

Acts 9:43

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner.

Analysis

And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner. Peter's extended stay with Simon the tanner demonstrates progressive movement beyond Jewish purity laws, preparing Peter for the radical Gentile inclusion revelation approaching at Cornelius's house.

Tarried many days indicates extended ministry period, not brief visit. Peter didn't immediately leave after Tabitha's resurrection but invested in Joppa church's growth. Faithful ministry requires patient, sustained presence, not merely dramatic interventions followed by departure.

Simon a tanner presents significant detail. Tanners worked with dead animals, making them ritually unclean under Jewish law (Leviticus 11:39-40). Observant Jews avoided tanners and their dwellings. Peter's willingness to lodge with tanner indicates loosening grip of purity restrictions, though full transformation required further divine intervention (Acts 10 vision).

Reformed theology sees this as divine preparation—God progressively moves Peter toward accepting Gentiles. The tanner's home location (likely near sea due to trade's odor) positioned Peter for Cornelius's messengers' arrival. God orchestrates circumstances preparing His servants for assigned tasks.

Historical Context

Tanners occupied low social status due to ritual impurity and occupation's unpleasant odors. Peter's choice of lodging (around 38-39 CE) indicated significant departure from strict Pharisaic background. This prepared him for Acts 10's revolutionary vision declaring all foods clean—and by extension, all peoples accessible through Christ.

Joppa's significance grew as Christianity's coastal gateway. Peter's extended stay established strong church presence in strategic port city. Simon the tanner's home, likely near sea for business reasons, provided location where Cornelius's messengers could easily find Peter. God's providence in details prepared way for monumental shift in early Christianity's understanding of Gentile inclusion.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God progressively prepare His servants for radical paradigm shifts?
2. What role do seemingly minor details (like staying with tanner) play in spiritual development?
3. In what ways should Christians examine whether religious traditions obstruct gospel advancement?
4. How does extended ministry presence differ from brief spectacular interventions?
5. What does Peter's flexibility regarding purity laws teach about distinguishing biblical commands from human traditions?

Interlinear Text

Ἐγένετο δὲ ἡμέρας ἱκανὰς μεῖναι αὐτόν ἐν
it came to pass And days many that he tarried G846 in
G1096 G1161 G2250 G2425 G3306 G1722

Ἰόππῃ παρά τινι Σίμωνι βυρσεῖ
Joppa with one Simon a tanner
G2445 G3844 G5100 G4613 G1038

Additional Cross-References

Acts 10:6 (Parallel theme): He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

Acts 10:32 (Parallel theme): Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

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