

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - The Transition Truth Within the New Testament - Peter and Cornelius - Acts Part 4

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

[0 : 00] I hope you have available to you a Bible this morning because you certainly will be needing it. We've got an extensive text to consider that is very, very critical to the general understanding of the whole plan and program of God.

And if you do not have a Bible, perhaps the person next to you may have one and would be kind enough to share it with you. We place a great deal of authority. In fact, we place all of our authority upon the scriptures for the simple reason that it's the only place where we can get the full scoop and the real truth.

And it is principally due to our nation having ignored or rejected the authority of scripture over the past several years that is responsible for the mess we're in right now.

You were aware that we are in a mess, weren't you? I trust you are. So when we tried to determine the name that we were going to give to this organization, this local church, we bandied about several possibilities and we came to two conclusions.

This was back in 1970. And the first conclusion we came to was that the Bible had to be our sole source of authority for belief and for practice.

[1 : 25] And we wanted to really emphasize the grace of God because there is absolutely nothing in the world and nothing that God has ever done that compares with the matchless grace he has extended toward us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

And when you put the Bible as our authority and the grace of God as our theme together, grace Bible church just seemed to be a kind of a natural.

So that's what we ended up with. And we have never regretted it. And we have never regretted it. Several months ago, we began this series that we have entitled The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problems.

And the world's problems, of course, centers around the nature of human sin, which was addressed through the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. And he, being a direct descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, down through the line of Judah and David the king a thousand years later, he, of course, is the final solution that the Jewish people have proposed.

And do you know, the irony of it is, they are not even aware of that. You will not find very many Jews today who think that Jesus of Nazareth is the world's solution to its problems.

[2 : 57] But he is. And what he came to do for us that we could not do for ourselves makes all the difference in the world because he wrought our redemption.

He paid the purchase price to deliver us from the slave market of sin. And eventually, in his second coming, which is prophesied far more throughout Scripture than is his first coming.

And when he comes again, he will not be in a good mood. He will not come as a suffering servant or as a lamb of God. He will be coming as the lion of the tribe of Judah.

And he is going to settle scores. So what we are currently considering is how all of this is going to play out. And once we finish this portion in the book of Acts and spend some time in Galatians and establish the authority and the calling of the apostle Paul to be the apostle to the Gentiles, we will then move on into the prophetic portions that await us.

And that will encompass the Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24 and 25, which is the most extensive message that Christ ever delivered in public.

[4 : 10] And it deals, of course, with what is coming in prophecy. And then we will be consulting the book of the Revelation as well. So while we are en route to that, let me remind you that the critical transition continues.

The Acts of the Apostles constitute the pivotal swing book of the plan and program of God. It is here in this book, encompassing 28 chapters and involving approximately 30 years of time in history, that these events are coming together to produce a cataclysmic change in humanity throughout the world.

The book of Acts encompasses 30 years of early Jewish Gentile history in a way never before realized.

Previously, that is, previous to the writing of the book of Acts, which was about 2,000 years ago, previous to that, or 4,000 years previous, Jew and Gentile, by divine design, had been very much separated one from the other.

This was God's doing, and it was very deliberate. The Jew, from the outset, was isolated from the rest of the world's population by its religion, because, first of all, they were monotheistic.

[5 : 50] They believed there was but one God. That was in stark contrast to all of the pagan neighbors around them. All the nations around them embraced an abundance of deities and idolatry.

So the Jew stood out in that he was the real oddball wherever he was. He believed there was but one God. And that one God, of course, is the creator and sustainer of the universe.

So he was not only isolated from the rest of the world by religion and monotheism, but by culture and even by their food diets, their dietary restrictions, their special observance of the Sabbath, this was Jewish only, or the seventh day of the week, and in the absolutely essential right of the circumcision of all Jewish males.

No one was or had ever been so separated from the world in so many ways designed to give them peculiarity as the Jew.

And God made it very clear, You will be a peculiar people unto me. And later he will say something through the prophet Amos like this, You only, addressing the nation of Israel, You only, of all the other nations of the world, have I known.

[7 : 18] That is a tremendously significant statement. Because none of the nations of the world were ever unknown to God. But this nation, Israel, was known by God in a way that no other nation ever was, including the U.S. of A. to this day.

He chose out the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And he is going to use that genealogical line to be the spearhead for solving the world's problems.

And that, of course, will center upon the sin problem. It never occurred to the Jew that this would ever change. And here is this dramatic upheaval that is now coming upon us that we are talking about.

From the time the Jew was singled out and blessed by God and told, You are to be separate. You are to be special. You are to be different from all the others.

You are not to intermarry. You are not to give your sons and daughters to those pagans or take them from theirs. You are to be a peculiar people unto me. And the Jew just naturally assumed, Well, that's the way it's always going to be.

[8 : 39] Can't imagine that ever changing. Because God started that. After all, it was the eternal God that set all this up. And made all these distinctions by which the Jewish people were to conduct their daily lives.

This was the law God gave to Moses. And the thought that it would not be eternal was to the Jew as ridiculous as the idea that God was not eternal.

So it was inconceivable to them that something was going to come about that would cause the Almighty to set all that peculiarity aside and mesh the Jew with the Gentile.

Unthinkable. Unthinkable. Impossible. Absurd. Don't consider that for a moment. That would have been the typical response of any Jew.

After all, how clear could God make it that through Moses, these laws and restrictions were imposed upon us, for us.

[9 : 56] They were never given to the Egyptians. They were never given to the Babylonians. Never given to the Sumerians. They are for the Jew. And the fact that it comes from an eternal God means that you're just locked in in perpetuity.

That's it. There isn't going to be any change from that. God is eternal. Everything he does is eternal. Isn't it? No, it isn't. Because God changes his plan and his program in accordance with the need of humanity.

And in accordance with his own divine design and wisdom. So that he doesn't always work the same way. We know this evidence in the fact that nobody's offering animal sacrifices anymore.

That ought to be a pretty obvious change right there. And that's just one of several changes that have come about. Because all that God gave to Israel for their peculiarity and their differences all came through the law of Moses and were all under the original first covenant.

The old covenant. Sometimes we call it the Old Testament. Same thing. But that Old Testament is going to make way for a New Testament.

[11 : 14] Which is simply the rest of the story. And what we are talking about now here in the book of Acts is the transition or the bridge that is taking place in amalgamating the Jew with the Gentile.

And it is going to cause a huge uproar. I mean things are going to go topsy-turvy.

The confusion that is going to be rampant is just unimaginable. Because for centuries the Jewish people have been so locked in.

Circumcision. Sabbath keeping. Dietary laws. Animal sacrifice. All the rest. And now. Now. They are going to be told.

That doesn't count anymore. That stuff is all passe. Something new has come. What? Are you kidding me? The faith of our fathers changed?

[12 : 24] Commingling. Hobnobbing with Gentiles? Hobnobbing with Gentiles? You can't be serious. And that's exactly what we are going to be looking at this morning.

So. First of all. I want you to turn to. Well you will need to turn there. I will just read it to you. Because we will be in several places. But. But if you would. While I am reading this.

Find your place in Acts chapter 10. We will return to Cornelius. Fascinating guy. And if you want to know. What purpose the law served.

It was a temporal thing. That God imposed upon his people. For their blessing and benefit. But. Galatians 3.19. Asks the question. As the apostle addresses it.

And he is talking of course. Regarding Judaizers. Paul asks the question. Wherefore then. Serveth the law. What's the purpose of the law?

[13 : 18] Why did God even give the law. If the time is going to come. When he is going to set it aside. And he tells us. Wherefore then. Serveth the law.

It was added. Because of transgressions. Till the seed. Should come.

To whom. The promise. Was made. Well. Who. Is the seed. Well. Who do you think. This is the seed.

Of the woman. In Genesis 3.15. And the seed. 4,000 years.

After the promise. Was made to Eve. The seed. Arrived. On the scene. And the seed. Was Yeshua. Amashiach. Jesus.

[14 : 14] The Messiah. He is the seed. And Paul says. Wherefore then. Serveth the law. What's the purpose of the law? It was added. Because of transgressions. Till.

Till. Till. The seed. The seed. Should come. To whom. The promise. Was made. And let me read. The rest of this to you. It is just. Stunning stuff.

Stunning stuff. Now. A mediator. Is not for one party. Only. Whereas God. Is only one. I'm reading from Galatians 3.

Is the law. Then. Contrary. To the promises of God. May it never be. For. Listen. Listen. Listen to this. This is. This is. Great. For.

If. A law. Had been given. Which was. Able. To impart. Life. This is a hypothetical. He's using this as a.

[15 : 11] Illustration. If. If. Life. A law. Had been given. Which was. Able. To impart. Life. Then. Righteousness.

Would indeed. Have been. Based on law. You see the logic of that. Now. What he is saying. Of course. Is. The law. Was never given. To impart.

Life. That was never. The purpose of the law. You don't obtain. Life. By keeping the law. And. This misunderstanding. Is so pervasive. Today. Because you would be surprised.

How many people think. That's the way. To receive. Eternal life. Keep the law. Keep the ten commandments. Obey all the law.

Well. Nobody does that. And those who think they do. Are. Terribly deceived. If. A law. Had been given. Which was able. To impart. Life.

[16 : 06] Then. Righteousness. Would indeed. Have been based. On law. But. Listen. Listen. But. The scripture. Has shut up. All. Men.

Under sin. That. Or so that. The promise. By faith. In Jesus Christ. Might be given. To those. Who believe. Not to those.

Who jump through. A bunch of religious hoops. But through the promise. Of faith. That is just. Through believing. This is called. Justification. By faith. It means. You are brought. Into a right.

Relationship. With God. Solely. And simply. And exclusively. On the basis. Of your belief. In Christ. That is incredible. That is as simple. As it can be.

And for some. Who say. Well that's too easy. Just let me remind you. It was terribly. Terribly. Difficult. But God. Already did. The difficult part. He left.

[17 : 01] The easy part. For us. That's just. To believe. That's amazing. It's called. Amazing. Grace. That's what it's called.

But before faith came. We were kept in custody. Under the law. Being shut up. To the faith. Which was later. To be revealed. Therefore. Listen. Listen. Listen. Listen. Therefore. The law.

Has become. Our tutor. Our teacher. Our instructor. To lead us.

To Christ. To Christ. That we may be justified. By faith. This is something.

You know. I have been through this. Up. And down. And back. And forth. And in. And out. For the last 50 years. And I still never get used to it.

[18 : 00] This is amazing. Justification. By faith. It means. God. Declares. You. To be. Just.

Righteous. On the basis. Of your belief in Christ. Now hear me well. It doesn't mean. That you. Are. Righteous.

And without sin. It means. You are. Declared. Righteous. That is. God's. Verdict. Even.

As a. Justified. Believer. In right. Standing. With God. You're still. Capable. Being. A real. Stinker. And so. Am I. We all.

Have. The capability. Of displeasing. God. And being. Ornery. And mean. And nasty. And unkind. And everything else. This. Justification. Justification. By faith. Is an official.

[18 : 55] Pronouncement. By God. It is not. Based on. Your good. Behavior. Wherefore.

The law. Has become. Our tutor. To lead us. To Christ. That we may be. Justified. By faith. You see. All the law. Can do. Is reveal. Your need. But it can't.

Answer your need. The law. Can tell you. What you need. To do. But the law. Can't do it. For you. I've never heard. A better. Better illustration. Of this. Than a little boy.

Who went in the bathroom. And climbed up. On the stool. And stood there. Before the sink. And looked in the mirror. And the mirror. Told him. Kid. You got a dirty face.

But he never took the mirror. And tried to wash his face. With it. Because that's not what the mirror is for. The mirror just reveals what's there.

[19 : 53] But it can't fix what's there. So then. He has to go to. Soap. And water. For the cleansing. So the law. Displays.

Our failure. Our shortcoming. We don't. Measure. Up. He who would keep the whole law. And offend in one point. He's guilty of all. Someone likened the law.

To a. A. A. A ten link chain. Think of a toe chain. Ten links. And all you have to do.

Is break one link. And the chain fails. Everything comes crashing down. You don't have to break all ten. Just break one. And it all comes crashing down. So the law. Is a schoolmaster.

The law is a teacher. To lead us. To Christ. Because. That's where the answer is. That's the solution. Christ can do something about it. In fact.

[20 : 48] He wants to do something about it. So desperately. That he died. In your place. To give him the right. To be able to do something about it. But now that faith has come.

We are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God. Through faith in Jesus Christ. And it doesn't make any difference.

If you're Jew. Or Gentile. Or Catholic. Or Protestant. Or Muslim. It doesn't make any difference. Once you put your faith in Jesus Christ.

Christ. You are justified. By faith. Regardless. Of what your background. Is or was. Regardless. Of what you believed before. So.

That which determines. Our eternal destiny. Is whether or not. Jesus Christ. Is in your life. And you've been regenerated.

- [21 : 52] By him. You've been made a new person. By him. You are all sons of God. Through faith. In Christ Jesus. For all of you. Who were baptized.
- Into Christ. Have clothed yourselves. With Christ. And folks. Don't. Put. Even a squirt. Or a drop of water. In this verse.
- Don't be misled. Just by seeing the word. Baptism. Where you think of. H2O. There are times. When it is that. But this. Is a baptism.
- That regenerates. This. Is a baptism. That places you. Into union. With Jesus Christ. And makes you. A new creature. In him. This.
- Is a regeneration. Of that. This is what God does. On the inside. Of you. When he makes you. A new person. In Christ. And it has nothing.
- [22 : 46] Whatever to do. With water. Not pouring. Sprinkling. Immersing. Or any other kind. This is what Paul. Is talking about. When he says. For by one spirit. Are we all.
- Baptized. Into one. Body. Whether it be. Jew. Gentile. Bond. Or free. Male. Or female. And you are all. Children of God. By faith. In Jesus Christ.
- This is just. Amazing. It means you are. Identified. With Christ. It means that the very. Righteousness. That belongs to Christ. Is put to. Your account.
- And you are regarded. As by God. Just as if that's. Your righteousness. And it is yours. Because God gave it to you. Through Christ. So if you want.
- A righteousness. That God will accept. You have to get it. From the only place. Where it's available. And that's the person of Christ. And in him. We have his righteousness. We receive that.
- [23 : 43] Just by believing on him. And receiving him. As our personal savior. And of course. That has to begin. With the felt need. If you think. You have no need of this.
- If you think. You're okay. As you are. You won't have any interest. In a savior. You don't even think. You need one. You're really satisfied. Some people.
- I have the idea. I am completely satisfied. With the way I am now. So why shouldn't God be. As if. As if God's standard. Is no higher than theirs. But it is.
- Isn't it? You have clothed yourself. With Christ. There is neither Jew. Nor Greek. There is neither slave. Nor free man. There is neither male. Nor female.
- For you are all one. In Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ. Then. You are Abraham's offspring. Heirs according to promise. And the reason we're considered Abraham's offspring.
- [24 : 37] Is because Abraham is the father of the faithful. Abraham believed God. And it was counted to him. For righteousness. God took Abraham's faith. In place of the righteousness.
- Which he didn't have. And he accepted that. Amazing. It's just amazing. Now. Let's get back to Acts chapter 10. This is where I was headed. Good. Uh.
- In our present study. Of this dramatic change about. We are in the very heart and thick of it. Here. In Acts chapter 10. And the man that God is using.
- To bring about this cataclysmic event. Can't believe. Can't believe what is happening. Or why. And I think that is really ironic.
- Because. The man. I mean. The single individual. Whom God is using. To open this new way. And to break down this barrier.
- [25 : 30] Has. Not even. A clue. What God is doing in his life. Or what he is bringing him into. And yet. This man.

Is the catalyst for it. His name is Peter. He is a chief spokesman. Of the twelve. He is number one.

Of the big three. Peter. James. And John. This Peter. Yes. The same one. Who denied the Lord three times. This Peter. Is the one. Who answered that.

Question. That Jesus asked. When they were. At the Banyos. Up north. In northern. In northern Galilee. And they were there. By Caesarea Philippi. And.

Jesus asked. His apostles. He says. By the way. What's. What's the scuttlebutt. What's going on out there. What are people saying. About me. Jesus had been.

[26 : 26] Moving about. Performing miracles. Delivering his teaching. And he said. To his apostles. What are the folks. Saying about me. Who do they say. I am anyway. And some of the apostles.

Spoke up and said. Well. Some think that you're. Some think that you are. John the Baptist. Raised from the dead. Oh. Well. That's interesting. And some think that you are. Elijah.

Somehow. Come back from the dead. Or reincarnated. Or some think that you're. That prophet. That is mentioned by Moses. In the book of Deuteronomy. Some think that that's who you are. Jesus says. Well. That's all very interesting.

Who do you say. That I am. And it was Peter. Who gave that stellar answer. Thou. Art the Christ. The son of the living God.

You are the Messiah. You are the long awaited promised one. That God said he would send. And we waited for 4,000 years. For you to come. And here you are. And Jesus said.

[27 : 29] Blessed art thou Simon. Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jonah. For God has revealed this unto you. And I give unto you.

The keys of the kingdom. Wow. You know he didn't say that to anybody else. He said that to Peter. Didn't say that to anybody else. I give unto you.

The keys. Now. Hear me well. He didn't say. I give unto you the keys of the church. He didn't say that. He said. I give unto you the keys of the kingdom. Because it was this kingdom thing.

That the Jew. Was really looking forward to. That God had promised. Would eventually come to the earth. When everything would be fixed. And the king would be here. And so on. And when he said.

He gives to Peter. The keys of the kingdom. The key. Is always. A symbol. Of authority. If you have the key. You're able.

[28 : 28] To unlock something. Or to lock up something. The key. Is very strategic. And nobody else. Was given that promise.

Or that commission. And Peter. Is going to use it. Even though. He doesn't.

Understand it. And it is here. In Acts chapter 10. It is just amazing. It's a lengthy passage. I don't apologize for it. I'll read it.

Try to give some. Explanation. As we move through. This all centers about. A man who is. Gentile. He is a Roman army officer.

He is probably. The equivalent. Of our captain. He has 100 men. Under his authority. From which the name. Centurion. Is taken. Almost all of these.

[29 : 27] Roman officers. Were pagans. They were loyal. To the Caesar of Rome. And they worshiped. Multiple gods. They had deities. For everything. Cornelius.

Was different. He was an oddball. He was a Roman army officer. But he didn't buy. The multi-god thing. He saw.

The wisdom. The value. Of their being. But one God. And he came to the conclusion. That that one God. Was the God of Israel. Now this guy.

Is unique. To start with. And here. Please don't lose sight of this. Because this is really. Really important. Acts chapter 10. Is somewhere between.

Eight. To ten years. Eight. To ten years. After. The day of Pentecost.

[30 : 26] When Acts 10. Takes place. Christ's resurrection. Is eight. To ten years old. And the really. Big news. About.

Acts 10. Is the fact. That this guy. Is not a Jew. He's a Gentile. Jew. And all that means. Is that.

Up until this time. All of the believers. In Jesus. As the Messiah. Were Jews. Jewish Messiah.

Jewish people. Believing in a Jewish Messiah. This message. Never went. To Gentiles. It was confined. To Israelites. Israelites. Now we know.

That God's ultimate. Intention. Was for this message. To go to everyone. All throughout the world. But they didn't know that. Back here. And Cornelius. Cornelius.

[31 : 20] Was called. A God. Fear. And. We explained. A God. Fear. Means. Someone who. Is in sympathy. With the beliefs. Of the God of Israel. And.

They may. Give money. To the support. Of the local synagogue. And the Jewish causes. Just out of sympathy. Support. But. Cornelius. Was not a proselyte. He had not become.

A full-fledged Jew. Because in order to do that. You've got to be circumcised. And for a male adult. That is not a small thing. No pun intended.

So. Certain man. At Caesarea. And this is not the Caesarea. That we spoke of earlier. This is Caesarea. By the sea. Caesarea Philippi. Is up in the Banyans. In the north.

Both of the. Caesarea. Caesarea's were named after. The Caesar of Rome. But this is Caesarea. By the sea. And it's a fascinating tourist place. Today. That you can visit. Right on the coast. Right on the coast of Israel.

[32 : 16] Caesarea. Which is the Roman headquarters. He was named Cornelius. The centurion. Called the Italian cohort. A devout man. A devout man. And one who feared God.

With all his household. And gave many alms. To the Jewish people. Now that brings out his sympathy. Someone says that. Your pocketbook will reveal.

Where your true sympathies lie. And Cornelius simply put his money. Where his mouth was. He gave many alms. To the Jewish people. And prayed. To God continually.

What do you think he prayed about? Well I have a theory. And I think it will be developed. We'll see it as we go. I think Cornelius was praying.

For information. For light. And let me tell you dear friends. You probably will not hear me say anything.

[33 : 12] Any more important this morning. Than this. If you really are serious. About God.

And your relationship to him. I would urge you. To begin asking God. For light. For information.

But only. But only. If you intend to respond to it. When you get it. God will not give you information. To satisfy your curiosity.

He will only give you information. If you're willing. To make a commitment. That's a really important thing. I think Cornelius.

Knew certain things. About God. And he knew enough. To know. There was so much more. To know about God. That he didn't know. That he wanted to know. That he was open to. That he was willing.

[34 : 09] To examine. And consider. If only I had the information. This man. Had a thirst. Had a hunger. He wanted to know. And God.

Will not allow. Anyone. To pray for light. And information. Without giving it to him. I don't care. Who you are. Or where you are. If you want the truth. God will see to it.

That you get the truth. Our biggest problem is. We don't want the truth. We want what we've got. We want what we want. Cornelius.

Cornelius. Was an honest guy. Open face. He prayed to God. Continually. About the ninth hour. Of the day. He clearly saw.

In a vision. An angel of God. Who had just come. Into him. And said to him. Cornelius. Now this would be enough. To pull you over.

[35 : 04] I think I'd have. Apoplexy. Right on the spot. Because the thing. That makes angels. So stunning. Is that you never. See them coming. If. If an angel. Walked up to you.

Like an ordinary person. You wouldn't even know. That they were an angel. But angels. In the Bible. Have this. Great. Tendency. To just. Appear like that.

Out of nowhere. So you couldn't. See them coming. And they weren't there. And they weren't down the road. Walking toward you. They're just. Just like that. They're there. And you turn. And where. Where did he come from?

Scary. Scary thing. No doubt. It was terrifying. And he said. Cornelius. And fixing his gaze upon him. And being much alarmed. He had reason to be much alarmed.

He said. What is it Lord? And the angel said to him. Your prayers. And alms. Have ascended. As a memorial. Before God.

[35 : 59] That means nothing more than. God has heard your prayer. And he's eager to answer. And now. Dispatch some men. Send some of your soldiers.

To Joppa. That's just down the coast. I don't remember if it's down the coast. Or up the coast. But it's all on the coast. Send some men to Joppa. For a man. Named.

Simon. Who is also called Peter. Tell you where you'll find him. He's staying with a certain tanner. Named Simon. Whose house is by the sea. So. Peter's name is also Simon.

And Simon the tanner. Is the guy that owns this tannery. And he tans hides. And he's located there. With his business by the sea. Because he needs. A huge amount of water. To carry on his business.

So he's right there on the coast. And Peter. Is visiting with this fellow. And by the way. Why didn't the angel tell him?

[36 : 58] Cornelius had questions. Why didn't the angel answer his questions? Why didn't the angel give him information? Angels are not subjects of redemption. They cannot communicate the plan of salvation.

They don't understand it. They don't know it. Brilliant as they are. They're not objects of redemption. There's an old gospel song. That talks about. And when we sing redemption story.

They will fold their wings. For angels never knew the joy. That our salvation brings. When the angel who was speaking to him.

Had departed. He summoned two of his servants. And a devout soldier. Probably his top kick. Top sergeant. Of those who were in constant attendance. Upon them. And after he had explained everything to them.

He sent them to Joppa. Now this would be an overnight visit. They'd have to go up the coast. It's several miles. Wouldn't get there in a couple of hours. And we read. On the next day.

[38 : 03] Verse 9. This is just. Man this is stunning stuff. On the next day. As they were on their way. And approaching the city. That is. They're arriving near Joppa. Peter.

Who is there. In the house of Simon the Tanner. At the city of Joppa. And we are told that. He went up on the housetop. About the sixth hour to pray.

That was the usual place of prayer. Because housetops were all flat. And children played on the housetops. And women hung out their wash on the housetops. And they conversed with neighbors next door.

Housetop to housetop. And it was often a place of prayer. And sometimes. When the weather was right. They would go up there and have meals. Just like a patio. On the roof. So Peter is up there praying.

And he became hungry. And was desiring to eat. Well. It's the sixth hour. But while they were making preparations. That is. Down below. In the kitchen.

[38 : 58] The women are busy. Fixing a meal. Peter is up on the housetop. Praying. And he fell into a trance. This is a supernaturally induced trance.

This is not a dream. Because in a dream. You're asleep. In a trance. You're awake. And he sees a vision. And the vision is from God. And it's one of the most extraordinary things you'll ever find.

He beheld the sky opened up. As he looks up. You see the sky opening. What is this? Now remember. This is not a literal thing.

This is a vision. It's very real to Peter. And God is the one who is giving him this vision. I suspect if there had been someone else there. They would have never seen it. This was tailor made.

This was just for Peter. And a certain object like a great sheet. Coming down. Lowered. By four corners to the ground.

[39 : 58] And there were in it. All kinds of four footed animals. And notice that's all kinds. Does that mean clean and unclean?

Yes. That's the whole point. All these animals are mixed together. And crawling creatures of the earth. And birds of the air. Whole conglomeration.

There's like a veritable zoo. Confined in this sheet. All these animals all thrown in together. And all mixed in together. And Peter is saying. What is this? What is this all about anyway?

And the voice says to him. Arise Peter. Kill and eat. Well of course. Literally speaking.

There was no possibility of his doing that. These things were not real anyway. They were a vision. But he was seeing them as if they were real. And he's trying to make sense of this. What is this?

[40 : 53] What's going on here? What am I witnessing? Where is this from? What's this all about anyway? And Peter said. By no means Lord. For I have never eaten anything.

Unholy or unclean. And he could have added. Very appropriately. I'm a Jew. Remember? Couldn't eat any of these things.

They're not kosher. They're not acceptable. You never gave us. In fact. You forbade us to eat those things. You forbade us to eat crab. And shrimp.

And pork. And all these things. In the sheet. And he's going. What is this all about anyway? The man is completely perplexed. And a voice came to him a second time.

What God has cleansed. No longer consider. Unholy.

[42 : 00] Well what does that mean? How has God cleansed these animals? So they're now acceptable to eat?

Even if you're a Jew? What is this anyway? Now let me give you a little clue. In reality.

This has nothing to do with animals. It's got everything to do. With people. These clean and unclean.

What do they represent? The clean represents the Jew. The unclean represents the Gentile.

And when the voice says. What God hath cleansed. Don't you call unclean. Well when and how did God cleanse Gentiles?

[43 : 03] When Jesus died on the cross. He redeemed the entirety of humanity.

Every last living Jew and Gentile on the planet. Every one of them. Was redeemed. And God has made the same application.

To Gentiles. That he made to Jews. Peter doesn't have a clue. He's going to. Very shortly.

But right now. He's completely out of it. He doesn't make sense of this. This is amazing. What God has cleansed.

No longer consider unholy. And this happened. Three times. You know. Peter does a lot of things in threes. Doesn't he? Denied the Lord three times. Now the sheets come down.

[44 : 05] Because. You know why? He just didn't get it. He didn't buy it. And the first time it happened. I'm sure Peter told himself. I don't believe this. I can't believe this.

I won't believe this. It cannot be true. I reject it. It's. Maybe it's the devil. But there can't be any truth in this. No. And then.

He goes through the same thing. All over again. Peter. Just like. Yours truly. And some of you. We can be slow learners.

And this. He goes through this three times. And now Peter's saying. I sure don't understand. What this is going on. And look. Look at verse 17. This is. This is priceless.

Now while Peter. Was greatly. Perplexed. In mind. He's trying to make sense of this. None of it makes any sense. While he is greatly perplexed in mind.

[45 : 02] As to what this vision. Which he had seen might be. Behold. The men. Who had sent. By Cornelius. Had been sent by Cornelius. Having asked directions.

For Simon's house. Appeared at the gate. And they are. There they are. Knocking at the gate. And Peter is in there. Entertaining this vision. Trying to make sense of it. And calling out.

They were asking. Whether Simon. Who is also called Peter. Was saying. Hey. Have you got a guy here. By the name of Peter. Is this where he is?

And while Peter. Was reflecting on the vision. Trying to make sense of what he had seen. The spirit said to him. That is to Peter. Hey Peter. Peter.

Three men. Are looking for you. They're downstairs. Knocking on the door. They're looking for you. But arise. Get up Peter. Arise.

[45 : 58] Go downstairs. And accompany them. Without. Misgivings. Don't. Be. Afraid. To go with them.

Because. I. Sent them. And Peter. Went down to the men. And here they are. Three Gentiles. Probably.

In uniform. Probably. Roman army office. Uniforms. Peter went down to the men. And said. Behold. I'm. I'm the one you are looking for. What is the reason.

For which you have come. Why are you looking for me. And they said. Cornelius. Our boss. A centurion.

A righteous. And God fearing man. Well spoken of. By the entire nation. Of the Jews. Was divinely. Directed. By a holy angel.

[46 : 56] To send for you. Peter. To come to his house. And hear. A message. From you. And. I.

Don't know what Peter's response. I think my response. Would have been something like. Golly. Wow. Really. Really. Wow.

Joppa. So he invited them in. And gave them lodging. I'll put you up for the night. So they're going to keep them as guests overnight. And on the next day.

Peter arose. And went away with them. And some of the brethren. From Joppa. Accompanied him. We're not told this here. But in the next chapter. We're told.

That Peter. Took. Six. Fellow Jews. With him. He probably wasn't all that comfortable. Being the only Jew there. With all these Gentiles. And he took six of his buddies.

[47 : 54] And now. There's. Ten of them. Going back to the house of Cornelius. And it'll be another day's journey. The following day.

He entered Caesarea. That's the Roman army headquarters. Now Cornelius. Was waiting for them. And had called together. His relatives.

And close friends. Hey. We're going to party. This is going to be something. We've got this special dignitary coming in. And he is going to give us some information. That I think is just going to be. Astounding.

And he went out and invited neighbors. Friends. Family. Everybody. Come in. And they're all packing the house. Of Cornelius. This army officer. And it came about.

In verse 25. That Peter entered. And Cornelius. Met him. And fell at his feet. And worshipped him. Now this is one happy man.

[48 : 50] See Peter. But he was completely out of line. With what he was doing. And yet I am satisfied. That Cornelius's heart. Was so overwhelmed. And he was so grateful.

For all of this. Doing on his behalf. And now Peter is here. He just gets on his knees. And falls down before Peter. And Peter is wise enough. Not to accept that kind of adoration.

And Peter raised him up. Saying stand up. Hey. Hey. Don't. Don't fall down on your knees before me. Peter. Stand up. I myself also. Am just a man. You don't.

You don't. You don't worship me. I think it was just. Profound gratitude. On the part of Cornelius. He just melted before him. And as he talked with him. He entered.

And found. Many. People. Assembled. We aren't told how many. But I suspect they were wall to wall. And there wasn't a Jew among them.

[49 : 50] They're all Gentiles. Peter. And those Jews who came with him. They're looking this situation over. And they're saying to themselves.

What. What are nice Jewish boys doing in a setting like this? This is not kosher. We don't belong here.

But here we are. And he said to them in verse 28. I can hear. I can hear. I can hear Peter clearing his throat. You yourselves.

You Gentiles. You Gentiles know. How unlawful it is. For a man. Who is a Jew. To associate.

With a foreigner. Or to visit him. Yet that's what I'm doing. I'm out of character here.

[50 : 49] And I'm not very comfortable. You. You Gentiles. Know that we're not allowed to do this. And here we are. And yet. God.

Has shown me. That I should not call. Any. Man. Unholy. Or unclean. Peter's got the message. It never was about animals.

Now that truth has sunk in. And he's gotten it. It's about Jew and Gentiles. Not about animals. Clean and unclean. It's about clean and unclean people. That is why I came without even raising any objection.

When I was sent for. Oh of course. God did have to do that three times. Like I said. It would be a slight objection. Wouldn't it? And so I ask. For what reason. You have sent for me.

So he tells Cornelius. Why am I here? Why did you send for me? What's this all about anyway? What do you want from me? And Cornelius said. Well it all happened.

[51 : 55] Four days ago. To this very hour. See. The two day trip to get there. Two day trip back. Now. Four days ago. Cornelius says. I was praying in my house.

During. The ninth hour. And behold. A man. Stood before me. In shining garments. That was the angel.

And he said. Cornelius. Your prayer has been heard. And your alms have been remembered before God. Send therefore to Joppa.

And invite Simon. Who is also called Peter. To come to you. He is staying at the house of Simon the Tanner. By the sea. And Cornelius says.

And so. I sent to you immediately. And you have been kind enough to come. Now then. We are all here present before God. To hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.

[52 : 55] Got a. Ready made congregation for you. Everybody is waiting on pins and needles. To hear what you have to say. And Peter is just dumbfounded. I can't.

What. What. How. What is this all. What is going on. And opening his mouth. Peter said. I most certainly understand.

Now. That God. Is not one to show partiality. What is Peter saying. He is saying. The barriers. Are starting to come down. And I don't quite know what to make of this.

This is all new. Nothing like this has ever happened before. But in every nation. The man who fears him.

And does what is right. Is welcome to him. The word which he sent to the sons of Israel. Preaching peace through Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all. You yourselves know the thing.

[53 : 53] Which took place throughout all Judea. Starting from Galilee. After the baptism. Which John proclaimed. You know of Jesus of Nazareth. How God anointed him with the Holy Spirit. And with power.

And how he went about doing good. And healing all who were oppressed by the devil. For God was with him. And we. We are witnesses. Of all the things.

Which he did. Both in the land of the Jews. And in Jerusalem. And they also. Put him to death. By hanging him.

On the cross. And God raised him up. On the third day. And granted. That he should become visible. Not to all the people. But to witnesses.

Who were chosen beforehand. By God. That is to us. Who ate and drank with him. After he arose from the dead. And he. Jesus. Ordered us. To preach to the people. And solemnly to testify.

[54 : 46] That this. Is the one. Who has been appointed by God. As judge. Of the living. And the dead. Of him. All the prophets. Isaiah.

Jeremiah. Ezekiel. Daniel. All the prophets. Bear witness. That through his name. Jesus. Everyone who believes in him. Receives. Forgiveness of sins.

And look at the next verse. While Peter was still speaking these words. The Holy Spirit fell upon all those. Who were listening to the message. And all.

The circumcised believers. Who had come with Peter. Were amazed. These are Jews. And the spirit of God.

Is manifesting himself. And coming down. On these Gentiles. And these Jews. Are standing there. Saying. What is this? This can't be.

[55 : 42] These aren't Jews. These are Gentiles. What's going on here? Here. And all the circumcised believers.

Who had come with Peter. Were amazed. Because. The gift of the Holy Spirit. Had been poured out. Upon the Gentiles. Also. This was just like a repeat.

On the day of Pentecost. And they are stunned. Because. That was a holy. Totally. Exclusively. Jewish experience.

This is Gentile. This does not compute. This is all wrong. This can't be. But it was. And unbeknownst to Peter.

He is using. A key. And he is. Opening the door. To someone. To whom. It had been closed before.

[56 : 36] Opening the door. To the Gentiles. For they were hearing them. Speaking with tongues. That is. Speaking in languages. They had not learned.

And able to communicate. With each other. And exalting God. And then Peter answered. And said. Surely. No one can refuse. The water. For these to be baptized. Who have received.

The Holy Spirit. Just as we did. Kenny. And this is. H2O water. This is not spiritual water. This is literal. Wet water. This. Is the baptism.

Of John. With which they were all familiar. But. It had never been provided. For Gentiles. Only for Jews. And now. Gentiles.

Are being water baptized. In obedience. In obedience. To John's message. And he ordered them. To be baptized. In the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they ask him.

[57 : 31] To stay on. A few days. And. I really don't want to quit. But I must. But I do want to inform you. That. The rest of the story. Will be delivered. In the next installment.

And I want you. To be alert. For the fact. That. Peter. Is going to get. Into a lot of trouble. With his Jewish brethren. Back home. When they hear. What he'd done. And with whom. He had done it.

They're going to call him. On the carpet. And he's going to give. An explanation. Eventually. Will satisfy them. And folks. What I'm telling you. Is. This transition. That we have just noted.

Is. Absolutely. Cataclysmic. It's going to start. An upheaval. That. Many. Of the established Jews. Are going to fight. Tooth and nail.

And one. Who is going to fight. The most. Defiantly. Against it. Will be a guy. By the name. Of Saul. Of Tarsus. So.

[58 : 26] The plot. Is beginning. To thicken. And we haven't seen. Anything yet. Would you stand. With me please. Father.

We are. Privileged. And blessed. To see. This thing. Unfold. Right. Before our very eyes. More than that. We want to understand. The significance. Of it.

And for the fact. That. In. That. Penalty. That Jesus. Christ. Paid. He. Made. The way. Of access. To God. Available.

And open. To all. Christ. God. God. God. Was. In Christ. Reconciling. The world. Unto himself.

God. So loved. The world. That he gave. His only begotten son. That whosoever. Believes in him. Should not perish. But have everlasting.

[59 : 28] And he is the propitiation. For our sins. And not ours only. But also. For the sins. Of the whole. World. Father. Somebody here.

Really needs to understand. That because. Jesus Christ. Died for them. And paid the penalty. For their sin. They are free. To come to you.

And receive from you. Complete. Forgiveness of sin. Justification. And eternal life. All because of what Jesus did.

For them. We trust that this will be a reality. With everyone here this morning. Dear friend. Whatever your station in life. Whatever your age.

Whatever your interests or desires. We would have you know. God loves you in a way you can't even begin to imagine. He loved you in such a way that.

[60 : 27] He was willing to give. That very dearest thing to him. The person of his own son. Just so he could buy you. And pay for you.

And take care of your sin. And all God wants you to do. Is acknowledge your need. Be honest with him. And honest with yourself.

And admit. That you're just like the rest of us. You like us. You fall far short. Of what God requires. But Jesus Christ loved you.

And he gave himself. For all your sins. And failures. And faults. Because he wants to call you to himself. And forgive you. And pardon you. And cleanse you.

And make you his child. And give you joy. And peace. Unimaginable. But he wants you to be honest. And admit your need for him.

[61 : 24] And admit that you cannot meet that need. And as best as you know how. Just say. Lord Jesus. Much about this I don't understand. But I know one thing. And there's no way I can save myself.

And I believe Jesus died for my sin. And I want him to be my savior. I know he'll have me. Because he said all who come to him. He will not cast out. And with all my questions.

And doubts. And fears. I just know one thing. I want your salvation. And I want. What you want for me.

Thank you. For making yourself available to me. And dear friend. If that's your sentiment. And you've made that decision this morning. You need to tell somebody.

So they can rejoice with you. And encourage you in the faith. And I'll be available. If you'd like to talk afterwards. I've got some literature. That you'll find helpful. Thank you father.

[62 : 23] For this glorious. Glorious truth. And for the transition. Even for the confusion of it. Because in studying the confusion. We get some clarity. And we're thankful for that.

Forgive us for things we've overlooked. Or anything we've gotten wrong. Anything uttered of the flesh. May it pass away. And come to naught. Commit it all to you. In the worthy name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.