

Acts 10:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

Analysis

And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. The angel's message affirms that God noticed Cornelius's spiritual devotion and charitable works, though these didn't earn salvation but demonstrated genuine faith.

Historical Context

Thy prayer is heard indicates God's attention to Gentile devotion outside formal Judaism. Alms in remembrance echoes sacrificial language (Leviticus 2:2), suggesting God viewed Cornelius's charity as pleasing offering. Reformed theology distinguishes works as evidence of genuine faith versus works as means of earning salvation. Cornelius's devotion, though praiseworthy, still required hearing gospel for actual salvation. This distinction, established around 40 CE, became crucial for understanding faith-works relationship.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How does God notice sincere spiritual devotion even outside covenant community?
2. What relationship exists between charitable works and saving faith?
3. In what ways do good works demonstrate faith without earning salvation?
4. How should believers understand God 'remembering' prayers and deeds?
5. What does this passage teach about God's justice in salvation beyond ethnic boundaries?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	φησὶν	Κορνήλιε	εἰσηκούσθη	σου	ἡ	προσευχὴ	καὶ
And	said	Cornelius	is heard	thine	G3588	prayer	And
G2532	G5346	G2883	G1522	G4675		G4335	G2532
αἱ	ἐλεημοσύναι	σου	ἐμνήσθησαν	ἐνώπιον	τοῦ	θεοῦ	
G3588	alms	thine	are had in remembrance	in the sight	G3588	of God	
	G1654	G4675	G3415	G1799		G2316	

Additional Cross-References

Acts 10:4 (Prayer): And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

Luke 1:13 (Prayer): But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

Daniel 10:12 (References God): Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

Daniel 9:23 (Parallel theme): At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to shew thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

Revelation 5:8 (Prayer): And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

Isaiah 38:5 (Prayer): Go, and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add unto thy days fifteen years.

Leviticus 5:12 (Parallel theme): Then shall he bring it to the priest, and the priest shall take his handful of it, even a memorial thereof, and burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: it is a sin offering.

Leviticus 2:2 (Parallel theme): And he shall bring it to Aaron's sons the priests: and he shall take thereout his handful of the flour thereof, and of the oil thereof, with all the frankincense thereof; and the priest shall burn the memorial of it upon the altar, to be an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD:

Leviticus 2:9 (Parallel theme): And the priest shall take from the meat offering a memorial thereof, and shall burn it upon the altar: it is an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.

Philippians 4:18 (References God): But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.