



## ACTS 10

# A GOSPEL FOR ALL PEOPLES: EXPANSION TO GENTILES

Acts chapter 10 holds a significant position in the story of salvation, particularly for people of non-Jewish descent. It is the story of Cornelius, a Roman centurion in need of a savior, and Peter, a disciple in need of God's redemptive vision for all people.

Though not Jewish, Cornelius was a devout man who feared God, gave generously to those in need, and prayed regularly (Acts 10:2). He was pious and well thought of among the Jews (Acts 10:22). In response to his prayers, God sent an angel instructing Cornelius to call for Peter.

In God's sovereign timing, Peter received a vision of a sheet filled with unclean animals, accompanied by God's command: "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean" (Acts 10:15). As Peter was wondering about the meaning of this vision, messengers arrived inviting him to Cornelius' home.

Upon arriving, Peter declared to all within the house that Jesus is Lord of all and that "everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name" (Acts 10:43). As he was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and all who heard the message of salvation. The Jewish believers who came with Peter "were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues (other languages) and praising God..." (Acts 10:45-46). This event was groundbreaking—it proved that Gentiles could receive the Holy Spirit.

Cornelius' conversion confirmed an important truth for Jewish believers—and the world—that God's offer of salvation through Jesus is for all people. For Peter and the early Jewish believers who had long seen themselves as God's chosen people, this required a radical transformation of thought. They had grown up believing that Gentiles were outsiders. Yet now, through Christ, God was creating a larger family.

The Apostle Paul would continue to emphasize this truth to the early church. Ephesians 2:14 states, "For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility." Galatians 3:28 declares that in Christ, "there is neither Jew nor Gentile." Through the Spirit, God was fulfilling His promise to bless all nations through Abraham (Genesis 12:3), forming one unified people in Christ, breaking down ethnic and religious barriers.

The story of Cornelius and Peter is one of conversion and expanded vision. Jesus had commanded His followers in Matthew 28 to "go and make disciples of all nations," and Acts 10 marks a pivotal moment in the fulfillment of that mission. This encounter confirmed that the message of salvation through Jesus is for everyone, regardless of background, culture, or tradition. What happened in Cornelius' home was more than a personal conversion—it was a breakthrough that reshaped the early church's understanding of who could belong in God's family.

