

ACTS 9:10-20

LESSON: CALLED TO PROCLAIM CHRIST — August 20, 2017

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 9:1-9 ¹Not content with persecuting Christians in Jerusalem, Saul received permission from the high priest to seek out those of the Way in Damascus and bring them bound to Jerusalem. It was near Damascus that Saul was blinded by a light from heaven falling to the ground and hearing a voice. He was called by name, and Saul responded, *"Who are you Lord?"* The voice says *"I am Jesus whom you persecute."* Saul then asked *"Lord what will you have me do?"* He was told to *"arise and go into the city and it will be told what he must do."* The men that had accompanied Saul on this journey didn't hear the voice nor see anyone that Saul had heard and seen. Saul got up off the ground and found out he was blind, and they then led him by the hand, bringing him into Damascus for further instructions. Saul was blind for three days, neither ate or drank.

LESSON:

I. THE ROLE OF ANANIAS Acts 9:10-14

9:10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. God had a special disciple named Ananias in Damascus waiting on assignment. God speaks to him in a vision; a dream; and he answers back unto the Lord, *"Behold, I am here, Lord."* When the Lord speaks, His voice is recognized. Saul, being thrown off the horse says, *"Who art thy Lord?"* Then later he says, *"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"* Even the demon-possessed man in the Gadarene, seeing Jesus afar off, ran and worshipped Jesus crying with a loud voice, *"What have I to do with thee Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God?"* Ananias just says *"I am here Lord."* He was sensitive to the voice of the Lord.

9:11 And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,— God tells Ananias to arise; to get up and go to the street called Straight. Do you see how God worded His Words? He gave the place to go before He revealed the name of the person he was to encounter. Saul of Tarsus was a well-known Pharisee; a Hebrew of the Hebrews who came against Christian Jews. They even knew of him in Damascus and what he came to do. But Ananias was willing to obey when God said go. Then, God tells him who he is to go to—Saul of Tarsus and he is praying. Tarsus was Saul's birthplace.

9:12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight. God also lets Ananias know that Saul has seen a vision of a man who was to come see him, and it is him (Ananias). Saul has seen Ananias put his hands upon him that he might receive his sight in the vision. God has given this vision to Saul that he may have clear assurance that his help was on the way; that his change was on the way; that his sight was on the way.

9:13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:— Well, Ananias lets the Lord know that he has heard from many people about Saul; the evil and great sufferings he's done toward the saints in Jerusalem. It's one thing to have heard something about somebody, but it's another to see and witness for yourself the work God can do and will do in a person's life.

9:14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. Saul, as if the Lord didn't

¹ http://executableoutlines.com/acts/acts_09.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

know had come with authority from the chief priest to put into chains and arrest all that call on the Name of Jesus. Saul might have had authority from the chief priest, but it will be nothing to the authority Jesus will give him.

II. THE COMMISSION OF SAUL Acts 9:15-20

9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:— Ananias' warnings and concerns were overruled by the Lord because He's communicating: *never mind Ananias, go head on; go to Straight street to the house of Judas for this man is my chosen vessel; a chosen instrument of God. "He is to bear my name in his heart and in his behavior and actions as he goes before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."*

9:16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. As Saul had been the minister of suffering to many believers, he himself would now be the recipient of much suffering, both at the hands of believers, and especially at the hands of his own kinsmen, the Jews.

9:17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Ananias departs and enters the house of Judas. He places his hands upon Saul and calls him brother, and saying that the Lord, even the same Jesus that appeared to him (Saul) has sent him (Ananias). Why? - For four reasons:

1. **Saul needed the touch of a disciple's hand and faithfulness.** He needed to experience the help and ministry of God's disciple. He needed to see faithfulness in action—love, care, concern, interest, help reaching out to him in time of need.
2. **Saul needed the recognition of being a "Brother" in the Lord.** This one word probably caused Saul to break out in tears, for he was being reached out to by a dear believer of the Lord despite the terrible wrong he had done to the believers. This was confirmation to him that he had been truly forgiven and received by the Lord.
3. **Saul needed the power of healing ministered.** He was afflicted. He needed Ananias to help him in his affliction. He needed his eyes healed, symbolizing how the scales of spiritual darkness and sin and shame had been removed from his heart.
4. **Saul needed the sharing of the Holy Spirit's infilling.** He needed the sharing of the infilling power of the Spirit for service.

9:18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. Saul was blind for three days. During that time he fasted and prayed. But when Ananias placed his hands upon Saul, it says immediately scales began to fall from his eyes, and he received his sight; he received his healing. He got up and was baptized.

9:19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. Fasting was over, but prayer is never over. Saul tended to his physical need and ate meat, so he could be strengthened because of the last three days, he was without food. He was in new surroundings and had become a new convert. He had to get acquainted with his new brethren. So, he joined and became associated and identified with other believers. You can imagine how stunned the other believers were, because they remembered his past. However, his old nature and old man had truly died on the Damascus Road, and now he has the new nature shared by all believers.

I want to bring up one point—²There is a common misconception among Christians that the name Saul of Tarsus was changed to Paul by Jesus after Saul's life-changing encounter with the risen Jesus on the road to Damascus.

² <http://graceandknowledge.faithweb.com/saul2paul.html>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

On the contrary, Acts 13:9 tells us that Saul *"was also called Paul"* (NIV). In other words, they are dual names for one man before and after his conversion. He apparently used the Hebrew name Shaul (Saul) in Jewish settings, as when he was addressing a crowd in Jerusalem after his arrest there (Acts 22); and the Roman name Paulus (Paul) in a Greco-Roman environment, as in his epistles. It seems to have been fairly typical for first-century Jews to have more than one name. Other New Testament examples include:

- "Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus)" (Acts 1:23);
- "Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas)" (Acts 9:36);
- "John, also called Mark" (Acts 12:12);
- Paul's companion Silas (Acts 15-18), who is also known as Silvanus (2 Cor.1:19; 1 Thes.1:1; 2 Thes.1:1).

This is just for clarity. Luke, the author of Acts, refers to Saul of Tarsus as *"Saul"* until Acts 13:9, then shifts to *"Paul"* for the remainder of the book. Jesus did not change his name.

9:20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. It didn't take him long. You know how it is with new converts—all gong-ho about Jesus! He immediately began to preach Christ in the synagogues whether they wanted to hear him or not. He now had a new belief. He was no longer talking about religion, tradition, ceremony rituals or, trying to round up the Christians to kill them. No, he preached that Christ is the Son of God!

SUMMARY:

The Lord appears to His disciple named Ananias (9:10). He was told to arise and go to a street named Straight where he would find Saul of Tarsus because he's praying (9:11). Saul of Tarsus had seen a vision of Ananias coming to see him and laying hands on him to restore his sight (9:12). Ananias brought up about Saul of Tarsus' reputation because of the evil he had done to the saints in Jerusalem (9:13). And Ananias makes it known to Jesus that the chief priests had given him authority to bind up all that called upon His Name (9:14). He thought he had an important role to perform until He met Jesus on the Road to Damascus (9:10-14).

Jesus tells Ananias that Saul is a chosen vessel for Christ, and he is to bear His (Jesus') Name before the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel (9:15). It will be made known how much he would suffer for Jesus' Name sake (9:16). Ananias did as he was commanded by the Lord God Almighty. He went to him and called him *"Brother Saul, saying, the Lord sent me"* as he laid his hands on him. Just like that, he was saved and is now a brother in the body of Christ; called by God. You have to remember that Saul had been fasting and praying for three days, indicating he had believed in the Lord and was calling on Him. Saul was filled with the Holy Ghost (9:17). After three days of temporary blindness, *"Immediately"* meaning instantly and quickly, the scales that had covered his eyes had fallen off, and Saul has now instantly regained his sight. He arose and was baptized with water as an outward expression of his conviction (9:18); different from verse 17, (filled with the Holy Spirit to be empowered for service). **My question to you:** *"Was Saul (Paul) saved on the Damascus Road, or when he was infilled with the Holy Spirit?"* The question is debated by various scholars. I'll let you discuss it. *And does the Spirit enter in before He fills you with power?* Saul tended to his physical need and ate meat, so he could be strengthened and remained several days with the disciples in Damascus (9:19). Soon he was proclaiming Jesus publicly in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God (9:20). (9:15-20).