

## Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 59

### Sha'ul's Third Missionary Journey ~ Part 2

**Note: To examine the graphics in this series, click on them for a pop-up version.**

As I mentioned in my last post, we returned to the **Book of Acts**. In this post, **Sha'ul** continues his **Third Missionary Journey** in Acts 19:1.

#### Talmidim Rebaptized

During **Sha'ul's** third missionary journey (circa 52–57 CE), he returned to **Ephesus**, where he stopped briefly on his second missionary journey (circa 49–51 CE). This time, he stayed in the city for about three years.

*19<sup>1</sup> While Apollos was in Corinth, Sha'ul completed his travels through the inland country and arrived at Ephesus, where he found a few talmidim. <sup>2</sup> He asked them, "Did you receive the Ruach HaKodesh when you came to trust?" "No," they said to him, "we have never even heard that there is such a thing as the Ruach HaKodesh." <sup>3</sup> "In that case," he said, "into what were you immersed?" "The immersion of Yochanan," they answered. <sup>4</sup> Sha'ul said, "Yochanan practiced an immersion in connection with turning from sin to God, but he told the people to put their trust in the one who would come after him, that is, in Yeshua." <sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were immersed into the name of the Lord Yeshua; <sup>6</sup> and when Sha'ul placed his hands on them, the Ruach HaKodesh came upon them; so that they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. <sup>7</sup> In all, there were about twelve of these men.*

A particular group of people are considered here, like Apollos (Acts 18:25), who had known of **God's** involvement in "salvation history" up to the time of **Yochanan the Immerser** but had not known of **Yeshua**. After instruction, they are **immersed into the name of the Lord Yeshua**, that is, into all that He is (Acts 2:38, Mattityahu 28:19). Thereupon the **Ruach HaKodesh**, of whom they had **never even heard**, visits them in power and with the same charismatic phenomena as were manifested in the one hundred twenty at **Shavuot** (Acts 2:4), in the people of **Shomron** (Acts 8:17), probably in **Sha'ul** (Acts 9:17), and in **Cornelius** and his household (Acts 10:44–48).

It should also be noted that the reception of the **Ruach HaKodesh** in Acts does not follow any set pattern. He came into Believers before immersion (Acts 10:44), at the time of or after immersion (8:12–16; 19:6), and by the laying on of apostolic hands (8:17; 19:6). Yet **Sha'ul** declared (Romans 8:9) that anyone without the **Ruach HaKodesh** is not a **Believer**.

~ Stanley D. Toussaint

#### Ministry in Ephesus

*<sup>8</sup> Sha'ul went into the synagogue; and for three months he spoke out boldly, engaging in dialogue and trying to persuade people about the Kingdom of God. <sup>9</sup> But some began hardening themselves and refusing to listen; and when these started defaming the Way before the whole synagogue, Sha'ul withdrew, took the talmidim with him, and commenced holding daily dialogues in Tyrannus's yeshivah. <sup>10</sup> This went on for two years so that everyone, both Jews and Greeks, living in the province of Asia heard the message about the Lord.*

In **Ephesus**, the development of opposition to the **Gospel** within the **synagogue** was relatively slow in coming - it took three months. But when it did come and grew strong enough to obstruct communication of the **Gospel**, **Sha'ul** made a strategic withdrawal **to Tyrannus's yeshivah**. The **Hebrew** word **yeshivah** comes from the word that means **sit**; it signifies a place for learning **Torah**.

But this **raises** a question worth exploring, namely, whether **Sha'ul** withdrew from the synagogue to a **Jewish** environment or a **Gentile** one. Or even more strongly, was he forgetting about the **Jews** altogether and instead **"turning to the Goyim"** (Acts 13:46, 18:6)?

The answer is **No!!!** The text states that he continued evangelizing all who would listen **for two years so that everyone, both Jews and Greeks ... heard the message about the Lord**.

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The **Kingdom** was the constant focus of **Yeshua's** teaching from the start of His ministry (Mark 1:14–15) to after His resurrection (Acts 1:3). Therefore, we shouldn't be surprised that it was the focus of **Sha'ul's** preaching through the book of **Acts** (see 28:30–31). The goal of redemption is that **Believers** in **Yeshua HaMashiach** would live their entire lives under **God's** sovereign rule as **Kingdom talmidim**.

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<sup>1</sup>

As happened in the past, some unbelieving **Jews became hardened** and **defamed the Way**. "The Way" was an early title for Christianity (see, e.g., Acts 9:2; 19:23; 24:14, 22). **Believers** in **Yeshua** were to follow a new way of life because **Yeshua** is **"the way"** (see John 14:6; Romans 6:1–7). So, **Sha'ul** moved his teaching and **discussions** from the synagogue to **Tyrannus's Yeshiva**. How effective was that? He taught there **every day** for two years so that all the residents of Asia, **Jews, and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord**. **Sha'ul** was incredible!

In our next post, we continue to explore **Sha'ul's Third Missionary Journey** beginning in Acts 19:11.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 19:1–10.