

Sha'ul of Tarsus & His Letters ~ Part 60

Sha'ul's Third Missionary Journey ~ Part 3

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 19:11.

Exorcist's Use Yeshua's Name

¹¹ God did extraordinary miracles through Sha'ul. ¹² For instance, handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were brought to sick people; they would recover from their ailments, and the evil spirits would leave them.

The book of **Acts** aims to show that in every way, **Sha'ul**, the **Emissary** to the **Gentiles**, had a ministry equal to that of **Kefa**, the leading **Emissary** to the **Jews** (see Galatians 2:7–9). These verses compare **Kefa's** healing miracles of Acts 5:15–16. Of course, it is **God** who heals, not **Sha'ul** or **Kefa**.

¹³ Then, some of the Jewish exorcists who traveled from place to place tried to make use of the name of the Lord Yeshua in connection with people who had evil spirits. They would say, "I exorcise you by the Yeshua that Sha'ul is proclaiming!" ¹⁴ One time, seven sons of a Jewish cohen gadol named Skeva were doing this; ¹⁵ and the evil spirit answered them. It said, "Yeshua, I know. And Sha'ul, I recognize. But you? Who are you?" ¹⁶ Then the man with the evil spirit fell upon them, overpowered them, and gave them such a beating that they ran from the house, naked and bleeding.

There is a right way and a wrong way to confront demons. **Sha'ul** was doing it right, but the seven sons of **Skeva** did it wrong. The central issue here is the name of the **Yeshua**.

As all who minister deliverance regularly know, the use of **Yeshua's** name is crucial. **Yeshua** said, ***"If you ask anything in My name, I will do it"*** (John 14:14). He also said that among the signs that follow believers, ***"In My name, they will cast out demons"*** (Mark 16:17).

The only authority we have to cast out demons does not reside inside of us naturally; it is delegated to us by **Yeshua**. This is similar to a United States Ambassador's authority in a foreign country.

Ambassadors do not travel to other countries in their names; they travel in the name of the President of the United States - only those the President designates can use his name effectively.

This is precisely what happened to the seven sons of **Skeva**. The name of **Yeshua** is no magic formula on the order of the ***"Ephesian writings,"*** which presumably could be purchased in the neighborhood occult shop. **Yeshua** had not authorized the seven sons of **Skeva** to use His name, and, therefore, the power was absent. **Yeshua** said that in the last days, some will say, ***"Have we not ... cast out demons in Your name?"*** And He will reply, ***"I never knew you"*** (Mattityahu 7:22–23). That is what He would have said to the sons of **Skeva**.

Because they used the **Lord's** name in vain, the seven sons opened themselves to a ferocious spiritual backlash they would not soon forget. They were stripped, beaten up, and chased out of the house naked! ¹

¹ Adapted from C. Peter Wagner, [The Book of Acts: A Commentary](#), 438–439.

Sorcery Given Up

¹⁷ When all this became known to the residents of Ephesus, fear fell on all of them, Jews and Greeks alike, and the name of the Lord Yeshua came to be held in high regard. ¹⁸ Many of those who had earlier made professions of faith now came and admitted publicly their evil deeds; ¹⁹ and a considerable number of those who had engaged in occult practices threw their scrolls in a pile and burned them in public. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, it came to fifty thousand drachmas. ²⁰ Thus, the message about the Lord continued in a powerful way to grow in influence.

Many of those who **engaged in occult practices** like these men became **Believers**, confessed their sins, and **burned** their **occult scrolls**. They no longer wanted to be associated with false and deceptive spirituality. Such idolatrous practices were good for nothing. When they rid their lives of these things, **the message about the Lord continued in a powerful way to grow in influence**. A **drachma** was a day's wages for common labor; therefore, think of **fifty thousand drachmas** as at least two million dollars. On the other hand, since they were individually produced, books and scrolls were much more expensive than now.

Sha'ul Anticipates A Journey

²¹ Sometime later, Sha'ul decided by the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and then go to Yerushalayim. "After I have been there," he said, "I must visit Rome." ²² So he dispatched two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, but he himself remained in the province of Asia for a while. ²

Sha'ul had determined **to pass through Macedonia and Achaia** again (the territory he covered during his second missionary journey) and **then go to Yerushalayim**. After that, his goal was to visit and proclaim the **Gospel** in **Rome**, the capital of the Roman Empire (19:21). But before he departed, **a major disturbance** occurred **about the Way** (19:23; on "the Way," see above on 19:9–10). Wherever **Sha'ul** preached, two things would regularly happen: people got saved, and people got mad. That pattern was about to repeat itself.

In our next post, we begin to explore **Sha'ul's Letters to the Corinthians**.

² Acts 19:11–22.