

I OBEYED THAT VISION FROM HEAVEN

Scripture:- Acts 26:12-23

Paul's conversion is recorded in 3 chapters in Acts Chapter 9,22,26. Acts 1:8 got fulfilled in Paul's life. Paul's five court trials are vividly explained in the book of Acts. The trial before the Jewish people, the Jewish council, Felix, Festus and King Agrippa 2nd. This court trial took almost 5 years. But even in those years of frustration Paul grabbed opportunity to share Gospel because sharing gospel was his passion always.

- WE NEED A VISION FROM HEAVEN. Verse 19

Paul received a vision from Jesus of reaching the unreached world. Paul like Jesus was always friend of sinners. The first time he received vision is mentioned in Acts 9:3-16.

Nehemiah felt the needs of his own people and God gave him a vision for HIS people. Do we feel the needs of the people around us? Let's ask GOD to open our eyes so that we will see the needs of people around us. When we have a vision of GOD like Isaiah, then we will hear God's cry for the world. Vision is essential for mission.

- THE VISION FROM HEAVEN SHOULD DIRECT OUR LIVES. Verse 19,20

From the time of vision, 35 years of Paul's life was directed by God given vision in Acts 20:24 he expresses his desire to complete the task God has assigned him.

But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God. Acts 20:24 NLT

The vision for Paul was not an end in itself. It was just a beginning he spent rest of his life trying to do what God told him to do in the vision. He was not prophet Jonah running from God and the vision. Remember, our vision should become a mission for Paul to live is Christ and to die is gain. Proverbs 29:18 *Where there is no vision people perish.* Samson without a vision even lost his physical vision David lost his vision and ended up with Uriah's wife. Joseph with a vision finally sat in the Egyptian throne.

- WE MUST BE CAREFUL TO KEEP THE VISION ALIVE. Verse 19

Keeping the vision alive is a great challenge. the problem with the vision is as it delays it tend to fade away. We may get side tracked by 3G'-GOLD, GIRL, GLORY. We may have troubles

keeping our priorities straight. If we are not careful we will lose our vision

How can we keep the vision alive? Paul kept it alive in his life. Now, many years after that vision experience on a Damascus road, the vision was as fresh and alive in his life as it was on the day he received it from JESUS. Why? Because he was obedient to that vision. He kept on acting on it. Everyday of his life, every moment of his life, he was ready to preach, in season and out of season, trying to win as many people as possible to Christ. Gospel preaching was a life style for him. that's why he could say woe to me if I don't preach the Gospel. It was a outgoing, ongoing thing in his life.

The little steps we take to make the vision practically possible, will help us to have the vision clearer in our life. We are called not to be successful or perfect in God' vision but to be faithful in our mission with the vision of God.

- THE GOD WHO GIVES THE VISION WILL BE ALWAYS PRESENT WITH US. Verse 17,21 and 22.

Acts 9:15,16 first time experience of the vision

¹⁵ But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

Acts 13:2-4 Dedication in Antioch church

² One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them." ³ So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. ⁴ So Barnabas and Saul were sent out by the Holy Spirit. They went down to the seaport of Seleucia and then sailed for the island of Cyprus.

Acts 19:21 I must visit Rome also

²¹ Afterward Paul felt compelled by the Spirit^[a] to go over to Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. "And after that," he said, "I must go on to Rome!"

Why Rome? Romans 1:13-15

¹³ I want you to know, dear brothers and sisters,^[a] that I planned many times to visit you, but I was prevented until now. I want to work among you and see spiritual fruit, just as I have seen among other Gentiles. ¹⁴ For I have a great sense of obligation to people in both the civilized world and the rest of the world,^[b] to the educated and uneducated alike. ¹⁵ So I am eager to come to you in Rome, too, to preach the Good News.

Acts 23:10,11 The LORD encouraged Paul again

¹⁰ As the conflict grew more violent, the commander was afraid they would tear Paul apart. So he ordered his soldiers to go and rescue him by force and take him back to the fortress.

¹¹ That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, “Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well.”

Acts 27:23-25 Ship wreck

²³ For last night an angel of the God to whom I belong and whom I serve stood beside me, ²⁴ and he said, ‘Don’t be afraid, Paul, for you will surely stand trial before Caesar! What’s more, God in his goodness has granted safety to everyone sailing with you.’ ²⁵ So take courage! For I believe God. It will be just as he said.

2timothy 4:16-18

¹⁶ The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me. Everyone abandoned me. May it not be counted against them. ¹⁷ But the Lord stood with me and gave me strength so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And he rescued me from certain death.^[a] ¹⁸ Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen

Paul’s delight Acts 26:29 everybody a Christian

²⁹ Paul replied, “Whether quickly or not, I pray to God that both you and everyone here in this audience might become the same as I am, except for these chains.”

Finally Paul stood before Caesar preaching the Gospel.

His last words 2timothy 4:6-8

⁶ As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. ⁸ And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing.