

Introduction: Acts 10

Act 10:1 There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a Roman army officer in what was called the Italian Regiment.

Act 10:2 He was a devout man, a "God-fearer," as was his whole household; he gave generously to help the Jewish poor and prayed regularly to God.

Who is Cornelius?

A roman officer – a man in a position of authority, whose culture contrasts that of the one he supports.

A God fearing Gentile who gave to the Jewish poor and prayed regularly to Adonai...

A Gentile who attached himself to Judaism but chose not to undergo formal conversion, which included circumcision and public immersion (proselyte baptism). This class of Gentiles, known in Judaism as "proselytes of the gate," was quite large at this time. They were attracted to the nobility of Jewish worship and to the truth of the one God who had revealed himself in the Bible.

He accepted two foundational truths:

1. Your people shall be my people
 - He didn't become an official convert .
 - He treated the Jewish people with respect and honored them by helping those in need.
 - He cared for them as if they were his own.

2. Your God shall be my God
 - He prayed to the God of Israel.
 - His works or actions stemmed from Faith:

Jas 1:27 The religious observance that God the Father considers pure and faultless is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being contaminated by the world.

This is similar to what the Prophets say:

Mic 6:8 Human being, you have already been told what is good, what Adonai demands of you — no more than to act justly, love grace and walk in purity with your God.

Ecc 12:13 Here is the final conclusion, now that you have heard everything: fear God, and keep his mitzvot; this is what being human is all about.

Ecc 12:14 For God will bring to judgment everything we do, including every secret, whether good or bad.

In essence what Cornelius is doing is the essence of Torah:

Deu 6:5 and you are to love Adonai your God with all your heart, all your being and all your resources.

Lev 19:18 Don't take vengeance on or bear a grudge against any of your people; rather, love your neighbor as yourself; I am Adonai.

Act 10:3 One afternoon around three o'clock he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

An angel appeared to him in the afternoon.

One of three times during the day that corporate prayer happened:

The three services are called

- *Shacharit* ("morning"),
- *Minchah* ("afternoon"; the word means "gift, offering")
- *Ma'ariv* ("evening")

Cornelius will actually make mention of this to Kefa when they meet for the first time:

Act 10:30 Cornelius answered, "Three days ago around this time, I was at minchah prayers in my house, when suddenly a man in shining clothes stood in front of me

Act 10:31 and said, 'God has heard your prayer and remembered your acts of charity.

Act 10:4 Cornelius stared at the angel, terrified. "What is it, sir?" he asked. "Your prayers," replied the angel, "and your acts of charity have gone up into God's presence, so that he has you on his mind.

As a result of his actions, Cornelius is instructed to send men to find Kefa.

Ultimately, Adonai knew his heart because Cornelius' prayers and actions aligned with each other.

Jeriism, If you say you believe something and don't do it, you really don't believe it.

In this case Cornelius' heart was for Adonai and was expressed through the very words of the Prophets...He ultimately put his words into action.

For that, Adonai recognized him for his faithfulness.

So much so, that he was faithful to do them in his home.

When Kefa went to meet with him, he spoke these words:

Act 10:28 He said to them, "You are well aware that for a man who is a Jew to have close association with someone who belongs to another people, or to come and visit him, is something that just isn't done. But God has shown me not to call any person common or unclean;

Act 10:29 so when I was summoned, I came without raising any questions. Tell me, then, why did you send for me?"

He does not use "*ethnê*," the usual New Testament word for "Gentiles" and equivalent to Hebrew *Goyim*.

The word here is "*alophulos*," translated to mean "someone who belongs to another tribe,". It is only used here in the New Covenant writings.

Also the word "*athemitos*," used only twice in the New Testament, does not mean "unlawful, forbidden, against Jewish law," as found in other English versions, but rather "taboo, out of the question, not considered right, against standard practice, contrary to cultural norms."

Kefa again preaches the message that he has been preaching...in Acts 2 and Acts 4, now this time it is to someone who wasn't Jewish but was faithful. Cornelius was the epitome of Habbakuk 2:4:

Hab 2:4 "Look at the proud: he is inwardly not upright; but the righteous will attain life through trusting faithfulness.

Much of the separation between Jew and Gentile had to do with the state of ritual impurity. Ohalot 18:7

Most of Mishna tractate 'Avodah Zarah ("Idol Worship") is devoted to limiting the contacts Jews may have with Gentiles (literally, "idol-worshippers").

According to chapter 2, Jews may not remain alone with Gentiles, leave cattle at their inns, assist them in childbirth, nurse their children, do business with them when they are traveling to idolatrous festivals...

Throughout Torah, Israel is warned not to do the same things that the nations have done...Adonai calls them:

- Abominations
- Abominable practices
- Disgusting practices

Deut 12:29 – 31; Lev 18:26 – 27, Deut 18:9-12

Torah says not to do the things of the people that inhabited the land before you, but to treat the Gentiles well:

Deu 10:19 Therefore you are to love the foreigner, since you were foreigners in the land of Egypt.

Deu 27:19 " 'A curse on anyone who interferes with justice for the foreigner, orphan or widow.' All the people are to say, 'Amen!'

By the Second Temple period, when the majority of Jews lived in Gentile environments (that is, in the Diaspora), and Israel itself was ruled by Gentiles, the threat from assimilation to Jewish identity, in both its national and its religious aspects, had become even stronger. Thus, while obedience to the details of the ritual impurity laws was not widespread, the overall tone of life in Jewish society vis-à-vis Gentile society did indeed produce the kind of self-imposed separation from Gentiles of which Kefa speaks.

So, by this time, it is understandable of Kefa's statement:

"You are well aware that for a man who is a Jew to have close association with someone who belongs to another people, or to come and visit him, is something that just isn't done. But God has shown me not to call any person common or unclean;"

So, Cornelius conveys to Kefa what happened and why he brought him to his home, concluding with these words:

Act 10:33 So I sent for you immediately, and you have been kind enough to come. Now all of us are here in the presence of God to hear everything the Lord has ordered you to say."

Act 10:34 Then Kefa addressed them: "I now understand that God does not play favorites,

Act 10:35 but that whoever fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him, no matter what people he belongs to.

Kefa goes on to convey the Message of Messiah to Cornelius and those there with him at his home.

The points of Kefa's sermon to these God-fearing Gentiles: Yeshua is sent by God and is still alive. He will be the final judge of all human beings. The *Tanakh* points to him. Those who trust in his mercy will be forgiven their sins **through his name**, that is, because of who he is and what he has done.

Kefa couldn't finish when a current changing moment occurs:

Act 10:44 Kefa was still saying these things when the Ruach HaKodesh fell on all who were hearing the message.

Act 10:45 All the believers from the Circumcision faction who had accompanied Kefa were amazed that the gift of the Ruach HaKodesh was also being poured out

Act 10:46 on the Goyim, for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Kefa's response was,

Act 10:47 "Is anyone prepared to prohibit these people from being immersed in water? After all, they have received the Ruach HaKodesh, just as we did."

Act 10:48 And he ordered that they be immersed in the name of Yeshua the Messiah. Then they asked Kefa to stay on with them for a few days.

Had Kefa and those with him not witnessed first hand what had happened, they would likely have not immersed them. But, because they saw first hand what Adonai had done, just as they saw first hand Yeshua's resurrection, they believed.

News traveled fast, especially when something happens that had never happened before...

Act 11:1 The emissaries and the brothers throughout Y'hudah heard that the Goyim had received the word of God;

Act 11:2 but when Kefa went up to Yerushalayim, the members of the Circumcision faction criticized him,

Act 11:3 saying, "You went into the homes of uncircumcised men and even ate with them!"

Act 11:18 On hearing these things, they stopped objecting and began to praise God, saying, "This means that God has enabled the Goyim as well to do t'shuvah and have life!"

This is the consistent, uncomplicated and simple message of the Good News, whether Jew or Gentile.

To do t'shuvah – repentance

To have life

Rosh Chodesh

Rosh Chodesh means “Head of the Month” and is a time that welcomes in the beginning of a new month.

This is done based on the biblical calendar which follows the lunar cycle.

The lunar cycle is measured by the time it takes for the moon to make one complete revolution around the earth.

It is a new moon when the Sun, Earth and Moon are perfectly aligned to where at night the moon will appear hidden.

Rosh Chodesh is not just a ceremony, but an outward observance with significant inward meaning.

The sacrifices that were once performed were done by those who were already in communion with Adonai. The olah or burnt offering found in Numbers 28, represent our wholly submitting our lives...meaning – giving over everything to Adonai.

As with the other Mo'edim – Feasts and Shabbat, there is too a connection between this time and Yeshua. Therefore to believers, it is a picture of our relationship to Messiah and His power of redemption.

Yeshua is like the sun.

We are like the moon.

We have no light of our own, but only what the sun gives us.

There are times when we move out of Adonai's will, ultimately losing our light and therefore our fellowship.

Rosh Chodesh is that reminder to come back into fellowship, back into that light, that relationship.

When we look at the lunar cycle we can relate it in such a way that as sinfulness grows, the earth enters into darkness. As the moon wanes and seems to disappear one can still see the moon – one can still see Messiah. At that point of darkness the Messiah will once again be revealed to Israel

Mat 24:29 "But immediately following the trouble of those times, the sun will grow dark, the moon will stop shining, the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers in heaven will be shaken.

Mat 24:30 "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, all the tribes of the Land will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with tremendous power and glory.

and Israel will come to salvation.

Isa 66:22 "For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will continue in my presence," says Adonai, "so will your descendants and your name continue.

Isa 66:23 "Every month on Rosh-Hodesh and every week on Shabbat, everyone living will come to worship in my presence," says Adonai.

Isa 66:24 "As they leave, they will look on the corpses of the people who rebelled against me. For their worm will never die, and their fire will never be quenched; but they will be abhorrent to all humanity."

and as King Messiah will reign from Jerusalem