

**PREFACE**

*"I thank God for the strong presence of the Holy Spirit in our midst and I could sense the exceptional freshness during the time of preaching. When I read the Book of Acts, I only have in mind that it records some incidents that happened during the transition period. Hence, I thank God for pastor who preached from the Book of Acts. I felt pastor gave a comprehensive treatment on this book by showing us the significance of Acts though being placed in between the Gospels and the epistles. Pastor showed us Acts is the continuation of the ministry of Yeshua Christ Who is ruling from the heavens above. It also marked the beginning of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Pastor said that Acts is about stories of preaching endeavours. Yet, without introducing the preacher, this story of preaching would not be complete. I saw the ambiguity lies in the identity of the person to whom Christ Yeshua has passed His baton to. Referring to the beginning 8 chapters, we might presume it has fallen to the hands of Peter. It struck me when pastor finally brought forth the story of Paul the apostle. I enjoyed when pastor gave us the run down of each chapter as an introduction to Paul's ministry and calling. As pastor moved on, I felt I was being transported to the Supreme Court! Pastor was establishing evidences by proving case by case how Paul has defended the Gospel. Paul was sharp to expose the sorcerer who sought to turn away the deputy from faith whereas Barnabas did not know what to do. Paul was confident to prove the identity of Yeshua Christ that He is the promised Saviour to the Jews and through Him the forgiveness of sins was preached to them. Paul also skilfully defended the Gospel when Peter and James encountered difficulties to define the Gospel of grace with regards of the issue of circumcision. Through Galatians 1 & 2, I was brought to see the uniqueness of Paul's calling. He did not receive the Gospel through man but by the revelation of Yeshua Christ. Paul was confident that this is the only Gospel that can save souls because he experienced the inward attestation of Yeshua Christ. It was so marvellous to hear that right from the first chapter, it is God's will that the vacancy of the 12<sup>th</sup> apostolic office ought to be filled up. Yet, it was striking to hear that there was confusion among the Jews concerning the truth and Paul has to withstand the leaders of the Jewish church. This is experimental as pastor too is adopting the same approach as Paul who ceases not to defend for the Gospel. His attacks often come within the circle of Christendom. God has given pastor a special quantum of light in this time of great apostasy. Many would question the qualifications of pastor because they do not understand that his authority comes from God. **Many are offended when it appears to them that pastor claims to have the monopoly of the truth.** I thank God for raising up pastor in our times to defend for the Gospel of Yeshua Christ or else I would have been doused by Arminianism or hyper-Calvinism. Like Paul, pastor often exhorts us with all humility of mind and ceases not to warn everyone with many tears. I was brought to examine my response to the Gospel when the example of Barnabas was shown to us. Though he had many direct opportunities to witness the preaching of Paul but he ended up separating from Paul and fell into heresy. It brought much fears to me when I consider that even Peter and James had difficulty recognising Paul's ministry. I am far from them, having no spiritual discernment. I pray that God may help me to cling on to pastor's ministry and grant me a portion of the passion and zeal like pastor to advance this Gospel with conviction because only this Gospel can save souls."* Hephzibah Chai. *The foregoing Sabbath vespers were in response to pastor's sermon, 'Acts Of The Apostles: The Ministry And Life Of Paul, The Thirteenth Apostle', Johor Baru, Malaysia; 14 November AD 2010*