

THE BOOK OF ACTS

ACTS 9:1-19 | LESSON SUMMARY

Seeing & Hearing

ACTS 9:1-2, "But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem." (ESV)

- High Priest = Caiaphas
 - Same high priest that presided over the trial of Jesus
 - Possible remains of Caiaphas identified by Israeli archeologists
- Letters = warrants/permission slips
 - Paul is doing everything "by the book"
 - This is no rogue operation
- "The Way"
 - Early Christianity was a movement: a way of life

The Light

ACTS 9:4, "And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" (ESV)

- Blind metaphorically and then literally



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- Saul is questioning the voice's identity, but recognizes it as "Lord"
- "Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing." (Acts 9:8, ESV)
- When Saul receives his spiritual sight, he regains his physical sight.

ACTS 9:10, "Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." (ESV)

- Ananias has a genuine relationship with God
- His response echoes Samuel
 - "Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" (1 Samuel 3:4, ESV)
 - Ananias isn't initially loving his assignment! But there is clear trust and obedience that allows him to hear clearly what God is asking of him
 - What God is about to ask Saul isn't easy either
 - Up until this point Saul is highly esteemed and living relatively comfortably.

ACTS 9:16, "For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name." (ESV)



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- God refers to Saul as a "chosen instrument"
 - Divine appointment doesn't always look divine
- Ananias fully complies, even referring to Saul as a "brother"
 - "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 9:17, ESV)
- "Something like scales"

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: C. Hemer, *The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History*, Randall Price, *Zondervan Handbook of Biblical Archeology*, *The Holman Bible Atlas*

