

DORCAS

Making the Bible Come Alive

The generous worker

WHO WAS THIS PERSON?

- Dorcas or Tabitha lived in Joppa, a city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.
- Dorcas is a Greek name that means "gazelle".
- Dorcas or Tabitha was a generous person who made clothes for the poor of Joppa.
- Dorcas was known because of her good works and "She was always doing kind things for others and helping the poor" (Acts 9:36).
- Dorcas was much loved in the community of Joppa.
- Dorcas was a seamstress (Acts 9:39).
- Dorcas was resurrected after her death (Acts 9).

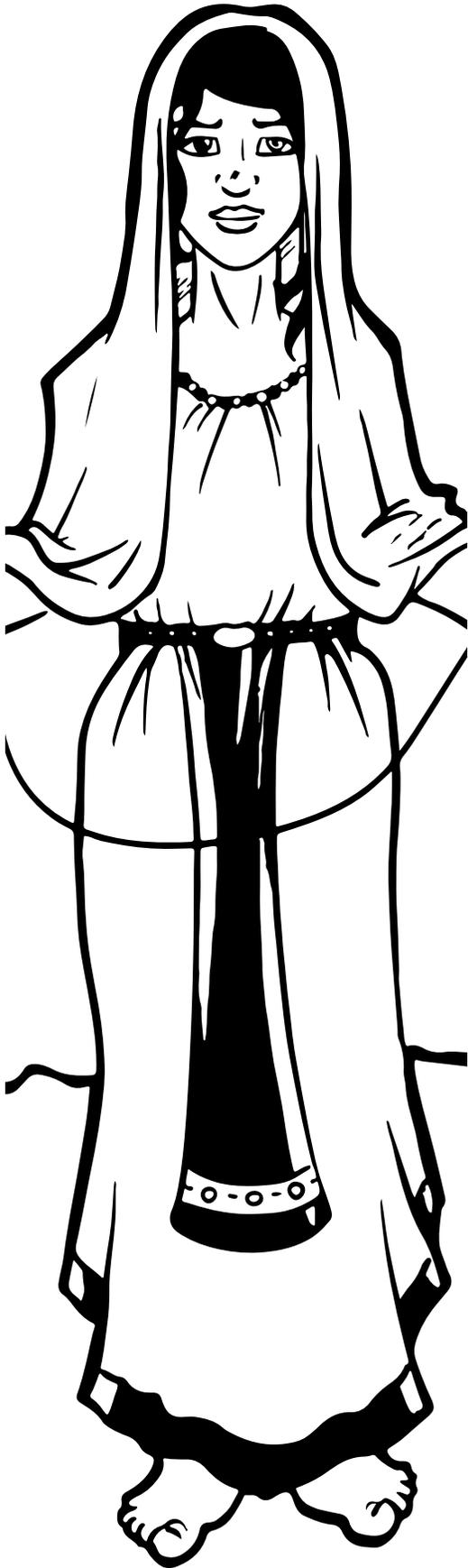


WHAT IS THIS PERSON KNOWN FOR?

- Dorcas was known for her good works and contributions to the poor (Acts 9:36); she was highly regarded in the Joppa community.
- One day she fell ill and died. After she was washed, she was laid in an upper room. The believers who knew Dorcas learned that Peter was in the nearby town of Lydda and sent two men to beg him "Please come as soon as possible!" (Acts 9:38).
- When Peter arrived at the house where Dorcas' body lay, he went upstairs to see her. There were many widows there weeping. They showed Peter everything: "the coats and other clothes Dorcas had made for them." They were tangible evidence of Dorcas' service (Acts 9:39).
- Peter brought out all the people, knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "'Get up, Tabitha.'" And she opened her eyes! When she saw Peter, she sat up!" (Acts 9:40).
- "He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then he called in the widows and all the believers, and he presented her to them alive. The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord." (Acts 9:41-42)

WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?





- **God wants us to help the people around us.** Dorcas is an example of how we should help those around us. We must do what Paul teaches us: "Their only suggestion was that we keep on helping the poor, which I have always been eager to do." (Galatians 2:10) James also tells us, "Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you." (James 1:27) This was the true religion that Dorcas practiced.
- **God wants us to support those who are in trial.** We see in the true story of Dorcas how the sisters and brothers in the Lord worked together. They mourned Dorcas' death as if she were a close family member. "This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad." (1 Corinthians 12:25-26) Dorcas was their sister and her death left a great void in their lives. In Jesus, we are united. We must weep with those who weep and laugh with those who laugh.
- **God wants us to use the gifts he gives us to help others.** Dorcas had talents as a seamstress and embroiderer. She put them to good use by making clothes for people who needed them. Any gift can be used to help others in practical ways: cooking or baking for a sick neighbor, helping to sort through someone's paperwork, writing a note of encouragement to a teacher or local first responder, running errands for someone who is not able to do so themselves. The Bible says, "Whatever you do, do well. For when you go to the grave, there will be no work or planning or knowledge or wisdom." (Ecclesiastes 9:10)
- **God wants us to be known not only for our words, but also for our good deeds.** Dorcas was called a disciple, which means that she followed Jesus' teachings (Acts 9:36). She knew that Jesus called his disciples to give, to care and to provide what they could. We don't have to wait until we are rich or have everything to start reaching out. "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." (Ephesians 2:10)
- **God wants to use us to witness to others.** Dorcas had shown many people the love of God. But her resurrection pointed even more people to the Lord. The Bible says, "The news spread through the whole town, and many believed in the Lord." (Acts 9:42) There was certainly great

rejoicing and celebration for this miracle of God. God has always given His people the opportunity to make positive changes and Dorcas obeyed. She remains a wonderful example of what it means to submit your talents to the Lord and leave a legacy behind. And God will always multiply the blessings that come from our good deeds.

- **God wants us to help, period.** Dorcas was known for her many good deeds in Joppa. You can learn from her by not waiting for a perfect time or to be perfect to help others. We don't do it to be remembered, we do it so that Jesus will be glorified. To the best of your ability, do what you can today.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.

- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Challenge yourself to find five minutes each day for a week, to quiet your spirit, finding a spot where you are not distracted, and practice just listening to God and being in tune with Him. Take your Bible to that quiet place. Use some of that time to pray, and some time to just meditate on His Word. Keep your ears and your heart open to what God is wanting to say to you. It's not a matter if IF He wants to talk to you. He does want to speak. But, He also wants you to be ready and positioned for listening, so you can actually hear in your heart what He is saying. Then, respond in obedience with a heart that is open to what God would have you to do. God called Samuel three times. How many times is He calling you? The more you spend time in His presence, the less He will have to try calling you over and over again. Maybe you will hear His voice the very first time He calls!

