

## Acts 10:23-33 – The Gospel to the Gentiles, Part II.

### The Delegation Goes to Cornelius

It is important to try to understand how and why Cornelius and Peter responded to the commands of God. In the three revelations, God does not give either of them all the information they probably desired. With the exception of Peter refusing the command to kill and eat the animals in the sheet, both men obeyed God's commands. For this week and next week, continue to try to imagine how Cornelius, as a Roman Centurion, would have thought about both the visit by the angel and the visit of Peter. Try to also imagine how Peter, as an “orthodox” Jew, would have thought about these events. Remember also that there are more people involved in this than those mentioned by Luke. Cornelius would have had all of the Italian Cohort watching, as well as perhaps other Roman officials, plus his neighbors. Simon the Tanner would have had his neighbors watching. Also remember that the news of Peter's visit to an uncircumcised man (household) and ate with them meant someone had to relay Peter's violation to the “circumcised” before he could return to Jerusalem.

1. Acts 10:23 and 11:12 records the delegation that went with Peter. ***How many accompanied Peter?*** Matthew Henry provides two reasons for the delegation:
  - a. *Either Peter desired their company, that they might be witnesses of his proceeding cautiously with reference to the Gentiles, and of the good ground on which he went, and therefore he invited them ([Act 11:12](#)), or*
  - b. *They offered their service to attend him, and desired they might have the honour and happiness of being his fellow travellers. This was one way in which the primitive Christians very much showed their respect to their ministers: they accompanied them in their journeys, to keep them in countenance, to be their guard, and, as there was occasion, to minister to them; with a further prospect not only of doing them service, but of being edified by their converse. It is a pity that those who have skill and will to do good to others by their discourse should want an opportunity for it by travelling alone.*
2. How long did it take for the delegation to arrive at Cornelius' house? At what time did they arrive at Cornelius' house? What makes the time significant? (see Acts 10:3, 30)
3. What was Cornelius' attitude during this time? (see Acts 10:5-8, 22b, 24-25, 27, 32-33)
4. What was Peter's reaction and attitude to God, Cornelius's delegation, and Cornelius during this adventure? (see Acts 10:17, 20-23, 26, 28-29, 34, 46-48, 11:13-17)
5. Where does Cornelius receive Peter? Why?
6. How does Cornelius greet Peter? Why this greeting? What is Peter's

response?

7. Who has Cornelius gathered at his house? How many? (Acts 10:27)
8. Based on what Peter relates to the Jerusalem leaders in Acts 11:34, what is Cornelius expecting? Acts 10:27 - *It ought to be both given and taken as a piece of kindness and respect to our kindred and friends to invite them to join with us in religious exercises, to go with us to hear a sermon. What Cornelius ought to do he thought his kinsmen and friends ought to do too; and therefore let them come and hear it at the first hand, that it may be no surprise to them to see him change upon it. MH*
9. Acts 10:28 – Why was this opening statement important for Cornelius's gathering to hear? *Ye know that it is not lawful. This seemeth to be no friendly preface, and such as may rather harden than win their hearts, when as they hear that they are accounted so unclean, that with their familiarity and conference they pollute the saints; which must needs be a great reproach for them. But it was needful for Peter thus to speak, lest they should suspect that he had an evil conscience, because, contrary to the custom delivered by the fathers, he came. But when as he affirmeth that he was sent of God, all such suspicion is taken away and purged. Moreover, he mitigateth very well by these words the offense which did stick in their minds, by reason of an old grudge which was between the Jews and the Gentiles, so that he could by no means have entered his speech better, For he pronounceth that those are now clean who were before unclean, so that they have mutual fellowship now with the saints. John Calvin, commentary on Acts. (French: Jean Calvin, born Jehan Cauvin: 10 July 1509 – 27 May 1564)*
10. Why does Peter inquire as to their intent in sending for him? (Acts 10:29)
11. What is Cornelius' answer? What does it tell Peter about Cornelius? What does it tell Peter about God's Providence? (see also below, questions 2)
12. Was Cornelius' answer given only for Peter or was this information those he gathered already knew?
13. What kind of speech does Cornelius expect from Peter? (see also 11:11-14)