**A Preacher In A Basket**

(Acts 9:23-25 KJV)

*23  And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: 24  But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.25  Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.*

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he Holy Spirit has introduced to the New Testament four accounts of Jesus’ ministry but only one book on the early years of the Church. This book is labeled as the Acts of the Apostles, but in fact it tells us exceptional things about a few of the apostles. What about John the beloved disciple, who gave us five of the New Testament books? What about Matthew the converted tax collector, who wrote one gospel? What about Andrew, or Thomas the doubter who missed the resurrection business meeting and wanted the votes and minutes reversed because he wasn't present to give his opinion? What about Bartholomew, James the less, Simon the Zealot, Judas son of James, and Matthias? Surprisingly, the book of Acts is even silent on the last fifteen years of Peter’s ministry. And evidently, just as God has not chosen to give us a complete biography of Jesus—He has determined not to inspire a thorough history of the Church’s blueprint of beginnings. Moreover, if Acts is not a complete history of the Church’s first three decades, then what is it? Our first clue is that it is the second of a two volume work. An early convert to Christianity named Luke wrote a gospel and Acts for a Roman aristocrat named Theophilus.

Luke was the "beloved physician" of the Apostle Paul. He traveled with Paul on part of his second missionary journey. Some years later, Luke went from Philippi to Jerusalem with Paul, and when Paul was arrested there, Luke accompanied him on his harrowing journey to Rome.

The whole purpose of the book of Acts deal with the joining and bridging of the church together as one body composed of Jews and Gentiles, so Paul was one man with both Jewish and Gentile relationships. He was a Jew by birth, but a Gentile by citizenship. He was God's choice servant to announce the message of the church, this "mystery" that God had kept secret from ages past—being associated with both Jews and Gentiles, trained in the OT Scriptures as well as the Greek philosophies and Roman laws, Paul was the ideal man to give this new message that there is no difference between the Jews and Gentiles in Christ. Here is Paul once known as Saul whom had undergone a spiritual metamorphosis of regeneration, justification, and God placed him in the hall of fame as Paul the new man because of his transformation and sanctification. And now as I read, I now find this preacher in a basket!

I have heard many sermons preached with Paul as the subject.  I have heard sermons on, “Paul Saved on The Road to Damascus”*,* “Paul and Silas In Jail*”* and "Paul's Message on Mars Hilland Paul bitten by a serpent*”*  But I have never heard a sermon on, *“*A Preacher In A Basket*.”* So, now a think it's time to preach about, "A Preacher In A Basket."

1. **The Interconnection Of The Scheming**

(Acts 9:23 KJV)

*And after that many days were fulfilled, the* ***Jews*** *took counsel to kill him:*

The "Jews" here speaks specifically of the religious sect who controlled the temple—and who were also very influential with the people. Now let me explain that after Saul's conversion he was directed by the Holy Spirit and under new management of the Holy Spirit, and he left Damascus, and proceeded into the solitary regions of Arabia, and he stayed there until he was fully prepared by God for his ministry. That's right he went to God's school as an spiritual pre-school student—and he returned to Damascus as a honor graduate. He went with only a glowing testimony of the manifested grace of God; and he also returned with a revelation that Christ was the risen savior.

So here it is that Saul the saved man who's conversion eventually met with the hatred and hostility of the Jews and their association. This all happened because of the preaching of the gospel and the adverse similarity of the message of salvation proclaimed by him. Now I must admit that everyone who gets saved will sooner or later experience some hostility to their faith.

Here we have the religious leaders of Judaism despising him. And let's not forget as Saul he had graduated from the college of Gamaliel and that he had a advanced knowledge of the laws of Judaism but then he had little knowledge of the Savior. But he's now under new management preaching Christ and Him crucified and risen again!

The Jews would view Paul as a betrayer and threat of their traditions. And the remedy to their resolution was to have him killed. Regretfully, Saul had come to realization that he had returned to Damascus, where evil men were waiting to murder him. But surprisely the Christians had their own underground contacts to protect the preacher—and every move of the enemy was reported to Saul.

1. **The Intervention Of The Scheming**

(Acts 9:24 KJV)

*But their laying await was* ***known of Saul.*** *And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.*

God enabled Paul and his supporters to learn of this scheming and they made plans to interfere and interrupt the enemies plan. Let me remind you—that you cannot hide anything from God. This gives an advantage to the persecuted people. It is well to remember that in times of stress, the fellowship and help of the saints are beyond evaluation. The real Christians knows how to work around **frustration**, knowing that God will bring **constellation** after we give Him **exhortation** despite our trials and **tribulations,** God will turn things around with a **demonstration**.

So finally, the assembly decided it was imperative to remove Saul from danger, and arrangements were made to prepare the preacher a basket. Now he would discover what it meant to be the hunted instead of the hunter!

1. **The Interceptors In The Scheming**

(Acts 9:24 KJV)

*But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the gates day and night to kill him.*

"*They* in the text mean (the **persecutors**, the **participators**) *watched the gates day and night to kill him*" In those days, cities were built with walls around them for protection from wild animals, and protection from enemy attacks. This particular city had their walls so thick that horses and chariots could be driven on top of them. And the houses were built on top of these walls And the only way you could enter or exit out of the city was by the gates in the walls. The enemies of Christ were a dedicated bunch. They kept watch of the city gates day and night so Paul could not leave the city without them catching and killing him.

1. **The Interaction Of The Scheming**

(Acts 9:25 KJV)

"*Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket*"

Now because the scheming was *"known,"* Paul's Christian communicated and cooperated together with friends, relative, co-worker, neighbors, and other believers—and came up with a clever way to get Paul out of the city without going through the gates where the enemy was waiting. And they all agreed to put Paul in a big basket and let him down by a rope outside the city wall. Here's Paul who has been—Criticized By Friends (2 Cor. 10:10-13), Buffeted By Satan (2 Cor. 12:7), Sneered At By Authorities (Acts 26:28) , Stoned By Enemies (Acts 14:19), Surrounded By Obstacles (2 Cor. 11:23-28), Forsaken By Brethren 2 Tim. 4:10, 11, And Disturbed By Mere Professors (Phil. 3:18, 19)—being let down by a rope while sitting in a basket.

Paul’s friends did not have an elevator or escalator to use in rescuing Paul; They only had a rope and a basket.  These were small, ordinary household items, but when dedicated to the cause of Christ, God blessed them and they were used to save the life of Paul. God uses small objects to accomplish big objectives. All David had was a sling shot.  All the lad had was five loaves and two fish.  All these Christians had was a rope and a basket.  When ordinary people dedicate ordinary things to Christ, they are used to accomplish large things.

Someone had to run and fetch a basket. Someone had to get a rope. Someone had to tie the rope to the basket. Someone had to open the window. It took more than one person to hold the rope as they lowered Paul down the wall. They cooperated together and got the job done. These folks must not have been Baptist; they cooperated together without getting into a fuss!  What would have happened if they had begun to argue about who knew how to tie the best knot or who was going to get to stand at the head of the rope so they could see Paul when he hit the ground?  The soldiers would have captured Paul and ended his ministry.

What are the names of these Christians?  We don’t know; they were not recorded in Scripture.  They are mentioned again in Acts 9:25, but no names are given.  They did not care about their names being recorded, to be noticed in future generations.  They did what they did simply because they loved Christ and wanted to further the gospel.

When is the last time you did something for Christ that nobody knows about?  
All believers should cooperate with other believers in a local church.  (Eph. 3:21)  The Lord does not need a “Lone Ranger”, He needs soldiers of the cross working with other soldiers.

Paul’s resume looked more like an intelligence according to (2 Corinthians 11:16-33). People thought Paul was insane. He had to bear the weight of responsibility in taking care of churches which most likely gave him many sleepless nights. He lacked clothing, many times he did not have enough food to eat. He was in danger wherever he went.  He was in and out of prison and he was publicly beaten within an inch of his life by lashes and with wooden rods. Who know how many times he almost died. One time he was stoned and they thought he was dead and they dragged his body out of the city (Acts 14:19). He was shipwrecked and floated at sea for a day. He was robbed and almost drowned. He was persecuted by Jews and Gentiles and those who claimed to be Christians and were not. Eventually, according to tradition he would be decapitated for his faith in Rome. Yet he says in scripture, “*But* *none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*” (Acts 20:24).