



“The Conversion of Paul”

Acts 9:1-19a

Acts: The Unstoppable Gospel

Intro: The main character in this passage is Saul of Tarsus, who becomes Paul the Apostle.

- Acts 9:1-19 is Saul’s conversion story. His testimony. How he got saved.

I. Saul in pursuit (vv. 1-3)

Acts 9:1-2 – “Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, ²and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.”

1 Timothy 1:12-16 – “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, ¹³even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief. ¹⁴and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. ¹⁶Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”

Acts 9:3 – “As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.”

Acts 26:13 – “At midday, O King, I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining all around me and those who were journeying with me.”

II. Saul interrupted (vv. 4-9)

Acts 9:4 – “And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?”

Philippians 3:10-12 – “That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.¹²Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus.”

Acts 9:5 – “And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And He said, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.’”

Acts 26:14 – “And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’”

- Acts 9:5 in NKJV includes the phrase “It is hard for you to kick against the goads”.

1 Corinthians 15:1-8 – “Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ²by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. ⁶After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but

some have fallen asleep; ⁷then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; ⁸and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.”

Revelation 1:16 – “In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.”

Acts 9:6 – “But get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do.”

The NKJV translates Acts 9:6 this way – “*So he, trembling and astonished, said, ‘Lord, what do You want me to do?’ Then the Lord said to him, ‘Arise and go into that city, and you will be told what you must do.’*”

Acts 9:7 – “The men who traveled with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.”

Acts 9:8-9 – “Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. ⁹And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.”

III. **Saul chosen** (vv. 10-16)

Acts 9:10-12 – “Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ ¹¹And the Lord said to him, ‘Get up and go to the street called Straight. and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, ¹²and 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.’”

Philippians 3:5 – “Circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee.”

Deuteronomy 6:4 – “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!”

Acts 9:13-17 – “But Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; ¹⁴and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ ¹⁵But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; ¹⁶for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name’s sake.’”

IV. **Saul restored** (vv. 17-19)

Acts 9:17-19 – “So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ ¹⁸And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; ¹⁹and he took food and was strengthened.”

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. Saul was sincere, but sincerely wrong. How can you make sure your passions align with God
2. What changes or surrenders is God asking of you right now?
3. Ananias was asked to do something risky. What uncomfortable tasks is God calling you to do?
4. If Saul can be saved, anyone can be saved. How does this transformation help you not give up hope that God can save your friends or loved ones who seem too far from God?
5. The early believers were terrified of Saul initially. How do we sometimes look at new believers with suspicion rather than grace? What should we do differently?