

THE BOOK OF ACTS – CHAPTER 9

9:1-2

1. What else had Saul been doing besides "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord"?

2. Why did Saul want to go after the Christians in "Damascus"?

3. Why sort of "letters" do you think Saul sought from the high priest?

9:3-6

4. Since Jesus already had ascended to heaven, did He come back for a visit before His second coming?

5. What did Jesus mean by, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads"?

6. How does this differ from the exchange Jesus has with sinners today?

9:7-9

7. What didn't Saul do during his first three days in Damascus?

8. Wasn't he hungry and thirsty?

9:10-18

9. To whom did the Lord communicate "in a vision"?

10. What is wrong with Ananias' response to the Lord?

11. What else did Jesus explain to Ananias?

9:19-23

12. How do you think the Jews felt when they let Saul back in the synagogue?

13. Where did Saul spend those "three years" (Galatians 1:18)?

14. Why?

9:24-31

15. Why would a city wall have a window big enough to pass a basket big enough to fit a man?

16. Who were the "Hellenists" who tried to kill Saul?

17. Why did the brethren send Saul to Tarsus from Caesarea?

9:32-40

18. Why did Peter go through "all parts of the country"?

19. Were the disciples in Joppa hoping Peter would heal Dorcas?

20. What were some of Dorcas' "charitable deeds"?

SOURCES:

1. <http://www.bibleversestudy.com/>
2. Life Application Study Bible – NIV
3. Life In The Spirit Study Bible- NIV

ANSWERS THE BOOK OF ACTS – CHAPTER 9

9:1-2

1. What else had Saul been doing besides "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord"?

"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word." (Acts 8:3-4).

2. Why did Saul want to go after the Christians in "Damascus"?

Only "the apostles" (Acts 8:1) were left in Jerusalem, so finding Christians to arrest in Jerusalem may have become slim picking.

3. Why sort of "letters" do you think Saul sought from the high priest?

Letters of introduction that would serve as arrest warrants authorizing him to arrest Christians and "bring them bound to Jerusalem" (Acts 9:2).

9:3-6

4. Since Jesus already had ascended to heaven, did He come back for a visit before His second coming?

No, a "light shone... from heaven" (Acts 9:3) just as Saul heard Jesus, so the Lord was speaking from heaven.

5. What did Jesus mean by, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads"?

Stubborn animals kick against the goads (a goad is a long rod with a sharp end that is used to prick an animal to move or to move in a different direction). Kicking against the goads inflicts pain to the kicker. Jesus was saying that in the process of persecuting Christians, Saul was hurting himself. Since he wasn't hurting himself physically, the Lord was likely referring to the impact on Saul's conscience.

6. How does this differ from the exchange Jesus has with sinners today?

It isn't. There aren't 'small' sinners and 'great' sinners, but just sinners. If we admit our sins and accept Jesus as our Lord, the discussion is short. It's only when we try to deny our sins or the Lordship of Jesus that the discussion and the goading drags on.

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9:7-9

7. What didn't Saul do during his first three days in Damascus?

He "neither ate nor drank" (Acts 9:9).

8. Wasn't he hungry and thirsty?

Chances are, he didn't care. Saul had thought he was doing his best to serve God by arresting and killing Christians. Now he knew that he had been persecuting God and murdering innocent true believers. He probably spent those three days as a total wreck in a heap of tears and deep in prayer of repentance.

9:10-18

9. To whom did the Lord communicate "in a vision"?

To both Ananias (Acts 9:10) and Saul (Acts 9:12)

10. What is wrong with Ananias' response to the Lord?

He is trying to inform God of what's going on.

11. What else did Jesus explain to Ananias?

That He had already appeared to Saul "on the road" (Acts 9:17) and that Saul was to "be filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 9:17).

9:19-23

12. How do you think the Jews felt when they let Saul back in the synagogue?

The Jews who gave Saul the floor at their synagogues, expecting to hear him condemn Christians, only to be "amazed" (Acts 9:21) and "confounded" (Acts 9:22) when the tables were turned on them.

13. Where did Saul spend those "three years" (Galatians 1:18)?

If the "then" in Galatians 1:18 references Saul's return to Damascus, then he spent those three years in Damascus. But if it references his conversion, then at least some and probably most of those "three years" were spent in "Arabia" (Galatians 1:17), presumably to be trained and

equipped by the Holy Spirit for the ministry that lay ahead. Most of those three years having been spent in Arabia is the more likely scenario.

14. Why?

It is highly unlikely that the Jews in Damascus would have put up with Saul's 'betrayal' of their cause and let him preach the Gospel under their noses for three years. Also, if Saul had preached the Gospel in Damascus for three years, the disciples in Jerusalem would have heard about it and would not have been "afraid of him" (Acts 9:26, next page) when he returned to Jerusalem.

9:24-31

15. Why would a city wall have a window big enough to pass a basket big enough to fit a man?

Middle Eastern city walls in those days contained living quarters with windows from which the invaders could be attacked from above during times of war.

16. Who were the "Hellenists" who tried to kill Saul?

They could have been the Hellenist Jews from the Synagogue of the Freedmen who had gone after Stephen, the first Christian martyr.

17. Why did the brethren send Saul to Tarsus from Caesarea?

Tarsus is Saul's home town - "I am a Jew from Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city; and I implore you, permit me to speak to the people" (Acts 21:39) - so he probably had family in Tarsus with whom he could stay, away from the murderous plot against his life in Jerusalem, and also because Tarsus, as it becomes apparent later, was where the Lord wanted him to start his ministry. Caesarea is the main port of Israel where they put Saul on a ship to Tarsus, some 250 miles (400 kilometers) to the north.

9:32-40

18. Why did Peter go through "all parts of the country"?

The Jewish Christians who scattered from Jerusalem had established churches throughout Israel and were multiplying in number - "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied" (Acts 9:31) - so he was visiting and ministering to them, and was soon to be used by God to initiate the evangelization of the gentiles.

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19. Were the disciples in Joppa hoping Peter would heal Dorcas?

Dorcas already had "died" and been "washed" (Acts 9:37). There is no record of them asking Peter to conduct a funeral for her, so they were hoping for Dorcas to be raised from the dead.

20. What were some of Dorcas' "charitable deeds"?

Because men were the breadwinners in those days, most "widows" (Acts 9:39) were poor, especially if they had no son to provide for them. And because all clothes were handmade in those days, they were expensive. Dorcas most likely made and gave the "tunics and garments" (Acts 9:39) to the widows, who were showing them to Peter.

SOURCES:

4. <http://www.bibleversestudy.com/>
5. Life Application Study Bible – NIV
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