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Dear Friends,

*This month, I would like to share with you some thoughts about **Saul's Damascus road experience**. In Acts chapter 9:1-6, in the Amplified Bible, we read this: -*

***Act 9:1** MEANWHILE SAUL, still drawing his breath hard from **threatening and murderous desire against the disciples of the Lord**, went to the high priest*

***Act 9:2** And **requested of him letters** to the synagogues at Damascus [**authorizing him**], so that if he found any men or women belonging to the Way [of life as determined by faith in Jesus Christ], he might bring them bound [with chains] to Jerusalem.*

***Act 9:3** Now as he traveled on, he came near to Damascus, and **suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him**,*

***Act 9:4** And he fell to the ground. Then he heard a voice saying to him, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me [harassing, troubling, and molesting Me]?*

***Act 9:5** And Saul said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. It is dangerous and it will turn out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad [to offer vain and perilous resistance].*

***Act 9:6** Trembling and astonished he asked, Lord, what do You desire me to do? The Lord said to him, But arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.*

*Here, we find Saul with a **heart full of ill will and bad motives**, seriously intent on determining to hurt others, [even with written permission], anyone whom he considered a threat to his cause, or of a different spiritual persuasion - (namely Christians). That is, until the Lord rebuked him, disarmed him, disabled him, stopped him, and dropped him; right in his tracks. Wow!!! **That sounds just like us, Lord**. We get so intent and tunnel visioned on our own agendas, disregarding the promptings of the Holy Spirit, until we too, are struck down – blinded by our own unwillingness to “**yield**” to*

the **still small voice**. We push on, till we hit the lightening flash from God, [just like Saul]; which finally (or hopefully), gets our undivided attention!!! Then, and only then, can we say as Saul did: -

**“...who are You, [really], Lord?...” [verse 5]
“...and what do You [really], desire of me to do?...” [verse 6]**

The result of that instantaneous drop to the ground, which robbed him of his physical sight, and brought him literally to his knees, bade him helpless. Helpless to go or do anything he had previously prepared and planned. That is, without outside assistance, at least. **God was trying to impart something of vital spiritual importance to Saul;** but, to get his undivided attention, He had to remove his physical sight; totally disabling his ability to carry out his own agenda. He was so determined in mind and spirit, and was so full of gusto in his pursuit to persecute all those he felt was opposed to his religious teachings, **it took a lightening flash from God to blind him, to get his attention.**

We also pursue, (with that same type of passion, and misinformed and misaligned ignorance and arrogance at times, believing naively that we are right on course) – our own hidden agendas. We rush on - pursuing and arguing and dictating, (just like Saul), to all and sundry, regarding anything opposed to our particular thought pattern at the time. Sound familiar?? If you are honest with yourself as you read this, you will see yourself, like I have seen myself; standing, but mostly running, or barging our way through life, oblivious to the promptings of God's still small voice, which is saying, **“this is the way...walk in it...”!!!**

Like Saul, I have experienced, learned, and been renewed, by my Damascus road encounter, and continue to be blessed by my determination to walk an obedient path – daily, hourly, and minute by minute. Don't remain in the **“thickheaded”** category of Jeremiah 4:22; with no knowledge or understanding of God and His instructions for your life; on an hour by hour, day by day, basis! Let's read that verse: -

*Jer 4:22 [Their chastisement will continue **until** it has accomplished its purpose] for My people are **stupid**, says the Lord [replying to Jeremiah]; they do not know and understand Me. They are **thickheaded** children, and they have **no understanding**. They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have **no knowledge [and know not how]**.*

You only have to drop to your knees in a true spirit of repentance and He will say to you;

Isa 60:1 ARISE [from the depression and prostration in which circumstances have kept you—rise to a new life]! Shine (be radiant with the glory of the Lord), for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

Wow! What an offer! What a gift! One we could hardly refuse. **But this new life, radiantly shining...with the glory of the Lord**, can be yours and mine every minute of every day. It is God's gift to us, and the very reason He went to the cross. And He is an awesome God who never fails to keep His promises. Amen!!!

So, if today, for some reason, I am not excreting that **radiantly shining new life** through my veins and skin for all to see, there's something wrong, and it's **not** with God. It's always with me. If I am walking in the blessings He has promised me, I am blessed. And if I am enjoying the fruits of the blessed life, it is a blessing to be a blessing to others. If all of that is not happening in my life, somewhere I have failed to be attentive enough to that first question: - **“Who are You [really], Lord?” ...and “...what do You [really], desire me to do?”**

If I am sincerely and transparently honest with myself and my Lord, **I will know** [hear] what He says to me. And if I am sincerely and transparently honest with and about His instructions to me, then **I will simply obey Him**. And, Oh what **Love, Joy and Peace - obedience brings!!!**

This month I pray you all be encouraged by your own Damascus road experience, or continue in the blessings you already share, as a result of your previous experience along that same Damascus road. Saul humbled himself and went on to become Paul, one of God's greatest ambassadors, **and so can you**. Just say, “Thank You Jesus, for that beautiful gift You purchased at the cross for me”, and take it as your own, and walk in it. **It's yours! It's free! But it is not cheap...it cost Jesus His life!** It can't and won't be of any assistance to you until you first reach out and say; “Thank You Lord, I will gratefully receive that gift from you”.

Be blessed!!!

Till next month

From my house to yours

Blessings of the abundant kind!

Leila Nord.

