

36. What mention of Joppa in the Old Testament (2 Chr. 2: 16; Ezra 3: 7; Jonah 1: 3). What does Paul say about the work of widows in the church? (1 Tim. 5: 10). What does the Bible say about kindness to the poor? (Deut. 15: 7-11; Job 29: 11-16; Ps. 41: 1-3; Isa. 58: 7-10; Matt. 25: 35, 36; Eph. 4: 28).

38. What similar entreaty was sent to Jesus? (John 11: 3; 4: 49). What reason had they to hope for a miracle? Why were two messengers sent? (Mark 6: 7; ch. 10: 7; 13: 2; 15: 22).

40. Compare and contrast this miracle with the raising of Jairus' daughter (Matt. 9: 23-25). What promise of Christ could Peter plead in his prayer? (John 14: 14).

41. If Christians are "saints" what should they strive to become? (Rom. 6: 19; Eph. 1: 4; Col. 3: 12; 1 Thess. 2: 12; 4: 3, 7; 1 Pet. 1: 15, 16).

42. Ought the record of these miracles to convince men to-day? (John 20: 31).

### PRACTICAL LESSONS.

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In the verse preceding the lesson we read that "The church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied." Thus we see that the persecution connected with the murder of Stephen was short lived and ended with the conversion of the arch inquisitor, Saul. The attempt to stamp out the sacred flame had only spread it far and wide, according to the purpose of Jesus as revealed in his last commission (Acts 1: 8). It had also led to the driving out of the believing Hebrews from Judaism and their consolidation into a community which might truly be called the Church of Palestine—and better still it had collapsed in the call of the great apostle of the gentiles.

The next important step in the world-wide dissemination of the gospel is the conversion of Cornelius; and all that is now related leads up to that great event. While Saul is being prepared in secret for his great life work, the Holy Spirit shows how the way for that work is being opened up by the apostle of the circumcision. Peter, to whom was given the keys of the kingdom of heaven will soon crown his official work by opening the door to the gentiles; then he will fall back into comparative obscurity; the interest in the sacred narrative will gather round a new name and pass to a new centre of influence. Paul will become prominent in carrying out the divine programme; the mother church of Jerusalem will give place to the gentile church of Antioch and its missionary activity, the results of which are felt throughout the world to this day. The narrative glides so smoothly along that we may not see that here we turn over one of the great leaves of church history.

The church of Jerusalem has in seven or eight years grown into the church of Palestine, with congregations scattered up and down through all the land, even in little towns and villages; and, taking advantage of the peace that prevailed, Peter went on an apostolic tour of visitation. Towards the end of this extended tour, he came to Lydda (now Lud) a little town which nestled amid its olive groves at the foot of the hills which form the backbone of Palestine. The town overlooks the fertile plain of Sharon which stretches to the sea, and on its low rocky promontory, some ten miles distant, Joppa, the poor but only natural seaport of Palestine, is plainly visible.

At Lydda he found a man called Æneas who had been a paralytic for eight years, and in the name of Jesus he healed him saying "Arise and make thy bed." The news of this great miracle spread among the simple agricultural people of the plain, and its influence was so powerful that they all turned to the Lord.

The news speedily reached Joppa and it came in hour of need for the little church there was in great trouble. They had lost one of their most useful and beloved members through death. She was loved by high and low, rich and poor, old and young, Jew and gentile. Some, probably the children and the poor, called her Tabitha; others called her Dorcas, but they both meant to call her "The Gazelle." Why? Because she was beautiful, and had large bright eyes like a gazelle? Possibly; but chiefly because she had such a lovely character. Because of this she won the love of all, both Jew and gentile, and thus anticipated the good day that was just dawning.

How came this woman to have such a winsome character? She was "a disciple"—only that, but truly that. For anyone to be true to