

Saul Finds Jesus on His Way to Damascus to Imprison Believers

About 5 minutes, from Acts 9:1-31

Participants (*No need to memorize lines; the aim is to relive sacred events, not to perform*)

Saul

Ananias

Stephen

Voice (of Jesus)

Prompter Shouts a brief line and Echoes repeat it.

Echoes Children and all adults who want to take part. Echoes need no script.

Saul Large rocks fly as I hold the coats of angry Jews who stone Stephen.

Of course, I, Saul, do not dirty my hands.

I'm a Pharisee; for me it's unlawful to execute this blasphemer, as he has had no legal trial. So I have others cast the stones.

I jeer at Stephen's crude protests. Hear him defy us!

Stephen You stiff-necked men resist the Holy Spirit just as your fathers did.

Saul This angers me, as I'm meticulously careful to observe our Jewish Law.

Stephen Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!

Saul Listen to him blaspheme! Keep throwing the rocks, men.

Prompter & Echoes More stones!

Stephen (*Look up*) I see heaven, and the Son of Man at the right hand of God!

Saul Stephen's cry infuriates his executioners. See them rush at him!

They hurl a volley of heavy stones to quiet that accusing voice.

Stephen Lord, Lord! Do not hold this sin against them!

Prompter & Echoes Forgive them!

Ananias Meanwhile, I am Ananias of Damascus, many miles from Jerusalem.

I hear that Saul of Tarsus is coming from Jerusalem;

he is breathing threats and murder against us disciples.

Prompter & Echoes As he did against Stephen!

Ananias Saul has letters from the High Priest to the synagogues here,

authorizing him to seize anyone following the Way,

both men and women, to take them in chains to Jerusalem.

Prompter & Echoes Cruel persecution!

Saul We're getting near to Damascus. Good! I'm eager to do my job!

Oh! What is happening? Bright light from heaven!

It's flashing on my fellow travelers and me. Help!

Prompter & Echoes Blinding light!

Saul I fall to the ground and hear a voice.

Voice Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?

Saul (*Groan, and hold an arm over your eyes*)

Who are you, Lord?

- Voice I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.
Get up and enter the city; there you will be told what you must do.
- Saul The men with me are speechless, hearing the words but seeing no one.
- Prompter & Echoes An awesome voice!
- Saul I rise. I can see nothing. They lead me by the hand into Damascus.
I go three days without sight, and without eating or drinking.
Then, as I would learn later, someone else hears that same voice.
- Voice Ananias!
- Ananias Here I am, Lord.
- Voice Go to the street called Straight, and ask for Saul of Tarsus.
He is praying, and 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 Saul of Tarsus! Oh, Lord, I've heard terrible things about this man!
He has done much harm to your followers in Jerusalem!
- Voice Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine.
He will bear my name before nations, kings, and the sons of Israel.
I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake.
- Prompter & Echoes He'll suffer for Jesus!
- Saul Ananias comes and lays his hands on me.
- Ananias Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the way,
has sent me to restore your sight. Be filled with the Holy Spirit.
- Saul Immediately scales fall from my eyes. I can see!
I get up and Ananias baptizes me; then I eat and receive strength.
God has answered Stephen's dying prayer to forgive me!
- Ananias For several days Saul stays with us disciples in Damascus;
he proclaims in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.
All who hear him are amazed and ask,
"Did he not attack believers in Jerusalem,
and come here to take us in chains to the chief priests?"
- Saul I receive warning word that Jews plot to do away with me.
They watch the gates day and night to put me to death;
but the disciples and lower me in a big basket at night
from the city's high wall.
- Ananias God's church in Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoys peace.
This man Saul, who later would call himself the world's worst sinner,
becomes the world's most powerful apostle Paul.
He introduces the Gospel of Christ into Asia Minor, Europe,
and many nations, and writes powerful letters to new churches.
- Prompter & Echoes Most of the New Testament letters!