

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Part VI: The Ministry Of The Universal Church In Its Spread To The Ends Of The Earth, Acts 8:26-28:31

A. Christ's Ministry To Evangelize Segments Of All Mankind, Acts 8:26-11:18

3. Christ's Evangelization In The Line Of Japheth

b. Christ's Use Of Circumstances To Lead Peter To Evangelize In Japheth's Line (Acts 10:23-48)

I. Introduction

- A. One way God leads His people into new directions in life and ministry is through Biblical circumstances.
- B. Christ led Peter to evangelize Gentiles this way, and we view it for our insight (as follows):

II. Christ's Use Of Circumstances To Lead Peter To Evangelize In Japheth's Line, Acts 10:23-48.

- A. After agreeing to go with the Gentile messengers from Cornelius in keeping with the vision Peter himself had received from God about accepting Gentiles (Acts 10:23 with 10:9-22), Peter departed for Cornelius' house with his messengers, a bold step of faith for an Orthodox Jew to take, Acts 10:23.
- B. Cornelius with his household, relatives and close friends were waiting for Peter to arrive, and when Peter entered his home, Cornelius bowed down and began to worship Peter, Acts 10:24-25.
- C. Peter quickly raised Cornelius up, explaining he was just a man (Acts 10:26) and when Peter found the house full of Gentiles, he explained that even they knew it was "unlawful" for him as a Jew to fellowship with them, but how God had showed him he was not to call any man unclean, Acts 10:28; Deut. 7:3-6.
- D. After this introduction, Peter then asked why Cornelius had sent for him, Acts 10:29.
- E. Cornelius' reply explaining the details of his own vision of Peter's coming **circumstantially** provided the evidence Peter needed to conclude God wanted him to give the Gospel to these Gentiles, Acts 10:30-33:
 - 1. Cornelius told how four days earlier, he had been fasting and praying when he had a vision about the "ninth" hour, the three o'clock **Jewish** time of *prayer* at the **evening sacrifice**, Acts 10:30a; 3:1. Peter knew the **timing** of this vision fit with **God's** addressing **Old Testament** saints by *angels*, Dan. 9:21!
 - 2. In that vision, Cornelius said a **man** stood before him in *bright clothes*, and **Peter** would know from the appearance of the angels at Christ's tomb that this was an angel of God, Acts 10:30b; L uke 24:4-6.
 - 3. This angel from God announced Cornelius' prayer had been heard, and that his alms were recalled in the sight of God, Acts 10:31, references to good works that Peter knew were repeatedly made by **God's angels** when they appeared to **Old Testament saints**, cf. Daniel 9:23 and 10:12 with Luke 1:13.
 - 4. Cornelius then told how this angel had (a) told him (b) to send (c) to Joppa for (d) Simon, (e) whose surname was Peter, who (f) lodged with (g) another Simon, a (h) tanner, (i) by the seashore, (j) and that (k) this Peter was to come to him (l) with a message, Acts 10:32. So many specific, personal *details* Peter knew could not have been humanly known by Cornelius, so his vision had been *supernatural*!
- F. Cornelius then explained his household was full of people who were expecting to hear a message from **God** through Peter, believing Peter had been commanded of **God** to deliver it unto them, Acts 10:33.
- G. The **many circumstances** of Cornelius' vision **with their BIBLICAL BASES** together with the **devotion** Cornelius had to **Israel's God** along with Peter's **own** earlier *vision* about **accepting Gentiles convinced Peter** to give the Gospel to this household: Peter then testified that this all made him realize God did not respect persons, but had accepted all men in every nation who feared and obeyed Him, Acts 10:34-35.
- H. Peter then gave these Gentiles the Gospel, that one is justified by faith in Jesus Christ, Acts 10:36-43.
- I. While Peter was explaining that God granted remission of sins by faith in Christ, these Gentiles believed, and were filled with the Holy Spirit and began supernaturally to speak in other languages like the Jewish believers did on the Day of Pentecost, evidence they **also** were in the Church, Acts 10:43, 44-46; 2:1-4!
- J. Shocked that the Holy Spirit had come upon Gentiles, Peter and the Jews with him agreed they could not withhold baptism from them, so they baptized them, and stayed with them for several days, Acts 10:47-48.

Lesson: Christ used (1) circumstances (2) based on Biblical truths (3) that were given above any human ability (4) in the context of devout people to **GUIDE Peter to GIVE Gentiles the GOSPEL of CHRIST.**

Application: May we view extensive circumstances that are based on Biblical truths that are given above human ability in the context of devout people as being from God, and follow His leading in them!