

“I really thought that I ought to oppose the name of Jesus the Nazarene in every way possible. And that’s exactly what I did in Jerusalem. I locked up many of God’s holy people in prison under the authority of the chief priests. When they were condemned to death, I voted against them. In one synagogue after another—indeed, in all the synagogues—I would often torture them, compelling them to slander God. My rage bordered on the hysterical as I pursued them, even to foreign cities. “On one such journey, I was going to Damascus with the full authority of the chief priests. While on the road at midday, King Agrippa, I saw a light from heaven shining around me and my traveling companions. That light was

brighter than the sun. We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice that said to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why are you harassing me? It's hard for you to kick against a spear.' Then I said, 'Who are you, Lord?' The Lord replied, 'I am Jesus, whom you are harassing. Get up! Stand on your feet! I have appeared to you for this purpose: to appoint you as my servant and witness of what you have seen and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to open their eyes. Then they can turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, and receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are made holy by faith in me.'