



Acts 9:31-10:23; God prepares Peter to go to the Gentiles.

Acts 9:1-31; Review of Paul's conversion?

Remember the key points seen in our study:-

**The conversion of Saul,
the one who persecuted the church.**

**Saul, a converted Jewish leader,
preached Jesus Christ.**

**Saul tried to join himself with the disciples
in Jerusalem.**

**After Saul's conversion the church
had a period of peace and rapid growth.**

Acts 9:31-43; Who was Dorcas?

During this time, Peter travelled around in Judea preaching, healing and raising a dead woman.

The rest of chapter 9, chapter 10 and part of chapter 11 tell about the travels and work of Peter.

Then Saul, or Paul, becomes the central character in the rest of the book.

Acts 9:32-35; Peter and Aeneas?

**32 “As Peter travelled about the country,
he went to visit the saints in Lydda.**

**33 There he found a man named Aeneas, a paralytic
who had been bedridden for eight years.”**

**34 "Aeneas," Peter said to him, "Jesus Christ
heals you. Get up and take care of your mat."
Immediately Aeneas got up.**

**35 All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon
saw him and turned to the Lord.”**

**Head of Aeneas, is a Famous Character
in Roman Mythology.**

**This, of course is not the Aeneas of the Bible
but is probably named after him.**



Peter still using the keys of the Kingdom.

Acts 9:31-35; Peter Heals Aeneas!



Acts 9:31-35; Peter Heals Aeneas!

Aeneas was probably one of the Greek-speaking Jews that were now so numerous in Palestine.

The original Aeneas was the famous Hero of the Aeneid written by Virgil, the Roman poet and writer.

Virgil's story was based on the older story of Odysseus and the Trojan war by the Greek poet Homer.

35 “All those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.”

As we have said before, the purpose of the miraculous signs and wonders was to confirm the word preached by the Apostles who performed the miracles.

The church grew very rapidly in this age of miracles. Again, we see the Holy Spirit at work in a special way.

Acts 9:36; to 10:23; Who was Dorcas?

36 “In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.”

37 “About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.”

38 “Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, “Please come at once!”



Acts 9:31-10:23; Peter goes to see Dorcas.

Acts 9:32-43; Who was Dorcas?

Joppa was on the coastal plain of Sharon near Lydda. You might remember this seaport as the embarkation point for Jonah when he tried to run away from God. (Jonah 1:3;)

The name of the female disciple who died was **Tabitha** in Aramaic, **Dorcas** in Greek and **Gazelle** in English.

She was beloved by the disciples because of her many charitable works. They washed her body, put it in an upper room and sent for Peter to come with great urgency.

Joppa. (modern Jaffa.)



Acts 9:32-43; Who was Dorcas?

Making clothing was very difficult in Bible times.
Clothes were very expensive.

Dorcas could have sold the clothes
for a lot of money.

Note that they didn't go to Dorcas' closet
and say "Look at all the clothes she had"
but rather at **how much she had given.**



Dorcas was not loved for what she had
but for what she gave.

Mrs. Ferdinand Marcos is not remembered fondly
for her shoes.

Acts 9:32-43; Dorcas was a giver!



Acts 9:32-43; Who was Dorcas?

39 “Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.”

**Did Peter decide to bring this woman back because she was better than others who had died?
I think not.**

This was simply another opportunity to perform a miracle that would serve to confirm his word as being from God.

Acts 9:32-43; Dorcas raised from the dead!





Raising the Dead!

In the Bible there are several accounts of persons raised from death by prophets.

The first such account was the raising of the widow's son by Elijah. (1 Kings 17;).

On another occasion a corpse was thrown into the tomb of **Elisha. When the body touched Elisha's bones, the man came back to life.
(2 Kings 13:20-21;)**

Raising the widow's son by Elijah. 1 Kgs 17;



He is Risen!



Jesus Raised the Dead!

Jesus raised several people from the dead, including **the son of the widow of Nain**. (Luke 7:11-17;)

The **daughter of Jairus**. (Matthew 9:18-26;)

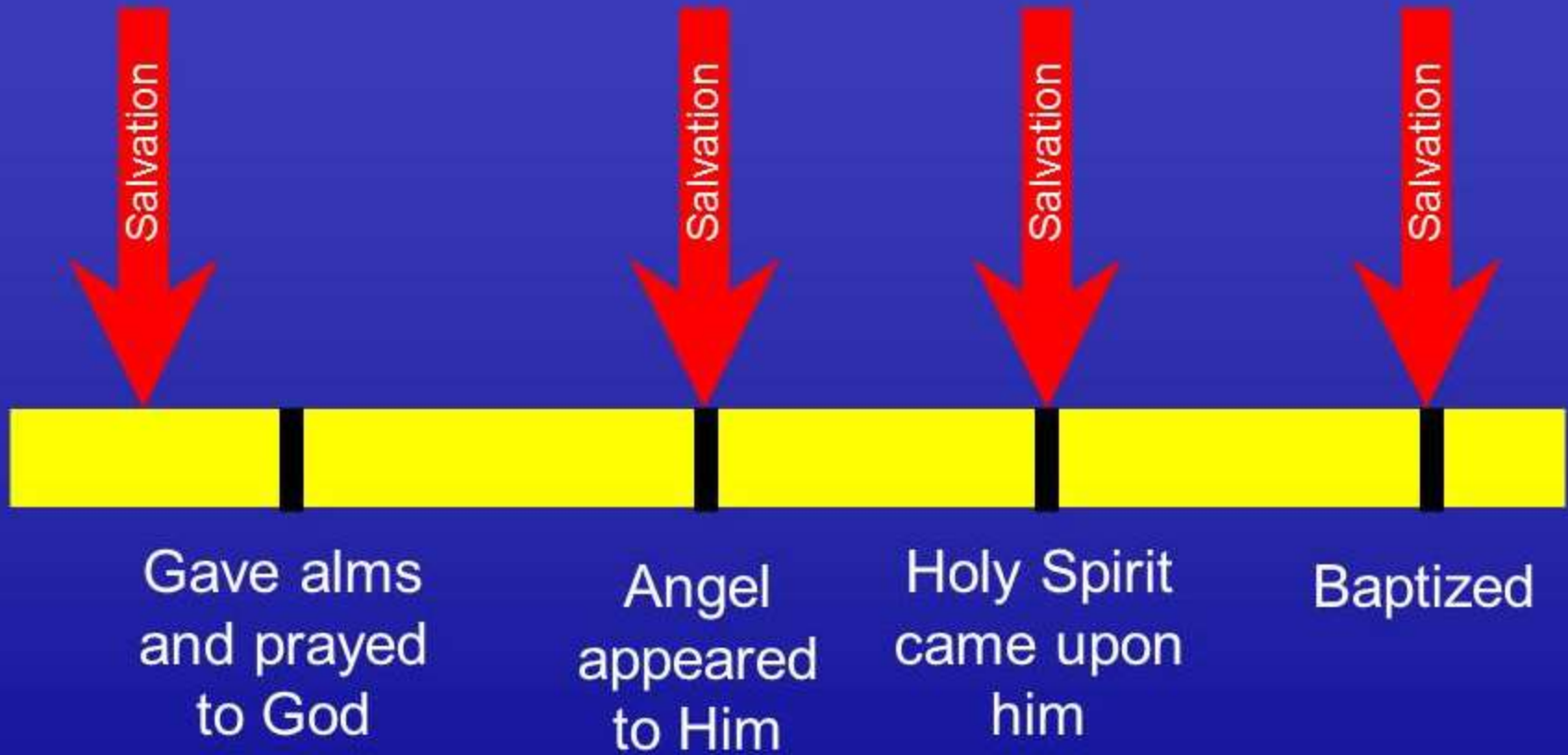
Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary of Bethany. (John 11;)

Paul raised the young man, **Eutychus** from the dead when he fell from an upstairs window and was killed. (Acts 20:8-12;)

Of course, the greatest miracle of all occurred when **Jesus Himself arose from the dead**.

Acts 10; The Gospel Is Preached to the Gentiles .

When Was Cornelius Saved?



Gave alms
and prayed
to God

Angel
appeared
to Him

Holy Spirit
came upon
him

Baptized

Acts 10; The Gospel Is Preached to the Gentiles .

10:1-8; A Gentile (Cornelius) sends for Peter.

10:9-23; Peter's vision

**10: 23-48; The conversion of Cornelius
and his household.**

10:1; Importance

**more length and detail than the account
of conversions of thousands in Jerusalem.**

Acts 10; The Gospel Is Preached to the Gentiles .

Gentiles in prophecy.

**Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8; Rom 9:24-26; Hos 2:23; 1:10;
All Nations to be Blessed! Jew and Gentile.**

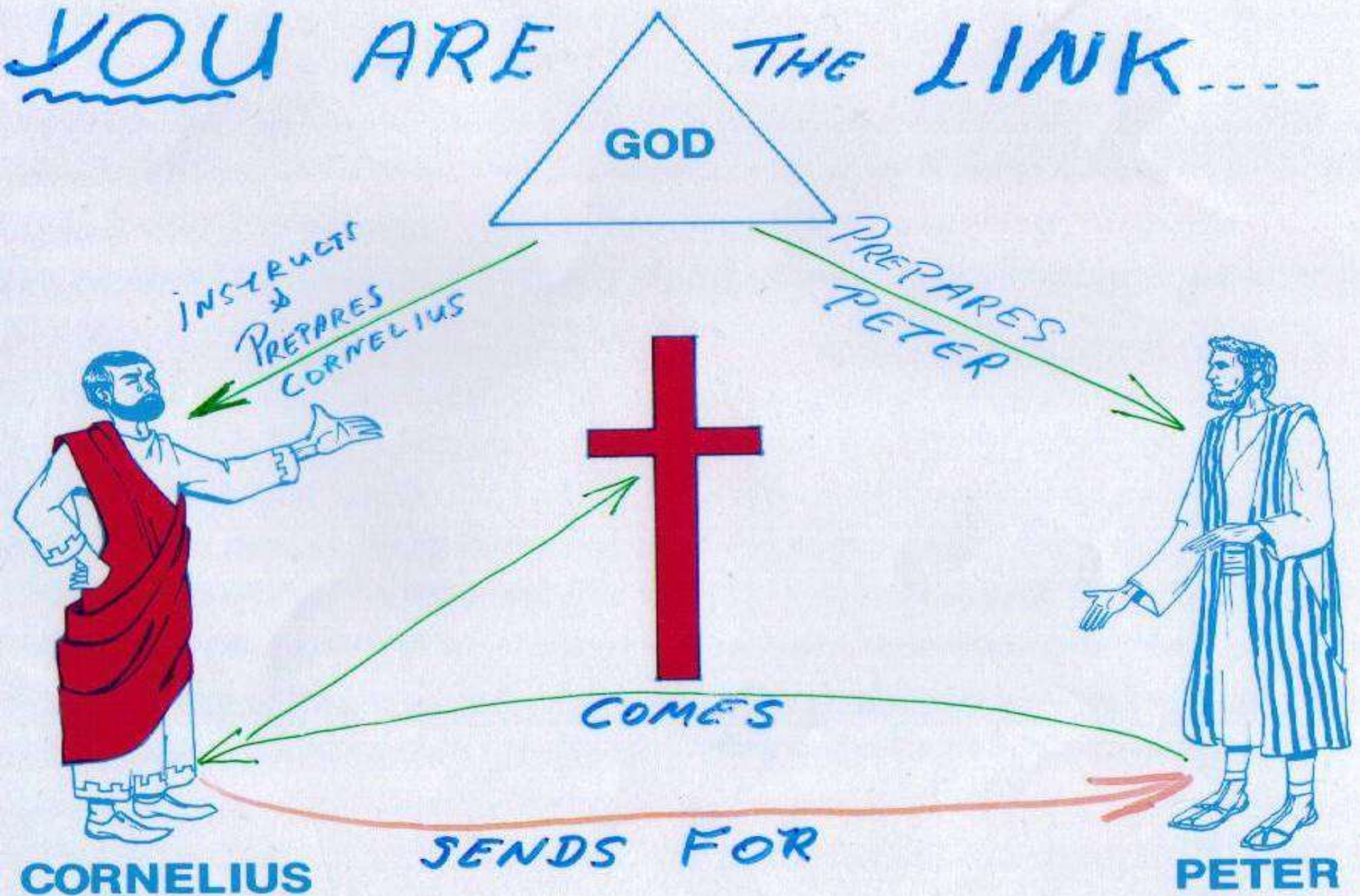
**God has always been concerned with the Gentiles,
remember **Jonah** in Ninevah?
Ezekiel preaching to the nations around?**

Gentiles in plan. Mystery revealed.

Matt 28:19-20; Eph 1:4, 13-14; 3:5-6;

**“This mystery, as it is now revealed in the Spirit
to His holy apostles and prophets, was unknown
to humanity in previous generations, that **the Gentiles**
now have **the same inheritance** and form the **same Body**
and **enjoy the same promise in Christ Jesus**
through the gospel.**

Peter. Keys of the kingdom. Matt 16:16-18;





The Mediterranean may be seen to the left through the pillars of this ancient Roman Aqueduct at Caesarea Maritima.

Acts 10; Conversion of Cornelius & His Household.

1 “At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment.”

2 “He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.”

3 “One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!"

DISCUSSION QUESTION:-

**What kind
of person
Was Cornelius?**



Acts 10; Conversion of Cornelius & His Household.

Cornelius:- God fearing, Generous,
Regular praying, Righteous, (v22;)
Respected. (v22;)

He had a miraculous vision. (v3;)

He was a Gentile. (11:2;)

He was not saved. (11:15;)

He knew of Christ (10:37;)

He was a Soldier!





Was Cornelius Saved by the Angel?

Acts 10; Conversion of Cornelius & His Household.

When was Cornelius Saved?

Cornelius was a God-fearing man who prayed often and gave alms to the poor. He worshipped God to the best of his knowledge and means.

But he was not saved. Like Paul, he needed a human person to come and tell him what he needed to do in order to be saved.

If you will notice as we read on, the angel told him to send for Peter who would bring him a message through which he and his household would be saved. (Acts 11:13-14;).

Acts 10:5-6; Conversion of Cornelius.

5 "And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter."

"6 He is lodging with one Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea."

**A tanner was despised.
(If a girl was betrothed to a
tanner without knowing he
was a tanner, the betrothal was
void.) His house had to be at
least 50 cubits outside the city.**



Acts 10:5-6; Conversion of Cornelius.

God knows the addresses of His people!

**“6 He is lodging with one Simon,
a tanner, whose house is by the sea.”**

**The angel tells him where
to find Peter. He doesn't
need more of an address.
The smell of those hides
down in that vat will lead
them to the right place!**



Acts 10:7-10; Conversion of Cornelius.

**“When the angel who spoke to him had gone,
Cornelius called two of his servants and
a devout soldier who was one of his attendants.**

**8 He told them everything that
had happened and sent them to Joppa.”**

**As the soldiers sent by Cornelius are going up
the Sharon Coastal Plain from Caesarea to Joppa,
Peter goes up on the flat roof to pray
while his lunch is being prepared.**

**God is about to show Peter the true meaning
of the laws He had given the Jews
restricting the kinds of animals they could eat.**

Acts 10:9; “The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.”

He went to the housetop, which may be some kind of patio for us now days. In their days, houses would have an empty space on top for relaxation purposes.

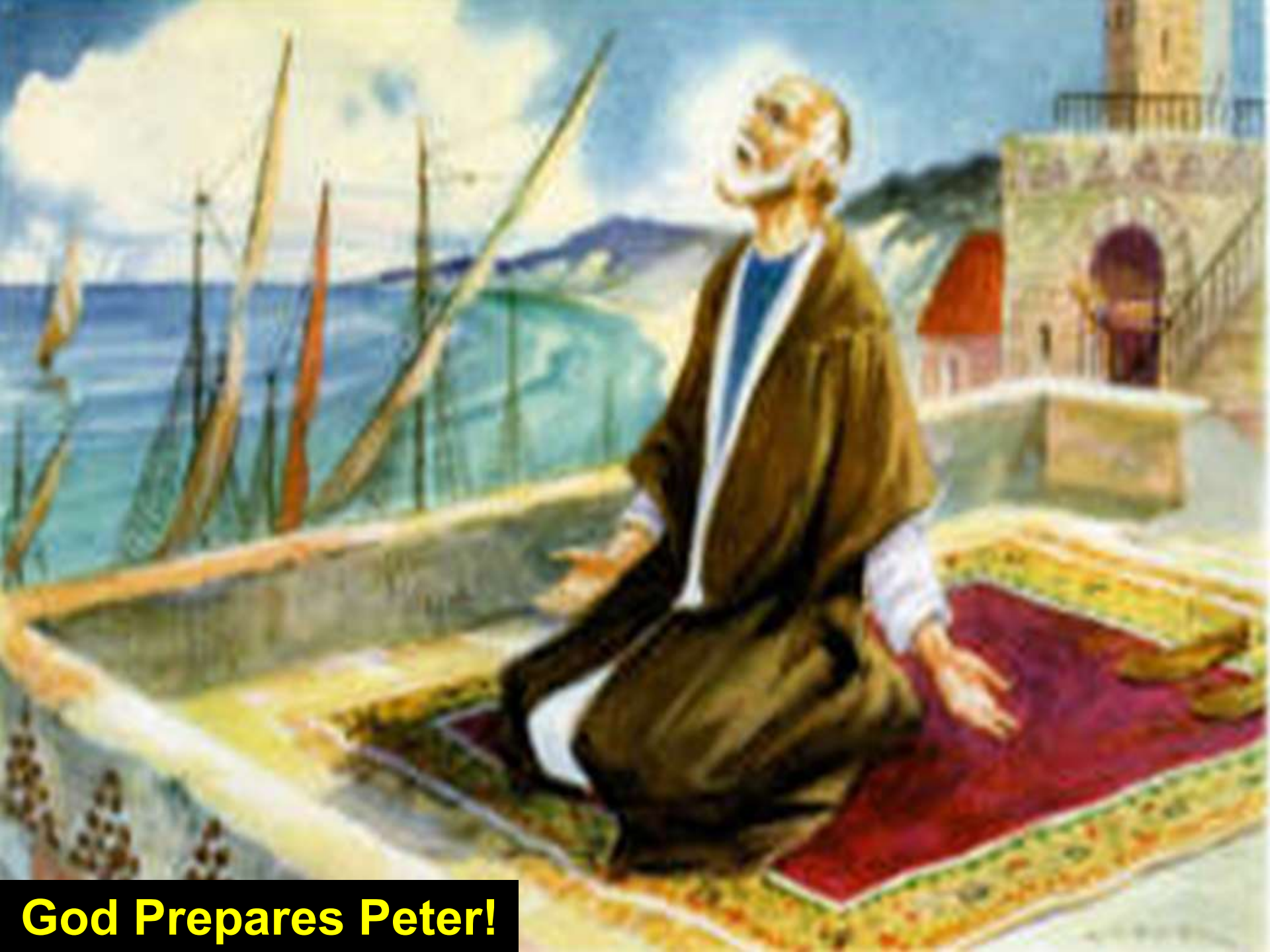
The flat-roofed house was something very common in Palestine and was usually built for the same purpose that we use patios now days.



Peter is praying at noon.

Was that an hour of Prayer? Yes- good, devout Jews would always use this time for prayer.

Acts 3:1; Psalms 55:17; Daniel. 6:10;



God Prepares Peter!

Acts 10:10; “Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance.”

The Greek word translated ‘hungry’ is ‘**prospeinos**’, and means ‘**very hungry.**’

“But while they made ready, he fell into a trance...”

What is a ‘**trance?**’ The Greek says that a trance is an ecstasy (ekstasis).

A state of being beyond reason and self-control.

A state of overwhelming emotion;
especially : rapturous delight.

ECSTASY may apply to any strong emotion
(such as joy, fear, rage, adoration)

Acts 10:11-11; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.



Acts 10:11; “and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.”

Even we are surprised when we read about this because to many, this is still hard to understand...

Peter saw heaven opened.

This is essentially the same idea like the one found in Acts 7:56, when Stephen was stoned.

It is almost as if a sliding door up in the sky was shoved back, marking a sort of trap-door opening through which the object could be lowered down from above.

Acts 10:11; “and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.”

**An object like a great sheet bound
at the four corners, descending to him**

**It was not an actual sheet,
but appeared to be like a sheet.**

This ‘sheet was being lowered by the four corners.’

**So, this vision comes down and stays before
Peter’s face in the city of Joppa at noon, on the top
of the house, while being hungry. what is next?**

**Acts 10:12; “In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth,
wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air..”**



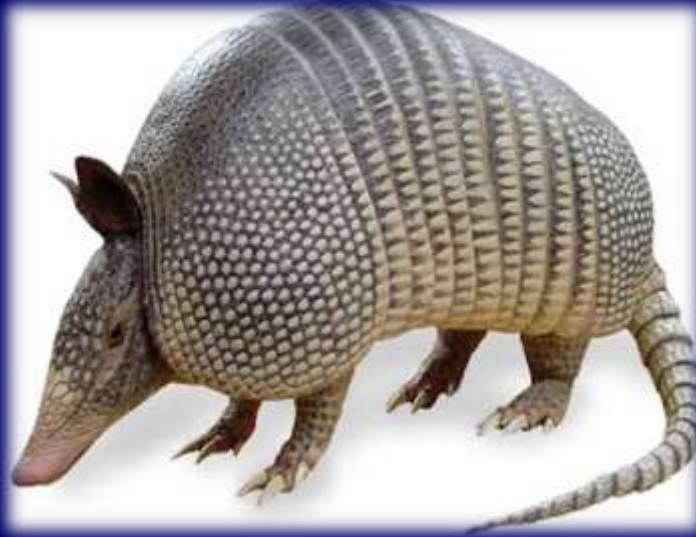
**Inside this sheet were:
Four-footed animals.**

Acts 10:12; “In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth,
wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air..”



Inside this sheet were:
Wild beasts.

Acts 10:12; “In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth,
wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air..”



Inside this sheet were:
CREeping THINGS.

Acts 10:12; “In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth,
wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air..”



Inside this sheet were:
Birds of the Air.

Acts 10:11-11; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.

13 “Then a voice told him,
"Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

Although the text does not say so, we know from Peter's answer to the Lord that every animal on this great sheet was an “**unclean**” animal – one the Jewish law had forbidden him to eat.



Acts 10:14-15; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.

14 "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15 The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

Since Peter could choose any animal to “kill and eat,” he said he could choose none of them. Therefore they must have all been “unclean” animals.





JEWS

The diagram consists of a large blue arrow pointing from left to right. The arrow's tail is a light blue square with a fine dot pattern, containing the word 'JEWS' in blue capital letters. The arrow's shaft is a solid medium blue. The arrow's head is a dark blue triangle pointing towards a red triangle on the right. The red triangle contains the word 'GENTILES' in dark blue capital letters. The background is white with faint vertical lines.

GENTILES

Acts 10:14-15; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.

**With the end of the Jewish law came
an end to the dietary restrictions of that law.
So too came the end of the restrictions upon
the Jews concerning their relations with Gentiles.**

**These Jewish Apostles and all Jewish disciples
had many things to learn about the new kingdom
and who could be a part of it.**

**Not only are the restrictions about which
animals could be eaten removed for Jews,
but they had to accept a new concept of who
God's Chosen People and His Holy Nation were.**

DISCUSSION QUESTION:-

**Are Christians
under any dietary
constraints in the
New Testament?**



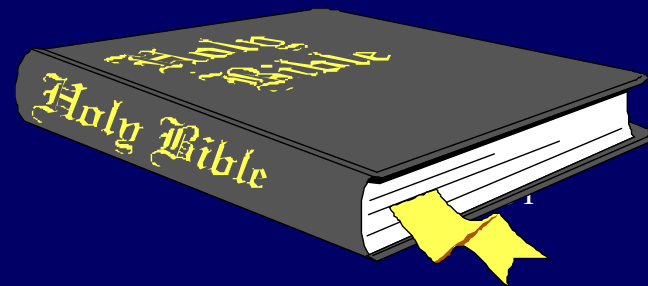
Christians dietary constraints today?

“You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals.”

Acts 15:29;

“Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.”

Eph 5:18;



Tanners at work in traditional house of Simon.



Acts 10:16-18; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.

**16 “This happened three times,
and immediately the sheet
was taken back to heaven.”**

**17 “While Peter was wondering about
the meaning of the vision, the men
sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's
house was and stopped at the gate.”**

**18 “They called out, asking if Simon
who was known as Peter was staying there.”**



Door of Simon the Tanner's House. (traditional.)

Acts 10:19-20; Peter's vision – Clean unclean.

19 “While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, “Simon, three men are looking for you.”

20 “So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.”

Here we have the Spirit directing the preacher to go to the unsaved man. Although an angel did appear to Cornelius it was not to save him directly.

Simon's Courtyard.



Acts 10:21-23; Peter meets the Gentiles.

**21 “Peter went down and said to the men,
“I'm the one you're looking for.
Why have you come?”**

**22 “The men replied, We have come from
Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous
and God-fearing man, who is respected
by all the Jewish people.**

**A holy angel told him to have you
come to his house so that
he could hear what you have to say.”**

**23 “Then Peter invited the men
into the house to be his guests.”**

DISCUSSION QUESTION:-

**Why do you think God
gave a vision
instead of just stating
to Peter plainly
about the Gentiles?**



This story has special elements that must be understood. **Cornelius was the first Gentile** to be allowed to enter this new kingdom without having to enter through Judaism.

Cornelius did not have to become like a Jew first, an adherent of the Law of Moses, then become a disciple, as all Gentiles before him had.

God is working to bring **Gentiles into His kingdom with Jews as equals** with no distinctions. He is erasing all ethnic or racial distinctions. **That was the meaning of Peter's vision.**



Peter's vision – Clean unclean. Conclusion:-

After Saul's conversion the churches of Judea experience a time of tranquillity.

Peter takes advantage of the short period of peace among the churches to travel throughout Judea, preaching, healing and raising a woman from the dead.

His miraculous works are signs that prove that his message is from God.

The number of disciples grow rapidly in this period.

Acts 10; Peter's introduction to Cornelius.

In the meantime, God has chosen the man who will serve as His introduction of Gentiles into the church.

This man is **a Roman captain** of a hundred men called, Cornelius, who is stationed in Caesarea, the Roman capital of Palestine.

An angel appearing to Cornelius, then the vision of a sheet full of unclean animals lowered out of heaven for Peter makes Peter think.

Through the Holy Spirit's direction, God is setting up **the opportunity and the means for Gentiles** to come into His church **to be co-equal with Jews.**



Acts 10; Peter's introduction to Cornelius.

Although **Cornelius had prayed to God** many times,
had offered alms in worship to God,
had observed God's laws as a righteous Gentile.

Although God had told him that his worship
was noted and his alms had come up before
God as a memorial, **Cornelius was not saved.**

According to God's principle of the treasure
in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7),
a human preacher had to give Cornelius
a message or words in order for him to be saved.

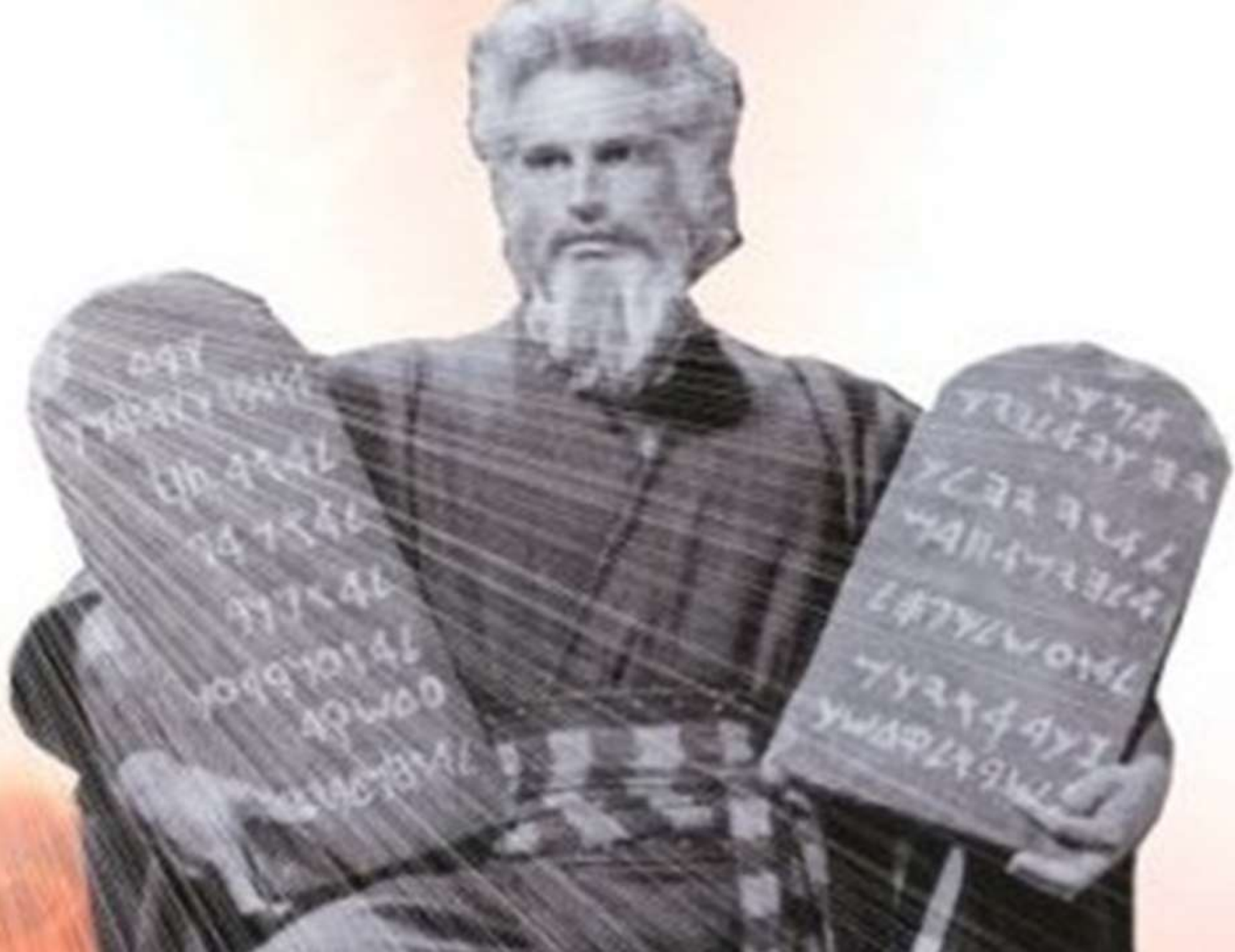
**Cornelius must respond to the gospel.
That Peter will preach to him.**

Acts 10; Peter's introduction to Cornelius.

The three men from Cornelius have found **Peter**. The Holy Spirit has told him to go with them.

He is ready to **go to the house of a Gentile** and do what Jews were before forbidden to do: enter his house, associate with him in a familiar, friendly way and **even eat with him**.

But notice in the next part of our story that he takes along **six Jewish men** to serve as witnesses to back him up when he is questioned about this visit by his fellow Apostles.



God Gave the Jews a Law.

God Gave the Jews a Law. by Ellis Jones.

The laws of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, were for the Jews and no one else. (Deut 5:2-3; Nehemiah 9:14;)

While the Jews were under that law, the Gentiles remained under the Laws of Noah.

**Now, no one is under that law today,
not even Jews.**

**Christians are under the Law of Christ.
(Rom 7:1-7; 1 Cor 9:21; Gal 6:2;)**

God Gave the Jews a Law. by Ellis Jones.

**To isolate the Jews
And keep that nation pure
God gave them Moses' Law;
So they could be secure.**

**In many of those laws
God's principles were taught:-
What things to avoid
And to do the things they ought.**



**But when the time had come,
God sent His Only Son.
He opened up the way
For each and every one.**



To God there is no Jew,

1

**Male, female,
bond or free.**

**So all
are now equal.**

And saved in Him may be.

**There are no distinctions
Of race or ethnic pride.
All “married” to our Groom,
We are all Jesus’ Bride.**



**All loyal to our Head,
We now obey His Law.
We live in the “Last Days,”
God in His plan foresaw.**



Acts 9:31; to 10:23; God prepares Peter to go to the Gentiles.

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**Next in the series:-
Acts 10:24; to 11 18; Cornelius.**