

Ancient Sources for Acts

Chapter 9

9:1–6

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 2.20.2 §561

On which account it was that their greatest concern was, how they might conceal these things from them; so they came upon the Jews, and cut their throats, as being in a narrow place, in number ten thousand, and all of them unarmed, and this in one hour's time, without anybody to disturb them.

Josephus, *Jewish Wars* 7.8.7 §337

This was Eleazar's speech to them. Yet did not the opinions of all the auditors, acquiesce therein; but although some of them were very zealous to put his advice in practice, and were in a manner filled with pleasure at it, and though death to be a good thing,

1 Maccabees 15:15–21

¹⁵Then Numenius and his companions arrived from Rome, with letters to the kings and countries, in which the following was written: ¹⁶“Lucius, consul of the Romans, to King Ptolemy, greeting. ¹⁷The envoys of the Jews have come to us as our friends and allies to renew our ancient friendship and alliance. They had been sent by Simon the high priest and by the people of the Jews, ¹⁸and have brought a gold shield weighing a thousand minas. ¹⁹We therefore have decided to write to the kings and countries that they should not seek their harm or make war against them and their cities and their country, or make alliance with those who war against them. ²⁰And it has seemed good to us to accept the shield from them. ²¹Therefore if any pestilent men have fled to you from their country, hand them over to Simon the high priest, that he may punish them according to their law.”

2 Maccabees 6:13

In fact, not to let the impious alone for long, but to punish them immediately, is a sign of great kindness.

9:7–9

Tobit 11:16–17

¹⁶Then Tobit went out to meet his daughter-in-law at the gate of Nineveh, rejoicing and praising God. Those who saw him as he went were amazed because he could see. ¹⁷And Tobit gave thanks before them that God had been merciful to him. When Tobit came near to Sarah his daughter-in-law, he blessed her, saying, “Welcome, daughter! Blessed is God who has brought you to us, and blessed are your father and your mother.” So there was rejoicing among all his brethren in Nineveh.

Didache 7.4

Thou shall not speak evil; for says He, “Love not to speak evil, lest thou beest taken away.” Nor shalt thou be mindful of injuries; for “the ways of those that remember injuries are unto death.”

Thou shall not be double-minded nor double-tongued; for “a man’s own lips are a strong snare to him,” and “a talkative person shall not be prospered upon earth.” Thy words shall not be vain; for “ye shall give an account of every idle word.” Thou shalt not tell lies: for says He, “Thou shalt destroy all those that speak lies.” Thou shalt not be covetous nor rapacious: for says He, “Woe to him that is covetous towards his neighbor with an evil covetousness.”

Justin, 1 Apology 61

I will also relate the manner in which we dedicated ourselves to God when we had been made new through Christ; lest, if we omit this, we seem to be unfair in the explanation we are making. As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, “Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mothers’ wombs, is manifest to all. And how those who have sinned and repent shall escape their sins, is declared by Esaias the prophet, as I wrote above; he thus speaks: “Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from your souls; learn to do well; judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow: and come and let us reason together, saith the Lord. And though your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white like wool; and though they be as crimson, I will make them white as snow. But if ye refuse and rebel, the sword shall devour you: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”

And for this [rite] we have learned from the apostles this reason. Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe; he who leads to the laver the person that is to be washed calling him by this name alone. For no one can utter the name of the ineffable God; and if any one dare to say that there is a name, he raves with a hopeless madness. And this washing is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings. And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is illuminated is washed.

9:10–16

9:17–19a

9:19b–22

9: 23–25

9:26–31

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 6.5.43

Wherefore Peter says, that the Lord said to the apostles: “If any one of Israel then, wishes to repent, and by my name to believe in God, his sins shall be forgiven him, after twelve years. Go forth into the world, that no one may say, ‘We have not heard’.”

Eusebius, *Ecc. Hist.* 5.13

1. AT this time Rhodo, a native of Asia, who had been instructed, as he himself states, by Tatian, with whom we have already become acquainted, having written several books, published among the rest one against the heresy of Marcion. He says that this heresy was divided in his time into various opinions; and while describing those who occasioned the division, he refutes accurately the falsehoods devised by each of them.

2. But hear what he writes: “Therefore also they disagree among themselves, maintaining an inconsistent opinion. For Apelles, one of the herd, priding himself on his manner of life and his age, acknowledges one principle, but says that the prophecies are from an opposing spirit, being led to this view by the responses of a maiden by name Philumene, who was possessed by a demon.

3. But others, among whom are Potitus and Basilicus, hold to two principles, as does the mariner Marcion himself.

4. These following the wolf of Pontus, and, like him, unable to fathom the division of things, became reckless, and without giving any proof asserted two principles. Others, again, drifting into a worse error, consider that there are not only two, but three natures. Of these, Syneros is the leader and chief, as those who defend his teaching say.”

5. The same author writes that he engaged in conversation with Apelles. He speaks as follows: “For the old man Apelles, when conversing with us, was refuted in many things which he spoke falsely; whence also he said that it was not at all necessary to examine one’s doctrine, but that each one should continue to hold what he believed. For he asserted that those who trusted in the Crucified would be saved, if only they were found doing good works. But as we have said before, his opinion concerning God was the most obscure of all. For he spoke of one principle, as also our doctrine does.”

6. Then, after stating fully his own opinion, he adds: “When I said to him, Tell me how you know this or how can you assert that there is one principle, he replied that the prophecies refuted themselves, because they have said nothing true; for they are inconsistent, and false, and self-contradictory. But how there is one principle he said that he did not know, but that he was thus persuaded.

7. As I then adjured him to speak the truth, he swore that he did so when he said that he did not know how there is one unbegotten God, but that he believed it. Thereupon I laughed and reproved him because, though calling himself a teacher, he knew not how to confirm what he taught.”

8. In the same work, addressing Callistio, the same writer acknowledges that he had been instructed at Rome by Tatian. And he says that a book of Problems had been prepared by Tatian, in which he promised to explain the obscure and hidden parts of the divine Scriptures. Rhodo himself promises to give in a work of his own solutions of Tatian’s problems. There is also extant a Commentary of his on the Hexaemeron.

9. But this Apelles wrote many things, in an impious manner, of the law of Moses, blaspheming the divine words in many of his works, being, as it seemed, very zealous for their refutation and overthrow? So much concerning these.

9:32–35

9:36–39

m. Sabbat 23.5

A. They prepare all that is needed for a corpse.

B. They anoint and rinse it.

C. on condition that they not move any limb of the corpse.

D. They remove the mattress from under it.

E. And they put it on [cool] sand so that it will keep.

F. They tie the chin,

G. not so that it will go up, but so that it will not droop [further].

H. And so in the case of a beam which broke—

I. they support it with a bench or the beams of the bed.

J. not so that it will go up, but so that it will not droop further.

K. They do not close the eyes of a corpse on the Sabbath.

L. nor on an ordinary day at the moment the soul goes forth.

M. And he who closes the eyes of a corpse at the moment the soul goes forth, lo, this one sheds blood.

9:40–43