

God Has Heard

Acts 9:32–42, 10:1–6

Each day, it's important to take your bearings. Where are you today? In the Easter season, in the scriptures, in your daily life, in your very self? Spend a few minutes getting your bearings for the day.

Let's briefly examine where we are in the Book of Acts and then begin our day with a prayer for deliverance—for ourselves, our fraternity brothers, and all Exodus Men.

You are about to be sent. The apostles have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. With them, we need to prepare for our mission.

Pray that the Lord grants deliverance to you, your family, and your fraternity.

Pray for freedom for all men in Exodus, just as they are praying for you.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy his consolations. Through the same Christ Our Lord. Amen.

A Reading from the Book of Acts

Now as Peter went here and there among them all, he came down also to the saints that lived at Lydda. There he found a man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you; rise and make your bed." And immediately he rose. And all the residents of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord.

Now there was at Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which means Dorcas or Gazelle. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she fell sick and died; and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him entreating him, "Please come to us without delay." So Peter rose and went with them. And when he had come, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping, and showing coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside and knelt down and prayed; then turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, rise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and lifted her up. Then calling the saints and widows he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known

as the Italian Cohort, a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms liberally to the people, and prayed constantly to God. About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius." And he stared at him in terror, and said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and bring one Simon who is called Peter; he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."

Reflection

God truly cares for us. We might be tempted to think that God forgets about us or does not care when we suffer. Although today's scripture passage lends itself to a reflection about God's healing power, there is a more important point. God is never far from us, and even when we are sick or dying, he hears us and responds. He cares for all people, as we see in the three people in our reading. From their names, we see one is Greek (Aeneas), one is Jewish (Tabitha), and the last one is a Roman centurion (Cornelius). God visits all of them through the ministry of Peter, showing that he always responds to those who reach out to him in faith.

You also should know that God hears you right now. We might be tempted to acknowledge that only as an intellectual point: yes, I know God hears prayers. These figures should remind us that our prayers and sacrifices, such as Cornelius's alms, really do ascend to God. He answers in the way he knows to be best. It might be through an interior inspiration or the words of another; he always helps us get through suffering and heals our afflictions. As a loving Father, he is listening and cares about you very much.

He wants us to walk: to move freely toward him and the service he wants us to give others. He wants us to live: to leave the habits of death behind and to experience the freedom of sons. He wants to visit us: to dwell with us in a newness of life.

This Easter season is a time for life—a time to be restored to a robust and vigorous life of faith. It is a time to celebrate the gifts that Jesus has won for us that enable this life to blossom in us. Thank God for these gifts, and take time to bask in his presence. Ask him to increase his healing grace and freedom in you.

Week 3 Action Items

Witness to your faith.

Host a game night to build community.

Reflect on your current plan.