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## ARE WE AWAKE TO GOD'S WONDERS?

“Therefore they said to Him, ‘What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?’” (John 6:30).

SOMETIMES WE ADOPT AN ALMOST DEMANDING ATTITUDE TOWARD GOD, INSISTING THAT HE DECLARE HIMSELF TO US MORE OPENLY. The problem, however, is not that God has not shown enough of Himself to us, but that we’ve not opened our eyes to the wonders He HAS shown. We need to learn to be more open and attentive to God’s marvelous work in at least three areas. CREATION. Promising deliverance to the people of Judah, God spoke of His creative power: “I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and

the dry land springs of water. I will plant in the wilderness the cedar and the acacia tree, the myrtle and the oil tree; I will set in the desert the cypress tree and the pine and the box tree together, that they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it” (Isaiah 41:18-20).

We too need to “see and know” what God’s hand has done.

REDEMPTION. What we see of our Creator’s work ought to make us EAGER to see His greater work as our Savior.

“Remember me, O Lord, with the favor You have toward Your people; Oh, visit me with Your salvation, that I may see the benefit of Your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Your nation, that I may glory with Your inheritance” (Psalm 106:4,5).

REVELATION. Nowhere, except in the very person of His Son, has God shown His glory any more than in His word. But we study the Scriptures drowsily and much of the wonder of God's word is lost on us. We need to wake up and pay attention! "Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things from Your law" (Psalm 119:18). Our fervent prayer ought to be for help in taking in what God has delivered to us. Our shrunken vessels are too small to hold a worthy portion of His glory. "Grant us, we pray thee, a heart wide open to all this joy and beauty, and save our souls from being so steeped in care, or so darkened by passion, that we pass heedless and unseeing when even the thornbush by the wayside is aflame with the glory of God" (Walter Rauschenbusch). "Only that day dawns to which we are awake" (Henry David Thoreau).- Gary Henry

## **The Power to Change**

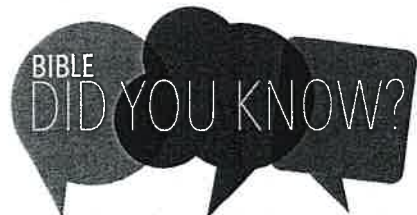
**By Kent Heaton**

Nothing is more remarkable than the change that took place over three days in the Syrian city of Damascus nearly two-thousand years ago. Saul had come to the city to bring "any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring

them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:2). His intensity of threats and murder against the disciples (Acts 9:1) had put him at the point of the Jewish spear to root out and destroy the followers of Christ. He confessed later to Agrippa that he thought he must do many "things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. This I also did in Jerusalem and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities" (Acts 26:9-11). The aged Apostle would reflect to his young protégé Timothy that he was a "blasphemer, a persecutor and an insolent man" (1Tim. 1:13) and the chief of sinners (1Tim. 1:15). But then came his mission to Damascus. No one would have foreseen the change that would take place in the life of this Benjamite; this Hebrew of Hebrews and Pharisee. Saul of Tarsus met Jesus of Nazareth and Saul's life would forever be altered. He "heard a voice saying to him, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' and he said, 'Who are You, Lord.' Then

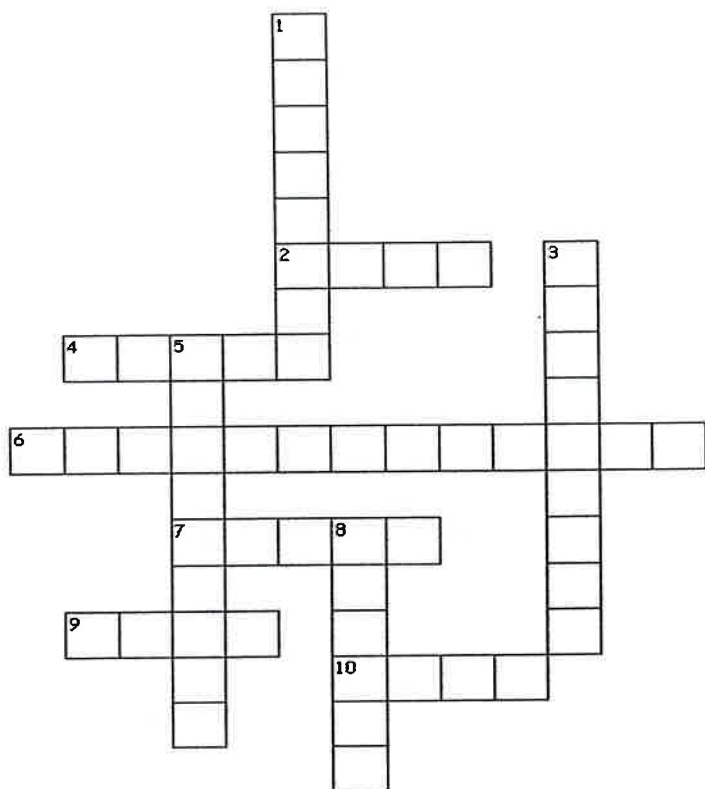
the Lord said, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you kick against the goads.' So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'" (Acts 9:4-6) Blinded, Saul arose and entered the city and "he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank" (Acts 9:9). Ananias would come and show Saul the work the Lord had for him to do. His sight returned, "he arose and was baptized" (Acts 9:18) and "spent some days with the disciples at Damascus" (Acts 9:19). For the rest of his life, Saul would be known as Paul the apostle and always live for Christ, the one he earlier sought to destroy. How could such a change take place in a man? While Paul characterized himself as the persecutor and those things he carried out were done "in all good conscience" (Acts 23:1) he had one focus that remained constant in his life. Saul of Tarsus loved the Almighty Jehovah God. What he did against the "Way" was because in his mind they stood against his God. His passion for God was intense, though misguided, and he never offered an excuse for what he did. His actions

were in ignorance according to unbelief (1Tim. 1:13). That unbelief became intense belief in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God when he learned the truth. Saul did not fancy himself with the pride of men nor with the religious motives of selfishness. When he saw that he was wrong, he made immediate change and "took no prisoners" (literally and figuratively). His change took place in the words of the Lord, "not as I will, but as thou will" (Matt. 26:39). It was total; it was complete; it was his dying devotion to God that led him to serve the Son of God. If Saul of Tarsus can be a faithful disciple of Christ, why is it so hard for you and me to change? What do we have in our lives that are more difficult to overcome than what Saul gave up immediately? The power to change is left to the will of man. We change what we want to change. To serve the Lord, our change must be total.



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# The ULTIMATE CRSSWORD



## ACROSS

2. Samuel hacked him to pieces after Saul spared him (1 Sam. 15:33)
4. Though man looks at appearance, the LORD sees this (1 Sam. 16:7)
6. Despite strength and size, Goliath had this weakness (1 Sam. 17:26)
7. David's oldest brother who accused him of mischief (1 Sam. 17:28)
9. Spotted David getting assistance from the priest (1 Sam. 21:9-10)
10. To do this is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22)

## DOWN

1. Jonathan made this strong "agreement" with David (1 Sam. 18:3)
3. Saul was unhappy with this number attributed to his victories (1 Sam. 18:8)
5. Priest who gave David consecrated bread (1 Sam. 21:1-6)
8. Used for coded language between David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 20:18-23)