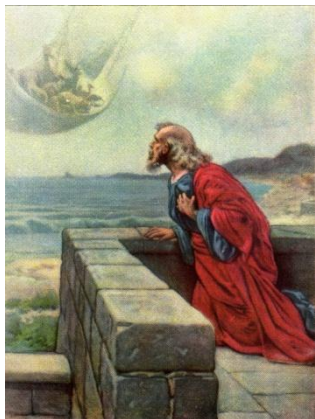


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 6



PETER'S VISION

Scripture Text: Acts 10:9-23

There was a road along the coast of Samaria that ran from Joppa to Caesarea. Last Sunday we stood at the Caesarea end of that road and looked at the vision God sent to Cornelius. Today we stand at the Joppa end and look at another vision. The visions are a pair. Together they caused two men to meet and change history. This would lead to the first Gentile being born into the church. Peter seems not to have laid out a schedule. He seems to have waited for God's direction of where to go and when.

God's plans are always in perfect order. When He told Cornelius to send for Peter, He prepared Peter to go. When He commands us, He makes the way before us. God knows the end. We can trust Him. What God commands, we can do without question. The law of clean and unclean animals is removed.

MEMORY VERSE: *And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.*

—Acts 10:15

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—Ephesians 2 Saved by grace.
- Tue.—Matthew 5:38-48 Loving as God does.
- Wed.—Luke 6:27-36 The actions of love.
- Thu.—1 Peter 3:8-18 Returning good for evil.
- Fri.—1 John 3:10-24 The love of God in us.

Devotional Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 Love each other.

The Vision of Peter

Acts 10:9-10 On the morrow—the day after Cornelius' vision and starting of men to contact Peter—as they—the men—went . . . and drew nigh to Joppa, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour—noon, dinnertime. Peter was hungry. (God wanted Peter hungry to receive the vision.) Peter fell into a trance—a state in which the soul seems carried away or absorbed in a vision.

Waiting time need not be wasted time. We are told to be redeeming the time. Parts of time some might waste in jesting, gossip, watching demoralizing TV, or pursuing wrong goals. Waiting time may be used in study, prayer, edifying talk, rest of the body, or purposeful tasks. Thus they may add up to real accomplishment for the Lord. Peter used his wait to pray. Doing so, he put himself at God's disposal and opened the door for the vision he could have missed by wrong use of his time.

Acts 10:11-13 Peter saw a vessel like a sheet caught up at the corners descending from Heaven to Earth. In it were all manner of . . . beasts . . . and creeping things, and fowls. A voice said, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. Peter needed food. Here was food. But Peter's belief stood in the way. God's Law forbade eating unclean flesh (Leviticus 11). Some of these animals were unclean.

Why did God give this Law and later set it aside? As all of the Law, He gave it to bring mankind to Christ (Galatians 3:23-25). The Law was a type, a forerunner of something better to come. Christ was the fulfillment of it. Read Colossians 2:8-17; Romans 14:14; Hebrews 8:8-13. By the Law of clean and unclean foods, God taught people to put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean (Leviticus 10:10; Leviticus 20:25-26). Salvation in Jesus provides us a better Law. The food Law has no further use.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 6

Call Not Thou Common

Acts 10:14-16 Peter said, Not so, Lord. Peter always quick to answer back did not realize he was contradicting God. This was a learning experience for him. God was bringing forth new Laws in a new dispensation. Now the same God Who gave the Law was giving Peter another command that took away the first. **What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.** If God made the unclean animals clean, they were clean. Peter was to accept them as clean. **This was done thrice.** The whole vision came three times to emphasize it. The lesson is true, clear, and for us all.

As the Law on food had a temporary use, so the rejection of Gentiles was temporary. It had set Israel aside for a time in preparation for Christ's coming. Now God puts no difference between any people. **For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him (Romans 10:12).** As some cling to the outmoded Law of unclean foods, so some hold some people as beneath them. It is wrong to consider any class of people as common or unclean. Anyone can be saved as well as us.

What Was Its Meaning?

Acts 10:17-22 While Peter doubted in himself—wondered, meditated, pondered—**what this vision . . . should mean**, he felt it had greater meaning than about the animals only. Just then **the men . . . from Cornelius . . . stood before the gate** and inquired for Peter. **While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said . . . men seek thee.** The Spirit could talk to Peter and straighten out his thinking. Peter met the three men and was told of Cornelius' vision. The Spirit told him to go with the men, **doubting nothing**—without further question, sure that it was right to do so—**for I have sent them.** Now Peter understood the vision: Cornelius was a Gentile. Peter, a Jew, believed that the Israelite nation was chosen by God as **a peculiar treasure unto Him above all people (Exodus 19:5-6)**. He believed salvation was for Jews only. He had believed it would be wrong to take it to the Gentiles, as they were "unclean" people, or rejected by God. Now the vision taught him that as all flesh was cleansed and fit for food, so all people were included in the offer of salvation. Christ died for ALL. Peter was to call no man common or unclean.

Peter's Obedience

Acts 10:23 God had sent the men, and Peter was glad to obey. After lodging the men overnight, Peter went away with them, accompanied by **certain brethren from Joppa**. What God commands, we can do without question. The Spirit never directs contrary to God's Word.

JUST A THOUGHT

Those who deserve love least need it more.