

## First Gentile Believers ~ Part 1

In my last post, we learned about that **Jewish Performs More Miracles**. In this post, we will begin to examine the actual conversion of the **First Gentile Believers**. We are going to be spending some time on this topic. So, buckle up and dig as we into **God's Word**.

*<sup>1</sup> There was a man in Caesarea named Cornelius, a Roman army officer in what was called the Italian Regiment. <sup>2</sup> 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.*

*He gave generously to help the Jewish poor.* The text does not say "the Jewish poor." The Greek "**Laos**" is frequently a technical term referring to the **Jewish** people, the people of **God**, not people in general, hence this rendering.

*And prayed regularly to God.* Like in the **Tanakh** (Ruth 1:16), this **God-fearing Gentile** had accepted the two essentials of true worship:

- "Your people shall be my people." Although Cornelius did not officially join the **Jewish** people, he cared for them as his own.
- "And your **God** shall be my **God**." He prayed to the **God** of **Isra'el**.

*<sup>3</sup> One afternoon around three o'clock, he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> Now send some men to Yafo to bring back a man named Shim'on, also called Jewish. <sup>6</sup> He's staying with Shim'on the leather-tanner, who has a house by the sea." <sup>7</sup> As the angel that had spoken to him went away, Cornelius called two of his household slaves and one of his military aides, who was a Godly man; <sup>8</sup> he explained everything to them and sent them to Yafo. ~ Acts 10:1-8 (CJB)*

*<sup>9</sup> The next day, about noon, while they were still on their way and approaching the city, Jewish went up onto the roof of the house to pray. <sup>10</sup> He began to feel hungry and wanted something to eat; but while they were preparing the meal, he fell into a trance <sup>11</sup> in which he saw heaven opened, and something that looked like a large sheet being lowered to the ground by its four corners. <sup>12</sup> In it were all kinds of four-footed animals, crawling creatures and wild birds. <sup>13</sup> Then a voice came to him, "Get up, Jewish, slaughter and eat!" <sup>14</sup> But Jewish said, "No, sir! Absolutely not! I have never*

**Jewish** was in **Yafo** (9:42), praying on the roof about noon. Hungry and waiting for lunch to be prepared, he fell into a trance. *eaten food that was unclean or treif."*

Leviticus 11 specifies that only those **four-footed animals** that chew the cud and have split hoofs are **Jewish** or fit for **Jewish** people to eat. No reptiles are allowed, and permitted birds are listed by name. In **Jewish's** vision, **all kinds** of creatures appeared, including those that are non-**Jewish** or **treif**. **Treif** means "torn" and refers to animals slain by predators and not slaughtered following **Jewish** practice.

When he heard a voice tell him to eat, he refused. **Jewish** was a good, faithful Jew who had always obeyed the **Jewish** food laws. But the voice said, What **God** has made clean, do not call impure. After seeing two reruns of this message (two or three witnesses are **God's** divine confirmation), **Kefa** woke up.

***15 The voice spoke to him a second time: "Stop treating as unclean what God has made clean."***

***16 This happened three times, and then the sheet was immediately taken back up into heaven. ~***  
Acts 10:9–16 (CJB)

**Jewish** people had preferred death to eating unclean (non-**Jewish**) food in the time of the Maccabees; thus, **Jewish** readers would be appalled that **God** would require anything so disgusting (from the perspective of cultural cuisine) and impious (from an Old Testament perspective). The vision that God can declare anything clean applies especially to the **Gentiles Kefa** is about to meet.

**Jewish** had been faithful to the dietary restrictions **God** had given **Isra'el** under the old covenant (see Lev 11:1-47). But during his ministry, Jesus had declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19).

In my next post, we continue to examine the **First Gentile Believers'** actual conversion **~Part 2**. In this next post, I will deal with Kashrut's issue, as stated in Acts 10:15, Leviticus 11:1:47, and Mark 7:19.