



Acts 26:7-8, 20 on Papyrus 29(c. AD 250)

Skeptics and critics frequently claim that the Bible is full of contradictions. One of them is about who heard Jesus' voice on the Damascus road. Here it is:

When Paul was on the road to Damascus he saw a light and heard a voice, did those who were with him hear the voice?

(a) Yes (Acts 9: 7)

(b) No (Acts 22: 9)

Many Bible translations do not precisely translate the Greek, which makes it appear that there really is a contradiction as to who heard Jesus' voice. However, this supposed "contradiction" is easily cleared up when we look at an accurate translation of the verses under examination.

"The men who were traveling with Saul heard the sound but did not see anyone" (Acts 9:7 NIV).

"The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of some's voice but saw no one!"—Acts 9:7 NLT

"My companions saw the light, but they did not understand the voice of him. who was speaking to me" (Acts 22:9 NIV).

When we examine the two accounts, it is easy to see that Saul's traveling companions heard the sound of a voice speaking to Saul, but they did not understand the words being spoken.

The Greek word for "voice" (*pho·ne'*) at **Acts 9:7** is in the genitive case (*pho·nes'*) and gives, in this verse, the sense of hearing of a voice—*hearing the sound but not understanding*. At **Acts 22:9** *pho·ne'* is in the accusative case (*pho·nen'*): the men "did not hear the voice" —*they heard the sound of a voice but did not get the words, the meaning*; they did not understand what Jesus was saying to Saul, as Saul did. (**Acts 9:4**) This knowledge from the original Koine' Greek of the Bible's use of the idea of 'hearing' in both senses helps to clear up what would otherwise appear to be a contradiction.

This is another case of the skeptics and critics being silenced over their criticism of the Bible. **"God will always be true even if no human being can be relied on" (Romans 3:4 NJB).**