

Peter's Vision

God gives Peter a vision of unclean animals and tells him not to call unclean what God has made clean. Peter realizes the gospel is for Gentiles too.

Acts 10:1-48

CHARACTERS: Peter, Cornelius, God

THEMES: Gospel for all, Breaking barriers, Obedience, The Holy Spirit

AT CAESAREA THERE was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing. One day an angel of God said to him, 'Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter.'

About noon the following day, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds.

Then a voice told him, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'

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

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

This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius arrived. The Spirit told Peter, 'Three men are looking for you. Get up and go with them. Do not hesitate, for I have sent them.'

Peter went with them to Cornelius's house. He found a large gathering of people. He said to them, 'You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with or visit a Gentile. But God has shown me that I should not call anyone impure or unclean.'

While Peter was speaking about Jesus, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The Jewish believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles.

Peter said, 'Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.' So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.