



1. Even though Cornelius was not a Jew, what indications do we have that he was a seeker of the One True God (10:1-2)?
2. Describe the visions Cornelius and Peter were shown. What message was the Lord trying to convey to each of them through their visions? (Verses 3-6, 11-13)
3. Do you think the Lord might use visions to reach God-seekers in the world today? Why or why not?
4. What can we learn about our own responses to the Lord's commands from the way Cornelius responded to the vision he saw? (7-8)
5. What do we learn about Peter's circumstances when he saw his vision (5-6, 9-10)? How might these circumstances have made him more open to the vision's message?
6. After the voice told Peter to "kill and eat," why did Peter respond the way he did initially? What did the voice he heard from the Lord say next? (13-15)
7. Why do you think the Lord gave Peter this vision three times? What was Peter's reaction when the vision was over, even after he had seen it three times? (16-17)
8. What important lesson had the Lord Jesus taught His disciples (including Peter) previously, that should have prepared the way for this vision? (Mark 7:14-19)
9. How did the Spirit's words to Peter relate to the vision Peter had just seen? (19-20) How did they relate to the command Jesus had given in Acts 1:8?
10. Application for us: Since we now have the complete Scriptures, the Lord speaks to us today mostly through His word. What might the Lord be trying to speak to you about this week?



The Integrated Church
Leader Notes for Acts 10:1-23

We are introduced to Cornelius at the start of this chapter, as a God-fearing Gentile man who did not have a Jewish heritage. He is the first person we see coming to Christ in the book of Acts who was neither a Jew nor a Jewish proselyte, like the Ethiopian eunuch in chapter 8. Yet the Lord was preparing Cornelius' heart for the gospel message.

Note the multiple ways the Lord reached Cornelius and Peter. Cornelius saw, heard, and spoke with an angel of God, whom he listened to and promptly obeyed. Peter fell into a trance, saw an object coming down from heaven, and heard a voice. He addressed the voice as "Lord," and expressed why he was resistant to what he heard. A short while later the Spirit spoke to him, giving him specific directions, which he also obeyed.

Seeing the same vision three times made it quite clear to Peter that he was not hallucinating, and that what he saw was a vision from the Lord. It seems interesting that his vision was about food while he was hungry and waiting for lunch. Hunger does seem to get our attention! But Peter was perplexed.

When Jesus was traveling around Israel training His disciples, Mark 7:19 tells us that "He declared all foods clean." From the parallel passage in Matthew 15:15 we learn that it was Peter who had asked the Lord to explain the parable to them at that time. So Peter had heard Jesus in-person declare unclean foods to be clean quite a few years earlier. But this lesson was now repeated to show that Gentiles (who were previously considered unclean people) could now be clean, too, through believing in Jesus Christ. The gospel is not limited to just Jews, but is open to all who believe in Jesus Christ – including a Roman centurion named Cornelius and all his household. These men weren't even circumcised (Acts 11:3)!

Note that the angel did not share the gospel with Cornelius; God assigned that task to a person! In Acts 1:8 Jesus told His disciples to be His witnesses to the remotest part of the earth. Maybe at the time it wasn't obvious to them that this command included reaching Gentiles in all the nations, but Peter's vision certainly opened his eyes to how the Lord wanted to use him in ways it seems he had not previously given much thought to.

At the close of this week's passage we see Peter going with the men whom Cornelius had sent to fetch him, still not sure of exactly what lay ahead when he got to Caesarea. He took other brethren from Joppa with him to participate in whatever was going to happen as a result of this strange vision and Cornelius' request for Peter to come.

Come back next week for the rest of the story!

