

The Rejected One Returns

Scripture Reading — Acts 26:9-18

“I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,’ the Lord replied.” — Acts 26:15

In our reading for today, Saul (later called the apostle Paul) shares the story of the great turnaround in his life.

A blazing light from the sky, brighter than the Middle Eastern sun at noon, stops Saul and his companions as they are traveling to Damascus to persecute Christians. They all fall to the ground, and Saul hears a voice speaking to him directly: “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

But Saul doesn't know who might want to stop him in his tracks. He has rejected Christ so thoroughly that he doesn't know any heavenly being whom he could possibly be persecuting. And because he doesn't get it, Saul has to ask, “Who are you, Lord?”

Saul recalls his Lord's reply: “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.” Saul also recalls the commission he received from the Lord Jesus: to bring the message of Christ, the good news of God's salvation, to the Gentiles—that is, to the people of other nations beyond the Jews of Judea.

In this way Saul learned that Jesus is really the Savior, the Messiah he had said he was. Saul learned that he had been opposing and persecuting God himself.

That day Paul's life was changed by the miracle of God's grace in Christ.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we pray that people of all the world's nations may follow you as God and Savior. Please also protect them from persecution. We look eagerly toward your coming again. Amen.

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Printed on July 17, 2019

