

Acts of the Apostles – 10

- I. The Inspired History
 - A. Cornelius Sends for Peter in Joppa (1-8).
 1. The Character of Cornelius (1-2).
 2. The Vision of Cornelius (3-6).
 3. The Obedience of Cornelius (7-8).
 - B. Peter Is Prepared for Cornelius (9-23).
 1. The Vision of Peter (9-16).
 2. The Coincidence of Gentile Visitors (17-20).
 3. The Reception of Cornelius's Servants (21-23).
 - C. Peter Meets Cornelius (24-33).
 1. The Initial Meeting (24-27).
 2. Peter's Explanation (28-29).
 3. Cornelius's Explanation (30-33).
 - D. Peter Preaches to Cornelius (34-43).
 1. God Accepts Gentiles (34-35).
 2. The Public Record of Jesus (36-41).
 3. The Purpose of Jesus Christ (42-43).
 - E. Cornelius Is Converted (44-48).
 1. God Confirms Gentile Converts (44-46).
 2. Peter Responds with Godly Wisdom (47-48).
- II. The Sense and Meaning
 - A. Cornelius has regenerate and faithful character identified by God through Luke (1-2).
 1. God wants us to see the conversion of Cornelius in detail (10:1-48; 11:1-18; 15:6-11).
 2. Luke identifies Cornelius as a certain man, for we have an important lesson here.
 - a. Cornelius is a Latin name of a Roman man i.e. Julius, Augustus, Octavius, etc.
 - b. He was an Italian officer of 100 soldiers in the Italian band of Rome's army.
 - c. He was serving in Caesarea, which Theophilus could have confirmed easily.
 3. Luke identifies Cornelius by his religious heart and actions, which are wonderful.
 - a. He was a devout man – devoted and solemn in religious exercises, pious.
 - b. He feared God himself and had led his family and staff to do the same also.
 - c. He gave much alms – charity to the poor as a religious exercise – to people.
 - d. He prayed to God always – he was constantly and fervently given to prayer.
 4. We may conclude without any doubts that Cornelius was a regenerated man.
 - a. He feared God, which natural men never do (Rom 3:18; Ps 55:19; Ec 8:12-13).
 - b. He gave alms, which God accepted as righteous (4,31; II Corinthians 9:9).
 - c. He prayed to God, which God heard as righteous (4,31; Pr 15:8,29; I Pet 3:12).
 - d. He worked righteousness, which God identified (34-35; Ro 3:10; I Jn 3:7,10).
 - e. He was accepted with God already (34-35; Ephesians 1:3-6; Ps 82:2; Pr 18:5).
 - f. His devout seeking of God was evidence of eternal life (Phil 2:13; Rom 3:11).
 5. Cornelius was clearly an elect, justified, and regenerated (born again) child of God.
 - a. For a man to be born again, he is first elected and justified (I Pet 1:2; Ro 8:30).
 - b. Quickening from death in sin follows election and justification (Ep 1:3 – 2:10).
 - c. His righteous acts proved he was already born again (I John 2:29; III Jn 1:11).
 6. Several facts about Cornelius are not sufficient by themselves to prove his salvation.
 - a. That he was a devout man does not prove the point (10:2 cp 13:50; 17:17).
 - b. Peter's vision of cleansing does not have direct proof of salvation (15 cp 28).

- B. An angel from God appears to Cornelius to give him instructions for his conversion (3-6).
1. The ninth hour of the day is 3:00 P.M. in the Jewish reckoning of time (Matt 20:1-12).
 2. Seeing an angel of God is a frightening experiences (Judges 13:1-23; Job 4:12-21).
 3. Cornelius addressed the angel as Lord, just as Saul knew to address his vision (9:5).
 4. His prayers and alms had come up into heaven, which proves they were approved.
 5. The angel directs Cornelius to Joppa, where Peter was left after raising Dorcas (9:43).
 6. Ministers are to tell regenerate men what they should do to be saved practically.
 - a. Preaching is entirely without value but to regenerate hearers (I Cor 1:18-24).
 - b. Preaching is dangerous to faithless men not born again (II The 3:1-2; Mat 7:6).
 - c. Preaching brings life to light in those ordained to life (II Tim 1:10; Act 13:48).
 - d. Preaching delivers from ignorance to saved consciences (Ro 10:1-4; I Pe 3:21).
 - e. Preaching saves men from error in doctrine and faith (Gal 5:4; James 5:19-20).
 - f. Preaching tells men what to do to please God (I Tim 6:17-20; Romans 12:1-2).
 7. Cornelius didn't need Peter to be born again, and Peter could not help (John 1:13; 3:8).
 8. Cornelius didn't need Peter to be justified, and Peter could not help (Romans 8:29-34).
 9. Cornelius didn't need Peter to be elected, and Peter could not help (Ep 1:4; II Ti 1:9).
- C. Cornelius dutifully obeys the angel's instruction and sends for Peter to come to him (7-8).
1. Godly men have godly houses – even a devout Roman soldier – to serve (Ps 101:4-7).
 2. He didn't have to disguise his mission – he could tell them everything openly. Amen!
- D. God prepares Peter to meet and baptize Cornelius by giving him an unusual vision (9-16).
1. The sixth hour of the day is 12:00 P.M. in the Jewish reckoning of time (Mat 20:1-12).
 2. Peter is praying at noon as part of a thrice daily routine (2:15; 3:1; Ps 55:17; Da 6:10).
 3. As true in all societies, preparation must be made in order to eat; and hunger results.
 4. He sees a great sheet tied together at the four corners coming down from heaven.
 - a. It was filled with animals, insects, and birds forbidden to Jews (Lev 11:1-47).
 - b. He is instructed by a voice to take advantage of this bounty and prepare lunch.
 - c. Peter recognizes the unclean creatures and faithfully rejects the instructions.
 - d. This same instruction was given three times, and then the sheet rose to heaven.
- E. Simultaneous with the vision, three visitors from Cornelius arrive asking for Peter (17-20).
1. When the Lord wishes to reveal something to a man, He doesn't make it very difficult.
 2. It was unlawful for Jews to company or visit with Gentiles (10:28; 11:1-3; John 4:9).
 3. God had made them a separate nation without any intermarriage; they exaggerated it.
 4. Jesus had limited His own ministry to the Jews (Matthew 10:5-6; 15:24; Rom 15:8).
 5. The Spirit instructs Peter to go with them without any worries, for He had sent them.
- F. Peter graciously receives the servants from Cornelius and boards them over night (21-23).
1. Their testimony confirms the Spirit's word of being sent, so Peter takes them in.
 2. This is the first time Peter hears the name Cornelius, as the servants describe him.
 3. The next day Peter takes six brethren with him as witnesses in this matter (11:12).
- G. Cornelius initially treats Peter as more than a man due to ignorance and superstition (24-27).
1. Far from being a Lot, Cornelius was able to invite his kinsmen and close friends there.
 2. Seeing Peter, whom the angel had identified, Cornelius falls down and worships him.
 3. Peter boldly corrects his popish worship and claims no superiority to Cornelius.
 4. Peter and Cornelius chitchat, and then Peter sees the large gathering of Gentiles there.
- H. Peter now understands the vision and explains to Cornelius and the Gentile audience (28-29).
1. I am here with Gentiles, because God has corrected my "unclean" notion of Gentiles.
 2. I have come without any resistance or questions, so tell me your purpose in calling me.
- I. Cornelius repeats the whole story of God sending an angel with instructions for Peter (30-33).
1. Cornelius had responded immediately and further commended Peter's compliance.
 2. Cornelius manifests a most noble and reverent spirit to receive everything from God.
 3. When God prepares a heart for His Word, it is a great delight for a minister (16:14).

- J. Peter first acknowledges God's acceptance of Gentiles by the fruit of their works (34-35).
1. Peter considers the spiritual evidence in Cornelius and his house and his recent vision.
 2. He admits that it is rather plain to see that God's reception of Cornelius is obvious.
 3. Don't forget that Peter had a great gift of discerning spirits, as with Simon (8:23).
 4. Regardless of nationality, the fear of God and righteousness prove God's acceptance.
- K. Peter then summarizes the public record of Jesus of Nazareth known by Cornelius (36-41).
1. Peter states that Cornelius certainly knew these public facts about Christ's ministry.
 2. God's revelation to Israel by Jesus Christ's ministry of peace was known by them all.
 3. Observe Peter's brief parenthetical reference to Jesus as "Lord of all." Amen!
 4. The word, or God's revelation, was by the preaching, character, and miracles of Jesus.
 5. Peter acknowledges his position as one of those specially chosen witnesses of Christ.
- L. Peter then concludes his brief remarks by identifying the full purpose of Jesus Christ (42-43).
1. Jesus of Nazareth is appointed by God to be the Judge of all men – living and dead.
 2. Jesus of Nazareth is the only means of salvation from judgment for our sins.
 3. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ brings forgiveness of sins in a practical way.
 - (a) Why understand this verse differently than Ananias's words to Saul (22:16)?
 - (b) Cornelius's sins were washed away by Christ's blood (Heb 10:10-14; 8:12).
 - (c) God remitted our sins by Jesus Christ; we simply tell about it (II Co 5:18-21).
 - (d) Our fellowship with God and relief from guilt comes by confession (I Jn 1:9).
- M. While Peter was still finishing these few words, God confirms these Gentile converts (44-46).
1. God sends the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and his house with the gift of tongues.
 2. The six Jewish brethren that Peter brought with him were astonished at this revelation.
 3. They either knew the languages or were gifted to interpret them magnifying God.
- N. Peter then exercises his apostolic authority to command baptism for these Gentile converts.
1. Knowing that God had sent him here with clear direction, he does not hesitate or fear.
 2. Knowing his Pentecostal formula had been reversed (2:38), he commands baptism.
 3. Cornelius and family and friends begged Peter to spend some days with them. Amen!