

Jesus talks to a man called Saul (Acts 9)

This is Saul. Saul was a very, very angry man. He was angry because Christians were going round telling others the good news about Jesus. This made Saul cross because he didn't believe Jesus was God's Son. He didn't love Jesus or think Jesus was alive. He didn't like the people who loved Jesus. In fact, Saul was so angry he was doing a terrible thing. He was arresting all the people who loved Jesus and putting them in prison. The people who believed in Jesus were very scared of Saul.

One day, Saul decided to go to a city called Damascus. It was a long journey to Damascus. Saul and his travelling group had been walking for a long time – but at last they were nearly there – nearly at Damascus. Then, suddenly, a light flashed around Saul. Saul fell to the ground, blinded by the light. What was happening? Saul was very scared. Then Saul heard a voice. "Saul! Why are you hurting me?" "Who are you?" cried Saul. He was very frightened! The voice spoke to Saul again and said, "I am Jesus. When you hurt my friends, you hurt me". Saul was so surprised. He had been telling people it was wrong to believe in Jesus. Suddenly Saul knew that he was wrong. Now he knew that Jesus was alive and real because Jesus was talking to him.

Jesus said to Saul, "Get up now. Go into the city and wait there until you are told what to do next".

Saul got up but, when he opened his eyes, he could not see - he was completely blind. His friends, who were travelling with him, took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. For three days he was blind. He didn't eat or drink anything, but spent all his time praying.

God had chosen a man called Ananias to help Saul. Ananias was a Christian. "Go and look after Saul," God told him. Ananias was very scared. "God, why do you want me to go and see Saul? He hates people like me!" "Ananias," said God, "Don't worry. I have chosen Saul to do a very special job for me. He is to go and tell people in far-away places about Jesus."

So Ananias obeyed God even though he was worried and went to help Saul. Ananias put his hands on Saul and God made Saul see again.

"Now, I want to be baptised", said Saul, "I want everyone to know that, now, I love Jesus"

Saul had changed what he believed about Jesus. He knew now that Jesus was alive and he believed that Jesus really was God's son - so he began telling everyone the good news about Jesus. But not everyone wanted to listen to Saul. Some people got together to plan to kill him. But Saul's friends heard about this plan and one night they helped him to escape. They put him into a really large basket and lowered him down over the city walls – Saul was safe.

To show how he had changed, Saul got a new name. He became known as Paul and he travelled to many, many places to tell people about Jesus and who he is and what he had done for them and many thousands of people became followers of Jesus.

Paul also wrote to these people to tell them more. There was so much to say. We can read about Paul's journeys and we can read these letters in the bible.