

Ancient Sources for Acts

Chapter 3

Acts 3:1–6

Josephus, *Antiquities* 15.11.3 §396–402

³⁹⁶He also encompassed the entire temple with very large cloisters, contriving them to be in a due proportion thereto; and he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the temple as he had done. There was a large wall to both the cloisters, which wall was itself the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man. ³⁹⁷The hill was a rocky ascent, that declined by degrees towards the east parts of the city, till it came to an elevated level. ³⁹⁸This hill it was which Solomon, who was the first of our kings, by Divine revelation, encompassed with a wall; it was of excellent workmanship upwards, and round the top of it. He also built a wall below, beginning at the bottom, which was encompassed by a deep valley; and at the south side he laid rocks together, and bound them one to another with lead, and included some of the inner parts, till it proceeded to a great height, ³⁹⁹and till both the largeness of the square edifice and its altitude were immense, and till the vastness of the stones in the front were plainly visible on the outside, yet so that the inward parts were fastened together with iron, and preserved the joints immovable for all future times. ⁴⁰⁰When this work [for the foundation] was done in this manner, and joined together as part of the hill itself to the very top of it, he wrought it all into one outward surface, and filled up the hollow places which were about the wall, and made it a level on the external upper surface, and a smooth level also. This hill was walled all round, and in compass four furlongs, [the distance of] each angle containing in length a furlong: ⁴⁰¹but within this wall, and on the very top of all, there ran another wall of stone also, having, on the east quarter, a double cloister, of the same length with the wall; in the midst of which was the temple itself. This cloister looked to the gates of the temple; and it had been adorned by many kings in former times; ⁴⁰²and round about the entire temple were fixed the spoils taken from barbarous nations; all these had been dedicated to the temple by Herod, with the addition of those he had taken from the Arabians.

Josephus, *Antiquities* 14.4.3 §65

And any one may hence learn how very great piety we exercise towards God, and the observance of his laws, since the priests were not at all hindered from their sacred ministrations by their fear during this siege, but did still twice a-day, in the morning and about the ninth hour, offer their sacrifices on the altar; nor did they omit those sacrifices, if any melancholy accident happened by the stones that were thrown among them;

m. Tamid

(See Neusner, Jacob. *The Mishnah: a New Translation*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1988)

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 5.5.3 §201

Now nine of these gates were on every side covered over with gold and silver, as were the jambs of their doors and their lintels; but there was one gate that was without the [inward court of the] holy

house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold.

m. Middot 2.3

A. Inside it [the Temple mount, surrounding the inner area which contained the women's court and the Temple court] is a latticed railing, ten handbreadths high.

B. There were thirteen breaches in it,

C. which the kings of Greece opened up.

D. They went and closed them up again and decreed on their account thirteen prostrations.

E. Inside it is the rampart, ten cubits [wide].

F. And there were twelve steps there [leading up from the rampart to the women's courtyard].

G. The height of each step is a half-cubit, and its tread, a half-cubit.

I H. All the steps which were there [within the Temple mount] were a half a cubit in height and a half-cubit in tread, except those out of the porch [which had a tread of a cubit].

II I. All of the entrances and gates which were there were twenty cubits high and ten cubits wide, except for that of the porch.

III J. All the entrances which were there had doors, except for that of the porch [M. 3:7].

IV K. All the gates which were there had lintels, except for the Tadi gate, which had two stones leaning against one another [as a pointed arch].

V L. All the gates which were there were changed [and covered] with gold except for Niqanor's gate, because a miracle was done with them [M. Yom. 3:10].

M. And there are those who say, "Because their bronze shone like gold."

m. Yoma 3.10

A. Ben Qatin made twelve stopcocks for the laver, which had had only two.

B. And he too made a mechanism for the laver, so its water should not be invalidated by being kept overnight.

C. King Monobases had handles made of Gold for all the vessels used on the Day of Atonement.

D. Helene, his mother, set a golden candlestick over the door of the sanctuary.

E. She also made a golden tablet, on which was written the pericope of the accused wife.

F. As to Nicanor, miracles were done at his doors.

G. And they remembered him with honor.

CD 15:15–20

XV And according to his (the Guardian's) knowledge, {no madman, or lunatic shall enter, no simpleton, or fool, no blind man, or maimed, or lame, or deaf man, and no minor, none of these shall enter into the Community, for the Angels of Holiness are [in the midst]}.

1QM 7:4

No man who is lame, or blind, or crippled, or afflicted with a lasting body blemish, or smitten with a bodily impurity, none of these shall march out to war with them.

1 QSa 2:3–7

And no man smitten with any human uncleanness shall enter the assembly of God; no man smitten with any of them shall be confirmed in his office in the congregation. No man smitten in his flesh, or paralyzed in his feet or hands, or lame, or blind, or deaf, or dumb, or smitten in his flesh with a visible blemish; no old and tottery man unable to stay still in the midst of the congregation.

11QT 45:14–16

No blind man shall enter it in all his days and shall not profane the city where I abide, for I, YHWH, abide amongst the children of Israel forever and ever. Whoever is to purify himself of his flux shall count seven days for his purification. He shall wash his garments on the seventh day and bathe his whole body in running water.

Tg. Zeph. 3:19

Behold, at that time I will make a *full end* of all those who enslave you, and I will deliver *those who are exiled and will bring near those you are scattered* and will set them for glory and for renown in all the land where they were in shame.

Tg. Isa. 35:6

Then, when they see the exiles of Israel gathered together, and going up to their land, even as swift harts which cannot be restrained, their tongue which was dumb shall sing praises; for waters have broken out in the wilderness, and streams in the desert.

Targum on Mic. 4:6–8

6. At that *time*, says the Lord *God*, I will assemble together the *exiled*, and I will gather together *the scattered*, and those *who were* treated harshly *on account of the sins of my people*. 7. I will make *the exiled* a remnant, and *the scattered* a mighty nation. *The kingdom of the Lord shall be revealed* upon them on Mount Zion from now and forever. 8. And you, O *Anointed One of Israel, who have been hidden away*

because of the sins of the congregation of Zion, the kingdom shall come to you and the former dominion shall be restored to the kingdom of the congregation of Jerusalem.

Cleomedes *De Motu circulari* 2.1,91

Ἐπεὶ γε πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν ἐμνησίαν αὐτῷ ποικίλως διεφθορότα ἐστὶ, σαρκὸς εὐσταθῆ καταστήματα λέγντι καὶ τὰ περὶ ταύτης πιστὰ ἐλπίσματα καὶ λίπασμα ὀφθαλμῶν τὸ δάκρυον ὀνομάζοντι καὶ ἱερὰ ἀνακραυγὰσματα καὶ γαργαλισμοὺς σώματος καὶ ληκῆματα καὶ ἄλλας τοιαύτας κακὰς ἄτας ὧν τὰ μὲν ἐκ χαμαιτυπείων ἂν τις εἶναι φήσειε, τὰ δὲ ὅμοια τοῖς λεγυμένοις ἐν τοῖς Δημετρίοις ὑπο τῶν Θεσμοφοριαζουσῶν γυναικῶν τὰ δὲ ἀπὸ μέσης τῆς προσευξῆς καὶ τῶν ἐπ' αὐλαῖς ποσαιτούντων, Ἰουδαῖκα τινα καὶ παρακεχαραμένα καὶ κατὰ πολὺ τῶν ἐρπετῶν ταπεινότερά.

Nam praeter alia etiam dictio eius vario modo corrupta est, cum dicat carnis rectam erectionem eiusque certas sperationes, cum lacrimam appellet pinquedinem oculorum, et sacras vociferations et titillationes corporis et scortatus et alia eiusmodi verba turpia, quorum alia e lupanaribus orta dicat quis, alia similia eis sunt, quae a Thesmophoriazosis mulieribus Cerealia celebrantibus proferuntur, alia ex media proseucha et ab eis, qui in aulis mendicantur, Iudaica quaedam et depravata et humi repentibus multo humiliora.

Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica* 3.53

Places of plea, the markets, theatres, highways, and great places in the town and suburbs, and churches, are troubles and confusions, by reason of the multitudes of people which resort to the foresaid places.

m. *Abot* 1.2

II. A. Simeon the Righteous was one of the last survivors of the great assembly.

B. He would say: “On three things does the world stand:

- (1) On the Torah,
- (2) and on the Temple service,
- (3) and on deeds of loving kindness.”

Acts 3:7–10

LXX Isa. 35:6

Then shall the lame man leap (ἀλεῖται) as an hart, and the tongue of the stammerers shall speak plainly; for water has burst forth in the desert, and a channel *of water* in a thirsty land.

Acts 3:17–21

Euripides, *Hippolytus* 1334–35

Ignorance acquits your misdoings of baseness.

Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 3.1.38

And after dinner, as the party was breaking up, Cyrus asked: “Tell me, Tigranes, where is the man who used to hunt with us? You seemed to admire him very much.”

“Ah,” he replied, “did not my father here have him put to death?”

“What wrong did he find him doing?”

“He said that he was corrupting me. And yet, Cyrus,” said he, “he was so noble and so good that when he was about to be put to death, he called me to him and said: ‘Be not angry with your father, Tigranes, for putting me to death; for he does it, not from any spirit of malice, but from ignorance, and when men do wrong from ignorance, I believe they do it quite against their will.’”

Epictetus, *Discourses* 1.26.6

Am I doing wrong then my father, and do I not know what is suitable to me and becoming? If indeed this can neither be learned nor taught, why do you blame me? But if it can be taught, teach me; and if you cannot, allow me to learn from those who say that they know how to teach. For what do you think? Do you suppose that I voluntarily fall into evil and miss the good? I hope that it may not be so. What is then the cause of my doing wrong? Ignorance.

Plutarch, *Divine Vengeance* 551E

He does not expedite punishment for all alike, but at once removes from life and amputates what is incurable, as constant association with wickedness is certainly harmful to others, and most harmful of all to the sufferer himself; whereas to those whose sinfulness is likely to have sprung from ignorance of good rather than from preference of evil, he grants time for reform, but if they persist, these too he visits with condign punishment; for he need hardly fear they will escape.

2 Esdras 11:46

That all the earth may be refreshed, and may return, being delivered from thy violence, and that she may hope for the judgment and mercy of him that made her.

LXX Exodus 8:11

11 But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite (ἀνάψυξις), he hardened his heart, and didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken.

Philo, *Abr.* 152

Again, if anger occupies us, the sight becomes more fierce and bloodshot; and when we are considering or deliberating, the eyes are tranquil and motionless, and almost as intent as the mind itself; just as at moments of the relaxation (ἀνάψυξις) and indifference of the mind, the eyes are relaxed and indifferent;

Acts 3:22–26

4Q175 (See Acts 2:33–36)

Philo, Spec. Laws 1.64–65

⁶⁴And since there is implanted in all men a desire of the knowledge of future events, and as, on account of this desire, they have recourse to sacrifices and to other species of divination, as if by these means they would be able to search out and discover the truth (but these things are, in reality, full of indistinctness and uncertainty, and are continually being convicted by themselves). He, with great energy, forbids his disciples to apply themselves to such sources of knowledge; and he says, that if they are truly pious they shall not be deprived of a proper knowledge of the future; ⁶⁵but that some other Prophet will appear to them on a sudden, inspired like himself, who will preach and prophesy among them, saying nothing of his own (for he who is truly possessed and inspired, even when he speaks, is unable to comprehend what he is himself saying), but that all the words that he should utter would proceed from him as if another was prompting him; for the prophets are interpreters of God, who is only using their voices as instruments, in order to explain what he chooses. Having now then said this, and other things like this, concerning the proper idea to be entertained of the one real, and true, and living God; he proceeds to express in what manner one ought to pay him the honors that are his Due.

Sib. Or. 5.346–50

And one shall come again from heaven, a man
Preminent, whose hands on fruitful tree
By far the noblest of the Hebrews stretched,
Who at one time did make the sun stand still
When he spoke with fair word and holy lips.