

The Book Of Acts: Verse-by-Verse

Acts 9:32-35

- **A Return To Peter's Ministry:**

Luke suspends his Pauline biography to set the stage for the greater story of the Gospel going to the non-Jewish world. John Stott: "He leaves Paul in Tarsus for a while, temporarily out of sight, until he is ready to bring to the center of the stage with the first missionary journey." – John Stott

Acts 9:32 to Acts 12:25: Peter's extended ministry. After that, Peter will all but drop from the Acts story – except for the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.

- **Common Thread: The Supernatural in Peter's Ministry: vv. 32-35**

As Peter traveled about the country, he went to visit the saints in Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years. "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat." Immediately Aeneas got up. All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord."

Since the recent persecution of Christians had somewhat abated Peter took advantage of this time of relative peace to visit the believers who had been dispersed to such areas as Judea.

While Peter travelled along the western seaboard two miracles took place, which Luke evidently considered to be similar in importance to his narrative. One happened in Lydda, the other in Joppa.

Peter's goal: "... To visit the saints in Lydda".

- **“Lydda” / “Lod”:**

A coastal town about 10 miles southeast of Tel-Aviv-Jaffa. First mentioned in I Chronicles 8:12: “The sons of Elpaal ... built Ono and Lod with its surrounding villages.”

Secular History:

- Canaanite Period: “Lod” was listed as one of the towns of Canaan during the reign of Thutmose III, who is credited with bringing the Egyptian empire to its zenith.
- Hellenistic Period: Lydda had a large cattle market, as well as textile, dyeing, and pottery industries. During the Hellenistic period, Lydda was detached from Samaria turned into a toparchy of Judea. After the Maccabean revolt it became a purely Jewish town.
- Roman History: During the Roman occupation (43 B.C), the city was sold into slavery by Cassius, the governor of Syria. In 66 A.D., Gallus, the Roman proconsul of Syria, burned it on his way to Jerusalem.
- 1st-Century Lydda/Lod: The home of many of the Jewish Christians who had fled Jerusalem during the recent persecution.

- **“He Found A Man Named Aeneas”:**

“He found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic who had been bedridden for eight years.”

Etymology of the name, “Aeneas”: Some scholars indicate it is a Gentile/Greek name, meaning, “to praise”. Others indicate it was a Hebrew name, meaning “one that answers” or “one that is poor”. Either way, he was likely already a believer when Peter met him.

Luke The Narrator/Medical Doctor: Luke says he was a paralytic. Luke uses the Greek word, “paralelymenos”. The root word, “paraluo” is

where we get our English word “paralytic”.

Paralelymenos refers to any kind of disease or condition which included the loss of mobility. Modern terms: Damage to the brain’s motor centers or the spinal cord.

In the first century this type of paralysis was not treatable. It left its victim unable to walk. Worse yet, it often was a progressive disease.

- **“Get up and take care of your mat”: v. 34.**

Peter said to him, “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat.”

A parallel to Jesus’ own miracles: Matthew 9:6 - The man lying on the mat. Jesus said, “Get up, take your mat and go home.” John 5:8: The man at the Pool of Bethesda. Jesus said, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”

Peter saw Jesus do those miracles and learned from them. Enabled by the Holy Spirit - Peter was following what he saw Jesus do.

In both cases where a paralytic has been healed Peter is quick to invoke Jesus’ Name and give him the glory. Acts 3: “I don’t have any silver or gold for you. But I’ll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!” Acts 9: “Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and take care of your mat.”

Koine Greek has two kinds of verbs: “continuing” and “finished”. Example: “I ran”. “I am running”.

Luke uses an “aorist imperative”: “Take care of your mat”, meaning, “Make your bed”. Peter is telling the paralytic to get up, make up his bed, and get on with life. His eight-year trial is over.

John MacArthur: “Every time in the Bible you hear about a healing where Jesus Christ is involved, it is absolute, complete healing. Always

complete.... So the cure was total; it was complete...”

- **“Immediately Aeneas got up”: v. 34.**

Peter gives the command, but the man who has been paralyzed for eight years has to respond. In both events in Peter's ministry involving supernatural healings of lame people, the offer of healing was extended, but a response was required.

Luke says, “Immediately Aeneas got up.” Pay attention to that word, “Immediately”. It's the New Testament way of pointing to something that can only be happening because God is choosing to act in a situation. See: Mark 1:30-31; Mark 1:42; Mark 5:29; Mark 5:42; Mark 10:52.

- **“All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord”: v. 35**

“Sharon” is also spelled “Saron” in some historical sources. This was the open coastal country south of Mt. Carmel, along the Mediterranean Ocean. This region extended to Caesarea and Joppa and included Lydda.

Historically, the “Plain of Sharon” was renowned for its extraordinary fertility. The very name became symbolic of any country of great beauty and fertility.

Luke records that the news of Aeneas' cure spread throughout the neighborhood and to the coastal plain of Sharon. When that happened, the locals and the people from the area of Sharon went to see Aeneas.

These people didn't just hear the rumor and make a decision: They went to see Aeneas and were convinced of his healing – and consequently became believers.

- **“A John 4 Throwback”:**

“Many Samaritans from the village believed in Jesus because the woman had said, “He told me everything I ever did!” 40When they came out to see him, they begged him to stay in their village. So he stayed for two days, 41long enough for many more to hear his message and believe. 42Then they said to the woman, “Now we believe, not just because of what you told us, but because we have heard him ourselves. Now we know that he is indeed the Savior of the world.”- John 4:39-42

The Breakthrough: Because much of the Sharon Valley territory was semi-Gentile, Peter’s miracle resulted in yet a further spread of the Gospel. Peter’s former three-year isolation in Jerusalem had been effectively broken.

And he was not done! We will see that next time.