common / holy | **unclean** / clean

Who are the children of Israel in relation to God and in relation to every other nation? (Who is God in relation to the children of Israel and every other nation?!)

See Exodus 6:7; (11:7) 19:5-6; (20:18-21); 33:16; (34:10, 27-28) Levitus 10:10-11; 11:1-47; 13:45; 15:31; 16:16; 18:24-30; 19:1-8; 20:3, 7-8, 22-28; 21:8, 15, 23; 22:9, 16, 31-33; Numbers 5:1-3; Deuteronomy 4:32-40; 7:6-8; 10:14-15; 14:1-2, 21; 23:14; Ezekiel 22:26; 37:21-28; 42:20; 44:23; 48:15

ESV **Leviticus 10:10** You are to distinguish between the holy and the common, and between the unclean and the clean, 11 and you are to teach the people of Israel all the statutes that the LORD has spoken to them by Moses."

ESV **Leviticus 20:22** "You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. 23 And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them. 24 But I have said to you, 'You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.' I am the LORD your God, who have separated you from the peoples. 25 You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. 26 You shall be holy to me, for I the LORD am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine.

How did Peter respond? (vv. 14, 16)

'By no means, Lord…'

'…for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean'

God began to show Peter the meaning of the vision (10:17-23a).

ESV **Acts 10:17** Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate 18 and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. 19 And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. 20 Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

What then happened to Peter? (vv. 17-20)

What did the men say? (vv. 21-22)

How did Peter respond? (v. 23a)

Sunday, November 15, 2026
Danny Capon, *Pastor*

ACTS—The Confident Witness of Jesus Christ
No. 24 | Witnessing beyond Jerusalem, pt. 5

Acts 10:1-23

Review

Acts depicts the *continuing* ministry of Jesus Christ. Though he has ascended, the witness of Jesus continues by the power of the Spirit through the spread of the gospel for the growth of the church. Those who hear and believe the witness of Jesus Christ can and should be confident following his way.

(1:1-26) Waiting for the Spirit—Confirming the Twelve Apostles

(2:1-47) Receiving of the Spirit—Birthing the Church

What then do we see in Acts 3 and following?

The witness of Jesus Christ goes from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. How?

What did the witness (and witnesses) of Jesus Christ encounter?

How did the witness (and witnesses) of Jesus Christ prevail?

Witnessing beyond Jerusalem, pt. 5 **10:1-23**

Overview

(3:1-8:3) Witnessing in Jerusalem

(8:4-12:25) Witnessing beyond Jerusalem

Who is the witness of Jesus Christ *for*?

Who needs it? Who can receive it? Who should hear it? Who needs to respond to it?

What does the witness of Jesus Christ come up against as it goes beyond Jerusalem?

(8:5-40) Philip takes the witness of Jesus Christ beyond the Jewish people

(9:1-31) Jesus chooses Saul to take his witness to the Jewish people and beyond

(**9:32-11:18**) God prepares Peter to support his Son's witness going to the Gentiles

(9:32-43) He sees the Lord work through him and moves closer to Gentiles

(**10:1-48**) **He visits Gentiles and proclaims to them the witness of Jesus**

(11:1-18) He defends the witness of Jesus going to the Gentiles

Peter's ministry demonstrates that the witness of Jesus Christ is for people who are beyond the Jews—it is *even* for the Gentiles (non-Jews).

What's going on here?

- Jesus Christ had commanded his apostles to be his witnesses "in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (1:8).

- They had been faithfully witnessing in Jerusalem and as a result of the "word of God…increas(ing)," the "number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem" (6:7).

- As a result of "great persecution against the church in Jerusalem," many believers were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria, like Philip, who "went about preaching the word" (8:1, 4).

- Jesus Christ convincingly converted Saul, who had been persecuting "the saints in Jerusalem," and enabled "the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria" to multiply (9:13, 31).

Will the witness of Jesus Christ go beyond, not just geographically, but ethnically?

Is it necessary for Peter to be involved in the witness of Jesus Christ going beyond, not just geographically, but ethnically?

Observations about 10:1-11:18

-- Though Philip was already in Caesarea (8:40), God moved Peter there via Lydda and Joppa (9:32, 38).

-- While in Lydda and Joppa, Peter saw clearly the Lord work through him as he moves farther from Jerusalem, while people send for him to help and many people in those areas "turned to the Lord" (9:35, 42).

-- Peter stayed in Joppa "for many days with one Simon, a tanner," whose trade involved dead animal and whose house, by the sea, was where Peter saw a vision of "all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds" (10:12).

-- Throughout this passage (10:1-11:18)—which illustrates scenarios that are similar to Saul and Ananias (9:1-19) and Philip and the Ethiopian (8:26-40)—there is an obvious conclusion (10:45-47; 11:15-17), but a progression to get there:

Peter pondered the meaning of the vision of the animals (10:1-23a)
Peter declared the gospel to people of another nation (10:23b-48)
Peter defended his ministry to uncircumcised men (11:1-18)

Peter became confident that the witness of Jesus Christ is *even* for the Gentiles—brought *by* Jewish believers, without converting to Judaism.

How? (What did this mean?)

He pondered the meaning of the vision and acted upon it (10:1-23a)

God responded to Cornelius in a vision (10:1-8; cf. 10:31).

ESV **Acts 10:1** At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of what was known as the Italian Cohort, 2 a devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms generously to the people, and prayed continually to God.

Who was Cornelius? (vv. 1-2)

a centurion

> "Centurions were commanders of a hundred men, a subunit of a cohort (composed of six centuries), which in turn was a unit of a legion (composed of ten cohorts, about six thousand soldiers)…Centurions were drawn from the ranks of the enlisted soldiers, were Roman citizens, were well paid, and, of course, were Gentiles." (Mikeal Parsons, p. 142)

a devout man

What did God do? (vv. 3-6)

a vision, an angel

saying…

'Your prayers and your alms have ascended…before God'

'And now send men to Joppa and bring one Simon…called Peter'

How did Cornelius respond? (vv. 7-8)

he related everything to two servants and a soldier

he sent them to Joppa

God gave instructions to Peter in a vision (10:9-16).

ESV **Acts 10:9** The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth.

What did Peter see? (vv. 9-12)

a trance, a vision (cf. vv. 17, 19; 11:5)

a great sheet, all kinds of animals in it

What did God instruct him to do? (vv. 13, 15-16)

'Rise, Peter; kill and eat'

'What God has made **clean**, do not call **common**'