

ACTS 9:32-43 TWO MIRACLES OF THE LORD THRU PETER: MANY SAVED

Seven Observations on Miracles of Healing in the New Testament

The scene now shifts back to Peter and to some itinerant ministries he had visiting scattered believers along the Palestinian coast. Luke is actually leading us to the detailed account of the conversion of Cornelius (Chapter 10), but on the way, he records two miracles that confirm the spoken Gospel: the healing of Aeneas, and the raising of Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead.

9:32-35 AENEAS IS HEALED AT LYDDA

v. 32, 35, 36 **The Geographical Scene:** Lydda, “Lod” of the Old Testament, is about 25 miles northwest of Jerusalem on a much traveled road to Joppa. Joppa, modern Haifa, 10-11 miles from Lydda, was the major seaport for Jerusalem. To the north of Joppa, the coastal Plains of Sharon extend to Caesarea (about 34 miles) and beyond to Mount Carmel. Multitudes of Jews get saved during Peter’s ministry in this area: thus Luke describes the further spread of the Gospel to the coastal areas of Palestine.

v. 32 **Peter’s Business There:** “*as Peter passed through all parts (quarters, KJV), he came down also to the saints which dwelt in Lydda.*”

Apparently Peter was on a planned, itinerant ministry of visitation to Jewish believers who had been scattered by the persecutions in Jerusalem. Note that the believers are again called “saints” (same in 9:13, 42), apparently a common designation for any believer at this time.

v. 33, 34 **Aeneas is Healed:** for 8 years, Aeneas was bedridden due to a paralytic condition. The verb form translated “*sick with a palsy*” is an imperfect periphrastic indicating the permanent and drastic paralysis to which he had succumbed.

Peter says to him, “*Jesus Christ heals you...*” The result: “he arose (aorist active indicative) immediately.”

v. 35 **Net Effect:** “*All that dwelt at Lydda (and the Plains of Sharon) saw and turned to (epi) the Lord.*” The results represent what a miracle was intended to produce (John 20:30, 31). Though many, the converts must have all been Jews or Jewish proselytes, because in the next chapter Peter is very surprised when God orders him to go to evangelize a Gentile. Regardless, the Gospel is advancing along the coastal plain.

9:36-43 DORCAS IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD AT JOPPA

v. 36 **Tabitha (Greek, “Dorcas”)** was a _____ who kept on _____ good works and almsdeeds.

v. 37 **Tabitha Dies:** while Peter was in Lydda, literally, “*having fallen sick, she died.*” IS THERE ANY AMONG US WHO IS NOT SUSCEPTIBLE TO THIS SAME FATE!?! They washed her body, a Jewish purification ritual, preparatory to burial.

v. 38, 39 **Peter Sent For:** apparently they had heard of the healing of Aeneas and fully expected Peter to raise Tabitha. Apply that to “healers” today! Peter immediately made the 10-11 mile trip to Joppa!

(OVER)

v. 40, 41 **Peter Raises Tabitha Out of Death:** though Jesus had granted miraculous powers to the Apostles, this is the first recorded instance of a resurrection (the only other is in Acts 20:9-12). He spoke to a _____, he presented her _____.

v. 42, 43 **Net Effect:** again, the intended effect of a miracle is realized: “it became known throughout all of Joppa” (INDEED!), and “MANY BELIEVED* UPON** (KJV “in”) THE LORD.”

*"believed" = aorist active indicative (point fact belief)

**"upon" (KJV, "in") = ἐπι/epi, upon, resting upon the Lord:

(see Acts 2:38, 11:17, 6:31, 22:19 for same use of *epi* relative to salvation.)

Note the passing of time in v. 43: Peter stayed many days at Simon the pig-skinner’s house in Joppa. How many we are not told, but approximately 9-11 years have passed since the Lord had given the great commission and still the Apostles are evangelizing only Jews. God will correct this in Chapter 10!

AND THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN IN CAESAREA CALLED CORNELIUS (A GENTILE)....

(to be continued.)

Seven Observations on Miracles of Healing in the New Testament

1. Jesus prophesied that the Apostles would exorcise and heal, Mark. 16:17, 18.
2. These gifts were to confirm the veracity of their testimony to the Gospel, to the fact that it came from God, Mark 16:20, Hebrews 2:2-4; Acts 9:35, 42.
3. The Apostles never advertised themselves as “Healers”: there were no “Mass Healing Meetings” in their day.
4. Two cases of an Apostle raising the dead are recorded. Have you ever heard of Benny Hinn, Oral Roberts, Morris Cerullo, Rex Humbard or ANY HEALER raising a dead person?
5. God still performs miracles, but the measure and means with which He delights to work are always in His hands; it is by His choice that no Apostles are left on the scene.
6. It is by God’s choice that the canon of Scripture is complete, hence no need for confirming gifts of miracles to accompany the ministry of the Word. Believers can now compare Scripture with Scripture to confirm verbal ministry.
7. The case of Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25-30 blows away many modern charismatic theories of healing. If there were healing in the atonement as charismatics claim (by wrongly interpreting Isaiah 53:5), then Epaphroditus missed it!