

Ancient Sources for Acts

Chapter 19

19:11–16

t. Hullin 2.22–23

2.22

- A. M ‘SH B: R. Eleazar b. Damah was bitten by a snake.
- B. And Jacob of Kefar Sama Came to heal him in the name of Jesus son of Pantera.
- C. And R. Ishmael did not allow him [to accept the healing].
- D. They said to him, “You are not permitted [to accept healing from him], Ben Dama.”
- E. He said to him, “I shall bring out proof that he may heal me.”
- F. But he did not have time to bring the [promised] proof before he dropped dead.

2.23

A. Said R. Ishmael, “Happy are you, Ben Dama. For you have expired in peace, but you did not break down the hedge erected by sages.

B. “For whoever breaks down the hedge erected by the sages eventually suffers punishment, as it is said, *He who breaks down a hedge is bitten by a snake* [Qoh. 10:8].

b. Abod. Zar. 27b

No man should have any dealings with *Minim*, nor is it allowed to be healed by them even [in risking] an hour’s life.

y. Shab 14.4 [I.3.EE–II]

[EE] [*Joshua b. Levi*] had a grandson, who swallowed [something dangerous]. Someone came along and whispered over him in the name of [L contains a blank space which later was filled in: “Jesus Panteri”] and he recovered. [L, added between the lines: “When he (the magician) went out,”] [*Joshua*] said to him, “What did you say over him?”

[FF] *He said to him such and such a word.*

[GG] *He said to him, “It would have been better for him if he had died and thus [had not been done for him].”*

[HH] It was “as an error that went out from before the ruler” (Qoh. 10:5). [His “suggestion” was realized and the child died.]

[II] R. Jacob in the name of R. Yohanan: “With all sorts of things do they effect healing, except for an idol, fornication, or committing murder [which explains EE].”

y. Abod. Zar. 2.2.40d–41a

[40d] R. Jacob bar Zabedi in the name of R. Abbahu: “**Healing for property** refers to [using a veterinarian for healing of his] beast, **healing for a person** refers to [using a physician for healing for] his own body.”

[B] R. Ba in the name of R. Judah: “If he was one who had inflamed a wound [with the medicine he prescribed for it, rather than healing the wound], then [for all time] it is prohibited [to make use of his services].”

[C] *That ruling is illustrated in the following: R. Ammi went up with R. Yudan the patriarch to the hot springs of Gerar. He injured his finger and put on it a plaster [which he got from a gentile physician]. He saw that [the wound] began to sink and deepen [relative to the surrounding flesh]. So he removed [the plaster].*

[D] *Now did he not take account of that which R. Jacob bar Aha said in the name of R. Yohanan: “If he was an experienced physician, it is permitted [to rely on his advice]”?*

[E] And are the two cases not parallel?

[F] [Surely they are.] *There*, if he was one who had inflamed a wound, it will be prohibited [to make use of his services], *while here*, if he was one who had inflamed a wound, will it [nonetheless] be permitted [to make use of his services]? [Obviously not.]

Clement, Strom. 5.8

And why should I linger over the barbarians, when I can adduce the Greeks as exceedingly addicted to the use of the method of concealment? Androcydes the Pythagorean says the far-famed so-called Ephesian letters were of the class of symbols. For he said that ἄσκιον (shadowless) meant darkness, for it has no shadow; and κατάσκιον (shadowy) light, since it casts with its rays the shadow; and λίξις is the earth, according to an ancient’ appellation; and τετράς is the year, in reference to the seasons; and δαμναμενεύς is the sun, which overpowers (δαμάζων); and τὰ αἴσια is the true voice. And then the symbol intimates that divine things have been arranged in harmonious order—darkness to light, the sun to the year, and the earth to nature’s processes of production of every sort.

Plutarch, Symp. 7.5.4

Silence following upon this, What application, said I, shall reason make, or how shall it assist? For I do not think it will apply those ear-covers of Xenocrates, or force us to rise from the table as soon as we hear a harp struck or a pipe blown. No indeed, replied Lamprias, but as soon as we meet with the foresaid intoxications, we ought to make our application to the Muses, and fly to the Helicon of the ancients. To him that loves a costly strumpet, we cannot bring a Panthea or Penelope for cure;

but one that delights in mimics and buffoons, loose odes, or debauched songs, we can bring to Euripides, Pindar, and Menander, that he might wash (as Plato phraseth it) his salt hearing with fresh reason. As the exorcists command the possessed to read over and pronounce Ephesian letters, so we in those possessions, amid all the madness of music and dancing, when we toss our hands with noise, and madly shout, remembering those venerable and sacred writings, and comparing with them those odes, poems, and vain empty compositions, shall not be altogether cheated by them, or permit ourselves to be carried away sidelong, as by a smooth and undisturbed stream.

Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.2.5 §42–49

(42) Now the sagacity and wisdom which God had bestowed upon Solomon was so great, that he exceeded the ancients, insomuch that he was no way inferior to the Egyptians, who are said to have been beyond all men in understanding; nay, indeed, it is evident that their sagacity was very much inferior to that of the king's. (43) He also excelled and distinguished himself in wisdom above those who were most eminent among the Hebrews at that time for shrewdness: those I mean were Ethan, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. (44) He also composed books of odes and songs, a thousand and five; of parables and similitudes, three thousand; for he spake a parable upon every sort of tree, from the hyssop to the cedar; and in like manner also about beasts, about all sorts of living creatures, whether upon the earth, or in the seas, or in the air; for he was not unacquainted with any of their natures, nor omitted inquiries about them, but described them all like a philosopher, and demonstrated his exquisite knowledge of their several properties. (45) God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return, (46) and this method of cure is of great force unto this day; for I have seen a certain man of my own country whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was this:—(47) He put a ring that had a root of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. (48) And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man; (49) and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly; for which reason it is, that all men may know the vastness of Solomon's abilities, and how he was beloved of God, and that the extraordinary virtues of every kind with which this king was endowed may not be unknown to any people under the sun; for this reason, I say, it is that we have proceeded to speak so largely of these matters.

Testament of Solomon (See Entire Work)

The Apocalypse of Adam 7:13

The fourth kingdom says [of him]: He came 'from a virgin ...Solomon] (79) sought her, he and Phersalo and Sauel and his armies which had been sent out. Solomon also sent his army of demons to seek the virgin. And they did not find the one they sought, but the virgin who was given to them was the one they fetched. Solomon took her. The virgin conceived and give birth to the child there.

19:23–27

Pausanias, *Descr.* 4.31.8

But all cities worship Artemis of Ephesus, and individuals hold her in honor above all the gods. The reason, in my view, is the renown of the Amazons, who traditionally dedicated the image, also the extreme antiquity of this sanctuary. Three other points as well have contributed to her renown, the size of the temple, surpassing all buildings among men, the eminence of the city of the Ephesians and the renown of the goddess who dwells there.

Pliny, *Letters* 10.96–97 (See on Acts 11:22–26)

19:28–34

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.18.7 §487

But for Alexandria, the sedition of the people of the place against the Jews was perpetual, and this from that very time when Alexander [the Great], upon finding the readiness of the Jews in assisting him against the Egyptians, and as a reward for such their assistance, gave them equal privileges in this city with the Grecians themselves

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 7.5.2 §110–15

(110) Whereupon the people of Antioch, when they had failed of success in this their first request, made him a second; for they desired that he would order those tables of brass to be removed on which the Jews' privileges were engraven. (111) However, Titus would not grant that either, but permitted the Jews of Antioch to continue to enjoy the very same privileges in that city which they had before, and then departed for Egypt; (112) and as he came to Jerusalem in his progress, and compared the melancholy condition he saw it then in, with the ancient glory of the city, and called to mind the greatness of its present ruins, as well as its ancient splendor, he could not but pity the destruction of the city,—(113) so far was he from boasting that so great and goodly a city as that was had been by him taken by force; nay, he frequently cursed those that had been the authors of their revolt, and had brought such a punishment upon the city; insomuch that it only appeared that he did not desire that such a calamity as this punishment of theirs amounted to, should be a demonstration of his courage. (114) Yet was there no small quantity of the riches that had been in that city still found among its ruins, (115) a great deal of which the Romans dug up; but the greatest part was discovered by those who were captives, and so they carried it away,—I mean the gold and the silver, and the rest of that most precious furniture which the Jews had, and which the owners had treasured up underground, against the uncertain fortunes of war.

19:35–41

Chrysostom, *Homily* 42.2

HE sends Timothy and Erastus into Macedonia, but himself remains at Ephesus. Having made a long enough stay in that city, he wishes to remove elsewhere again. But how is it, that having from the first chosen to depart into Syria, he turns back to Macedonia? “He purposed,” it says, “in the Spirit,” showing that all (that he did) was done not of his own power. Now he prophesies, saying, “I

must also see Rome:" perhaps to comfort them with the consideration of his not remaining at a distance, but coming nearer to them again, and to arouse the minds of the disciples by the prophecy.