

# PETER'S MIRACLE MINISTRY

Acts 9:32-10:38

## What is the greatest miracle that God can do for us?

Healing of the body? The raising of the dead? Salvation of a lost sinner? WHY?

Because salvation

1. Costs the greatest \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Produces the greatest \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Brings the greatest \_\_\_\_\_.

In this section, we find Peter participating in all three miracles: He heals Aeneas, he raises Dorcas from the dead, and he brings the message of salvation to Cornelius and his household.

## 1. A GREAT MIRACLE—HEALING THE BODY (9:32–35)

The apostle Peter had been engaged in an itinerant ministry (Acts 8:25) when he found himself visiting the saints in Lydda, a largely Gentile city about twenty-five miles from Jerusalem. It is possible that the area had first been evangelized by people converted at \_\_\_\_\_, or perhaps by faithful believers who had been scattered far and wide during the \_\_\_\_\_.

Philip the evangelist had also ministered there (v. 40). We know very little about Aeneas. How old was he? Did he believe in Jesus Christ? Was he a Jew or a Gentile? All that Dr. Luke tells us is the man had been palsied for \_\_\_\_\_, which meant he was crippled and helpless. He was a burden to himself and a burden to others, and there was no prospect that he would ever get well. Peter's first miracle had been the healing of a crippled man (Acts 3), and now that miracle was repeated. As you read the book of Acts, you will see parallels between the ministries of Peter and \_\_\_\_\_.

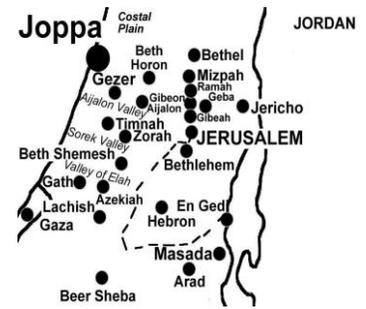
- >Both healed cripples.
- >Both were arrested and put into jail and were \_\_\_\_\_.
- >Both were treated like gods (Acts 10:25–26; 14:8–18)
- >Both gave a bold witness before the authorities.
- >Both had to confront \_\_\_\_\_ (8:9–24; 13:6–12).

No one reading the book of Acts could end up saying, "I am for Paul!" or "I am for Peter!" (1 Cor. 1:12). "But it is the same God which worketh all in all" (1 Cor. 12:6). The \_\_\_\_\_, by the authority of His name, brought perfect soundness to Aeneas (see Acts 3:6, 16; 4:10). The healing was \_\_\_\_\_, and the man was able to get up and make his bed. He became a walking miracle! Acts 9:35 does not suggest that the \_\_\_\_\_ of Lydda and Sharon were saved, but only all those who had contact with Aeneas (See John 12:10–11 for a similar instance). This miracle enables Peter to evangelize, teach, and encourage the believers, and to establish the church in the faith. Jesus had commissioned Peter to care for the sheep (John 21:15–17), and Peter was faithful to fulfill that commission.



## 2. A GREATER MIRACLE—RAISING THE DEAD (9:36–43)

Joppa, the modern Jaffa, is located on the seacoast, some ten miles beyond Lydda. The city is important in Bible history as the place from which the prophet \_\_\_\_\_ embarked when he tried to flee from God (Jonah 1:1–3). Jonah went to Joppa to avoid going to the Gentiles, but Peter in Joppa received his call to go to the Gentiles! Because Jonah \_\_\_\_\_ God, the Lord sent a storm that caused the Gentile sailors to fear.



Because Peter \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord, God sent the “wind of the Spirit” to the Gentiles and they experienced great joy and peace. What a contrast! It seemed so tragic that a useful and beloved saint like Dorcas (Tabitha = gazelle) should die when she was so greatly needed by the church.

The believers in Joppa heard that Peter was in the area, and they sent for him immediately. There is no record in Acts that any of the apostles had raised the dead, so their sending for Peter was an evidence of \_\_\_\_\_ in the power of the risen Christ. When our Lord ministered on earth, He raised the dead, so why would He not be able to raise the dead from His exalted throne in glory? We usually think of the apostles as leaders who told other people what to do, but often the people commanded them! (For Peter’s “philosophy of ministry” read 1 Peter 5.) Peter was a leader who served the people and was ready to respond to their call. Peter had the power to heal, and he used the power to glorify God and help people, not to

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It was a Jewish custom first to wash the dead body, and then to anoint it with spices for burial. When Peter arrived in the upper room where Dorcas lay in state, he found a group of weeping widows who had been helped by her ministry. Keep in mind that there was no “government aid” in those days for either widows or orphans, and needy people had to depend on their “network” for assistance. The church has an obligation to help people who are truly in need (1 Tim. 5:3–16; James 1:27). The account of Peter’s raising of Dorcas should be compared with the account of our Lord’s raising of Jairus’s daughter (Mark 5:34–43). In both cases, the \_\_\_\_\_ were put out of the room. **Why put them out?**

The words spoken are almost identical: “talitha cumi: little girl, arise”; “Tabitha cumi: Tabitha, arise.” Jesus took the girl by the hand before He spoke to her, for He was not afraid of becoming ceremonially defiled, and Peter took Dorcas by the hand after she had come to life. In both instances, it was the \_\_\_\_\_ that raised the person from the dead, for the dead person certainly could not exercise faith. Again, the miracles gave Peter the opportunity to ground these new believers in the truth of the Word, for faith built on miracles alone is not substantial. It was a good thing Peter tarried in Joppa, because God met with him there in a thrilling new way. **God’s servants need not always be “on the go.”** It is significant that Peter stayed in the home of a tanner. Why?

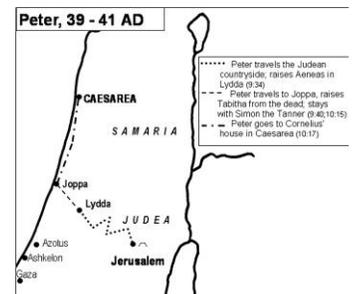
- >Because tanners were considered “\_\_\_\_\_” by the Jewish rabbis (see Lev. 11:35)
- >It is a step away from Jewish legalism as he heads to \_\_\_\_\_.

### 3. THE GREATEST MIRACLE—WINNING LOST SINNERS (10:1–48)

Chapter 10 is pivotal in the book of Acts, for it records the salvation of the \_\_\_\_\_. We see Peter using “the \_\_\_\_\_ of the kingdom” for the third and last time. He had opened the door of faith for the Jews (Acts 2) and also for the Samaritans (Acts 8), and now he would be used of God to bring the Gentiles into the church (see Gal. 3:27–28; Eph. 2:11–22). This event took place about \_\_\_\_\_ after Pentecost.

Why did the apostles wait so long before going to the lost Gentiles? After all, in His Great Commission (Matt. 28:19–20), Jesus had told them to go into all the world, and it would seem logical for them to go to their Gentile neighbors as soon as possible. But God has His times as well as His plans, and the transition from the Jews to the Samaritans to the Gentiles was a \_\_\_\_\_. The stoning of Stephen and the subsequent persecution of the church marked the climax of the apostles’ witness to the Jews. Then the gospel moved to the Samaritans. When God saved Saul of Tarsus, He got hold of His special envoy to the Gentiles. Now was the time to open the door of faith (Acts 14:27) to the Gentiles and bring them into the family of God. There were four acts to this wonderful drama.

**(1) Preparation (vv. 1–22)** Before He could save the Gentiles, God had to prepare Peter to bring the message and Cornelius to hear the message. Salvation is a divine work of grace, but God works through human channels. Angels can deliver God’s messages to lost men, but they cannot preach the gospel to them. That is our \_\_\_\_\_—and \_\_\_\_\_. Caesarea is sixty-five miles northwest of Jerusalem and thirty miles north of Joppa (Jaffa). At that time, Caesarea was the \_\_\_\_\_ of Judea and boasted of many beautiful public buildings. In that city lived Cornelius, the Roman centurion, whose heart had tired of pagan myths and empty religious rituals, and who had turned to Judaism in hopes he could find salvation. Cornelius was as close to Judaism as he could get without becoming a proselyte. There were many “God fearers” like him in the ancient world (Acts 13:16), and they proved to be a ready field for spiritual harvest. It is interesting to see how religious a person can be and still not \_\_\_\_\_.



Certainly, Cornelius was sincere in his obedience to God’s law, his fasting, and his generosity to the Jewish people (compare this to Luke 7:1–10). He was not permitted to offer sacrifices in the temple, so he presented his prayers to God as his sacrifices (Ps. 141:1–2). In every way, he was a model of religious respectability—and yet he was not a saved man. The difference between Cornelius and many religious people today is this:

**He knew that his religious devotion was not sufficient to save him.**

Many religious people today are satisfied that their character and good works will get them to heaven, and they have no concept either of their own sin or of God’s grace. In his prayers, Cornelius was asking God to show him the \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 11:13–14). When someone wants to be saved, God will get the message to them!

An angel was sent to Cornelius. **How did he responds? Military fashion**  
**Why send for Peter 30 miles away when Philip was already working in this area? \_\_\_\_\_**

The law of Moses was a wall between the Jews and the Gentiles, and this wall had been broken down at the cross (Eph. 2:14–18). The Gentiles were considered aliens and strangers as far as the Jewish covenants and promises were concerned (vv. 11–13). But now, all of that would change, and God would declare that, as far as the Jew and the Gentile were concerned, “There is no difference” either in condemnation (Rom. 3:22–23) or in salvation (10:12–13).

**Why did God use a vision about food to teach Peter that the Gentiles were not unclean?**

- > Peter was \_\_\_\_\_
- > The distinction between “clean and unclean foods” was a major problem between the Jews and the Gentiles in that day (Acts 11:1–3)!
- > God was not simply changing Peter’s diet; He was changing His \_\_\_\_\_!  
Rom. 11:32--This meant that a Gentile did not have to become a Jew in order to become a Christian. Even though Peter’s refusal was in the politest terms, it was still wrong. Dr. W. Graham Scroggie wrote, “You can say ‘No,’ and you can say ‘Lord’; but you cannot say ‘No, Lord!’” If He is truly our Lord, then we can only say “Yes!” to Him and obey His commands.

God’s \_\_\_\_\_ is always perfect, and the three men from Caesarea arrived at the door just as Peter was pondering the meaning of the vision. Peter was no longer to make any distinctions between the Jews and the Gentiles.

**(2) Explanation (vv. 23–33)** The fact that Peter allowed the Gentiles to lodge with him is another indication that the walls were coming down. Peter selected six Jewish believers to go along as witnesses (Acts 11:12). When Peter arrived, he discovered that Cornelius had gathered relatives and friends to hear the message of life. He was a \_\_\_\_\_ even before he became a Christian! When he announced that he did not consider the Gentiles unclean (dogs), this must have amazed and rejoiced the hearts of his listeners.

What is remarkable about Peters question in Acts 10:29? **maybe best not to go strait RomRoad**

While Peter is doing better with the Gentiles issue others were not! (11:1–18, 15)

Before we leave this section, some important truths must be emphasized.

- > The idea that “one \_\_\_\_\_ is as good as another” is completely false.
- > The seeking Savior (Luke 19:10) will find the seeking \_\_\_\_\_ (Jer. 29:13).
- > Peter certainly was privileged to minister to a model \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 10:33).

### (3) Proclamation (vv. 34–43).

- > There can be no faith apart from the \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 10:17), and Peter preached that Word.
- > When it comes to sin and salvation, “there is no difference” (2:11; 3:22–23; 10:1–13).  
All men have the same Creator (Acts 17:26), and all men need the same Savior (4:12). Acts 10:35 does not teach that we are saved by works, otherwise Peter would be contradicting himself (Acts v. 43). To “fear God and work righteousness” is a description of the \_\_\_\_\_. To fear God is to reverence and trust Him (Mic. 6:8). The evidence of this faith is a righteous walk. Peter then summarized the story of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cornelius and his friends knew about Christ’s life and death, for “this thing was not done in a corner” (Acts 26:26). Peter made it clear that Israel was God’s instrument for accomplishing His work (10:36), but that Jesus is “Lord of all,” and not just Lord of Israel. From the very founding of the nation of Israel, God made it clear that the blessing would be from Israel to the \_\_\_\_\_ (Gen. 12:1–3).

#### **Answers:**

Price, Results, Glory to God, Pentecost, Great persecution, Eight years, Paul, Miraculously delivered, False prophets, Resurrected Christ, Instantaneous, Entire population, Jonah, Disobeyed, Obeyed, Their faith, Promote himself, Mourning people, Power of God, Unclean, Cornelius, Gentiles, Keys, Ten years, Gradual one, Privilege, Responsibility, Roman Capital, Be Saved, Way of salvation, Keys, Hungry, Entire program, Timing, Witness, Religion, Sinner, Congregation, Word, Christian Life, Whole World