

Aeneas and Dorcas

Acts 9:32–43

At Joppa, which was near Lydda, there lived a woman named Dorcas, whose good deeds had made her greatly beloved. She was a worthy disciple of Jesus, and her life was filled with acts of kindness. She knew who needed comfortable clothing and who needed sympathy, and she freely ministered to the poor and the sorrowful. Her skillful fingers were more active than her tongue. (AA 131.2)



Acts 9:32–43

- Coat—*chiton*—tunic
- A *chiton* was a sleeveless tunic of linen or wool, woven in one or two pieces, with narrow colored stripes down either side from the shoulder to the bottom end of the garment. A *chiton* could be of any color, and examples from eastern Mediterranean lands include red, purple, blue, green, yellow, pink, peach, and orange.

- Garment—*himation*—usually translated as cloak (cloke in KJV)
- The *himation* was a billowing outer garment worn by both men and women. For men, it was usually draped over the left shoulder and under the right arm, in order to keep the right arm more easily. It was a large rectangular piece of cloth worn wrapped around the body. Women might wear it in the same manner or bring it across the back of the head to cover their hair as well. A *himation* was laboriously handwoven, and its size and corresponding amount of thread made it an expensive item.

And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat [tunic], let him have *thy* cloke [outer garment] also. (Matthew 5:40)

chiton—himation

Jesus bade His disciples, instead of resisting the demands of those in authority, to do even more than was required of them. And, so far as possible, they should discharge every obligation, even if it were beyond what the law of the land required. (*MB 72.1*)

The law, as given through Moses, enjoined a very tender regard for the poor. When a poor man gave his garment as a pledge, or as security for a debt, the creditor was not permitted to enter the dwelling to obtain it; he must wait in the street for the pledge to be brought to him. And whatever the circumstances the pledge must be returned to its owner at nightfall. Deuteronomy 24:10–13. In the days of Christ these merciful provisions were little regarded; but Jesus taught His disciples to submit to the decision of the court, even though this should demand more than the law of Moses authorized. (*MB 72.1*)

- Submit to the court even if the court required more than the law of the land required OR more than the law of Moses required.

More than this, they were to give to the creditor his due, if necessary surrendering even more than the court gave him authority to seize. “If any man would go to law with thee,” He said, “and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.” R.V. (*MB 72.1*)

- Submit to the court even if the court required more than the law of the land required OR more than the law of Moses required.
- Do more than what the court requires in order to do what is right to the creditor, even if it means giving up your cloak also, in cases when the court has misjudged and is wrong in its leniency toward you and in its harshness toward the creditor.

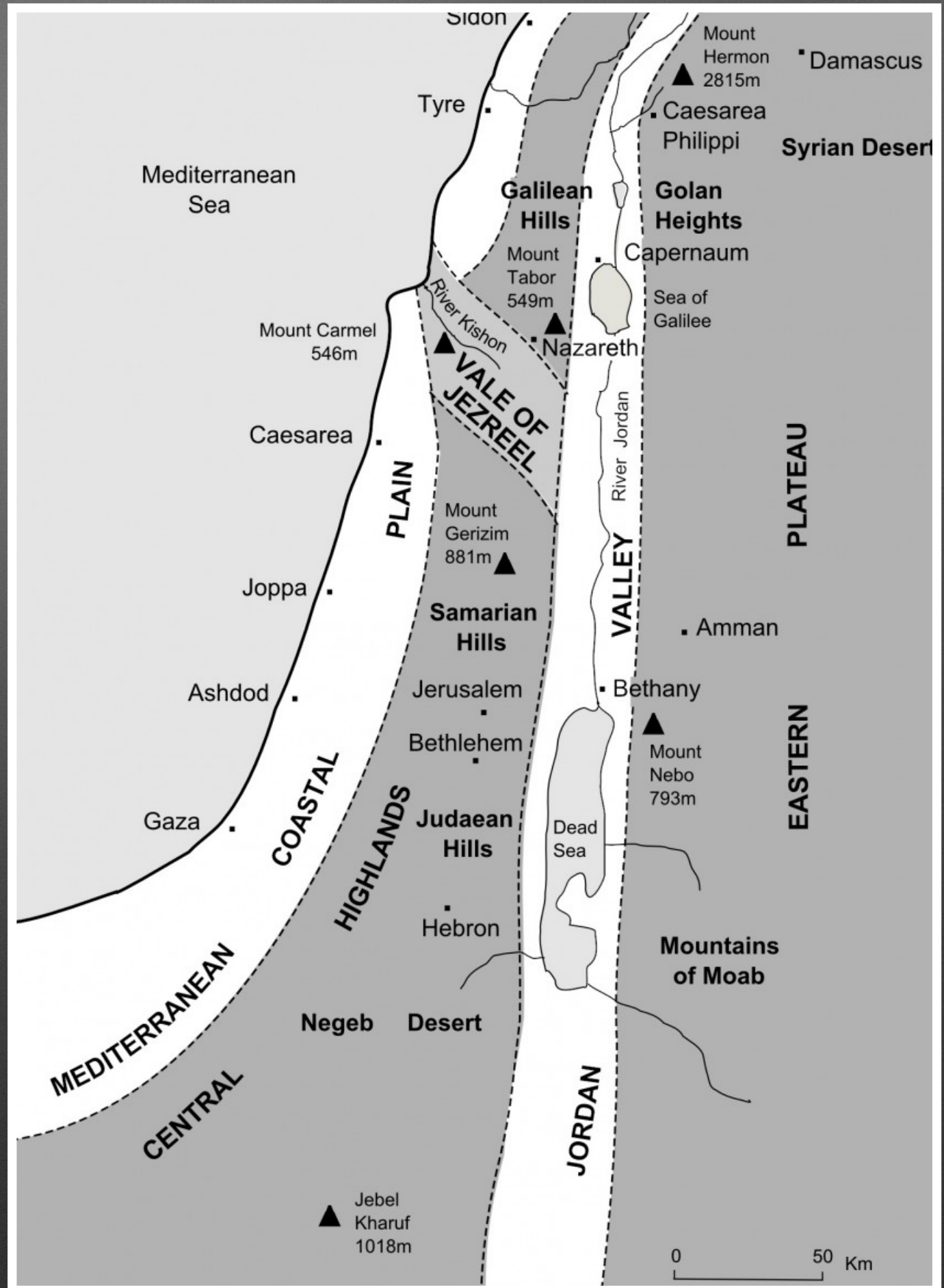
We do not know if Dorcas wove the material for the clothes she made or if she obtained already woven material to make the garments. The Bible says she made coats (*chiton*) and garments (*himation*) for the widows.





It is about 35–40 miles or 62.5 kilometers from Jerusalem to Joppa.

Elevation of Jerusalem averages about 2,575 feet or 785 meters).



Joppa is modern Tel Aviv and is on the Mediterranean Sea about 10+ miles from Lydda.

Lydda was in the central coastal plain, southeast of Joppa and about 10–12 miles inland from the sea.



“And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died.” The church in Joppa realized their loss, and hearing that Peter was at Lydda, the believers sent messengers to him, “desiring him that he would not delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.” In view of the life of service that Dorcas had lived, it is little wonder that they mourned, that warm teardrops fell upon the inanimate clay. (AA 131.3)

The apostle's heart was touched with sympathy as he beheld their sorrow. Then, directing that the weeping friends be sent from the room, he kneeled down and prayed fervently to God to restore Dorcas to life and health. Turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes: and when she saw Peter, she sat up." Dorcas had been of great service to the church, and God saw fit to bring her back from the land of the enemy, that her skill and energy might still be a blessing to others, and also that by this manifestation of His power the cause of Christ might be strengthened. (AA 13.1)

We tried to comfort Augusta. She is cast down and discouraged, health poor and no one to depend on. She has laid aside her armor and shield of faith. May the Lord strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees.
(WM 322.2)

We see this in the tender regard and care of Naomi toward Ruth and also in the kindness and care of Dorcas for the widows.

Raised from the dead in OT

- The widow of Zarephath's son (1 Kings 17:17)—Elijah
- The Shunammite woman's son (2 Kings 4:18)—Elisha
- An unnamed man placed in Elisha's tomb (2 Kings 13:20)

Raised from the dead in NT

- Jairus's daughter (Matthew 9:18)
- The widow of Nain's son (Luke 7:14)
- Lazarus (John 11:43)
- Dorcas (Acts 9:36)—Peter
- Eutychus (Acts 20:7)—Paul

Miracles of Peter

- Healing a man lame from birth—Acts 3:6
- Healing Aeneas—Acts 9:34
- Raising Dorcas—Acts 9:40
- The sick laid in the street that the shadow of Peter might fall on them—Acts 5:15

Miracles Peter Received

- Walked on water (Matthew 14:29)
- Two releases from prison (Acts 5:19; 12:7)

Miracles of Paul

- Elymas struck temporarily blind (Acts 13:11)
- A man lame from birth healed (Acts 14:10)
- Cast a spirit out (Acts 16:18)
- Healing with handkerchiefs (Acts 19:11–12)
- Eutychus raised (Acts 20:10)
- Publius's father healed (Acts 28:7)
- Sick people on Malta healed (Acts 28:9)

Miracles Paul Received

- Sight restored (Acts 9:3)
- Survived a viper's bite (Acts 28:3)

Miracles by Others in NT

- Stephen—performed great wonders and signs (Acts 6:8)
- Philip—healings (Acts 8:7)
- Ananias of Damascus—healed Saul's blindness (Acts 9:17)
- Barnabas—with Paul signs and wonders (Acts 14:3)
- The 12 apostles—healed (Mark 6:13)
- The 70 disciples—healed (Luke 10:8, 17)
- Unknown person casting out demons (Luke 9:49)

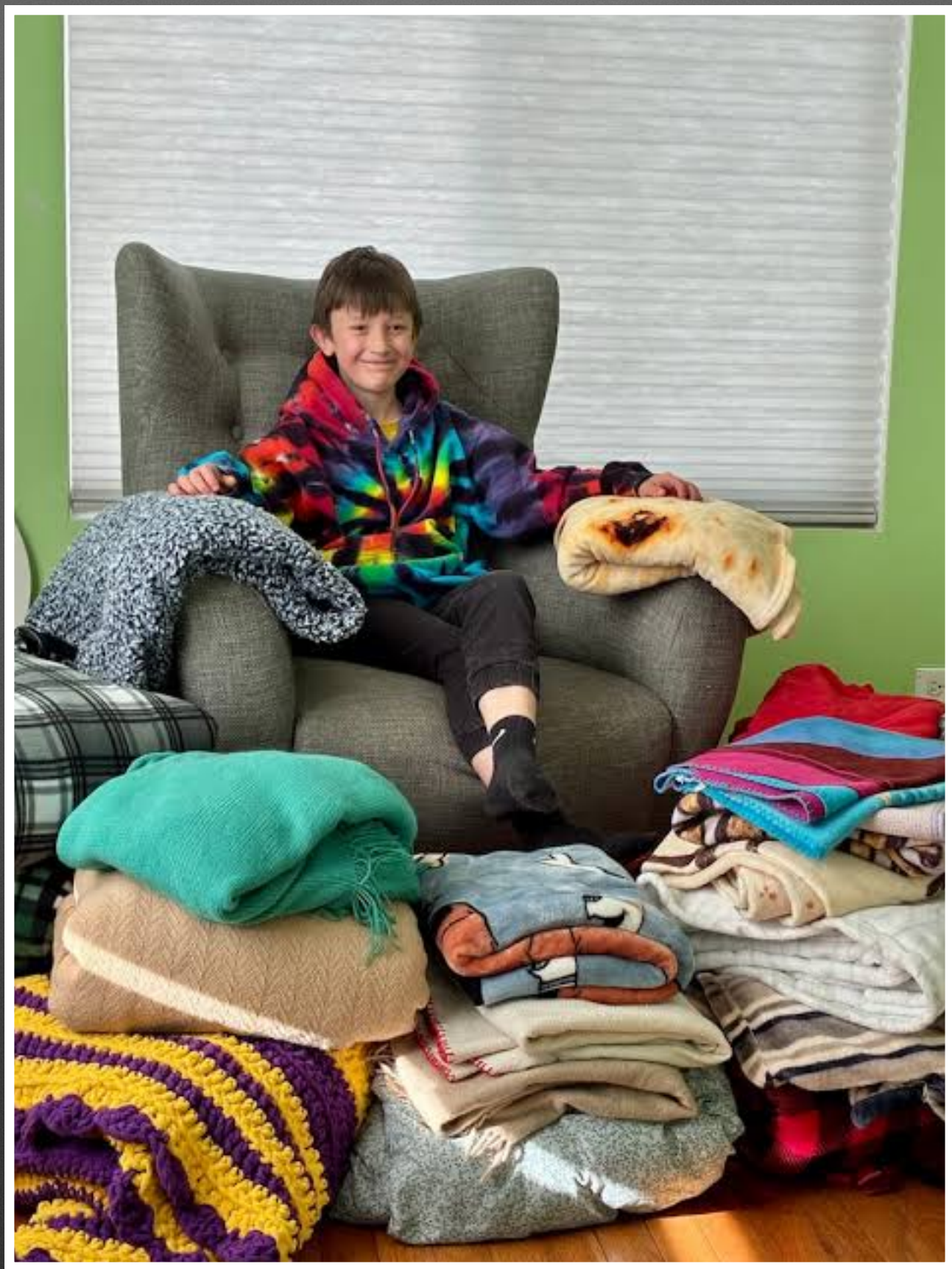


Dorcas Witnessed















"Yesterday this pile of blankets was all over the ground filthy, partially wet and frozen having been slept in the night before. I saw a city worker putting the stuff into what looked like a trash can. Then this morning I walk by the same spot and see the blankets had been washed and folded. Made me smile."













As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10)

Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. (1 Peter 3:9)

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. (Luke 6:38)