

Arise - Acts 9:32-43 - 2017-04-02

Call to Worship: Isaiah 60:1-3

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 17:8-24

Sermon: "Arise" Acts 9:32-43

Benediction: 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

This was first preached 2012-09-02, then preached again the Lord's Day after family camp, 2017.

INTRODUCTION

Acts chapter 9. We do have one more verse yet in the study of Ephesians. I plan to take that up with you next week. Today we re-visit a text I have previously studied, and preached to you from five years ago, when we were studying through Acts together.

The author of Acts, whom we understand to be Luke, wrote in chapter one that his previous volume, the gospel of Luke, was a record of all that Jesus *began* to do, and *began* to teach, until He was taken up into heaven after He rose from the dead. So this second volume is Luke's record of all Jesus *continued* to do and *continued* to teach after He was taken up into heaven. He continued His doing and His teaching through His church, especially such set-apart men as Peter, John, Stephen, Philip, Paul, and Barnabas.

In the opening chapters, the story revolves around our Lord's working through Peter and John, their preaching and miracle working in Jerusalem. In chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9, the story does not revolve around Jesus' working through Peter, but His working through Stephen, Philip, and Saul. Then, here in the second half of chapter 9, continuing through chapter 10 and the first half of 11, the spotlight is back on Peter, apostle of Jesus Christ, commissioned to make disciples of all nations, by preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins in His name; and commanded to feed the Lord's sheep.

Acts 9:32 we find Peter engaged in that work to which the Lord had called him. In the course of travelling from town to town preaching and teaching, Peter was empowered by the Holy Spirit to perform many miraculous signs. Two miraculous signs are recorded here in this chapter of Acts. These miracles were, of course, of great benefit to the people upon whom they were performed. But the history of them is now also of great benefit to us, both to the sinner who has not believed in Jesus Christ, and to the disciple, who needs the strengthening of his faith for endurance to the end.

TEXT

Acts 9:32-43

BODY

- I. Aeneas Told to Arise: A Picture of Salvation for the Sinner
 - A. "A certain man" or "a man" 9:33a
 1. not "a disciple"
 - a) Acts 9:10 a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias
 - b) Acts 9:36 a certain disciple named Tabitha
 2. a certain man named Aeneas; so Aeneas serves to show the condition of every man who is still in his sins
 - B. The man's condition 9:33b
 1. bedridden
 - a) not doing what he was created to do
 - b) not doing what he needed to do
 - c) not doing what was good for his family
 2. bedridden eight years
 - a) he is not getting better
 - b) this is permanent
 3. why bedridden? he was paralyzed
 - a) legs could not move
 - b) possibly arms could not move, either
 - C. What should a sinner understand about his own condition from Aeneas being bedridden eight years because of paralysis?
 1. created to love God, you do not truly love Him; created to worship God, you do not truly worship Him
 2. you need to be reconciled to God; you need to get to heaven; but you are not doing that; you cannot do what will accomplish that
 3. your condition is not improving; you are not getting better;
 - a) any attempts you have made at getting better have failed;
 - b) any attempts you make in the future to get better will fail
 - D. What should we all understand about the grace of God, from Aeneas being paralyzed?
 1. a major component of the blessing we are receiving in the Reformed Baptist churches is the recovery of this truth
 2. in the churches I grew up in I learned the faith in, there was an overestimating of the sinner's ability, and so an underestimating of how much help the sinner needs from the Lord
 3. we certainly understood that we needed the Savior to die for our sins, or else we would have to die for them ourselves, in the form of eternal punishment in hell
 4. we understood that we needed to hear the gospel of forgiveness of sins for all who turned from their sins and trust in Christ

5. but we overestimated the ability of the sinner to do that; we thought he could just do that by his own choice or decision
 6. and so we thought all we needed God to do was leave it to each person to choose or decide
 7. but we were not understanding correctly scriptures like this one. Aeneas was bedridden; why? He was paralyzed! He needed more from God than just to be given a choice. He needed to be raised from his paralysis. And so does the sinner need to have the Lord Jesus Christ move in him by the power of the Holy Spirit, creating in him saving faith and granting him repentance unto life.
- E. Peter declared to Aeneas that he was healed by the Lord Jesus Christ
1. not by natural process of healing
 2. not by medical treatments
 3. healed by miracle wrought in him by Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit working in him
- F. Take care you don't fall for wrong application of this. This does not mean that the preacher at the charismatic healing meeting can do this, too. This was done as a sign that the message preached by Peter is of God, that Peter is the apostle of Jesus Christ!
- G. What, then, should a man think about the message preached by Peter?
1. it is of God; only the power of God can do this miracle, so Peter's message must be from God
 2. it is of Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ is working miracles through Peter; what Peter is preaching must be from Jesus Christ
 3. it is for sinners suffering the effects of sin
 4. it is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe
- H. What should the sinner do who hears about what Jesus Christ did through Peter for Aeneas? Acts 9:35 All should turn to the Lord.
1. When you see that Jesus Christ, through Peter, said to Aeneas, "Arise and make your bed"
 2. And you hear that the same Jesus Christ, through Peter, said to sinners, "Repent and be baptized" for the forgiveness of sins
 3. You should then indeed trust yourself to Jesus Christ, turn from your sins, be baptized.

II. Dorcas Told to Arise: A Picture of Resurrection for the Disciple

- A. "A certain disciple" or "a disciple" 9:36
1. G3101 masculine *matathetes*; here G3102 feminine *mathetria*
- B. The disciple's condition
1. she was full of good works G18 *agathos* G2041 *ergon*
 - a) a general term for all the good a disciple of Jesus Christ is to do
Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ

Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

- b) here said to be “full of good works;” elsewhere said to be “adorned with good works” 1 Timothy 2:8-10 I desire therefore that the men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting; (9) in like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, (10) but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.
 - (1) note that what her face and hair looked like are not recorded
 - (2) note that how tall or short or thin or plump she was is not recorded
 - (3) note that how stylishly she was dressed, or how richly bejeweled she was is not recorded
 - (4) what has survived in this description of her is how she was full of, was adorned with, good works
- 2. she was full of charitable deeds
 - a) the word literally means “compassionateness”
 - b) it is used to mean charity to the poor
 - c) here it is specified that it was not money given to the poor, but actual acts of charity for the poor; she clothes for the poor widows
 - (1) availability of clothing different before manufacturing
 - (2) need for clothing different in that culture
 - (3) need for clothing more intense for the poor
 - d) I like the old word for this: almsdeeds
 - (1) there is almsgiving, which is also good
 - (2) this was almsdeeds, because it said “which she did” or “acts”
 - e) in the next chapter we could read that an angel was sent to Cornelius, who gave alms to the poor; the angel told him that his prayers and alms had ascended to heaven before God
- 3. she had grown ill
 - a) a disciple of Jesus Christ is not immune to this, is she?
 - b) you know this from painful experience, don’t you?
 - c) for all of us in general
 - d) for women especially, because when Eve sinned, God said to her, “I will greatly increase your pains in childbearing.”
- 4. she had died
 - a) this disciple of Jesus Christ died
 - b) sometimes the dead of a disciple is called falling asleep
 - c) here the normal term is used: she died
 - d) note that this was the best disciple of Jesus Christ we know about

- C. Peter, by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, working by His Spirit in Peter and in Tabitha, raised her from the dead back to life
- D. Take care you don't fall for any phony balogna based on this
 - 1. stories of people going to heaven and coming back
 - 2. the pentecostal preacher raising the dead
- E. This was a miraculous sign
 - 1. resurrection is real!
 - 2. there is resurrection for the saints who die in the Lord! they only sleep
- F. What should the sinner think about the message preached by Peter? Peter says that this Jesus who was crucified rose from the dead.
 - 1. that seems crazy; no one rises from the dead
 - 2. oh no? here, see a person risen from the dead
 - 3. Peter, who says Jesus is risen from the dead, just raised a woman from the dead, in the name of Jesus!
- G. What should the disciple think about the message preached by Peter?
 - 1. it is the same with that of Jesus Christ
 - a) he works in the name of Jesus Christ
 - b) he does the same things Jesus did, right up to raising the dead in the same way
 - 2. its promises, which are based on the resurrection of the dead, are true
 1 Peter 1:3-9 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, (4) to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, (5) who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (6) In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, (8) whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, (9) receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.
- H. What do we, the disciples of Jesus Christ, do about death?
 - 1. of beloved saints
 - a) we grieve, of course
 - b) but not like the world, without hope
 - c) we are not devastated
 - 2. of ourselves
 - a) we do not fear
 - b) we want to stay here to do good
 - c) but we would rather go on
 - d) any pain involved is not worth comparing

CONCLUSION

1 Corinthians 15:12-26 Now if Christ is preached that He has been raised from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? (13) But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. (14) And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. (15) Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up--if in fact the dead do not rise. (16) For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. (17) And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! (18) Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. (19) If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. (20) But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. (21) For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. (23) But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. (24) Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. (25) For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. (26) The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- (52) in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. (53) For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. (54) So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY." (55) "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING? O HADES, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY?" (56) The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. (57) But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (58) Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Consider that Aeneas was made in the image of God.

4:21 / 9:11 am

He was made with two hands with which to do his work. He was made with two feet, with which to go wherever he needed to go to do that work. He was put here on the earth to work it and take care of it, to earn the bread that he would eat for himself, and also for his family. For a time, for most of his life, it seems, he was able to do that. But then, somehow, through accident or illness, he came to be paralyzed. I'm taking this from verse 33. It's interesting that it doesn't matter what language we try this in: whether in today's English, where we say "paralysis" or "paralyzed;" or in yesterday's English, where we said, "palsey," which is just a shortened form of the old word "paralysee;" or whether you go back to the French, where our words came from, or the Latin, where the French words came from, or all the way back to the Greek original, where the word is *paraluo*, it's the same word. It means that he wasn't able to move. Today we might describe the man as "quadraplegic." He must have been able to move his mouth enough to take his nourishment, or he couldn't have lived like this. Yet he wasn't able to move enough to get up from his bed. He was bedridden, and not for a short time, either, but for eight years! Eight years of lying in bed unable to move! Think what it was like for him not to be able to care for himself. He couldn't earn his own bread, could not do his work, could not fulfill the purpose for which God made him. He would have to watch as others in his family did the work that he couldn't do. He couldn't even go to the table to eat his food, but had to have it brought to him, so that others around him had to do everything for him, because he couldn't do anything for himself. He laid in this condition day after day. In one year, 365 days of this would pass. By the end of eight years, more than 2,500 days of living like that---day after day lying in bed powerless to do anything for himself or for anyone else. As Peter was coming down to visit the believers, the disciples in the various towns, and he was coming toward Lydda, that was the condition of the man named Aeneas.

There was healing going on in that part of the world at that time. The Lord Jesus Christ Himself had healed multitudes. The apostles had healed multitudes. And yet this person had not received that grace from the Lord. He still lay in his paralysis for all of these eight years, while miracles of healing were worked around him.

The bible here, in this true history of this paralyzed man, is painting us a picture. The Lord used the physical body of Aeneas, which could be seen with the physical eyes, to teach us about something spiritual, which our physical eyes can't see. The state of Aeneas physically shows the state of the soul of every person as he comes into this world. There was Aeneas, created for life, but experiencing a living death. He lay there unable to fulfill his purpose, unable to do what God had made him to do, unable even to feed himself or to clean himself. That could be seen with the eyes. It provides a glimpse into what is true about the soul of every sinners. There is a person who, because of all his sin, all his breaking of God's law, lies unable to do what God has created him for, unable to serve anyone else, unable to clean himself from the filth of his own sin. That is the state of the soul of the sinner, and is portrayed in the body of poor Aeneas lying

paralyzed in his bed. Then Peter came down to see the disciples, to encourage them in the Lord. The bible doesn't say here that Aeneas himself was a disciple. When Luke, the author of Acts, wrote of another man, Ananias of Damascus, he wrote, "a certain disciple named Ananias." A few lines down in this chapter, writing about Tabitha, Luke writes, "a certain disciples named Tabitha." But of Aeneas the author writes just, "a certain man."