

Acts 10-12, Part Two

Conversion of Cornelius to Church at Antioch

I. The Conversion of the House of Cornelius: Acts 10

- A. Cornelius' Status: Gentile God-fearer – 10:1-4
- B. Cornelius' Vision: "What is it Lord" (compare with 9:5) – 10:3-8
- C. Peter's Vision – 10:9-16
 - a. Four Corners
 - b. Cleansed Creatures
 - c. Three Times Repeated
 - d. Perplexity
 - God often gives vision without understanding; the understanding only comes after obedience to the vision.
- D. Cornelius' Preparations – 10:24
- E. The Intersection of the Jewish – Gentile Worlds – 10:25-29
 - a. Cornelius' homage
 - b. Peter's strange response
 - It most certainly was not "unlawful" for him to be there.
 - If you are an Apostle and you have a crowd of people gathered to listen to you, one would suppose you would know what to do next!
- F. Peter's Message – 10:34-43
 - a. Peter's moment of discovery/understanding
 - b. Gospel of and about Jesus the Lord – His life, death, resurrection, ascension, and the forgiveness of sins.
- G. The Holy Spirit's Presence – 10:44-48
 - a. Spirit Baptism as Conversion
 - b. Water Baptism as Necessary
 - "Can anyone think of a reason NOT to do this?"
 - No doubt God "took command" as there was no way even Peter could persuade the anti-Gentile Jerusalem Christian community of the reality of the Gentile harvest.
 - Acts 11:1-3, 15-18; especially note, "Who was I to stand in God's way!"
 - The beginning of the acceptance of the one new man – 11:18

II. The Beginning of the Church in Antioch – Acts 11:19-26

- Antioch as a major city
- A. The Jerusalem Connection
 1. Persecution in association with Stephen's martyrdom
 2. Foreign presence in the city at Pentecost - Acts 2:7-11

- B. Hellenists: Greek speaking Gentiles
- C. Apostle Barnabas
 - 1. Witness to Grace
 - 2. Enlisting Paul. Why? The former Pharisee understood clearly the Gentile Mission because of his theological vision.
 - 3. A Year of Instruction
 - We can only wonder what they included in these catechetical lessons.
 - Perhaps in this context, Paul began to “flesh out” his thoughts in Romans 1-4
 - Perhaps here the implications of justification were worked out.
- D. The People of the “The Way” as “Christians”
- E. Shared Ministry that is plural and diverse
- F. First Offering for Jerusalem

III. Peter’s Arrest and Deliverance

- A. Persecution of the Hebrew Christians (Stephen was a Hellenist)
 - 1. Death of several believers, including James, brother of John Zebedee
 - 2. Arrest of Peter
- B. Prayer and Deliverance – Acts 12:5- 11 (note: Philippians 1:12-19)
- C. Angels in the Ancient Church – 12:12-19
- D. James the Just (“Old Camel Knees”) – 12:17; author of the epistle and leading figure in the Church of Jerusalem (Acts 15:12-21; Galatians 2:1-14). Later, executed on the eve of the beginning of the Jewish revolt in Jerusalem (AD 65).
- E. “Keeping the Word” – Acts 12:18-19
- F. Gruesome Death of Herod – Acts 12:20 ff