

The Acts of the Apostles

[Wed. Aug. 27, 2014] Acts Series, Acts 9.32-43 - Craig A. Thurman

In chapter nine we saw the conversion of Saul to Jesus Christ on his way to Damascus. After reaching Damascus he was met by a certain disciple named Ananias, who had been commanded of the Lord to go to Saul, to command him baptism and reveal his commission to preach Jesus Christ to all men. He might have immediately gone into Arabia for three years (Gal. 1.16) and then returned to Damascus. He boldly preached Christ in the synagogue, and discovered that there were some unbelieving Jews who had planned to kill him. The disciples helped him escape through a window in the wall. (2Co.11.33) He then goes to Jerusalem for fifteen days, during which time he ultimately joins with the saints of the church. During this brief visit he only saw the apostles Peter and James, the Lord's brother. (You might recall that we just spent some time discussing the term *apostle* being applied to those that were outside of the twelve and Paul.) As Saul preached Christ in Jerusalem, during this brief 15 day visit, it was discovered by some brethren that the Hellenist Jews here had also plotted to have Paul killed. So they brought him to Caesarea, and then sent him to his hometown of Tarsus, Cilicia. It is at this point that the Scriptures state that the *churches*, notice the plural, had rest.

Before moving into this chapter it might be good to reflect on the events thus far covered in Acts. Our Lord Jesus begins this account of church history by reminding the apostles that the promise of the Holy Spirit shall come. But wait until then in the city of Jerusalem. We have the first business meeting to appoint an apostle to replace Judas in chapter 1. The church, the only church in existence at that time received the Holy Spirit (also called the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the shedding forth of the Holy Spirit, and the gift of the Holy Spirit) on the day of Pentecost. Immediately thereafter we have the account of the healing of the lame man; then the apprehension of Peter and John, stand before the Sanhedrin and release; Ananias and Sapphira's attempted deception of the church, and their death for it; then the apostles' apprehension, miraculous release from prison, their witness before the Sanhedrin, their beating, and release; we learn of a need for and appointment of seven deacons to minister to the widows of the church; Stephen's preaching, apprehension, testimony, and his martyrdom; Saul's persecution of the saints and conversion to Jesus Christ. In all of this Peter has been in the forefront.

The Acts of the Apostles

Peter leads the first Jerusalem business meetings; explains what was taking place in Jerusalem at Pentecost; speaks to the lame man and lifts him up; he is the one whose remarks are shared when he and John were apprehended and brought to answer before Sanhedrin; he rebukes Ananias and Sapphires for their attempted deception of the church and the Holy Spirit who is therein; in the next apprehension he is once again the noted spokesman for the apostles; he would have been a part of the decision to have seven deacons appointed for service; he rebukes Simon the converted sorcerer; and in this chapter he will be used to bring healing to a palsied man and raise a beloved sister-in-law from the dead; he shall be used of the Lord to take the gospel to the gentiles; and be called by the church to give an answer for his going to the uncircumcised; after this Herod shall apprehend Peter, who then shall be miraculously released; he will then move to Caesarea; and finally, the last we read concerning him will be when the gentile churches send men to Jerusalem so that they apostles and the church might consider the issue of circumcision, and the Law's application to them. Chapter 15.7 is the last time Peter is mentioned. Paul becomes the predominate figure for the rest of the book.)

Acts has 28 chapters; 1007 verses; 24,250 words (*The Bible in the Making*, Geddes MacGregor, p.429) While I could not count words, there are 25 pages (inclusively) in the book of Acts that cover Peter's ministry – and there are 25 pages (inclusively) that deal with Paul's. The book of Acts is virtually split between Peter's ministry and Paul's. If we mark Acts 15.7, the last place where Peter is named this would mark almost center of the book.

32 ¶ *And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout*

διερχόμενον διὰ; acc, sing, masc, part, pres of διέρχομαι; διὰ through, by + ἔρχομαι to come; noting the prefixed διὰ to ἐρχόμενος below:

διερχόμενον; 17.23 *as I passed by*; 18.23 *and went over all the country*

διερχόμενος; 8.40 *and passing through he (Philip) preached*

all quarters, he came down

The Acts of the Apostles

κατελθεῖν; aor 2, inf of κατέρχομαι; κατά according to, down +
έρχομαι to come.

also to the saints which dwelt

κατοικοῦντας, acc, pl, masc, part, pres of κατοικέω; κατά down + οικέω
dwelling. (vs.35)

at Lydda.

North and west above Emmaus. Here there was a church.
Sometimes disciples means those of a church. But saints always
refers to church disciples.

*33 And there he found a certain τινά man named Æneas, which had kept his bed
eight years,*

ἐξ ἑτῶν ὀκτῶ κατακείμενον ἐπὶ κρᾶββάτῳ
of years eight having lain upon a bed

and was sick of the palsy.

ὃς ἦν παραλελυμένος
who was paralyzed

παραλελυμένος, pass, perf, part of παραλύω; παρά about + λύω
loosed; KJV *palsy* 4, *feeble* knees 1. παραλυτικός, which is of the same
root is always translated with the English word, *palsy* 10.

**Beyond any doubt, all that were so afflicted were bedridden, and had to
be borne about by others.** (παραλελυμένος Lk.5.18, 24; Acts 8.7; 9.33;
παραλυτικός, Mt. 8.6; 9.2, 6; Mk. 2.3-10)

34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole:

ἰᾶται, 3rd p sing, pres, ind, mid of ἰάομαι; KJV *heal, whole; He himself
heals.*

The Acts of the Apostles

In the first healing miracle that we saw in the third chapter of Acts where the man, who was lame from his mother's womb, had looked up to ask an alms, not expecting a miracle, Peter looked on him, commanded him to rise up, took him by the right hand and lifted him up. (Acts 3.4-7) Here, Peter *found* this certain man, and announces that Jesus Christ heals him. He not so much as touches this paralyzed man. These, and all healing are at the discretion of the Sovereign God. There is no holy recipe for men to heal others. There is nothing that marks out any other sick, lame, crippled, maimed, blind, or leprous man from another but the sole judgment of the sovereign God. And yet, when the topic of God's election of grace comes up in Scripture then it is, "Oh no, that can't be!" God won't, even **can't** violate the sanctity of a man's free will. Has it ever dawned on us how inconsistent that is? Yet God is absolutely impartial in His actions. He simply does what pleases Him. Should he act in any other way he would not be God. Would it be just for God to heal one because he has suffered long enough? With God that is not a consideration. What is long enough to God? But what about the other who may have suffered, not in longevity, but in intensity? But with God that is not a consideration. How intense must it be before God acts? Again, it is no consideration for God. *Ro 9:18 ... he mercy on whom he will have mercy.* We see one healed being above forty years of age, who was lame from his mother's womb, another who was 38 years impotent; and this paralyzed man only eight. Another woman had spent all her living for a cure and was nothing bettered, and found healing without a price for just a touch of the hem of the Master's garment. What was just? What was fair? How do men judge this? These are the things that belong to God. *De 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God ...* Give glory to God for the great things he hath done.

Mr 7:37 ... He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

Arise,

ἀνάστηθι, 2nd p, sing, aor 2, **imper** of ἀνίστημι, ἀνά again, anew + ἵστημι, stand again or anew.

The Acts of the Apostles

and make thy bed.

στρώσον, 2nd p, sing, aor 1, **imper** of στρώννυμι; KJV *spread and strowed* Mt.21.8; Mk.11.8; *furnished* Mk.14.15; Lk.22.12; Acts 9.23 *make ... bed.*

The **commandment** is that he is to **spread his own pallet to lay on** from henceforth.

And he arose

ἀνέστη, 3rd p sing, aor 2 of ἀνίστημι.

immediately εὐθέως.

35 And all that dwelt

κατοικοῦντες; here in the nominative case as opposed to the accusative in verse 32.

at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord.

J. P. Green Sr. *Bible Interlinear,*

Who (then) turned to the Lord.

οἵτινες ἐπέστρεψαν ἐπὶ τὸν Κύριον

οἵτινες, nom, pl, masc of ὅστις; ὅς + τις; relative pronoun. It would be somewhat redundant to repeat the fact that these of Lydda and Saron were those who turned to the Lord. So, for English idiom the lack of translation is self-explanatory. It is also true that the understood adverb *then* is unnecessary because it is obvious that their conversion was a result which followed the miracle performed upon this paralyzed man.

ἐπέστρεψαν, 3rd p pl, aor 1, ind act of ἐπιστρέφω; ἐπί upon, for + στρέφω to turn;

36 ¶ Now there was at Joppa a certain τις disciple named Tabitha,

The Acts of the Apostles

Peter had found a certain paralyzed man, and now there is a certain disciple named Tabitha.

which by interpretation

by interpretation, διερμηνευομένη, nom, sing, fem, part, pres, pass of διερμηνεύω; διά through, by + ἐρμηνεύω **KJV always with the English word *interpret* 4** (cf. Jn.1.38, 42; 9.7; He.7.2); and **the noun is always the same** as well (**2**); and this is transliterated into our English noun hermeneutics.

διερμηνεύω, KJV *expounded* Lk.24.27; *interpretation* Acts 9.36; *interpret* 1Co.12.30; 14.5, 13, 27.

διερμηνευτής is only used in 1Co.14.28 *interpreter*.

J. P. Green's Interlinear Bible, *being translated*. I'm not sure that this is best. We make a distinction between *translation* work and *hermeneutics*. We can interpret, or give the sense of something without necessarily being involved in the discipline of translating. (Technically speaking.) And in this case, because we are dealing with the text of Scripture it would, in my opinion, be best if we kept these distinctions clear, especially in an interlinear which is involved in the work of translation.

I.E. Dorcas means, or is interpreted to mean *Doe* or *Roe*. Ταβιθά is translated Tabitha. (Or, in this case transliterated.) A better example would be, ἐργῶν is translated into the English language with the word *work*. We can define what work means by giving our interpretation of it, perhaps as we consider relative adjectives and the context in which it is found.

(NEB, RSV: *meaning*; Young's, NIV: *interpreted*; NASB: *translated*; Amp: *means*.)

is called Dorcas:

The Acts of the Apostles

Δορκάς, Harold Moulton's *The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised 1978 Edition*, p.106, 'Dorcas, pr. Name, signifying a gazelle or antelope ...'

They must have referred to her as a 'Doe.' A number of features in this animal is that it is graceful, swift, quiet, harmless, and has beautiful eyes.

The LXX translates δορκάς: KJV hart ... fallow deer ... roe

Cf. Deu. 12.15, 22; 14.5; 15.22; 1Ki. 3.1 (III Ki. 3.1; found at the end of vs. 46); 4.23 does; Pr. 6.5 doe

2Sa. 2.18 roe; 1Chron. 12.8 roes; S of S 2.9 roe; = doe

S of S. 4.5 fawns; 7.3 (4) fawns; 8.14 doe;

this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

Tabitha/Dorcas was known for the good works that she did and the contributions, or deeds of mercy, that she made to others.

A note concerning Bible versions:

At this place in the New International Version (NIV) the noun *works* is changed to a verb. (?)

NIV, ... *who was always doing good and helping the poor.*

The NIV has chosen to directly contradict Scripture by the way that they have ignored the truth and chose to interpret the Greek noun ἐργῶν. It is not a verb ... *doing*. ἐργῶν is never translated as a verb! Comparing the KJV and the NIV we learn that they do not say the same thing. Tabitha was full of good works, or, Tabitha was always doing good. Again, Tabitha was plentiful with good works, or, Tabitha was without ceasing doing good. I think the religionists have nominated her for sainthood. The trouble is, she is already a saint *full of good works*. In addition to this, the NIV comes in direct opposition with other Scripture. There is only one instance where someone is said to have done good, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Acts of the Apostles

*Ac 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about **doing good**,*

εὐεργετῶν, now a verb with a prefixed adjective, *doing well*.

and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

In the gospel of Mark,

Mr 10:18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

The NEB has decided that good means *kindness*, and almsdeeds means charity. It is certainly not a translation of the Greek text underlying the English version, and stands better as a commentary upon the text. (Again, we see that this version is better at hermeneutics than translation work.)

37 And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, (weakened or sickened)

ἀσθενήσασαν, acc sing, fem, part, aor 1 of *ἀσθενέω*; KJV sick as in physical (to be physically incapacitated, same as impotent & diseased) 17, diseased 1, impotent as in no strength (weakened through illness, same as sick and disease), weak as in capability of faith, to influence to obedience (as the law is to the flesh), weak in the conscience, personal weakness and proper dependence upon the Lord. *ἀ* negation + *ῥ*σθενόω used once in 1Pe.5.10 *strengthen*.

σθενός, LXX, Job 4.10 *The strength of the lion; 16.16 my strength has been spent on the ground; 26.14 strength of his thunder.*

She had become weakened or diseased to the point that she ... lit. weakened **to** die.

The Acts of the Apostles

and died:

ἀποθανεῖν, aor 2, **inf** of ἀποθνήσκω; ἀποθανεῖν is used in 15 place in the N.T and translated *was dead, die, was buried, shall die, and mostly to die.*

whom when they had washed,

λούσαντες, nom, pl, masc, part, aor 1, act of λούω to wash.

An excellent place to see the distinctions made in the Greek between complete washing λούω (bath), and partial washing νίπτω (cleansing), is John chapter 13.

- λούω, Jn.13.10 *washed*. Always translated in the KJV as *wash* 6. It is a thorough washing, as in a bath. But NEVER to be confused with baptism. This should be considered a *bath*. (1Jn.3.5, 6, 9)

Re.1.4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

*5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and **washed** λούω **us from our sins in his own blood,***

6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Again, it would be heresy to say that baptism washed away sins. Only the shed blood of Jesus Christ has remitted our sins before God. *Baptism* in on account of the fact that our sins have been remitted. Only after producing evidence that we have had our sins forgiven, that we have repented before the Lord are we even considered a candidate for the waters of baptism.

The Acts of the Apostles

- *νίπτω*, Jn.13.5, 6, 8 twice, 10 *wash*, 12, 14 twice. Always translated in the KJV as *wash* 17. Note the context. It should indicate a partial washing. This should be considered a *cleansing*. (1Jn.1.9)

Mt.6.17 *wash* thy face; Mt. 15.2 *wash* ... their hands; Jn.9.7 *wash* in the pool of Siloam (your eyes); Jn.13.5; 1Ti.5.10 *wash* the feet.

Also consider these words:

- *ῥαντίζω*, sprinkle with water or blood; He.9.13, 19, 21; 10.22; the noun *ῥαντίσμος* in He.12.24; 1Pe.1.2. Always translated by the English word *sprinkle* (KJV 4 times & 2 times respectively.) This is for purification/sanctification/setting apart.
- *βαπτίζω* to baptize into water

βάπτισμα, always *baptism* 22

βαπτισμός, *baptism* 1, *washing* 3

The very passive act that *pots and cups* receive. (Mk.7.4; Mk.7.8) And the *washings* of He. 9.10. Here baptism clearly pictures our taking vessels and plunging them into the water and bringing them back up. Someone might say that this proves that baptism purifies. We answer, as we must always do, with Scripture again. *1Pe 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:*

βαπτίζω, *baptize* 74, *Baptist* 1

βάπτω, *dip* 3 (along with the clear description we are given in Scripture with the baptism of our Lord Jesus and the eunuch

The Acts of the Apostles

(Mt.3.16 *went up straightway out of the water; Acts 8.38, 39 they went down both into the water ...and he baptized him ... And when they were come up out of the water*) we have a full understanding of what baptism is: both go down into a sufficient pool of water to plunge the candidate down into it and raise him back up out of the water. (Ro.6.4. a type of our death, burial, and resurrection with Jesus Christ when these occurred with Him.)

Lk.16.24 dip the tip of his finger; Jn.13.26 when I have dipped (the sop); a vesture dipped in blood.

they laid her in ἐν an upper chamber.

ὑπερώω, dat sing of ὑπερώων; Used 4 times in the N. T., Acts 1.13 once, where the first business meeting occurred to ordain a man to replace Judas' vacated apostolic office; 9.37 39 twice, where Tabitha's body was laid; 20.8 and once, where Eutychus fell from the window.

Of these three occasions would you think that there is a common denominator? Some spiritual lesson and application that could be drawn from this? The three instances only involve the saints of God. It is the saints that are in the upper room. Whether conducting the business of the church, whether dead (Tabitha), or to their deaths (as Eutychus fell from the window [lit. *third roof*, τρίσπεγος]), they were all in the *upper room*. The saints have an *upper room* where they have been blessed by God to be *seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*.

*Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us **with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ**: (What are they? They are election and predestination to the likeness of Jesus Christ ...)*

4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

The Acts of the Apostles

6 *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein (in which grace of the Father's) he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

These spiritual blessings were ordained for us from eternity, and we receive them through the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

Eph.2.4 ¶ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even **when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together**

*συνεζωποίησε, 3rd per sing aor 1, ind of συζωποιέω; triple compound: with-life-do. (Co.2.10 And you are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power: ... 13 **hath he quickened together with him**)*

with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

How can this be? Even when we were dead, he has quickened us together with Christ. The fact that our lives have been effectually changed by the grace of God, from what we once were by nature, walking according to the prince of the power of the air, is the direct result of the fact that Christ Jesus our Lord was quickened from the dead.

*Joh 14:19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: **because I live, ye shall live also.***

6 And hath **raised us up together,**

συνήγειρε, 3rd per sing aor 1, ind act of συνεγείρω; he raised; (Col.2.12; 3.1 aor 1, passive ye are risen)

and **made us sit together**

συνεκάθισεν, 3rd per sing aor 1, ind of συγκαθίζω; sat together.

in heavenly places

The Acts of the Apostles

συνεκάθισεν, 3rd per sing, aor 1, ind of *συνκαθίζω*, *σύν* together, with + *καθίζω* to set, sat, to continue in a place (Acts 18.11), to place.

in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

And so what our God has ordained from eternity in blessing us becomes our present experience because we are in Christ. We shall be brought to appreciate these eternal, spiritual blessing in heavenly places for ourselves in time: when we are quickened by the Spirit of God and converted to Christ by the gospel we can begin to understand that when He came to earth from glory, when he died, when he raised from the dead, and when ascended to the right hand of the throne of the Father in glory we were **in** Him. Saints of God, hear this: there was never a time when we were not in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ! When He **sat down** in the presence of God we were in/with Him. What we experience now, of the grace of God, is all a result which springs from the love of God for His Son.

38 And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Look at what is taking place. We're being prepared for chapter 10. Peter, having been faithfully preaching Christ in the area is being led by, what appears to be a couple of significant manifestations of the Spirit of God among them so that he moves out toward the coastal region of the Mediterranean Sea, to Joppa. Can we deny that the Lord is leading him in this direction? Yet Peter does not know the end of these things. He certainly does not have any indication that the coming conversion of the gentiles is just in the distance. But all of this is preparing him for this unexpected and monumental event: the gospel of Jesus Christ is gone to the gentiles, is now to go into all of the world; *Acts 11.18 ... Then hath God*

The Acts of the Apostles

also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. It is as if through this series of events that this tremendous door is opened to the world. No time for thinking. No time for a consultation. The Lord has all but shut him in so that he shall respond to the will of God to do what hadn't even been imagined to this time. Now back to the immediate text at hand concerning Tabitha's death.

Why would the disciples ask this of him for her? Why now? Why Tabitha? Weren't other disciples becoming weakened as well through disease and age, and dying? Yes, they were. Why not call for Peter every single time that a saint became sick and died? Is that what we see from the saints? No. We have a faithful woman in the Lord Jesus who had evidently affected many people's lives. She could be used for the glory of God to witness of His great power in a way that, if I might be allowed to say it this way, lesser saints could not be so used. The brighter the light of Jesus Christ that shines in our lives the greater the witness. We can't expect the Lord to use us in small and great ways if our lives are not holy, separated, pure, clean. He used holy men and women in Scripture in great ways. (Acts 4.8 Peter could answer the Sanhedrin being filled with the Holy Spirit; Acts 6.3 deacons could be appointed for serving the widows of the church being men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost; Acts 8.59, 60 Stephen could face martyrdom being full of faith and the Holy Ghost; Acts 9.17 Ananias was called upon to go to Saul who had been such a great persecutor of the church being a devout man; Acts 11.25 Barnabas for Saul, being a good man full of the Holy Ghost and faith; 2Pe.1.21 men were called forth to write Scripture being holy men.) If we want to be used we need to live separated from the world and unto God.

If we have a trashy yard hardly a person will look, and when they do it is to complain. When the yard begins to be maintained it becomes attractive; then people take notice. And it is like that with us. No one notices Christ living in the heart of the carnal Christian. It is when the saints have genuinely set God apart in their lives that others take notice. These are the ones that the Lord would use in His service to give Him glory in that special way. Look, we can all be used of God for an example of chastening and judgment. Doubtless it is that He is lacking children in that respect. But to

The Acts of the Apostles

be called upon for more fruit, to be purged by the Lord is a special honor that only some few endure. (Jn.15.2)

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber ὑπερῶον: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.

It sounds like Tabitha was a Proverbs 31 woman. (Pr. 31.10-31) So many Christian women want to model the worldly woman of today. She is to work and compete with the men. She is to be able to talk as course as a man. She is to be sexy and flaunt it if it can be worked for her advantage. She is to be toned and painted, dyed and bold. But that is far from the biblical description of the godly woman. Young women who will live for Christ now, who will apply the biblical pattern of the godly women to their lives, are the only ones who shall be able to help other young women when they become older. (1Ti.3.11; 5.14; Tit.2.3-5; 1Pe.3.1-6)

40 But Peter put them all forth,

How contrary this is to the spirit of the deceivers today. These wicked men and women gather great masses together to display their deceitful acts publically, misleading many as if they were some great power of God. (cf. Acts 8.10) Through such acts these fleece the simple of their hard earned substance.

and kneeled down, and prayed; and turning him to the body said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up.

41 And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called the saints and widows, presented her alive.

42 And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.

43 And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.