

Acts 9:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them.

Analysis

And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. The urgent summons demonstrates the church's faith in apostolic authority and expectation of divine intervention through Spirit-filled leadership.

Forasmuch as establishes geographical reasoning—Lydda's proximity (10-12 miles) made urgent appeal feasible. The disciples' awareness of Peter's location suggests communication networks among early Christian communities. They didn't summon randomly but strategically sought apostolic ministry.

Sent...two men follows biblical pattern of paired witnesses (Deuteronomy 19:15) and provides mutual support. Desiring him indicates earnest request, not casual invitation. The phrase would not delay conveys urgency—either hope for resurrection if Peter arrived quickly, or need for pastoral comfort to grieving community.

Reformed theology sees this as exercising faith without presumption. They hoped God might work through Peter but didn't demand it. Genuine faith requests boldly while submitting to divine sovereignty. Their action exemplifies balanced faith—trusting God's power while respecting His freedom.

Historical Context

The Lydda-Joppa distance allowed same-day travel. News of Aeneas's healing (Acts 9:32-35) had spread quickly, raising expectations about Peter's apostolic authority. The Joppa disciples' request parallels Jairus seeking Jesus for his dying daughter (Mark 5:22-23) and demonstrates early Christianity's high view of apostolic ministry.

Ancient communication relied on messengers—no telephone, telegraph, or instant messaging. Sending two men represented significant investment, indicating community's desperation and faith. This occurred around 38-39 CE, shortly before Cornelius encounter. God was positioning Peter for sequential miraculous events building toward revolutionary Gentile inclusion revelation.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How should Christians balance boldness in prayer with submission to God's sovereign will?
2. What role do church leaders play as instruments of God's power versus wielding inherent authority?
3. In what ways does geographical proximity serve God's providential purposes in ministry?
4. How should desperate circumstances affect the urgency and boldness of our prayers?
5. What does sending paired messengers teach about wisdom in Christian communication and requests?

Interlinear Text

ἐγγὺς δὲ οὕσης Λύδης τῇ Ἰόππῃ οἱ μαθηταὶ
was nigh And forasmuch as Lydda G3588 to Joppa G3588 and the disciples
G1451 G1161 G5607 G3069 G3588 G2445 G3101

ἀκούσαντες ὅτι Πέτρος ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῶν ἀπέστειλαν
had heard that Peter was there him they sent
G191 G3754 G4074 G2076 G1722 G846 G649

δύο ἄνδρας πρὸς αὐτῶν παρακαλοῦντες Μὴ ὀκνήσαι
two men unto him desiring not delay
G1417 G435 G4314 G846 G3870 G3361 G3635

διελθεῖν ἔως αὐτῶν
to come to him
G1330 G2193 G846

Additional Cross-References

Acts 9:36 (Parallel theme): Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

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