

Kefa Performs More Miracles

In my last post, we learned about the **Great Persecution of the Faithful Has Hit Yerushalayim**. In this post, we learn about that **Kefa Performs More Miracles**.

³² As Kefa traveled around the countryside, he came down to the believers in Lud (Lydda).

The narrative in Acts returns to **Kefa**. The last reference to him was in connection with his return from **Shomron** (8:25). **Lud** is on the plain below **Yerushalayim**, about 10 miles east of **Yafo (Yafo)** and modern **Tel Aviv** and less than two miles from **David Ben-Gurion Airport**. Today it has a mixed **Arab** and **Jewish** population.

Yafo, now joined with **Tel Aviv**, was a prosperous port city, about eleven miles from **Lud**. It was about 30 miles south of **Caesarea Maritima** and controlled one of **Judea's** administrative districts. It was under **Jewish** control for about forty years until it came under direct **Roman** authority in 6 CE.

³³ There, he found a man named Aeneas who had lain bedridden for eight years because he was paralyzed.

Jewish piety included visiting the sick. Although **Aeneas** is a familiar Gentile name, several **Jews** also bore it (which seems likelier here). **Aeneas** could have been paralyzed from a stroke or another problem with the central nervous system, or an accident (such as a fall from a roof), or tuberculosis affecting the spine, or from some other cause. Apart from massaging the person with olive oil, little treatment was available. ¹

³⁴ Kefa said to him, "Aeneas! Yeshua, the Messiah is healing you! Get up and make your bed!" ³⁵ Everyone living in Lud and the Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord. Now in Yafo, there was a talmidah (female disciple) named Tavita ³⁶ (which means "gazelle"); she was always doing tzedakah (charitable works) and other good deeds. ³⁷ It happened that just at that time, she took sick and died. After washing her, they laid her in a room upstairs.

Jewish dead were always washed before burial. Only women prepared women's bodies for burial.

³⁸ Lud is near Yafo, and the talmidim had heard that Kefa was there, so they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come to us without delay."

It is vital that **Lud** is near **Yafo** because corpses had to be buried right away (ideally before sundown). The distance of fewer than twelve miles meant perhaps roughly four hours' journey each way (for the messengers to **Kefa** and **Kefa** to **Yafo**); because it was customary to bury the corpse before sundown, even if Tabitha had died early in the day, they could afford no delay.

So powerfully had **God** worked wonders through **Kefa** and the other **emissaries** that even when **Tavita died** and had been ceremonially washed and *laid... in a room upstairs* for viewing, **Believers** in **Yafo** did not give up hope but instead sent for **Kefa**.

³⁹ Kefa got up and went with them. When he arrived, they led him into the upstairs room. All the widows stood by him, sobbing, and showing all the dresses and coats Tavita had made them while she was still with them.

Upstairs rooms were generally small attics built on the flat rooftops; this one is large enough to accommodate a few people. Making clothing was one of the domestic tasks assigned to women in that culture.

¹ Bible Background Commentary - New Testament.

⁴⁰ But Kefa put them all outside, kneeled down, and prayed. Then, turning to the body, he said, "Tavita! Get up!" She opened her eyes, and on seeing Kefa, she sat up.

Following Jewish scruples, **Tavita's** body would be covered before **Kefa** is brought into the room.

⁴¹ He offered her his hand and helped her to her feet; then, calling the believers and the widows, he presented her to them alive. ⁴² This became known all over Yafo, and many people put their trust in the Lord. ⁴³ Kefa stayed on in Yafo for some time with a man named Shim' on, a leather-tanner. ~ Acts 9:32-43 (CJB)

Shim' on the leather-tanner stank all the time; his profession guaranteed it. **Kefa's** unpretentiousness, his straightforward identification with ordinary folks, is demonstrated by his staying on in **Yafo** for some time with him; in modern Hebrew slang, **Kefa** would be called "' *amkha*" ("your [kind of] people").

Tanners were often considered impure because of their contact with dead animals. This indicates that either **Jewish law** on this practice had relaxed by this era, or else that **Kefa** was already enjoying freedom from the **Jewish law** because of his liberty in **Yeshua**.

In my next post, we will begin to examine the actual conversion of the **First Gentile Believers**.