

NOTE: For exceptional Bible students, I have created links online to other material related to this chapter. Go to <http://LemmonsAid.WordPress.com> and type in the SEARCH BOX: Acts 9 Links

Peter—Acts 9:32-43

Aeneas Healed; Dorcas Raised

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

- 01. 9:32... he came down also to the saints which dwelt at Lydda**—“Lydda was on the road that led from Jerusalem to Joppa, about thirty-two miles west of Jerusalem and nine miles east of Joppa. The area was a stronghold of Jews, hence Peter was about his business of evangelizing among the native Hebrews. The apostle was in Lydda for the purpose of visiting ‘the saints’ (see 9:13), doubtless to strengthen them in the labor of the Lord” [Wayne Jackson, *The Acts of the Apostles: From Jerusalem to Rome*, p. 116].
 |||| “The mention of healing Aeneas shows that God was honoring the promise of Jesus that mighty signs should follow the preaching of the apostles ‘confirming the word’ (Mark 16:17ff). The healing of a person so long an invalid was soon widely known and published with a result that many turned to the Lord” [Coffman].
- 02. 9:36... Dorcas**—“This is the Greek form of Tabitha; and the word means ‘little gazelle,’ ‘fawn,’ or ‘a roe.’ From this word, ‘Dorcas Societies’ in many places have been named being societies formed to sew for the poor” [Coffman]. |||| “Her life was filled with good works, particularly ‘almsdeeds’ (the original term denotes acts of kindness resulting from a merciful heart). The verb ‘did’ is an imperfect tense, suggesting that benevolence was a way of life with Dorcas” [Jackson, p. 118].
- 03. 9:39... all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made**—“Death is a time of remembering the deeds, words and achievements of the departed. How happy are they whose demise is an occasion for remembering what was done on behalf of others, especially of the poor and needy, as was the case with Dorcas. For the unfaithful, death is a time of remembering things melancholy, pathetic and tragic; but, from the very times described here, the Christians sorrowed not as those who have no hope” [Coffman]. **while she was with them**—“...literally reflects a present participle, ‘being with them,’ and represents a state concurrent with the verb ‘made.’ The implication is, as suggested by the command translation, she made the garments back when she was ‘with them.’ She was no longer ‘with’ them, though her mortal body was in the room. There is something that exists independent of the physical tabernacle (2 Cor 5:1)” [Jackson, p. 119].
- 04. 9:42... and many believed in the Lord**—“The result of the raising of Dorcas was exactly the result of the raising of Lazarus, of which the Pharisees said, ‘Behold ... the world is gone after him’ (John 12:11,19). The Lord was working with his apostles as he had promised in Mark 16:17ff” [Coffman].
- 05. 9:43...** “Peter was engaged, at this time, in general evangelizing among the Jews, adapting his stay at a given point, and his change of place, to the exigencies of the cause. The restoration of Dorcas, doubtless, opened a wide field for usefulness in the surrounding community” [J.W. McGarvey, *Original Commentary on Acts*].

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church. “Tanning (Acts 9:43) is the process of treating animal skin to make it into leather. Organic and inorganic chemicals are used to prevent

decomposition and to make the leather flexible, strong, and attractive. Hard leather was used for shields and containers; soft leather was used for clothing and shoes. Parchment was a smooth, thin leather that was prepared for writing.” [The Life and Times Historical Reference Bible, p. 1477].

III. Summary.

This last part of chapter nine contains the record of two supernatural events involving the Apostle Peter. First in Lydda he heals Aeneas from the palsy which had burdened him for eight years. Then, in Joppa, Peter raises Dorcas from the dead. Evidently Dorcas had been a very busy and service-minded person. The widows were grieving over her death and held in their hands or wore garments made for them by this godly woman. There is a very positive outcome from both of these miracles, involving turning to the Lord and believing in the Lord.

IV. Outline.

1. Aeneas is healed (Acts 9:32-35).
2. Dorcas is raised from the dead (36-42).
3. Peter stays with Simon, the tanner (43).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Peter had to travel over 500 miles when he answered the call to come to the place Dorcas lived.
02. _____ Aeneas had been sick of the palsy for twenty years.
03. _____ In the rest of the Book of Acts, we do not hear again of the SIMON who is mentioned in this chapter.
04. _____ There were no Christians in Lydda before Peter’s miracle.
05. _____ Peter raised Dorcas from the dead in an upper room.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ The results of the raising of Dorcas included: (a) many believing in the Lord; (b) Peter being stoned; (c) widows being imprisoned.
07. _____ Who was with the body of Dorcas when Peter arrived: (a) the apostles; (b) Aeneas; (c) widows.
08. _____ Who was miraculously healed of palsy: (a) Aeneas; (b) Saul; (c) Tabitha.
09. _____ What did Peter do before he commanded Tabitha to arise: (a) sent the widows out of the room; (b) prayed to God; (c) a & b; (d) none of these.
10. _____ Which of the following expressions accurately describes the reaction of the people after the miracle at Lydda: (a) many believed in the Lord; (b) turned to the Lord; (c) neither a nor b.

Fill in the Blanks

11. Peter told Aeneas, **Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee _____;**
_____, **and make thy bed. And he arose _____.**
12. Dorcas was her Greek name, but the Aramaic name was: _____.
13. The two men sent to Peter at Lydda from Joppa urged Peter that he would not _____ to come to Joppa.
14. It is said of Peter that he tarried _____ days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.
15. When Dorcas was raised, she saw _____ and sat up.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Acts 9:1-30 Questions... [(1) True, Acts 9:2; (2) True, Acts 9:9; (3) False, Acts 9:26; (4) False, Acts 9:15; (5) True, Acts 9:25; (6) b, Acts 9:2; (7) d, Acts 9:10, 12; (8) e, Acts 9:1, 13, 32, 30; (9) c, Acts 9:20; (10) a, Acts 9:26; (11) B, Acts 9:27; (12) E, Acts 9:14; (13) C or F, Acts 9:11; (14) A, Acts 9:2; (15) D, Acts 9:22.]

VI. Lessons & Applications. [The two outlines below are from Frank L. Cox, *Treatises of Luke*, pp. 174-77].

1. **The Miracle at Lydda (Acts 9:31-35).**

I. The Time of It:

1. During a period of peace and prosperity (v. 31). This favorable condition was due in part to the conversion of the persecutor—Saul.
2. Just before the opening of the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

II. The Instruments of It:

1. A Christian. A good man in the hands of God is like a sharp tool in the hands of a skillful workman. Men must be good if they do good. But Peter was more than a Christian.
2. An apostle. It was because of his divine call and apostleship that he was able to do miraculous works (cf., Acts 3:1ff; 5:1ff, 19; 8:14ff; 9:36ff).

III. The Subject of It: Aeneas, by name. An obscure man. Likely, a disciple (verses 32, 33a). It seems that he was numbered with the saints at Lydda. Let us study the nature of his sickness.

1. "He was palsied." This rendered him helpless. he "had kept his bed."
2. A disease of long standing: "Eight years."
3. Incurable by human means.

IV. The Nature of It:

1. Divine. "Aeneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee." The apostle claimed no healing power of his own.
2. Instantaneous: "And straightway he arose." This is evidence that the power which touched him was super-human. Human remedies are slow in bringing about a cure—if at all.
3. Complete: "He arose." Without doubt, he did what he was told to do—make his bed. he did that which others had been doing for him. That disease was dismissed, and the old powers were again used. He was not immunized from future sickness. When the Lord healed, he did not inoculate.
4. Not creative, but restorative in nature. Nothing material has been created since the beginning (Gen 1). Aeneas was not given something new, but the old powers, which had been wasted by disease, were restored.

V. The Results of It: (verse 35). Lydda was a town between Jerusalem and Joppa. Sharon was the name of the level country between Lydda and Caesarea. When the people of this section saw Aeneas whole again, they "turned to the Lord"—that is, a general conversion of the inhabitants followed the miracle.

2. **The Raising of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-43).** This paragraph, so thrilling in interest, presents three different scenes of this unique character...

I. Dorcas In Life. The life of this woman may be described by one word—"beautiful" (v. 36).

1. A beautiful name: **Dorcas**, or **Gazelle**. The gazelle (or antelope), celebrated for its agreeable form, its graceful motions, its fiery and beautiful eyes, was frequently employed by the Orientals as a type of female loveliness.
 2. A beautiful soul: A disciple of Christ. Her soul was adorned with compassion. She considered the poor (Ps 41:1; 1 Pet 3:1-4).
 3. A beautiful dress. Her compassion did not perish for want of action: for she was "full of good works and almsdeeds which she did." A needle-woman. It has been said that "a stitch in time saves nine," but this Christian lady got her needle into the very fabric of eternity (cf., 1 Tim 2:9-10).
- II. Dorcas in Death. Notwithstanding the beauty of her soul and the usefulness of her hands, Dorcas died. We shall now come to scenes in the death-chamber of this worthy woman...
1. Tenderness. They "washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber" (cf., 1 Kgs 17:19).
 2. Mourning. The chief mourners were widows—the recipients of her kindness. No hired mourners—their sorrow was genuine.
 3. Comfort. This came from the presence of a gospel preacher. When shadows fall, the presence of one who is intimate with the Lord is greatly desired.
 4. An exhibition. Not the trophies of one skilled in worldly amusement, but "the coats and garments which Dorcas made." No words of eulogy were spoken, no words of eulogy were needed: for the garments were all-eloquent! (cf., Rev 14:13).
- III. Dorcas in her Resurrection. Peter was the instrument by which her resurrection was effected. He had restored withered limbs (Acts 3), purged the church of dross (Acts 5), imparted the miraculous gift of the Spirit (Acts 8), healed the sick (Acts 9), but never had he or any other apostle raised the dead. Let us ask—
1. How was Dorcas raised?
 - 1) In solitude. Peter modeled his behavior after the example of Jesus in the house of Jairus (Lk 8:54).
 - 2) Through prayer. Jesus raised the girl through his own power; but Peter on this occasion invoked divine power.
 - 3) With a command: "Tabitha, Arise." (Cf., Luke 8:54; Jn 11:43).
 - 4) With a helping hand (cf., Mark 1:31).
 2. Why was Dorcas raised?
 - 1) To prove to the people the divinity of Jesus and his religion.
 - 2) Perhaps, to show that goodness is immortal. Women, like Dorcas, never die.
 3. What was the nature of Dorcas' resurrection? Unlike the resurrection of the last day, Dorcas lived as she had lived before; she lived her natural life, subject to death.
 4. What was the effect of Dorcas' resurrection? Luke does not try to describe the emotions of joy which must have been expressed by the people present. The ultimate effect was that it caused "many to believe in the Lord."

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

M N B V C X Z L D O R C A S M A D E K H
 W G F D S A P O I U Y A T R E W S Q A Z
 X E S W E D C V F R D T E G B T N H Y U
 M J E U I K L O P D O I U N N Y T R S D
 E W Q P A Z X S Y E G D C E E V F K I E
 R F V B I G T L Y N C H M N M A R J C I
 J U I M J N T K I I O R L P O O S Z K D
 Z X C V B A G W N M A L K J W H G E F E
 P E T E R D O S A G T P O D I U Y I T S
 R E W Q A H Z X S W S E O D C D V G F I
 R T G B S E G V F R T O B N E H Y H P R
 O I U Y T R E W Q M G N B N V C X T Z A
 L K J H G F D S A S P O R I U Y T T R A
 E W Q T A B I T H A M U E N B V C E X H
 Z L K P J H G F D C T S L A P O I A U T
 Y T P R E W Q Z X R S W O E D C V R N I
 M O N B V S I C K O F T H E P A L S Y B
 J C X Z L K J H G D F D W D S A O P U A
 Y T R E W Q A Z X S W E D C V F R N B T
 M N B V C X Z K J L O P Y H N B G D R L

[The words (or word locaters) listed below are to be found in the text of our lesson. They also are found in the puzzle above. This is just one more way to reinforce what you have studied from the text. Why not read the whole verse where the word is found one more time as you do the puzzle? Thank you for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. Let's desire the sincere milk of the word that we may grow (1 Pet 2:2). DRL]

Acts 9:32-43

Peter, 32	good works, 36
Lydda, 32	sick, 37
Aeneas, 33	died, 37
eight years, 33	weeping, 39
sick of the palsy, 33	showing, 39
whole, 34	coats, 39
turned, 35	garments, 39
Joppa, 36	Dorcas made, 39
Tabitha, 36	Tabitha, arise, 40
Dorcas, 36	