

Comments About Acts 10

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's website, churchofgodbigandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of July 29, 2017.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—Recently, I began a series of brief articles to discuss chapters in the book of Acts. This week, we will talk about chapter 10.

May this project encourage you to review the valuable history found in the book of Acts.

Cornelius's vision

As you recall in Acts 9 (verses 36-43), Peter stayed many days in Joppa. At the beginning of chapter 10, we see that a man in Caesarea had a vision that resulted in him sending three men to Joppa to contact Peter.

- Cornelius was a centurion in the Italian Regiment (verse 1).
- Cornelius was a devout man (verse 2).
- Cornelius had a vision in which an angel of the Lord instructed him to send people to Joppa to see Peter (verses 3-8).

Peter's vision

Before the traveling representatives arrived, Peter had a vision.

- As the traveling men were approaching Joppa, Peter went to a roof one day at noon (verse 9) and had a vision while he was getting ready to eat (verse 10)
- The vision showed a wide variety of animals (verses 11-12) and an instruction: "Rise, Peter, kill and eat" (verse 13).
- Peter indicated that the variety of animals included animals that he had avoided eating throughout his life (verse 14).
- A voice spoke to him a second time: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common" (verse 15). This was done three times (verse 16).
- As Peter was contemplating the meaning of the vision (verse 17), the three men communicated Cornelius's invitation for Peter to visit Caesarea (verses 18-22). Peter accepted the invitation and left Joppa (verse 23).

Cornelius met Peter

When Cornelius met Peter, he made a sincere mistake.

- When Peter arrived at Caesarea, Cornelius fell down at Peter's feet and worshiped him (verses 24-25). Peter instructed Cornelius to avoid worshipping him (verse 26).
- Peter told Cornelius about his vision (verses 28-29).
- Cornelius told Peter about his vision (verses 30-32) and about his desire to hear what Peter had to say (verse 33).
- Peter preached to Cornelius and his household (verses 34-43).
- As Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon the audience (verse 44).
- People were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured upon the gentile believers (verse 45)—as it earlier had been poured upon the Jewish believers (Acts 2).
- These recipients of the Holy Spirit in this spectacular moment in history spoke with tongues (verse 46)—reminiscent of Acts 2:3-4.
- These recipients of the Holy Spirit in this spectacular moment in history received the power before water baptism (verses 47-48)—reminiscent of Acts 2.

Only to people?

It is interesting to ask if Peter's vision was meant to apply only to people.

Acts 10:28—"Then he said to them, 'You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.' "

- There are people who believe that God gave access to both food (the form) and people (the substance).
- There are people (while accepting the understanding that salvation was offered to the gentiles) who still adhere to the biblical teachings to avoid "unclean" foods.