

Acts 22:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Analysis

I fell unto the ground (ἐπεσον εἰς τὸ ἔδαφος)—Physical prostration from divine encounter, echoing Old Testament theophanies (Ezekiel 1:28, Daniel 8:17). **Saul, Saul**—The doubled vocative in Hebrew/Aramaic intensifies urgency and emotion (compare 'Martha, Martha' in Luke 10:41; 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem' in Matthew 23:37). The risen Christ addresses Paul in his Hebrew name, affirming his Jewish identity even while redirecting his zeal.

Why persecutest thou me? (τί με διώκεις)—The pronoun 'me' is emphatic. Jesus doesn't say 'my followers' but identifies personally with his persecuted church. This reveals the mystical union between Christ and believers (compare Matthew 25:40: 'inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me'). To touch the church is to touch Christ himself.

Historical Context

On the Damascus road, circa AD 34, around noon (Acts 22:6; 26:13). Paul was 6 days from Damascus with authority to arrest believers. The supernatural light brighter than midday sun (Acts 26:13) and audible voice transformed Christianity's greatest enemy into its greatest missionary.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's identification with his persecuted church ('why persecutest thou ME?') shape your understanding of Christ's presence in suffering believers?
2. What 'Damascus road' moment disrupted your trajectory and redirected your life toward Christ?

Interlinear Text

Ἐπεσον τε εἰς τὸ ἔδαφος καὶ ἤκουσα φωνῆς
I fell And unto the ground and heard a voice
G4098 G5037 G1519 G3588 G1475 G2532 G191 G5456

λεγούσης μοι Σαούλ Σαούλ τί με διώκεις
saying unto me Saul Saul why me persecutest thou
G3004 G3427 G4549 G4549 G5101 G3165 G1377

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 2:9 (Parallel theme): Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead.

Matthew 25:45 (Parallel theme): Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.