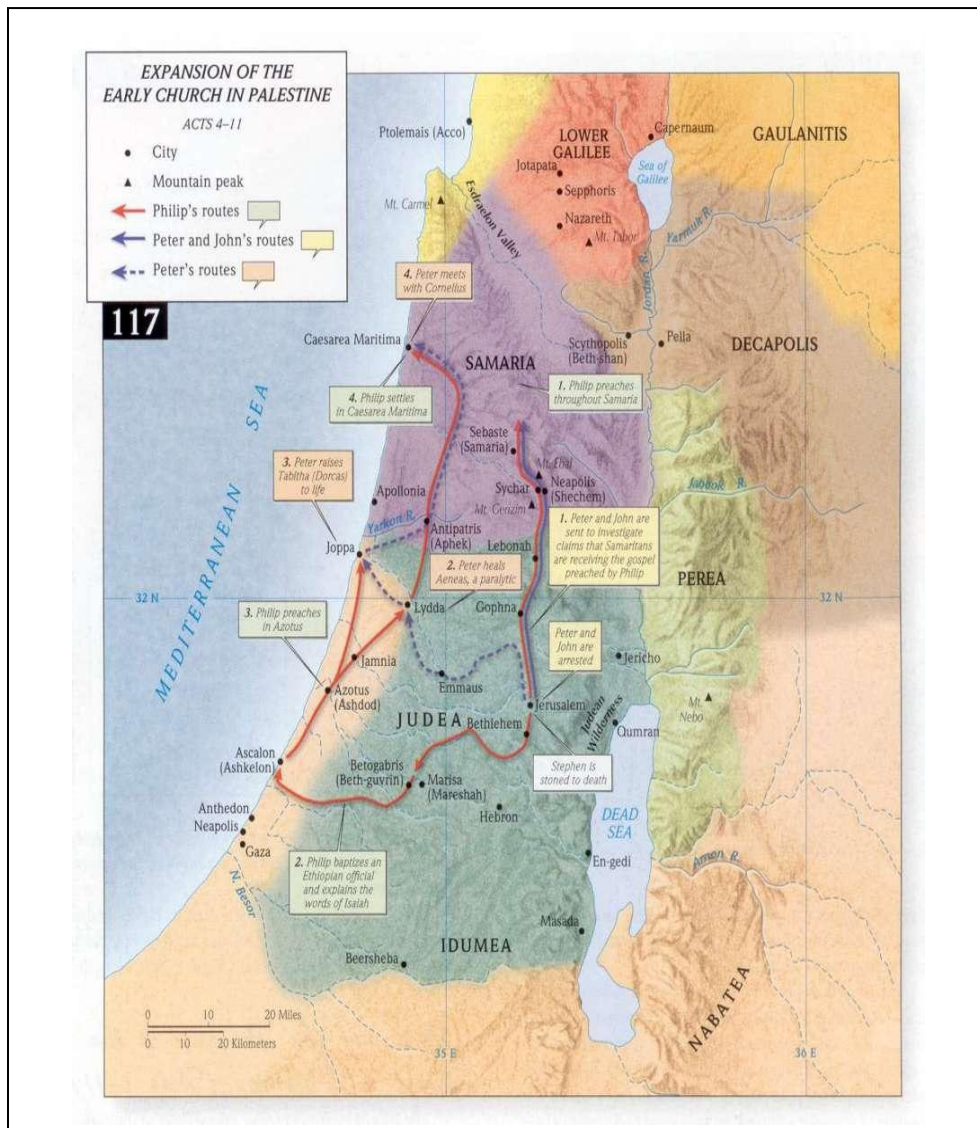


Peter's Pastoral Ministry – Part I
Evidenced by Healings and Miracles
(Acts 9:32-43)

Introduction:

1. The last time we heard about Peter was in Acts 8:25
 - If you recall; Peter and John were dispatched to Samaria to observe the conversion of Gentiles (to faith in Christ) in that region due to the preaching of Phillip.
 - After affirming those believers in the faith and evidencing their conversion by the laying on of hands – Peter & John will return to Jerusalem and Phillip heads towards Gaza.
 - Sometime while Peter was in Jerusalem he will actually meet up with Paul. (Acts 8:27-28, Galatians 1:18)
2. Peter's missionary ministry expanded throughout the region of Judea and we now find him going to visit the saints in the city of Lydda.
3. A little information on the cities that Peter visited:
 - **Lydda** is about 9 miles east (inland) of Joppa. Its modern name is Ludd or Lod and is home to the Ben Gurion International Airport. It was also called Lod in the O.T.
 - **Sharon** is a fertile plains area between Jerusalem and the Mediterranean Sea. It is about 30 miles long and anywhere from 8-15 miles wide. This is where we get the phrases "*Rose of Sharon*" and "*Lily of the Valley*".

- **Joppa** is a coastal sea port town with quite a history and is located about halfway between Caesarea and Gaza. It is approx. 30 miles north-west of Jerusalem. This is the same town where Jonah sailed from in his attempt to flee from the Lord. It has also served as the sea port that received the cedars of Lebanon from King Hiram that Solomon used to build the temple. Its modern name is Jaffa (located in the municipality of Tel Aviv) and it continues to be a major sea port for the State of Israel.



3. We'll now pick up with Peter who will minister to three people and impact an entire region with the Gospel.

The Healing of Aeneas (Acts 9:32-35)

1. While in the town of Lydda; Peter finds a paralytic man who had been confined to his bed for 8 years.
 - The only thing we know about Aeneas is what is recorded here in this passage.
 - It is apparent that Peter had personal compassion on him since there is no record that he was compelled to visit this man.
 - 1) Where did he learn to have such compassion?
 - 2) Should we have compassion on those who are sick, ill, disabled?
 - 3) What can we do for those who are sick or disabled?
2. Who does Peter claim does the healing?
 - This is a good reminder that our source of strength comes from the Lord (John 15:4-5, I Peter 4:11)
 - Can you recall another time when Peter healed someone? Describe the circumstances and results of that healing? (Acts 3:1-10)
 - Who gave Peter and the other Apostles the power to heal? What is so significant about this?
 - Were the healings by Jesus and the Apostles immediate or progressive?

3. What were the results of Aeneas' healing? (Acts 9:35)
- Luke tells us; "And all who lived at Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they **turned to the Lord**"
 - 1) What does "turned to the Lord" mean?
 - 2) Although this man (Aeneas) may have been insignificant as far as recorded history goes; but we can easily conclude that the impact of his healing caused many to come to faith in Christ.
 - 3) This one incident may have been the catalyst for the beginning of a church or perhaps many churches in the region of Lydda and Sharon.
 - Listen to what John MacArthur says about Peter and this incident; "Peter's willingness to be involved with people and his desire to glorify the Lord made him a useful instrument by which the Lord could gather a rich harvest for His kingdom" (John MacArthur; Commentary on Acts, Vol. 1 page 282)

The Healing of Dorcas (Acts 9:36-42)

1. Peter has now moved on to the city of Joppa where he will be used by God to raise a woman from the dead.
 2. The name of this woman in Aramaic is _____ and in Greek her name is _____; both names mean _____.
- How does Luke describe her?
 - What sort of things did she do for others?

- The role of serving others is so crucial in the church and Tabitha is a prime example that all believers have value and need to use their gifts and talents for the Lord.
 - 1) The gospel can be preached just as easy from serving others as it can from the pulpit!
 - 2) Random or purposeful acts of kindness can go along way to show people that our faith in Christ is real and genuine!
 - 3) Do you intentionally help or serve others? Are there times when you are prompted to help someone in need? These are things that reveal our inward “new nature” that the Holy Spirit has placed in us and makes us what we are – “Christians”.
3. Take note of Peter’s actions:
- He went immediately which shows Peter was _____ and he had _____.
 - 1) These are good qualities and character traits of a minister
 - 2) The fact that the two men came to Peter and “entreated” (pleaded or implored) him to come seems to show they believed that God would perform a miracle through Peter.
 - 3) It is my firm belief that they placed Tabitha’s body in the upper room as opposed to burying her immediately (as was the custom), in anticipation that Peter could (if the Lord willed it so) raise her from the dead.
 - 4) These were unique times and the Apostles were gifted with unique abilities (many that may not have been recorded for us to read); which is probably one reason that the church grew so rapidly.

- Peter knew that it was not his own power but the Lord who was the instrument by which such a miracle could take place.
 - 1) Why did he ask the people to leave the room? (Mark 5:40)
 - 2) Peter did not presume to know the will of God – what does he do that reveals this? (See Ephesians 3:20)
 - 3) Where did he learn such dependence on the Lord? (Matthew 14:23, Luke 6:12-13)
- 4. What were the results of Tabitha being raised from the dead? (Acts 9:42)

Ministry to an Undesirable (Acts 9:43)

1. It would be real easy to skip over this verse but there are just a couple of things worth pointing out:
 - Simon was a _____ which means he touched the skins of dead animals. This made him a despised and undesirable person within Judaism.
 - Since Peter stayed with Simon “many days” leads me to conclude that God is slowly breaking down the barriers of prejudice and causing Peter to embrace taking the Gospel to the Gentiles. We’ll witness this a little more clearly in Acts 10.
2. How are we doing at presenting the gospel to those who are undesirables in our culture? Just a thought to ponder.