

- A Study in Acts -

**Chapter Ten – First Uncircumcised Gentile Convert**

**ACTS 10:23-33:**

In our last lesson, Peter was prepared by a vision concerning God's purpose in using him to fulfill announcing the Gospel of Jesus as Christ to the Gentiles. He would, even after the heavenly vision, still need some prompting by the Spirit of God, to go with the servants of Cornelius that had been sent to bring him.

We will pick up now with Peter going with the servants of Cornelius and their coming together to fulfill God's purpose.

**Text #1:**

**Acts 10:23 Then he invited them in and lodged *them*. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.**

The fact that Peter lodged the servants of Cornelius is demonstrative that he has now understood the Lord's instruction concerning these of another nation (also remembering that it wasn't even his home). The next day that Peter begins his journey with these servants is the third day of the events that began in **Vs. 3**.

**Some Brethren:** Before we move into the unification of Peter and Cornelius, it is vital to note that Peter is not going to make this journey alone. He is going to take along six brethren. These brethren are very important to the events that will transpire during the conversion of Cornelius and his household ("**Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized**" – **Vs. 47**); as eyewitnesses to the demonstration of God's approval (**Vs. 44-46**) and would act as witnesses when Peter would return to Jerusalem and have to defend the conversion of Gentiles to the Jews there (**11:12, 17-18**); because the six brethren are also Jews.

This is the Lord's wisdom for evidentiary establishment, to avoid division and prejudice, note:

**Matthew 18:16 "But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.'" See also: Deuteronomy 19:15**

**Text #2:**

**Acts 10:24-29 "And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends. <sup>25</sup> As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped *him*. <sup>26</sup> But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man." <sup>27</sup> And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?”**

Keep in mind as this group makes this journey to Caesarea, that there are seven Jews traveling with three Gentiles, which is made significant by the words of Peter in **Vs. 28!**

**The Following Day:** This will constitute day four of these events and will correspond with Cornelius’s statement in **Vs. 30** (even though they were still in the fourth day, and the first day was mostly concluded when it was counted – see the notes in the previous lesson).

**Fell Down at His Feet:** Cornelius anxiously awaited Peter’s coming, and at his arrival fell down at Peter’s feet. This was a man who was used to being respected and commanding others, but was so submissive to the commands of God and reverent to His servants that he prostrated himself.

Peter, on the other hand, was a true servant of His Master, and would not accept any recognition or exaltation; as Jesus the Christ, whom Peter served was the only One due preeminence (**Philippians 2:9-10; Colossians 1:18**).

We will see another recorded account that is very similar to this one later in the work of Paul and Barnabas (**Acts 14:14-15**), with the same reaction by the true servants of the Lord’s.

**I Came Without Objection:** Peter, upon entering Cornelius’ home finding it full, and states that under normal circumstances, he would never have come; however, he reveals that God’s hand was that which has brought them together.

Now Peter knows that he has been sent to speak the word of God concerning Jesus as the Christ (**Vs. 22**); but now Peter is going to allow Cornelius to introduce the Divine instruction that has caused him to send for Peter (“**What reason have you sent for me?**”).

**Text #3:**

**Acts 10:30-33** “So Cornelius said, “Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,<sup>31</sup> and said, ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.<sup>32</sup> Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.’<sup>33</sup> So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God.”

**Four Days Ago:** As Cornelius begins to recite the events that led him to send for Peter, we see the completion of the exercise concerning the estimation of days often used by New Testament writers.

Day One – Vs. 3 – a partial day

Day Two – Vs. 9

Day Three – Vs. 23

Day Four – Vs. 24 – a partial day

**Bright Clothing:** This is a common reference to the presentation of heavenly beings when sent as messengers to man (**Hebrews 1:14**). I find it interesting that they are remembered only for the clothing they wear (see also: **Matthew 28:2-3; Mark 16:5**), and not for any other features. Once again, we must appreciate in the narrative that the messenger is not the important focus of the story!

Yet, their appearance universally had the effect which caused the ones receiving them, or in their presence to fall to the ground in reverent and fearful understanding of their heavenly origin.

**Present Before God:** In the finality of this lesson, we see something that virtually any evangelist or teacher of the holy word of God dreams of; an ideal audience!

I have learned over the years, without making too much of this, that ideal audiences are often what we make them; however, we should appreciate the unique attitudes of these preparing themselves to hear.

**First**, they recognize that Peter was going to speak only the word of God!

**Second**, they knew that what was to be spoken to them were the commands of God, which indicates that they were prepared to obey what they would be instructed!

We must equally continue to work to bring people to be, **all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God!**