

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 33 | ACTS 10:17-35

ACTS 10:17-23 | PETER'S MEETING WITH CORNELIUS' MEN

- Verses 17-18 –
 - Peter **doubted in himself what this vision...should mean**. Clearly this was a new vision/revelation. Clearly it was eight years *after* Pentecost. Clearly those who believe that the “church” of the previous eight years was living under grace and not law are wrong, for even the one with the “keys to the Kingdom” is not aware of such an arrangement.
 - Was this a revelation of “the mystery?” I do not believe so.
 - The mystery is that “everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord” will be saved outside of the prophetic order (“out of due season”).
 - Such mystery has not been revealed here, only a freedom from kosher laws.
- Verses 19-20 –
 - Peter **thought on the vision**. The word implies “turning it over in his mind.” He was perplexed as to the meaning (further proof that this message was something *new*).
 - Peter was instructed to go to the visitors **doubting nothing**.
 - The Greek word διακρίνω [diakrino] is “thoroughly judging,” thus carries the idea of one who is suspicious, untrusting, judgmental. In this case it is connected to a negative, **nothing**.
 - God assured Peter that this *strange* and *new* work was His doing.
- Verse 21-22 –
 - Notice that Peter was obedient, but perplexed. Had the truth of the vision been clear since Pentecost, his response would have been totally different.
- Verse 23 –
 - Peter is obedient to the heavenly vision and prepares for a next-day departure from Joppa to Caesarea.

ACTS 10:24-48 | THE ENCOUNTER AT CAESAREA

- Verses 24-26 –
 - Cornelius trusted that Peter would arrive, and gathered **his kinsmen and near friends** for the occasion.
 - Cornelius wanted to worship Peter, who would not allow it. Modern Popes who claim to be in Peter’s position do not have the same qualms.
- Verses 27-29 –
 - Peter’s first comment was to note that **it is an unlawful thing for...a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation** but that he was being obedient to the vision.
 - It is interesting that there was nothing in the Torah that prohibited such.
 - Jesus had instructed that the Apostles not go to the Gentiles with the Kingdom message. However, Jesus Himself did not seem bothered by going to the home

- of a gentile (see Luke 7:6, where He did not go into the house but fully intended to).
 - Likely this was a rabbinical prohibition; which Peter had previously fully accepted (more evidence that the Jewish believers were living in full harmony with Judaism up to this point).
 - The word **gainsaying** is from ἀναντιρρήτως [anantirrhetos], literally “not speaking against.”
 - The most important phrase of these verses is Peter’s question, **I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?**
 - Peter has been taking a *Jewish message of a Jewish Kingdom to a Jewish people*. Why in the world would a gentile gathering be interested in this message?
 - Peter literally has no idea what to say to this crowd.
- Verses 30-33 -
 - Cornelius explains that he does not really understand what is going on either. He only knows that **a man stood before me in bright clothing** and told him to send for Peter, who **shall speak unto thee**.
 - Cornelius *waited with bated breath to hear all things that are commanded thee of God*. No doubt Peter, arriving in ignorance, also wanted to know what message God would have spoken.

ACTS 10:34-43 | PETER’S ADDRESS TO CORNELIUS AND COMPANY

- Verses 34-35 -
 - Peter’s *perception* (the literal meaning of the Greek καταλαμβάνω [katalambano] is to *fully grasp*) is that **God is no respecter of persons**.
 - That is, *He doesn’t care who you are or what you look like* (προσωπολήμπτης [prosopolempthes] is literally *to take the face* into account).
 - Rather, God accepts people from anywhere who **feareth him, and worketh righteousness**.
 - Though we always say that Cornelius was the first “gentile Christian,” or the first gentile to “receive the Gospel,” we must make note here of two things:
 - The Gospel is not found in verse 33. What Peter declares is works-based acceptance before God.
 - The perception stated by Peter is nothing new. Compare Deuteronomy 10:17, Numbers 15.16, and the stories of Namaan and Jonah.
 - Peter’s message in verses 34-35 are correct, but they are not anything new.
- *To be continued!*