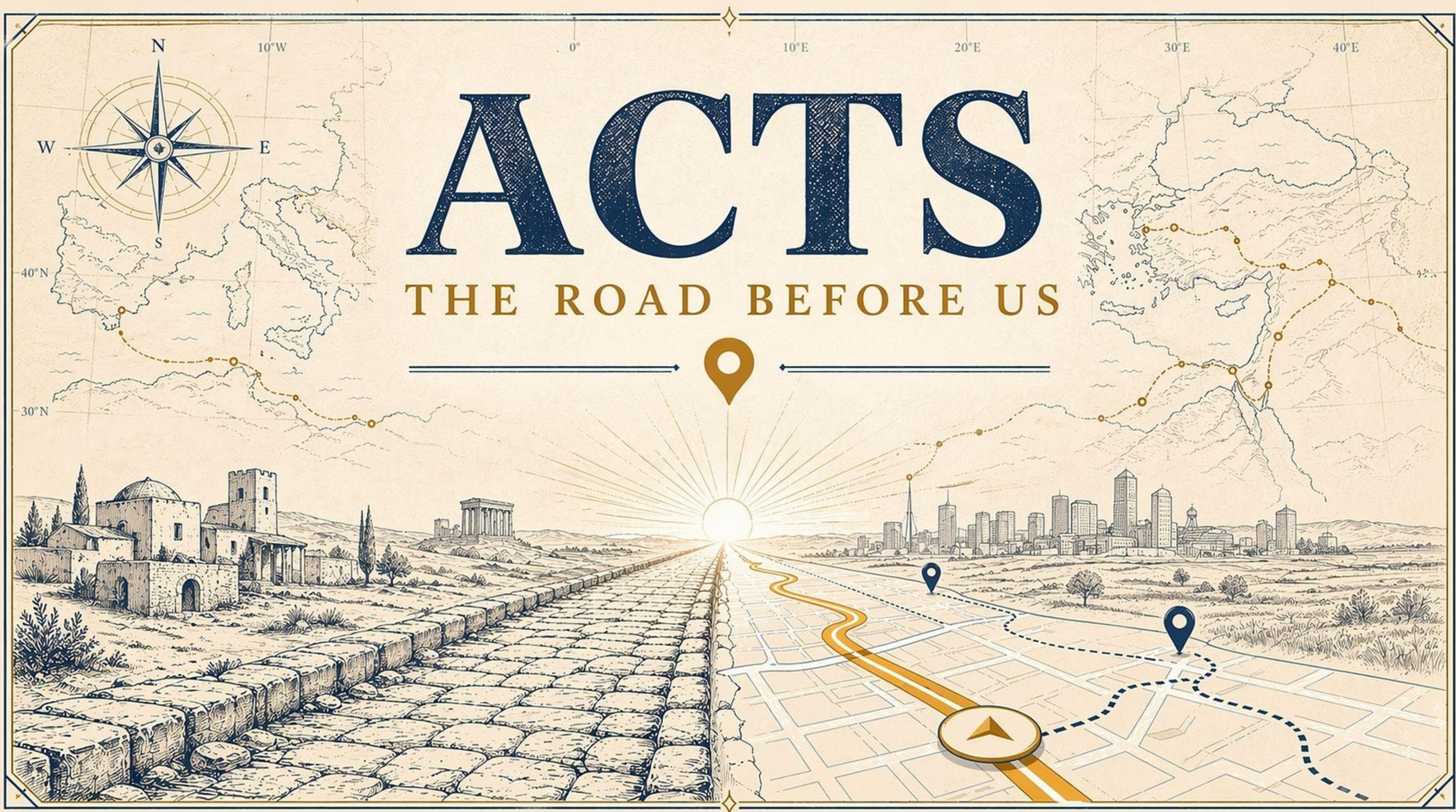
-In the spring of 2019 we closed The Pulse and God moved us over here, I don't know what He has for us in the future, but what I do know is that I will serve faithfully wherever He plants my feet.

Application

1. Have you allowed God to rewrite your eternal map? If not maybe today is that day.
2. Reflect back in your life to the times God rewrote your map and give thanks to Him. Rejoice and grieve again if you need to.
3. Share your rewritten map with others around you.
4. Open yourself up to the possibility of God rewriting your map.

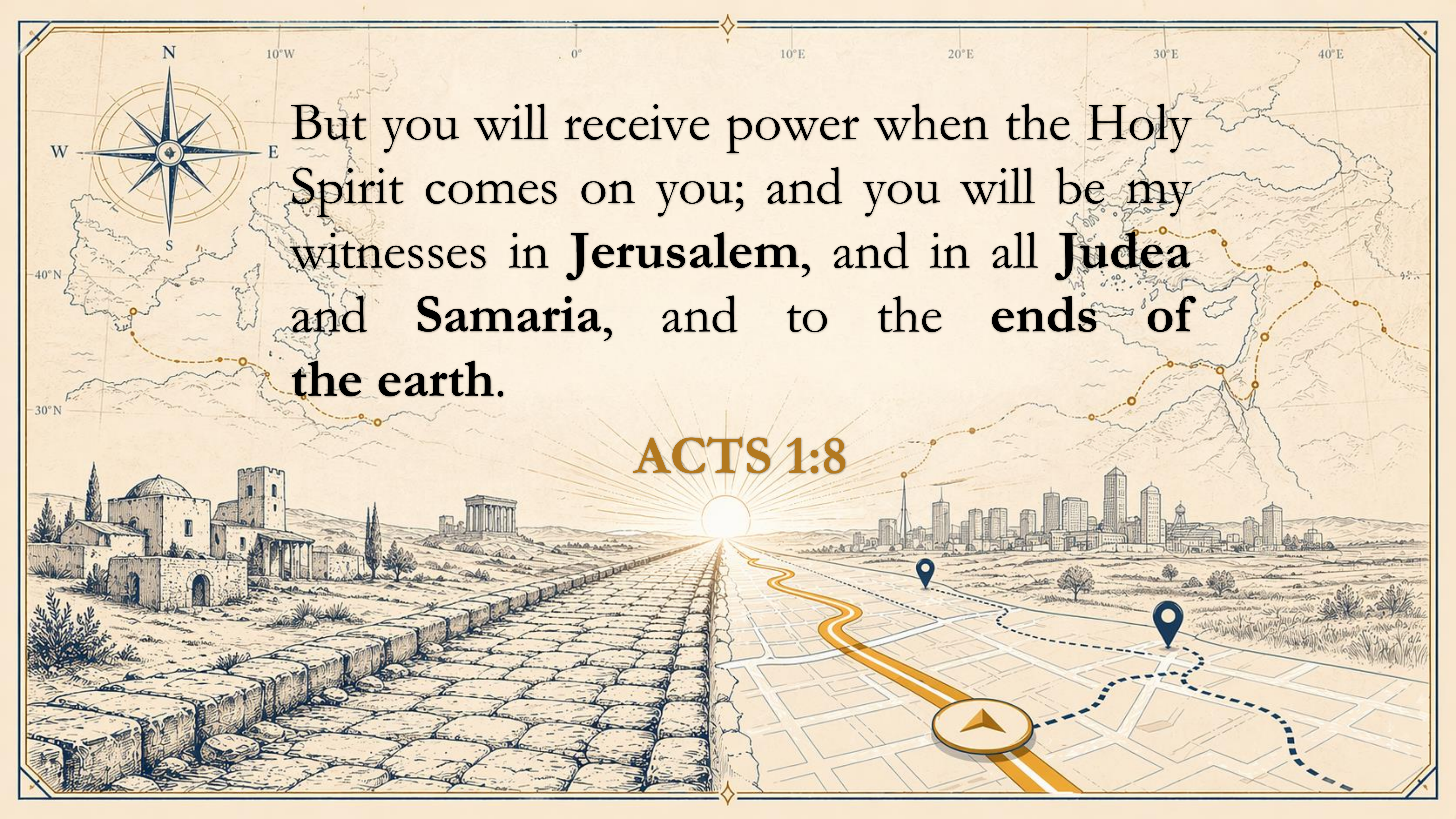
Communion

(Push pins? Maybe just for our district.)



ACTS

THE ROAD BEFORE US



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to the **ends of the earth**.

ACTS 1:8

When God Rewrites Your Map

ACTS 9:1-31



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10°E

20°E

30°E

40°E

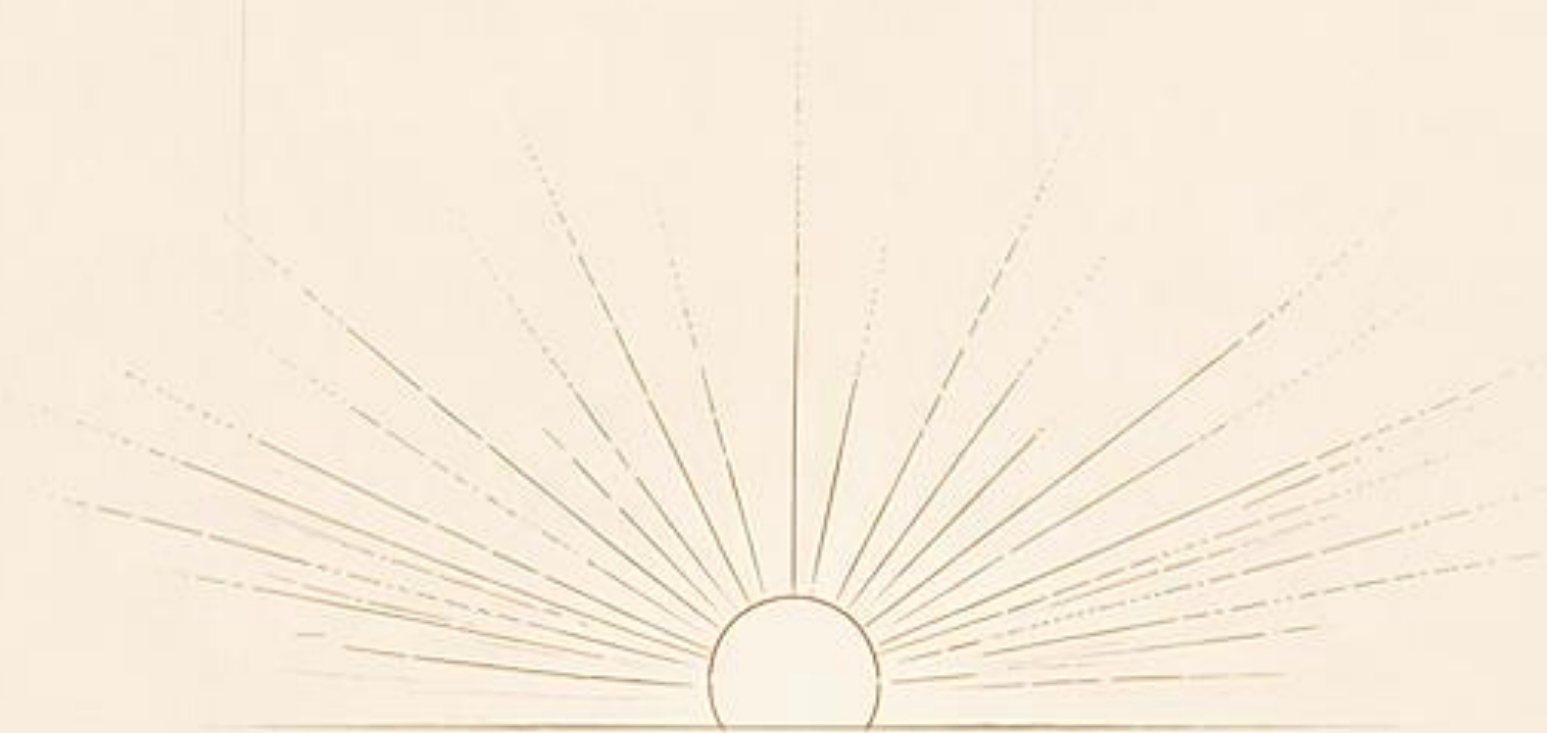
40°N

30°N

As a kid
what did you want to do/be
when you grew up?



God rewrote my map.



Saul's Credentials

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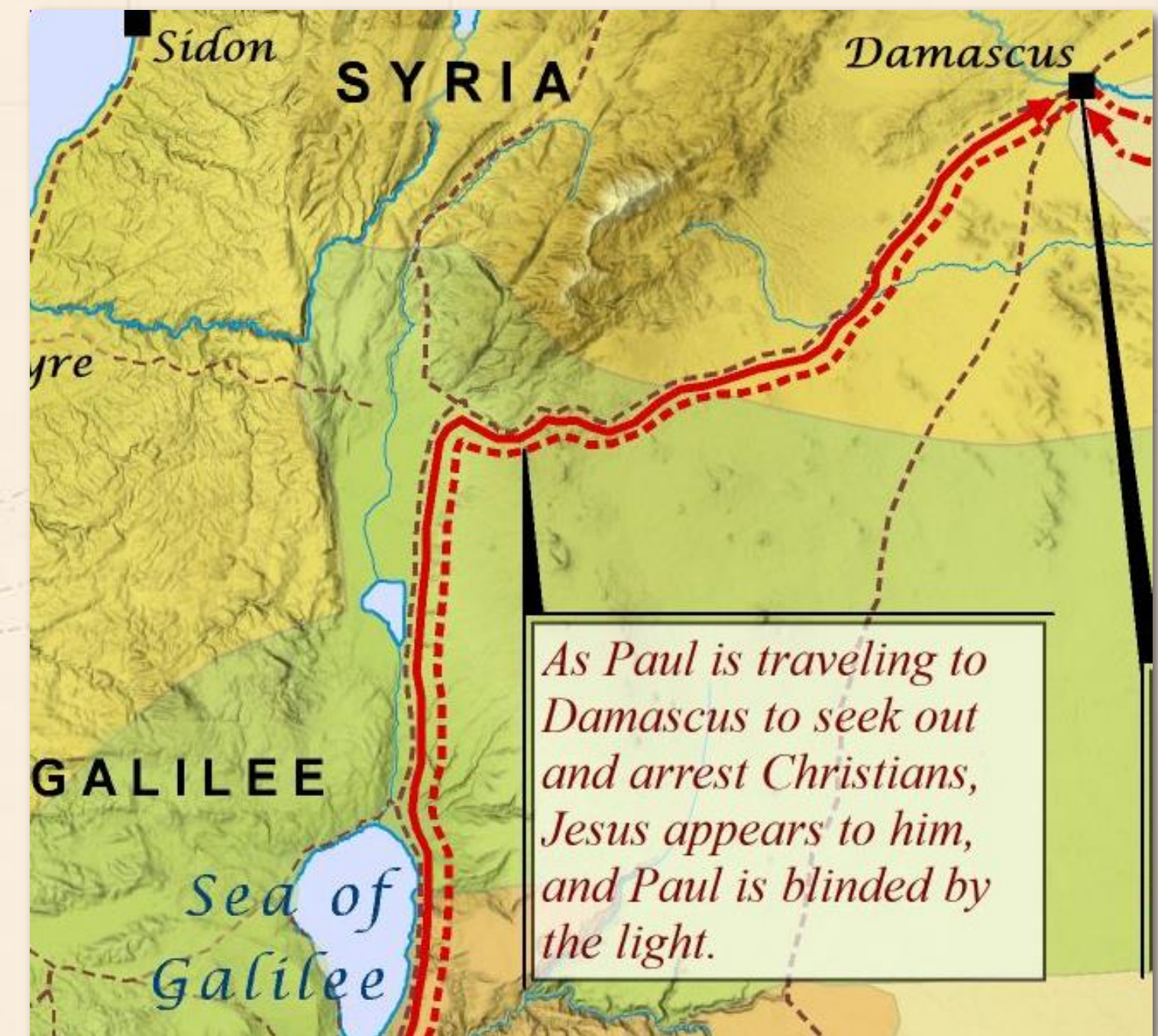


The Waze logo is displayed on a blue background. The word "waze" is written in white lowercase letters. Below the text is a row of five circular icons: a yellow circle with a black car icon, a red circle with a white car icon, a white circle with a black car icon, an orange circle with a black car icon, and a green circle with a black car icon. A small, white, round cartoon character with a smiling face and black wheels is positioned in the center, overlapping the white circle icon.[illegible]

Saul's Waze App



ACTS 9: ³As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from Heaven flashed around him. ⁴He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?” ⁵“Who are You, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting,” He replied. ⁶“Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”



Saul's Waze App



ACTS 9: ⁷The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone. ⁸Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could see nothing. So they lead him by the hand into Damascus. ⁹For 3 days he was blind, and did not eat or drink anything.



Saul's Waze App



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Saul's Waze App



ACTS 9: 10 In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias!” “Yes, Lord,” he answered. 11 The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying. 12 In a vision he has seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him to restore his sight.” 13 “Lord,” Ananias answered, “I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.”

Saul's Waze App



ACTS 9: 14 And he has come here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on Your name.” 15 But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is My chosen instrument to carry My name before the Gentiles and their kings, and before the people of Israel. 16 I will show him how much he must suffer for My name.



Saul's Waze App



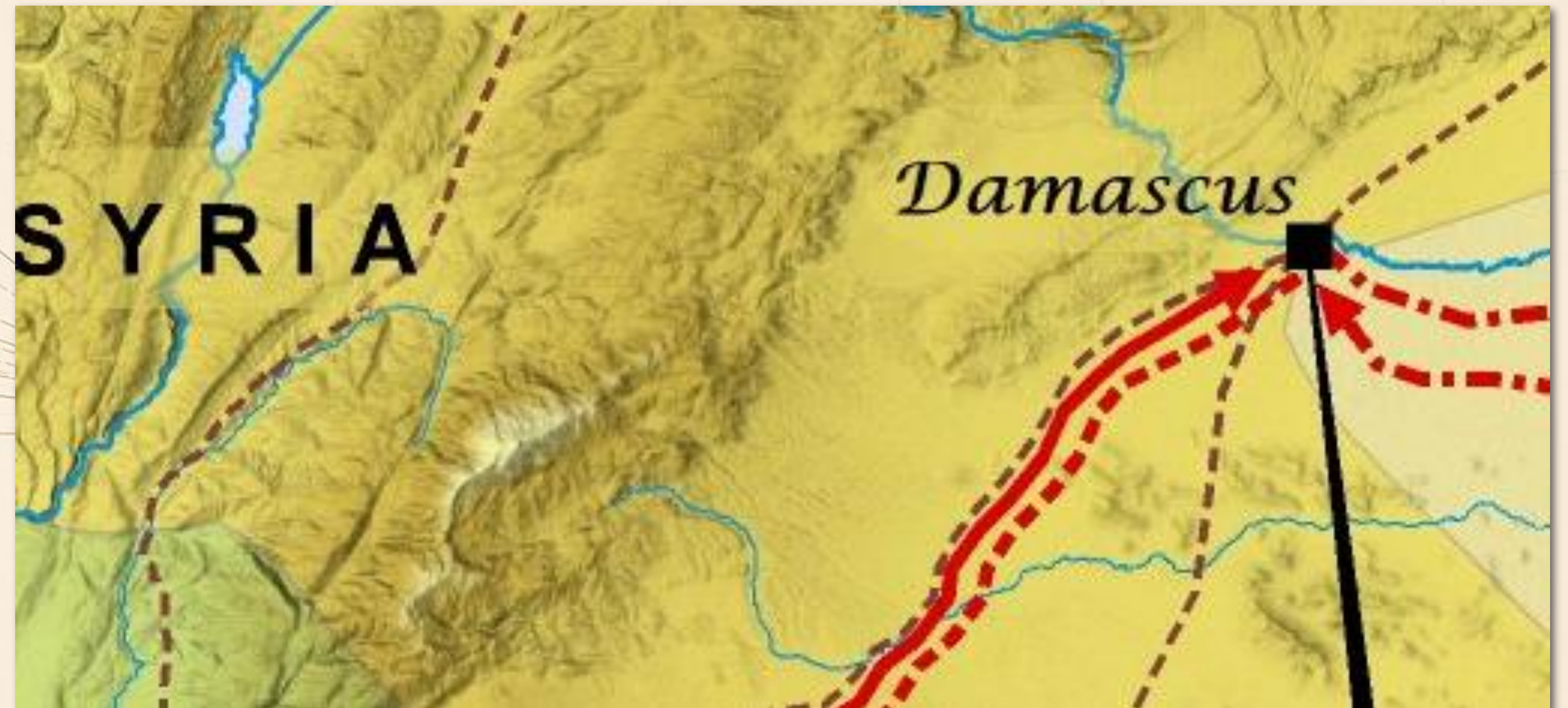
ACTS 9: 17 Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord - Jesus, Who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here - has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” 18 Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, 19 and after taking some food, he regained his strength.



Saul's Waze App



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Saul's Waze App

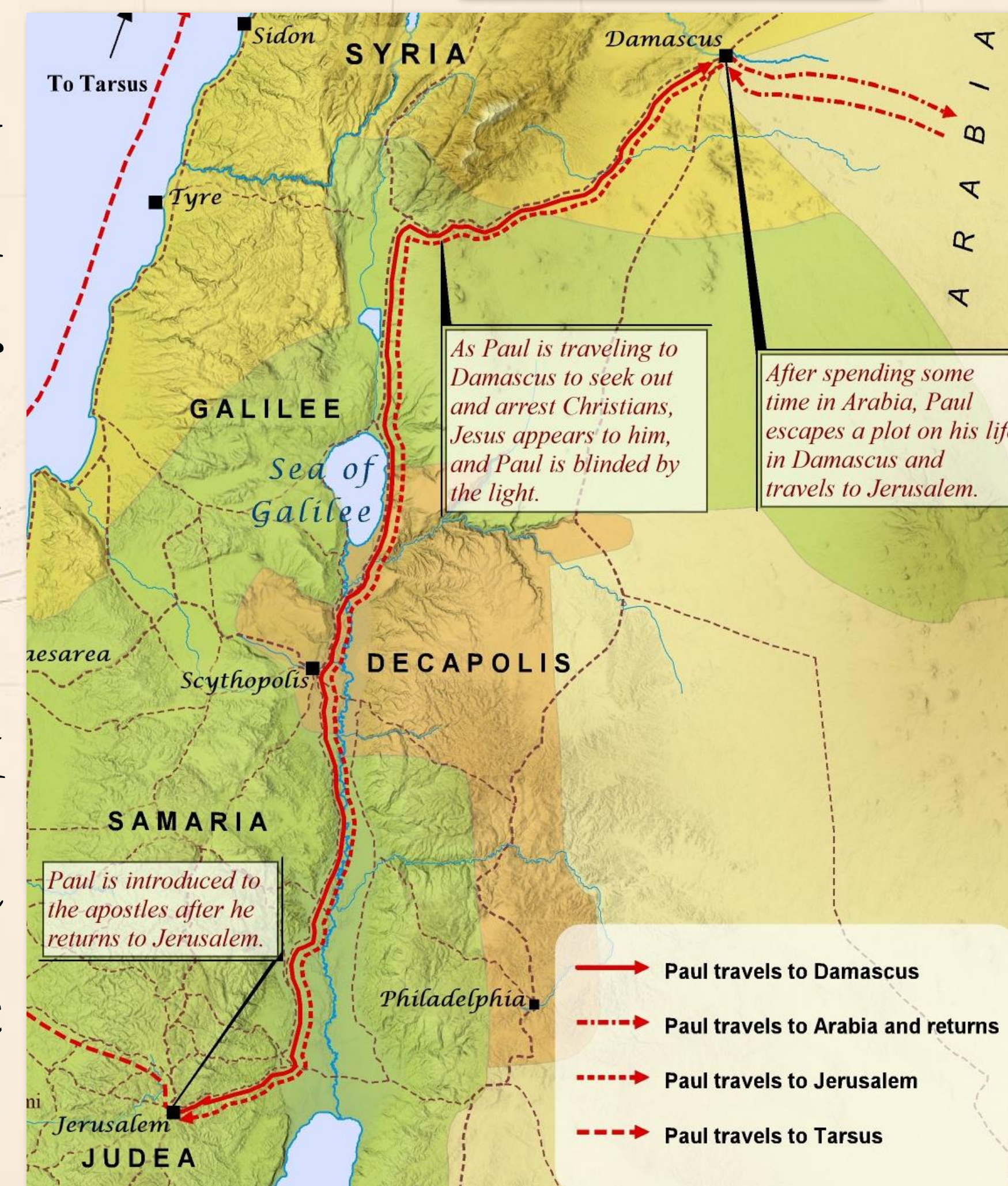


ACTS 9: 19 Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. 20 At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. 21 All those who heard him were astonished and asked, “Isn’t he the man who raised havoc in Jerusalem among those who call on this name? And hasn’t he come here to take them as prisoners to the chief priests?” 22 Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ.

Saul's Waze App



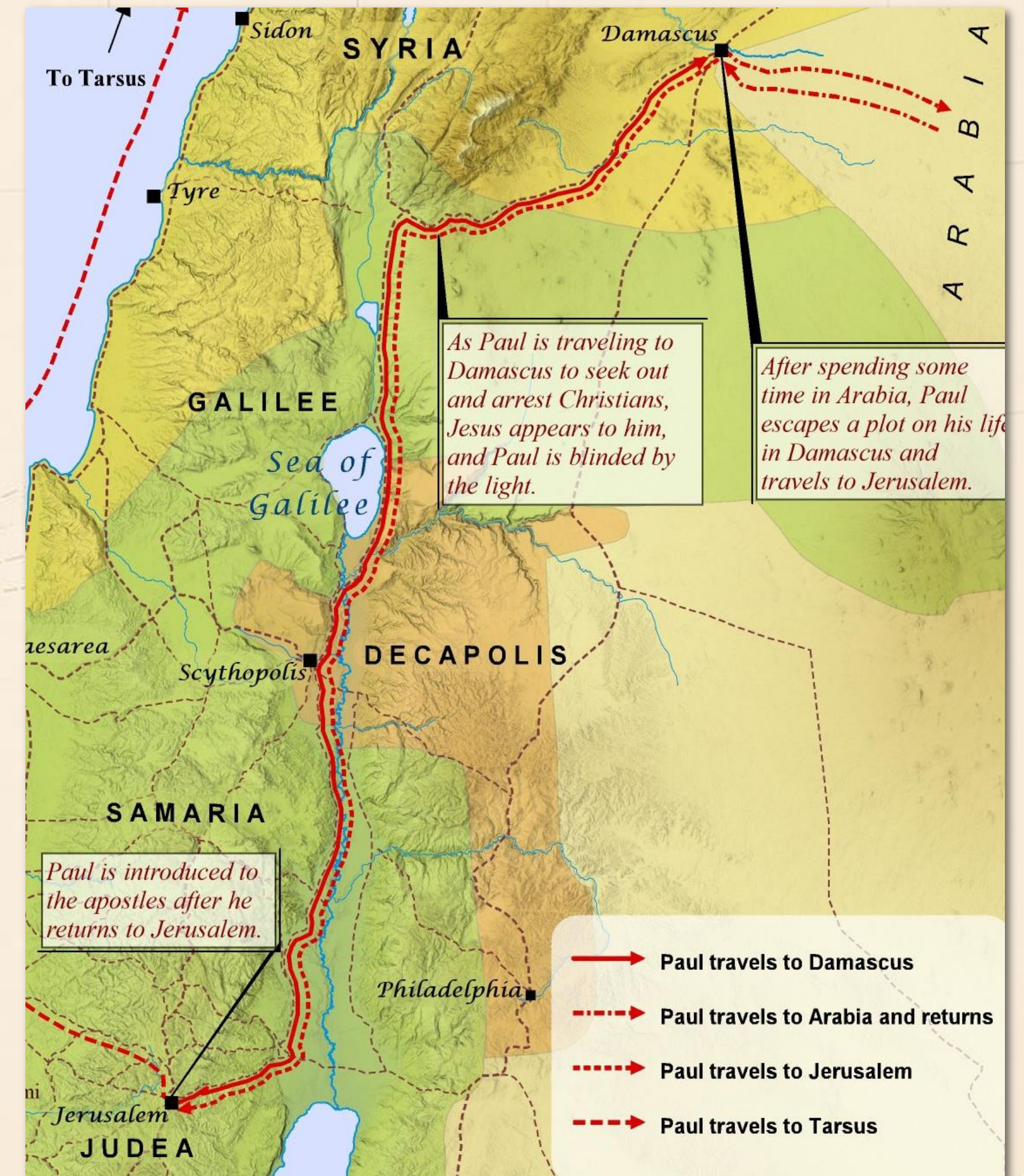
ACTS 9: 23 After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, 24 but Saul learned of their plan. Day and night they kept close watch on the city gates in order to kill him. 25 But his followers took him by night and lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.



Saul's Waze App



God again
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Saul's Waze App

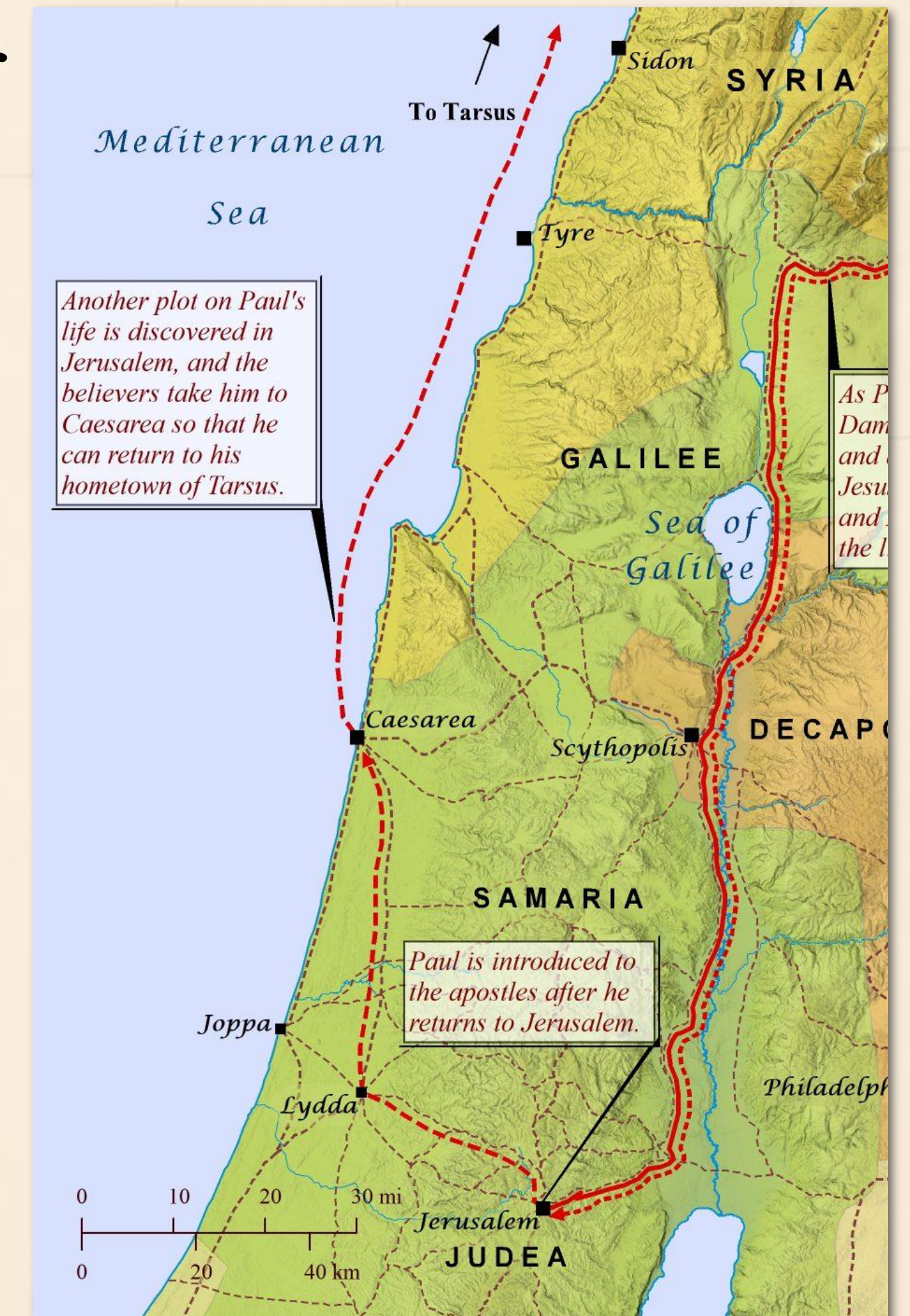


ACTS 9: 26 When he came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. 28 So Saul stayed with them and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. 29 He talked and debated with the Grecian Jews, but they tried to kill him

Saul's Waze App



ACTS 9: 30 When the brothers learned of this, they took him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus. 31 Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord.

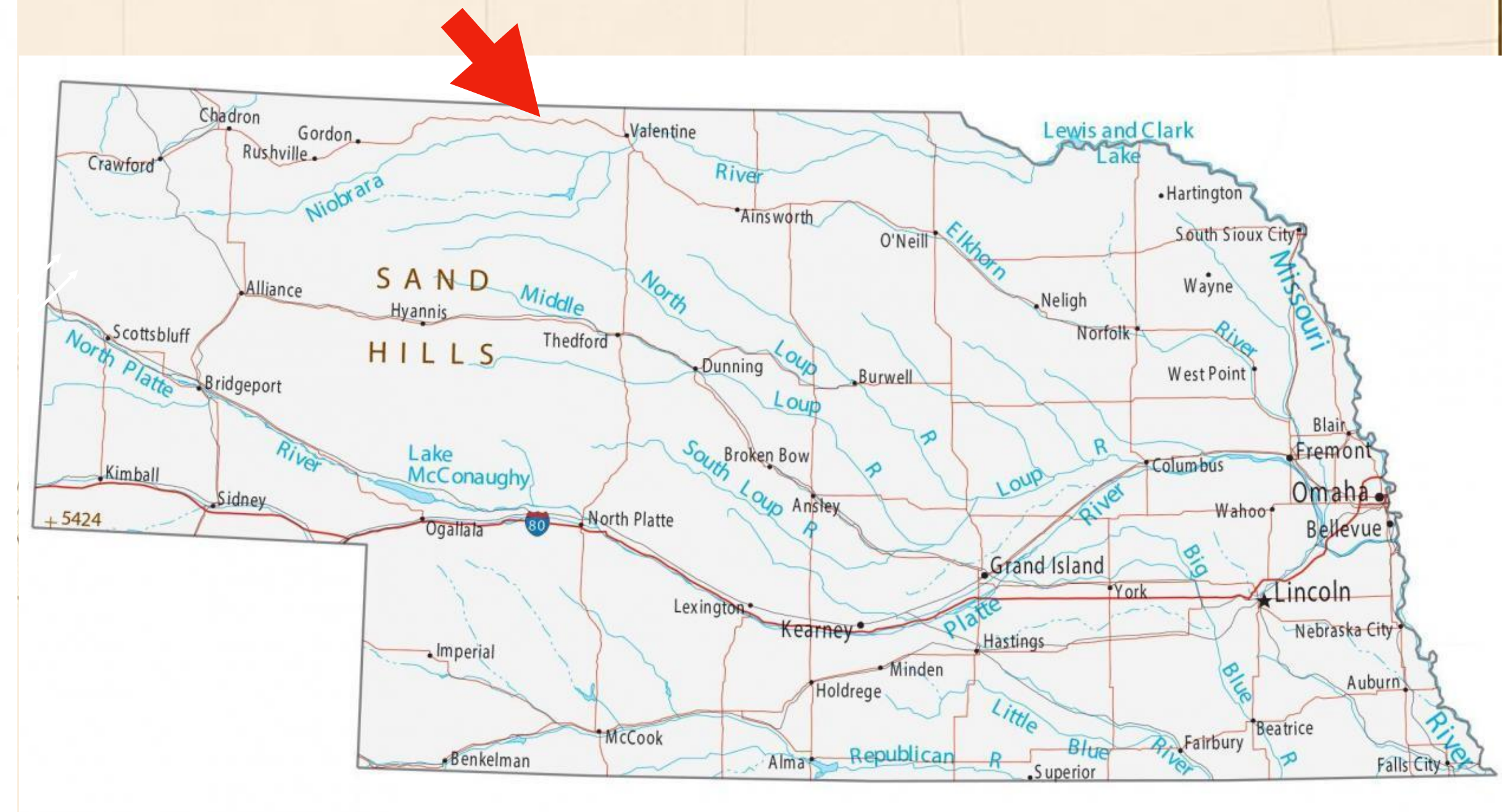


Saul's Waze App

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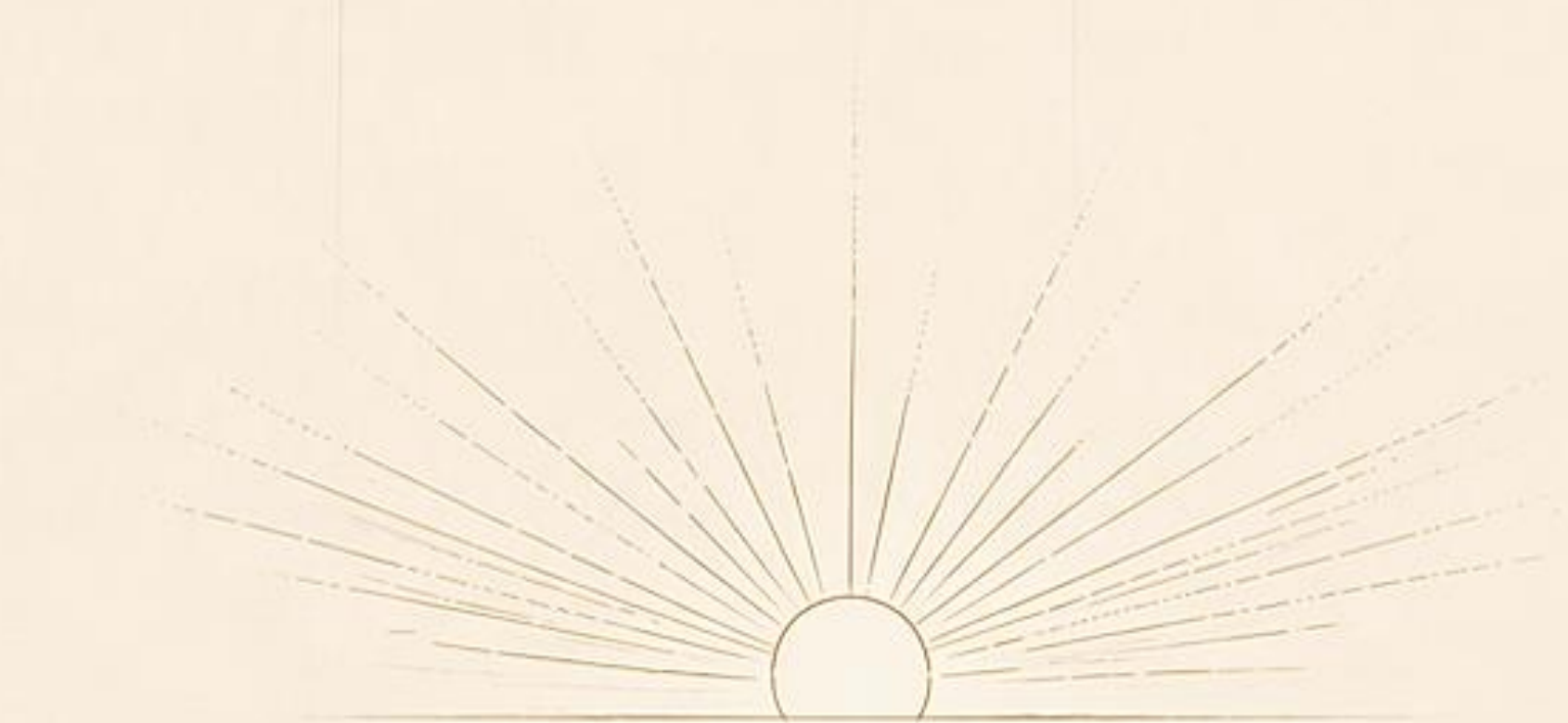


James' Waze App



APPLICATION

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When God Rewrites Your Map

ACTS 9:1-31

