

- I) V1-2 INTRO: There was a certain man in *Caesarea* called Cornelius a centurion of what
- II) LUKE: Had just stated that Peter stayed for some time in the city of Joppa
- III) HE NOW: Speaks about a man named Cornelius who lives in the city of *Caesarea*
  - a) The city of *Caesarea* was 30 miles north of the city of Joppa
- IV) CAESAREA: Was a major city at that time
  - a) It was the headquarters of Pontius Pilate. It was a where Paul was imprisoned for two years. It was the home of Philip the evangelist, and his four daughters and after Jerusalem was destroyed, it became the center of Christianity in Israel.

It was provided with a magnificent harbor and was named *Caesarea* in honor of Augustus. It had a forty acre harbor that used concrete that hardened, under water and could accommodate 300 ships. It also had a theater that sat 3,500 that was covered with skins, providing shade and a hippodrome that seated more then 20,000 for chariot races. It had water provided by an aqueduct that utilized gravity, bringing water from springs at the base of Mt Carmel, almost 10 miles away.

The majority of its inhabitants were Greeks. *Caesarea*, at this time the chief seaport of Israel and the Roman capital, was their military headquarters.
- V) V1 IN CAESAREA: Lived a certain centurion named Cornelius
- VI) CENTURION: High ranking military leader in charge of 100 men
- VII) ROMAN LEGIONS: Were divided into groups of ten cohorts of 600 men
  - a) Each centurion commanded 100 men, and each legion had 60 centurions
- VIII) CORNELIUS: Commanded the Italian cohort, simply meaning they were Italians
- IX) NOTICE: Cornelius is described as a *devout* (pious, religious) man
  - a) This speaks of reverence motivated by awe, and demonstrated by actions
- X) QUESTION: What are the earmarks of a devout man?
- XI) *FIRST*: A devout *fears God* and leads and influences *his household*
  - a) Dt 5:29 Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to *fear me* and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!

b) Jer 5:22 Should you not fear me?" declares the LORD. "Should you not tremble in my presence? I made the sand a boundary for the sea, an everlasting barrier it cannot cross. The waves may roll, but they cannot prevail; they may roar, but they cannot cross it.

I) **SECOND:** He *gives alms generously to the people*

a) He cared for those in need, resulting in respect from Jewish people (V22)

1) 2 Co 9:11-12 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

II) **THIRD:** He *prayed to God always (he was a man of prayer)*

a) Ps 55:17 Evening and morning and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice

III) **REMEMBER:** Philip had come to Caesarea (Ac 8:40)

a) He had been preaching in all the cities, and undoubtedly was preaching there

1) Cornelius would have heard of this, and was praying as to if it was true

IV) V3-4 ABOUT: The ninth hour (3pm) of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God

a) Such angelic visits often are accompanied by fear and not a casual attitude

1) Daniel 10 angels calms down Daniel; Zacharias was afraid when Gabriel spoke to him (Lu 1); the angel speaking to the shepherds (Lu 2:10), at Jesus' resurrection angels calmed the women at Jesus' tomb (Lu 24:5)

V) **POINT:** God was answering his prayer:

a) The gospel is true, and God was visiting him with salvation, *though Gentile*

1) Hosea 1:10 Yet the number of the children of Israel Shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' *There* it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.'

VI) **CORNELIUS:** Was a God fearer worshipping God according to the best of his knowledge

a) God is revealing salvation to him

VII) V4 NOTICE: He said what is it, *Lord*

a) He is openly stating that he will do whatever he is commanded to do

VIII) THE ORDER: Send men to Joppa for Simon and he will tell you what *you must do*

a) He will tell you what you must do to be saved, through preaching the gospel to you

3) He sends three: Two devoted household servants and a devout soldier

V5-8 NOW: Send men to Joppa and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. He is

a) Go get Peter: He will explain the gospel to you

1) Sends three: Two devoted household servants and a devout soldier

VII) V9-16 THE NEXT DAY: As they went on their journey and drew near the city Peter went up on the

a) Not only was God preparing Cornelius and his household, but He was also busy preparing Peter

I) SINCE HE WAS HUNGRY: His vision involved eating

a) The sheet contained clean and unclean animals reflecting the OT instructions of Kosher

1) Lev 20:25-26 "You must therefore make a *distinction* between *clean* and *unclean* animals and between unclean and clean birds. Do not defile yourselves by any animal or bird or anything that moves along the ground --those which I have set apart as *unclean* for you. You are to be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and *I have set you apart from the nations* to be my own.

2) Dietary law was a visible reminder that Israel was set apart from Gentiles

II) KOSHER LAW: Was so deeply ingrained in him that he could not grasp what God was doing

a) In Jesus, Kosher law was abolished

1) Col 2:16-17 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you *eat or drink*, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; *the reality*, however, is found in Christ.

III) GOD WAS MAKING: Jew and Gentile one in Jesus

a) The wall of separation was coming down

1) Eph. 2:13-16 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has

made *the two one* and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself *one new man* out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

IV) V17-22 NOW: While Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant behold

a) He does not have much time to wonder, because God has timed it so the messengers arrive

1) V21 Peter models the disciple: He is obedient to the instructions of the Holy Spirit

V) V23 THEN: He invited them in and lodged them

a) This subtly reveals an amazing work of the Spirit: Hatred for Gentiles was dissolved

1) He treats them like royalty, entertaining them as honored guests

2) 1 Pe 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

VI) PETER: Brings some brethren from Joppa with him

a) Ac 11:12 tells us he took six with him

1) This is wise, because later he is taken to task for obeying the Holy Spirit in this manner

VII) V24-33 AND: The following day they entered Caesarea

a) They spent a night en route and arrived the next day: Cornelius was waiting with relatives and friends

1) V25 INTERESTING: This saint did not accept worship!

2) Rev 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

3) Rev 22:9 But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

VIII) V28 THEN: He said to them You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with

a) This was because Gentiles did not observe ceremonial law and would be unclean

1) Jn 18:28 Then the Jews led Jesus from Caiaphas to the palace of the Roman governor. By now it was early morning, and to avoid ceremonial uncleanness the Jews did not enter the palace; they wanted to be able to eat the Passover.

I) V28 NOTICE: But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean

a) SHOWN: To give evidence or proof of a thing

1) God has revealed to me that I am to fellowship with Gentiles

2) Gal 2:11-14 When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

II) V29-33 WE ARE OPEN: Tell us what God wants us to know!

a) Ro 10:11-15 As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile --the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

III) V34-43 THEN PETER: Opened his mouth and said In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality

a) He finally sees it clearly: The Church is made up of Jew and Gentile

1) Ro 3:29-30 Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, since there is only one God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith.

IV) IMPORTANT: Cornelius was unsaved

a) God's HS had begun a work that resulted in salvation:

1) Jn 16:8-11

2) 2 Ti 2:25 Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance *leading them to a knowledge of the truth*

3) 2 Co 6:2 For he says, "In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

V) V38 GOD ANOINTED JESUS

a) Jesus had the fullness of the Spirit and ministered in the Spirit's power

1) Lu 3:21-22 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

2) Lu 4:18-19 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

VI) V41 NOT TO: All the people

a) 1 Co 15:5-8 he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

VII) V44-48 SERMON'S CONCLUSION: Pentecost for the Gentiles

a) HS baptized them as they listened: They believed as they heard, and the power came upon them

1) They are baptized, because they have been saved