

# Comparing Conversions Paul and Alma

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## Explanation

The conversions of Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus and of Alma the Younger in the land of Zarahemla are similar in certain fundamental respects, as one would expect since the source of their spiritual reversals was one and the same. Interestingly, in each case we have three accounts of their conversions: Paul's conversion is reported in Acts 9, 22, and 26. Alma's conversion is given in Mosiah 27, Alma 36, and 38. No two of these accounts are exactly the same. The columns on the far right and left sides of chart 15-17 show the verses of these six accounts in which each element either appears or is absent. Down the middle are found the elements shared by both Paul and Alma, and off center are words or experiences unique to either Paul or Alma. In sum, the personalized differences significantly offset and highlight the individual experiences in the two conversions.

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## Reference

Rex E. Lee, "Paul and Alma and Harold B. Lee: What Prophets and Common Sense Can Teach Us about Learning from Our Mistakes," *Brigham Young University Devotional and Fireside Speeches*, (Provo, Utah: BYU Press, 1993/94), 13–17.

# Comparing Conversions

## Paul and Alma

Conversion of Paul			Conversion of Alma				
Acts	Acts	Acts					
9:	22:	26:		27:	36:	38:	
			Three accounts				
1-2			Seeking to destroy church	8-11	6		
			Corrupting the people	8-10	14		
1-2	5	9-12	Arresting and persecuting saints				
3-8	6-11	13-19	A heavenly vision of Jesus Christ	A heavenly vision of an angel	11-18	5-9	7
3	6	13	Light shining from heaven				
			Whole earth did tremble	11, 18	7	7	
			Thunderous voice	11-18	7	7	
4	7	14	Fell to the earth	12, 18			
4	7	14	"Why persecutest thou me?"	"Why persecutest thou the church?"	13		
5	8	15	"Who art thou, Lord?"				
6	10		"What wilt thou have me to do?"				
			Warning of self-destruction		9, 11		
6	10	16	Told to arise	13	8		
			Commanded to repent	16			
7			Some hear, but do not see		11		
			Some hear and see, but do not understand	12, 18			
	9	13	Some see, but do not hear	Some hear and see, but Alma does not	11		
9	11		Struck blind	Struck dumb	19		
			Overcome with weakness	19	10		
9	11		Without food or drink for three days	Immobile for three days	23	10	8
			Soul racked with torment	29	12-18	8	
			Prayers of fasting and righteous	21-23			
10-18	12-16		God sends Ananias to heal	Brought before a multitude	21		
18	16		Ananias invites to baptism	Reborn of the Spirit	24-30	18-19	6, 8
			Declaration of repentant joy	20-22			
15-16	14-15	16-19	Called to the ministry				
13-26	18-21		Mistrust among the disciples	Redeemed through Jesus Christ	18-19	6, 8	
20-30			Proving discipleship				
			Testimony of repentant convert	30-31	22-30	4-6	
		20	Taught the gospel	32-37	24-26		
		31	Maintained testimony in the face of persecution	32	27		