



ACCM

Bible Study: Thursday, February 04 2016.

Topic: Acts 9

TEXT: Acts 9

INTRODUCTION: As the church grew in number so did one of its thorns and major challenge, persecution. One of the main executors of this persecution was a young, educated Pharisee by the name of Saul. Acts Chapter 9 tells the entire story about the transformation of Saul to Apostle Paul and also from the persecutor to the persecuted. It begins with him obtaining permission to go to Damascus to bring the believers to Jerusalem to be imprisoned. On the way He encounters the Lord and that changed the object of the entire mission. For three days he did not eat nor drink anything until the Lord asked Ananias to go and pray for him that he may regain his sight. Ananias resisted this errand initially but later went and he prayed for Paul who regained his sight.

Thereafter Paul became a strong witness for the Lord. His stand for the Lord was so great that the Jews in Damascus sought to kill him. He escaped by being let down through a basket and he headed for Jerusalem. At Jerusalem, the believers initially did not want to accept him due to fear but Barnabas intervened asking the believers to accept him.

Again, he continued his powerful defence of the gospel as he contended with the Grecian Jews. The hatred grew to desperate level where they again decided to kill. Him at was at this time that the disciples decided to send him to Tarsus

The Bible reports that there was peace all over Israel thereafter. The peace enabled the disciple to focus on the work of the gospel resulting in remarkable miracles at Lydda (Lod) such as the raising of Dorcas back to life and healing a paralytic called Aeneas who was bed ridden for eight years. This thus gave rise to an amazing growth in the expansion of the gospel.

Do we realise that the word saint (set apart ones) was first used in Acts Chapter 9:13

DISCUSSIONS

1. The hatred of Saul for the church could not stop the movement of the gospel. This is a confirmation of the statement that the enemy's power is limited when you are with God.

Psalm 34:19, Lam 3:37.

2. Why did Jesus use the words 'Why do you persecute me' **Vs 4**. I believe that it is a sure sign that Jesus identifies with the Church. **Matt 10:40, I Cor 8:12**
3. Comment on the way Paul referred to the Lord when he encountered Him. **Vs 4-6**.
4. Why was Paul so obedient to this voice? **Vs 6. II Cor 8:12**.
5. Paul was feared in Jerusalem and same in Damascus. If you were in these locations how will you relate to Paul? How should we judge people based on our previous knowledge of these people? E.g. an ex-murderer, an ex-hooker, an ex-robber etc. **Vs 26-28 and 13-14. II Cor 5:17**. How did Ananias address Paul when he got to him. **Vs 17**.
6. What is the importance of knowledge in the propagation of the gospel? **Vs 22. II Tim 2:15, II Peter 1:10, Matt 13:52**
7. Comment on the roles of Ananias and Barnabas in the life of Paul. **Vs 17 and 27**. How did Ananias and the people of Damascus know that Paul was on his way to Damascus? What will you do if you heard that a character like Saul was coming to Damascus? If you were Ananias how will you behave to Paul. **Vs 10-17. Acts 22:12-15**.
8. Is it unusual when people do not easily accept our testimony of the Lord? Why do we as believers in order to gain acceptance lower the standard of the gospel. **Vs 20-23, 29**.
9. Upon your first encounter with a personality, how will you feel when the personality decides to tell you that you are going to suffer for his sake. **Vs 16**.
10. How long does it take a believer to begin to testify or work for the Lord. **Vs 19-20**. Have you ever seen someone who got born again and in a short time was a powerful witness for the Lord? What has been hindering you from being a powerful witness or worker for the Lord?
11. The conversion of Saul brought peace to the entire Israel. Do you know that the best step to peace is to win your enemy?

CONCLUSION: Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing. God will defend His people not just because they are His people but because He is interested in the growth of His work. If we are completely overcome by the challenges of this world, who will propagate His

gospel? He has the ability to arrest and challenge any character for His name sake. He did it to Herod, Saul and Nebuchadnezzar. All He requires from us is that we stand still so we will have the opportunity to prove His abilities.