

Acts 9:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket.

Analysis

Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket. The disciples' creative rescue demonstrates faithful stewardship, communal care, and God's provision of means for protecting His servants.

The disciples' involvement shows corporate responsibility for member safety. Christianity isn't individualistic; believers protect and assist one another. Their willingness to help despite danger to themselves exemplifies costly discipleship and mutual love Jesus commanded (John 13:34-35).

By night indicates strategic timing—darkness provided cover for clandestine operation. The basket lowering through wall (likely via window in house built into fortification) required planning, cooperation, and courage. This practical action demonstrates faith working through human ingenuity rather than passively waiting for miraculous intervention.

The scene's humiliation shouldn't be missed—prominent Pharisee, Roman citizen, Damascus's most controversial preacher, escaping like fugitive criminal. Paul later references this event with ironic pride (2 Corinthians 11:32-33), acknowledging that gospel ministry involves weakness and humiliation. Reformed theology emphasizes God's strength perfected in human weakness; the gospel advances not through worldly power but divine power manifested through weak vessels.

Historical Context

This escape occurred around 37 CE, forcing Saul to Jerusalem where he faced continued suspicion (Acts 9:26-30). The basket escape became memorable enough that Paul referenced it decades later (2 Corinthians 11:32-33) when defending his apostolic credentials against critics who questioned his authority.

Ancient city walls often incorporated residential buildings with external windows, enabling this escape route. The operation required coordination—obtaining basket, accessing appropriate house, timing the descent, arranging outside reception. The Damascus Christians risked severe punishment if discovered aiding Saul's escape. Their faithfulness enabled Paul's subsequent apostolic ministry transforming the Mediterranean world.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does Christian community responsibility include protecting endangered members?
2. What balance should exist between trusting God's protection and taking practical safety measures?
3. In what ways does gospel ministry involve humiliation and weakness rather than worldly prestige?
4. How do seemingly minor human acts (like lowering basket) serve God's vast redemptive purposes?
5. What does this episode teach about courage required for faithful discipleship?

Interlinear Text

λαβόντες	δὲ	αὐτὸν	οἱ	μαθηταὶ	νυκτὸς	καθῆκαν
took	Then	him	G3588	the disciples	by night	and let him down
G2983	G1161	G846		G3101	G3571	G2524
διὰ	τοῦ	τείχους	χαλάσαντες	ἐν	σφυρίδι	
by	G3588	the wall	G5465	in	a basket	
G1223		G5038		G1722	G4711	

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 11:33 (Parallel theme): And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

Joshua 2:15 (Parallel theme): Then she let them down by a cord through the window: for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.