

Saul meets Ananias (Acts 9:10-22)

Saul, on a journey to arrest people who believed in Jesus, a light flashed from heaven and he heard the voice from Jesus Christ: **“Saul why do you persecute me? (Acts 9:4)** Thereafter, Saul could not see anything and was led by others into Damascus.

Predestination / God’s Plan - Nothing is by accident (chance) to believers. It was in God’s plan to meet Saul. Nothing would be by accident to God’s chosen people even though it may appear so. For this reason we should/could realize and explain our past filled with suffering which we did not first understand. And have hope in the future when we know Jesus. And God had a plan for Saul to meet Ananias. Bible does not tell about him in detail but he heard voice of Holy Spirit and obeyed immediately when God wanted to use him **“In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, “Ananias “Yes, Lord,” he answered. The Lord told him, “Go to the house of Judas on Straight Street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying (Acts 9:10-11)** Ananias heard voice of God clearly. Either vision or voice, God tells clearly - not in vagueness. **“This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! (Ezekiel 13:3)** However, we should not say that our own thoughts comes from God. Ananias experienced spiritual fellowship - a vision with God.

God communicates to us in various ways.

- Special revelation (dream, vision, prophecy) **“In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit ...and they will prophesy. (Acts 2:17-18)** God tells us through prophecy, visions and dreams. Birth of Jesus was told by Joseph’s dream (Matthew 1:19-21) God told this amazing message through dream not by vision or prophecy. Also, it was through dream that escape to Egypt when Herod try to kill Baby Jesus and return to Israel after Herod’s death. (Matthew 2:13, 19-20) However, not all of our dream come from God. We could dream by own thought or Satan’s too. Our dreams will come true when we are fulfilled with Holy Spirit. **Through Vision** It means we could see God’s plan (Acts 10:1-3) **Through voice.** We could hear God’s voice in our heart or prophecy guided by Him. **Through revelation** God could command us to think with our mind. **“a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout...been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah(Luke 2:25-26).** There would be commandment in mind to be done even though no one say it.

- Guidance by Holy Spirit through our wish in mind. **“for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose(Phil 2:13).** All of us have wishes but it is passion of specific wish which guided by Holy Spirit. It could be God’s telling when we have joy and peace if we pray but still have certain wish in our mind. Saul received Holy Spirit **“Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul’s eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized (Acts 9:18)** Anania placed his hands on Saul and he was filled with Holy Spirit, could see again. There is something which covers our ears/eyes - stops us to go closer to God.

- Environment (surroundings) Surroundings drive us even we do not receive neither revelation nor wish. **“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come (John 16:13)**

Guidance and Direction by God No other way but only one way to go when/where God force us. It is by God’s guidance; He prepared for us. **“However, as it is written: “What no eyes has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived” the things God has prepared for those who love him(1Cor 2:9)“But the Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel. (Acts 9:15)** Saul was chosen instrument for gentiles. What about us? No one is created by God without purpose. **“Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care (Matthew 10:29)** If we do not think of basic fundamental (Why we born, live...) it is we do not find out own task (mission) because we still live in sins, deceived by Satan who drive us destruction. **“For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. (1 John 2:16)** However, Saul found out the task (mission) as soon as he met Jesus. He looked back on his own identity, knew about Jesus accurately and realized his purpose to live so that he did not spare his life for the task. **“However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.(Acts 20:24)** God called Saul to use him for the task of testifying whole gentile world.

God’s people- Immediate Obedience. Ananias gave up his thought as God commanded him. **“Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, 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 Holy Spirit.”(Acts 9:17)** We could see that Ananias immediate obedience even though he did not agree with God’s command. It is not obedience if we do depends on its contents. Attitude is more important than obedience itself. We should have will and determination to obey whatever it is. Faith should be followed by immediate obedience. Saul was active and move immediately if he believe right. **“At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20)** **“Yet Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Messiah. (Acts 9:22)** He preached that Jesus is Son of God even in Jerusalem (previously persecuted people who believe in Jesus) Saul was faithful to God wherever he went. God uses one who is faithful to the basic.