

WOC INTERNATIONAL

Agents Of Change

Acts 9 - February 18, 2022

Background

Acts 9:1-2 “Meanwhile, Sha’ul, still breathing murderous threats against the Lord’s talmidim, went to the cohen hagadol 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Dammesek, authorizing him to arrest any people he might find, whether men or women, who belonged to “the Way,” and bring them back to Yerushalayim.” CJB

Important Observations

Damascus was the capital of Syria about 133 miles north of Jerusalem

And it has been said to be the most beautiful of all Western Asia

Sha’ul was unsatisfied with conducting his inquisitions and persecutions just in Jerusalem

His anger against Messianics, led him to _____ them to Jerusalem

They weren’t a religio licita (legal religion) & afforded legal protections as Judaism

Even though under Roman rule the Sanhedrin did not have temporal power

Letters from the cohen hagadol carried weight in even Damascus

In internal Jewish matters it was honored even beyond the borders of Israel

Important Realizations

1 - Yahweh never changed Saul’s (Sha’ul) name to Paul (Paulos); that is a myth

Paulos is the Greek version of the Hebrew Sha’ul

Acts 13:9-10 “Then Sha’ul, also known as Paul, filled with the Ruach HaKodesh, stared straight at him and said, 10 “You son of Satan, full of fraud and evil! You enemy of everything good! Won’t you ever stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord?”

2 - Early believers did not refer to themselves as Christians, but as “People of the Way”

And Sha’ul’s persecution of them helped spread their message

Acts 8:3-4 “But Sha’ul set out to destroy the Messianic Community – entering house after house, he dragged off both men and women and handed them over to be put in prison. 4 However, those who were scattered announced the Good News of the Word wherever they went.” CJB

Setting - A Precipitating Event (flashing light and a voice)

Something triggering an event or situation to happen _____ or sooner than normal

What was the precipitating events in this case? - Light & a bat-kol (voice from heaven)

Acts 9:3-4 “He was on the road and nearing Dammesek, when suddenly a light from heaven flashed all around him. 4 Falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, “Sha’ul! Sha’ul! Why do you keep persecuting me?” CJB

Notes

What are some other biblical examples of public bat-kols?

Yahweh speaking to Avraham, Yitzchak, Ya'akov and Moshe

Yeshua's immersion at the hands of John

Matt 3:16-17 "As soon as Yeshua had been immersed, he came up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, he saw the Spirit of God coming down upon him like a dove, 17 and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; I am well pleased with him." CJB

Why is it important to know the bat-kol in this instance was the voice of _____?

Nothing less would have turned him 180 degrees around from his zealous persecution

Acts 9: "Sir, who are you?" he asked. "I am Yeshua, and you are persecuting me." CJB

Note - Sha'ul went from persecuting Messianic Jews to becoming one himself

What important myths does Sha'ul's bat-kol encounter refute?

Myth 1 - The one hearing the Lord's voice always _____ it is Him speaking to them

Obviously, Sha'ul didn't know it was Yeshua or he wouldn't have said what he did!

Myth 2 - The Voice one hears is _____ from that of a human being

Obviously, Samuel heard a voice he thought was human (Samuel's)

1 Sam 3:8-9 "Adonai called, "Sh'mu'el!" again, a third time. He got up, went to 'Eli and said, "Here I am – you called me." At last 'Eli realized it was Adonai calling the child. 9 So 'Eli said to Sh'mu'el, "Go, and lie down. If you are called again, say, 'Speak, Adonai; your servant is listening.' Sh'mu'el went and lay down in his place."

Fact - God can use any voice He wants besides His own, including a human being's

This is why God will often use another person's voice to tell someone something

Precipitating Reality (Persecuting the Messianic Jews is equal to persecuting Yeshua)

Yeshua is "head" of the "Body"; when the body is pained, so is the head

Scripture says the Father's responsibility regarding this is - He will avenge us

Heb 10:30 "For the One we know is the One who said, "Vengeance is my responsibility; I will repay," and then said, "Adonai will judge his people." CJB

Scripture says our responsibility regarding this is - We cannot repay evil

1 Thess 5:15 "See that no one repays evil for evil; on the contrary, always try to do good to each other, indeed, to everyone." CJB

Precipitating Event witnesses

Acts 9:7 "The men traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one."

Important observation - The men heard what he heard, but did they see the light he saw?

Result of the Precipitating Event Reality witnesses

Acts 9:8-9 "They helped Sha'ul get up off the ground; but when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing. So, leading him by the hand, they brought him into Dammesek. 9 For three days he remained unable to see, and he neither ate nor drank." CJB

What brought Sha'ul to the ground?

What's the significance of Sha'ul fasting for 3 days & needing to be led by the hand?

Precipitating Event Command

Acts 9:6 *But get up, and go into the city, and you will be told what you have to do.*” CJB

Why did Yahweh tell him immediately where to go, but not what to do?

Post Precipitating Event Reality

Yahweh was preparing the “changed” Sha’ul to change His covenant people

Acts 9:10-13 *“There was a talmid in Dammesek, Hananyah by name; and in a vision the Lord said to him, “Hananyah!” He said, “Here I am, Lord.” 11 The Lord said to him, “Get up and go to Straight Street, to Y’hudah’s house; and ask for a man from Tarsus named Sha’ul; for he is praying, 12 and in a vision he has seen a man named Hananyah coming in and placing his hands on him to restore his sight.”* CJB

What was the difference in instruction between Sha’ul and Ananias?

Why did the Spirit lead Sha’ul to Ananias and not someone else?

A Torah zealot like Sha’ul would not have found anyone else _____

Acts 22:11-12 *“I had been blinded by the brightness of the light, so my companions led me by the hand into Dammesek. 12 “A man named Hananyah, an observant follower of the Torah who was highly regarded by the entire Jewish community there”* CJB

What does this passage reveal about the need for credibility?

Yahweh was preparing the “changed” Sha’ul & the “changed” Ananias to change the world

Acts 9:13-16 *“But Hananyah answered, “Lord, many have told me about this man, how much harm he has done to your people in Yerushalayim; 14 and here he has a warrant from the head cohanim to arrest everyone who calls on your name.” 15 But the Lord said to him, “Go, because this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name to the Goyim, even to their kings, and to the sons of Isra’el as well. 16 For I myself will show him how much he will have to suffer on account of my name.”* CJB

Post Precipitating Event Results

Blinded eyes were opened, strength was renewed, and new spiritual blessings were received

Acts 9:17-19 *“So Hananyah left and went into the house. Placing his hands on him, he said, “Brother Sha’ul, the Lord – Yeshua, the one 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 Ruach HaKodesh.” 18 In that moment, something like scales fell away from Sha’ul’s eyes; and he could see again. He got up and was immersed; 19 then he ate some food and regained his strength.”* CJB

Conclusion

What Precipitating Events has Yahweh used to bring about His change in your life?

What Precipitating Commands has Yahweh given you to obey?

What Post Precipitating Event Results are you expecting?

Notes