## My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire, even the sons of men

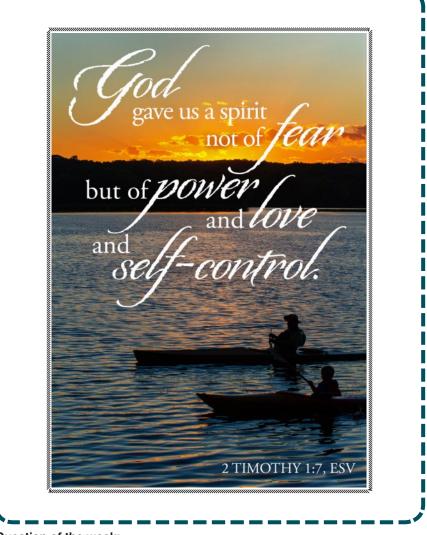


Young moose on the way to the Bible School class taking a short cut through Garlock's yard Nelson Road Christ's Church in Bozeman, MT

"The Jews therefore did not believe it of [the blind man] that he had received sight, until they called the parents of the very one who had received his sight."

John 9:18





## Question of the week:

What was the name of the mountain overlooking the plain of Jezreel where King Saul met his end?

Last week's question: When Jesus spoke of the Lord's Supper in the gospel according to John in terms of eating His flesh and drinking His blood, He spoke of something "on the last day." What was it? *Answer: The Resurection (John 6:54)*.

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK:

Bible School – 104 Morning Assembly – 119 Evening Assembly – 62 Wednesday Night (5/19) – 90 Butte Lord's Day – 18 GF Lord's Day – 50,61, *Wed.* - 60



Acts Alive ...

## An Apostle to the Gentiles

The death of Stephen and the resultant persecution of the church caused those early Christians to go everywhere preaching the word. So the gospel went to Samaria and into Africa. But the gospel had not yet gone to the Gentiles; the Ethiopian was a Jew, and the Samaritans were distant relatives of the Jewish people. A couple more stages in the development of God's plan were necessary before the Jewish Christians were prepared to take the gospel to the Gentile world, to carry the good news to the remotest part of the earth.

God, however, was not idle, and His judgment and His salvation were not asleep. His mighty outstretched arm reached into the middle of the pack of the most rabid persecutors of the church—the Phari-

sees—and selected for Himself an apostle. And not only an apostle, but an apostle to the *Gentiles*! It happened like this:

- -- A hot, zealous young Pharisee named Saul from the city of Tarsus in the Roman province of Cilicia (in what is now south central Turkey) had pretty well cleaned out all the Christians (called "disciples of Christ" early in the book of Acts) he could find in Jerusalem.
- -- This same young Pharisee received letters from the High Priest of the Jews to the synagogues in Damascus to the effect that if he found any followers of this Jesus, he could bind them and bring them to Jerusalem for trial.
- Jesus blinded Saul as he approached Damascus (though his eyes were open, he could not see because of something like scales had formed over them). The Lord regarded Saul's persecution of the saints the same as if he were personally attacking Christ Himself. "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" was the charge.
- The reason Saul was persecuting the early church because the good confession that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God," is a declaration that Jesus is Lord and God. Saul (though he had heard the preaching of Stephen) could not believe that the great Yahweh whom he thought he zealously served could have taken human form. The disciples of Christ were proclaiming that Jesus' resurrection from the dead established that core

## "He is chosen...to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and Israel."

truth. Thus when the voice stated that the Possessor of that voice was being persecuted, Saul wanted to know to whom he was speaking.

- -- When the voice answered, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," then Saul of Tarsus knew that the proclamation of Jesus' resurrection was true, and that Saul personally had been diametrically opposed to the will of God hounding the saints and voting to put them to death. When the (now believing, repentant, and confessing Jesus as Lord) Saul of Tarsus wanted to know what to do, the Lord told him to go into Damascus and someone would be sent with proper information.
- -- The Lord then appeared to a Jewish disciple of Christ named Ananias and convinced him that he should go to this Saul. Ananias went to Saul, laid his hands on him so that he might receive his sight. This was the signal to Saul that this was the one with the correct information. After being told to "arise, be immersed, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord," Saul arose and was immersed.
- Saul immediately began preaching Jesus as the Son of God, to the amazement of both the Jews and the followers of Christ. He kept increasing in strength in his proclamation, so much so that the Jews now tried to kill this former violent persecutor of the Way.

When Ananias first heard from the Lord that he was to visit this Saul, he was somewhat hesitant to go. But the Lord assured him, saying, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts 9:15,16). The Lord was now ready for His name to go into all the world, even at the cost of intense suffering on the part of His name-bearers. The "beat" Mulson IAY WILSON