

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Peter and Cornelius

10 ¹There was in Caesarea a man named Cornelius, captain of what was called the Italian Battalion. ²He was a religious and God-fearing man together with his whole household. He gave generously to the people and constantly prayed to God.

³One afternoon at about three he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming towards him and calling him:

—Cornelius!

⁴He stared at the vision with awe and said:

—What is it, sir?

And the angel answered:

—Your prayers and your alms have just been recalled before God. ⁵Now send some men to Joppa and summon a certain Simon also known as Peter; ⁶he is the guest of Simon, a tanner, who lives beside the sea.

⁷As soon as the angel who spoke to him departed, Cornelius called two of his servants and a devout soldier from among those attached to his service, ⁸and after having explained everything to them, he sent them to Joppa.

⁹The next day, while they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up to the roof at about noon to pray. ¹⁰He became hungry and wished to eat, but while they were preparing food, he fell into a trance. ¹¹The heavens were opened to him and he saw an object that looked like a large sheet coming down, until it rested on the ground by its four corners. ¹²In it were all kinds of four-legged animals of the earth, reptiles and birds.

¹³Then a voice said to him:

—Get up, Peter, kill and eat!

¹⁴But Peter replied:

—Certainly not, Lord! I have never eaten any defiled or unclean creature.

¹⁵And again a second time the voice spoke:

—What God has made clean, you must not call unclean. ¹⁶This happened three times and then the sheet was taken up again into the sky.

¹⁷While Peter was still puzzling over the meaning of the vision he had seen, the messengers of Cornelius arrived at the gate asking for the house of Simon. ¹⁸They called out to inquire whether Simon, also known as Peter, was staying there. ¹⁹At that moment, as Peter continued pondering on the vision, the Spirit spoke to him:

—There are men looking for you; ²⁰get up and go downstairs and follow them without hesitation, for I have sent them.

²¹So Peter went and said to the men:

—I am the one you are looking for. What brings you here?

They answered:

²²—He who sent us is Captain Cornelius. He is an upright and God-fearing man, well respected by all the Jewish people. He has been instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, so that he may listen to what you have to say.

²³So Peter invited them in and put them up for the night. The next day he went off with them and some of the believers from Joppa accompanied him. ²⁴The following day, he arrived in Caesarea where Cornelius was expecting them; he had called together his relatives and close friends. ²⁵As Peter was about to enter, Cornelius went to him, fell on his knees and bowed low. ²⁶But Peter lifted him up saying:

—Stand up, for I too am a human being.

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