

Men's breakfast talk Oct 21 - Ananias - a brave believer

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Opening question

How many men called Ananias in NT/Acts? Ananias and Sapphira, our one, and the High Priest in Acts 23

Hebrew equivalent is Hananiah - 1 Chronicles genealogies (son of Zerubbabel), Shadrach in Daniel, false prophet in Jeremiah 28. 'Favoured of the Lord'. Shadrach was definitely a brave believer too!

The story so far

Acts 1-8 summarised

All that Jesus began to do and teach (Luke) and all that he continued to do and teach through the Holy Spirit and the Apostles (Acts).

Ascension

Pentecost

Fellowship of believers - growing church

Signs and wonders (healings)

Powerful preaching (Peter)

Prayer

Sharing possessions

Problem people (Ananias and Sapphira, Simon the sorcerer)

Persecution (Arrest of Peter and John, Martyrdom of Stephen)

Choosing of the seven

Philip in Samaria and the Ethiopian

Gospel to Jews and Samaritans mainly so far - Judea and Samaria - not the ends of the earth (Gentiles) yet

Saul first mentioned in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen

Saul's conversion

Ananias and Paul

Two accounts - Luke in Acts 9:1-19 and Paul in 22:1-16

Used to heal Paul of his blindness, possibly also baptised him and fed him.

From 9:19 we assume that Ananias shared his story with the other believers in Damascus and convinced them that Paul had been transformed!

Barnabas continued this in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26-27) and Antioch (11:25-26).

Equivalent today - perhaps a Muslim country like Saudi Arabia or Iran, or a communist one like China or North Korea?

Consequences of his brave obedience - acceptance of Paul, all his missionary journeys and epistles!
Gospel to the Gentiles, including us.

What about us?

God can be at work in unlikely people, perhaps in those who seem most opposed to the Gospel.

Being sure it's him speaking to us - Ananias needed reassurance! Questioning is OK - other examples like Gideon, Mary ...

When you're sure, obey!

Don't underestimate the possible consequences of your obedience!