



Acts Facts – Part 3

A study in the Book of Acts. We go through Acts from chapter 10 verse 1, to chapter 16 verse 15. We take our study verse by verse.

This e-book is the third part of our study. In Part 4, we will complete our verse by verse study of the book of Acts.

This e-book combines into one volume, several pages from

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Verse by Verse Studies in Acts

—Author's Preface

Introduction and overview of the verse by verse exposition of Acts of the Apostles.

I have spent hundreds of hours putting together a complete verse by verse study of Acts. In this preface I explain some of the aims and attitudes behind this work, and how you might make the best use of it.

1 *The Paraphrase*

The text of Acts appearing in these studies is my own paraphrase. My main aims were to present Luke's text in a straightforward manner, keeping the language simple. I've done such things as (1) broken up long sentences into shorter ones; (2) replaced many pronouns with the nouns they refer to; (3) eliminated most instances of *And* where it starts or joins sentences; (4) Eliminated phrases such as "*it happened that*" which are stylistic but contain no information; (5) replaced some of Luke's terms with more understandable ones such as *commander* instead of his *chiliarch*.

Beyond these measures, I have frequently not reproduced the exact sentence structure and phraseology of Luke, but rather used my own words to express what he meant. That's what a *paraphrase* is. I realise that some *translators* will even take these liberties, but I have not attempted a *translation*. The paraphrase, is intended to be expository—to explain and bring out the meaning of the original text.

The symbol ¶ appears before each section of my paraphrase, to remind the student that I am not quoting from any translation but using my own words.

The paraphrase appears in discrete sections, but is also repeated in fragments with the comments. Sometimes the paraphrase will differ slightly in the fragment compared to the sectional reading. This is intentional.

My paraphrase loses much of the elegant style of Luke's penmanship. That's the sacrifice made for the sake of presenting Luke's narrative in a modern style that has a familiar feel to many readers and may be clearer to them. But my purpose is not to replace the many translations that do convey Luke's manner of story telling. Even Luke himself would consider that understanding and believing the story itself is more important than appreciating the skill and culture of the story teller. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive, but my purpose is to help primarily with understanding and belief.

Chapters and Verses

The paraphrase is presented in natural sections and logical paragraphs. The traditional "chapters and verses" are sometimes arbitrary and clumsy divisions that inappropriately break the flow of the narrative. They weren't part of the original scripture. Nevertheless I have included "chapters and verses" in the natural sections to provide customary reference. However I have made the verse numbers unobtrusive so they don't interfere with the natural flow and structure.

2 *The Notes*

Between the sections of the paraphrase, various notes appear. I've not attempted to deal with every matter that might arise. If a detail is merely academic and not necessary to a good understanding of the passage, then the note on that detail will be brief if it occurs at all. In other cases the notes will be thorough because the matter is important. The notes, like the paraphrase, are intended to be expository—to explain and bring out the meaning of the original text.

3 *The Maps*

I have some years ago prepared simple maps of the area covered in Acts. The appropriate maps are placed on each lesson so that the student does not have to go looking for them. There is a maps page with all the maps together, but it seemed good to me to place the maps on the lesson pages as well.

My Reservations

I have some reservations about presenting these expository or verse by verse studies. Paraphrasing scripture, and inserting one's own comments between the verses, could be viewed as a great impertinence: adding one's own words to the scripture. However expository teaching, if done honestly and carefully, is a very direct and powerful means of helping people understand, appreciate, and apply the scriptures for themselves. I urge all students to have their own Bibles at hand, and to read the whole passage for themselves, then turn to my paraphrase and notes as distinct from the scripture. I have taken much care with this work, and continue to check and edit it. It is by this care that I justify using the expository method.

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Acts 9:32-43

—Verse by verse

This page is a verse by verse study of Acts 9:32-43, about Peter's Miracles in Lydda and Joppa. Peter healed a paralyzed man and raised Tabitha from death back to life.

Peter's Miracles in Lydda and Joppa

Acts 9:32-43

¶³²Peter was travelling all around, and he came down to visit the holy people who lived at Lydda. In Lydda, ³³Peter came upon a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden with paralysis for eight years. ³⁴Peter said to him, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Rise up and make your bed.' Immediately Aeneas got out of bed. ³⁵All the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord." (Acts 9:32-35).

¶³⁶At Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha. Her name translated is Dorcas or Gazelle. This woman was full of good works and constant acts of mercy. ³⁷However, she fell sick in those days, and died. Her carers washed her and laid her in an upper room. ³⁸The disciples at Joppa heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda. So they sent two men to Peter, imploring him to come to them without delay. ³⁹Peter got up and went with them. On reaching Joppa, they brought Peter into the upper room. All the widows stood by weeping. They showed Peter the coats and garments that Dorcas had made while she was with them alive." (Acts 9:36-39).

¶⁴⁰Peter asked everyone to leave the room. He knelt and prayed. Then he turned to the body and said, 'Tabitha, arise!' Tabitha opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. ⁴¹He offered her his hand, and lifted her up. Then he called the holy ones and widows and presented Tabitha alive. ⁴²This miracle became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. ⁴³Peter ended up staying many days in Joppa, as a guest of Simon, a tanner." (Acts 40-43).

1 *Peter's Miracle at Lydda*

Verse 32

¶ "Peter was travelling all around, and he came down to visit the saints who lived at Lydda." (Acts 9:32).



- **Saints** The disciples of Christ are called “saints” four times in the book of Acts. It means those who are *sanctified* or made holy, and this applies to all disciples (1Thessalonians 5:23-24). Instead of the word “saints”, we can use the term “holy people” —it means the same thing.

Verses 33-35

¶ "In Lydda, Peter came upon a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden with paralysis for eight years. Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Rise up and make your bed.” Immediately Aeneas got out of bed. All the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord." (Acts 9:33-35).

- **Immediately.** One characteristic of the healing miracles performed by the apostles was *immediacy*. The healing was not gradual with a period of convalescence. Nor was there any need to coax the healed into standing up and taking a few faltering steps. The healing was immediate and complete.
- **All saw him.** Another characteristic of the apostolic healing miracles is the quality of *testimony*. A large number of people saw the man healed, knowing first hand what condition he had been in before the healing.

2 Peter's Miracle at Joppa

Verses 36-37

¶ "At Joppa, there was a disciple named Tabitha. Her name translated is Dorcas or Gazelle. This woman was full of good works and constant acts of mercy. However, she fell sick in those days, and died. Her carers washed her and laid her in an upper room." (Acts 9:36-37).

- **Good people die.** It's hard for us to understand why sickness and death inflict even those who are full of mercy and good works. The death of Dorcas, like the death of any righteous and beloved person, is sad and disheartening. It's hard to see the reason why. Trials and tribulations, sickness and sorrow, death and disappointment —these are facts of life that our faith must face. We rely on the promise of heaven: "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain..." (Revelation 21:4).

Verses 38-39

¶ "The disciples at Joppa heard that Peter was nearby at Lydda. So they sent two men to Peter, imploring him to come to them without delay. Peter got up and went with them. On reaching Joppa, they brought Peter into the upper room. All the widows stood by weeping. They showed Peter the coats and garments that Dorcas had made while she was with them alive." (Acts 9:38-39).

- **Peter nearby.** It seems that there was nobody in Joppa who could raise the dead. No surprise there. In the normal world, there is never anybody who can raise the dead once death is complete. But on this occasion there was, in a nearby town, an apostle of Jesus Christ who could raise the dead. Knowing this, the disciples at Joppa sent for Peter with urgency. He came to find Dorcas surrounded by women weeping. Since they were widows, this was not the first time death had caused them to weep. But weeping and lamenting, as appropriate as it was, wouldn't bring Dorcas back. However, Peter could.

Verses 40-42

¶ "Peter asked everyone to leave the room. He knelt and prayed. Then he turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, arise!" Tabitha opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up. He offered her his hand, and lifted her up. Then he called the saints and widows and presented Tabitha alive. This miracle became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord." (Acts 9:40-42).

- **Tabitha, arise.** Tabitha's return to life must have been a joyful occasion. However she would some day die again and be wept over once more. There's a day coming when all the saints who have died, including Tabitha, shall rise from death never to die again (John 5:28-29, 1Corinthians 15:50-55, 1Thessalonians 4:13-18).

3 Peter's Ministry at Joppa

Verse 43

¶ "Peter ended up staying many days in Joppa, as a guest of Simon, a tanner." (Acts 9:43).

- **God's manifold grace.** The miracle at Joppa caused many to believe. Peter stays on so as to minister to these new believers. But preachers are not the only servants of use in the church. Simon the Tanner also served, by offering hospitality to Peter. So you see, we all have something to contribute: like Dorcas making

clothing for the needy; Peter making the gospel and power of Jesus known; Simon the Tanner offering hospitality to God's workers. Yes, we also serve. Peter himself says, "As each person has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1Peter 4:10).

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