

## **Dramatic Reading: Acts 9**

The year is 36. For the past 3 years the followers of Jesus had been growing in number, in Jerusalem and further afield. Saul was a young man, newly trained as a Pharisee, full of passion for the Jewish faith. He saw the Way of Jesus as a poisonous threat and threw all his energy into fighting it.

One day, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, Saul went to the High Priest.

*Paul: Please, sir, may I have letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if I find any who belongs to that 'Way', men or women, I would have permission to bring them bound back to Jerusalem for you to deal with.*

The High Priest gave him the letters, and an armed guard, and Saul set off.

They had nearly finished their journey to Damascus when suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him,

**ALL: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?"**

Saul asked,

*Paul: "Who are you, Lord?"*

The reply came,

**ALL: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Get up, go into the city, and you will be told what you are to do."**

The men who were traveling with him stood speechless because they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul got up from the ground, opened his eyes but to his horror:

*Paul: "I can't see! I can see nothing!!"*

So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. For three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

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Now there was a disciple in Damascus named Ananias. Jesus spoke to him in a vision;

Jesus: "Ananias."

Ananias: "Here I am, Lord."

Jesus: "Get up and go to Straight Street. At the house of Judas look for a man of Tarsus named Saul. At this moment he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight."

Ananias: “Lord, I have heard about this man! We’ve heard how much evil he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. We heard that he has come with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who call on your name.”

Jesus: “Go to him, for he is an instrument whom I have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel. I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

So Ananias found the right house and went in. He laid his hands on Saul and prayed for him.

Ananias: “Brother Saul, I know that the Lord Jesus appeared to you on your way here. He has sent me to you, so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”

And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and after eating some food, he regained his strength. He stayed several days with the disciples in Damascus, and immediately he began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues, saying,

Paul: “*Jesus is the Son of God!*”