

## July 17–23. Acts 10–15: “The Word of God Grew and Multiplied”

The Gospel is Extended to the Gentiles

Cornelius, a Roman centurion stationed in Caesarea, receives a vision and is told send someone to see Peter

Acts 10:1-6

[1] There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band.

[2] A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

[3] He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

[4] And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

[5] And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

[6] He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

What can we learn about personal revelation from Cornelius’ experience?

Ask to go to the proper Church authorities

(now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter... he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do)

LeGrand Richards

"From this example we learn that no matter how righteous one may be who seeks after truth, the Lord directs him to one of his servants who has been ordained to the priesthood, so that he can be baptized at his hands and be instructed.

"This was also true with respect to Saul, to which we have already referred. Even though the Savior spoke to him on the road to Damascus, the Lord directed him to go into the city of Damascus, where the Lord instructed one of his servants, Ananias, what to do." (A Marvelous Work and a Wonder, pg. 105)

Ministering of angels available to all who have been righteous to the best of their knowledge

(a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band)

Parley P. Pratt

“The doctrine of visions and ministering of angels... was common to all dispensations... We will carry it still further. It was enjoyed among the Gentiles, before there was a people of God fully organized among them in the days of Christ. Cornelius had the ministering of angels before he became a member of the Christian Church, or understood there was a crucified and risen Redeemer. He prayed to the living God, and gave alms of such things as he had. He was a good man, and an angel came to him and told him his prayers were heard, and his alms had come up as a memorial before God.”  
(JD, 1:297)

Meanwhile, Peter receives the vision of unclean things

Acts 10:9-18

[9] On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

[10] And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance,

[11] And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth:

[12] Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

[13] And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

[14] But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

[15] And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

[16] This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

[17] Now while Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

[18] And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

Why did Peter refuse to eat the animals shown in the vision?

(I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean)

Leviticus 20:25

Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean.

But it was God who called these animals common in the Law of Moses.

What lesson do you think that the Lord was trying to teach Peter?

(What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common)

Spencer W. Kimball

"The prejudices were deep rooted in Peter, and it took a vision from heaven to help him cast off his bias.... Then the heavenly voice made clear that the program was for all. 'What God hath cleansed,' it said, 'that call not thou common.' Peter's long sustained prejudices finally gave way under the power of the thrice-repeated command. When the devout gentile Cornelius immediately thereafter appealed to him for the gospel, the full meaning of the vision burst upon Peter and he exclaimed, 'God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.'" (Faith Precedes the Miracle, pg. 294)

Peter was pondering the meaning of this vision when the servants of Cornelius arrived

Acts 10:19-20,25-28

[19] While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

[20] Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

[28] And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

As Peter did as he was instructed (go with them doubting nothing)-  
What did Peter learn was the interpretation of his vision?

(God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean)

Brigham Young

"At that time the Gospel had been given to the Jews only, and Peter and his brethren had the idea that it was not for the Gentiles; but this vision was as much as to say, 'I want to open your eyes and show you that the Gentiles as well as the Jews are to receive and participate in the blessings of the Gospel.' Just as Peter awoke from his vision there came a rap at the door and the messengers of Cornelius inquired for him." (JD, 14:129)

Also during this time many members had gathered together. Peter told them about the message he had received and he began to put it into practice

Acts 10:34-35,44-48

[34] Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

[35] But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

[44] While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

[45] And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

[46] For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

[47] Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

[48] And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

What convinced those Christian Jews present that the gospel was also for the Gentiles?

(because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost)

D. Todd Christofferson

"By this experience and revelation to Peter, the Lord modified the practice of the Church and revealed a more complete doctrinal understanding to His disciples. And so the preaching of the gospel expanded to encompass all mankind." (CR, April 2012)

Peter relates his vision and the events surrounding Cornelius and other Gentiles. Here we see how the Cristian Jews were still clinging to the Law of Moses.

Acts 11:1-4,18

[1] And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

[2] And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

[3] Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

[4] But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

[18] When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

What was the initial reaction of the Jewish church members to Peter's actions?

(contended with him

Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them)

What was their reaction after Peter explained the vision he had?

(they held their peace, and glorified God)

But receiving Gentiles into the Church would remain a major stumbling block in the Church. This seems to more because of cultural difference than because God accepted all who would repent and believe

Spencer J. Condie

"Traditions seem natural because most people in a given society engage in such behaviors, but the commandments of God are based upon revealed truth, not popular preferences...."

"Sometimes members become so fond of certain traditions within the Church that a change in a given policy or procedure becomes a test of their faith. They believe in continuous revelation as long as it does not involve change. Describing the Saints in his day, the Prophet Joseph Smith once exclaimed, 'I have tried for a number of years to get the minds of the Saints prepared to receive the things of God; but we frequently see some of them... will fly to pieces like glass as soon as anything comes that is contrary to their traditions' (TPJS, pg. 331)." ("A Disposition to Do Good Continually", Ensign, Aug. 2001)

### Paul's First Mission

A number "prophets and teachers" of the Church were gathered at Antioch

Acts 13:2-4

[2] As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

[3] And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.

[4] So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.

What do you think is significant about there Saul and Barnabas were sent on their first mission?

Institute Manual

The real significance of Paul's first missionary journey lies in the fact that it led to the establishment of branches of the church in areas far removed from Jerusalem. Many hear and received the gospel message who could otherwise not have done so... We note also Paul's eagerness to preach the gospel to all men, regardless of their station or background. When the Jews reject the word of God, Paul turns to the gentiles. (Institute Manual, The Life and Teachings of Jesus and His Apostles, pg. 263)

They preach in a synagogue to the Jews about how Jesus has the power to bless us with justification and about his perfect resurrection

Acts 13:33-39,42

33 God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34 And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.

35 Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

36 For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:

37 But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

38 ¶ Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:

39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

42 And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next sabbath.

What did Paul tell the Jews that Jesus had done that set Him apart from other prophets whom they glorified?

David's body deteriorated in the ground while Jesus was resurrected  
(David... fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption)

The Law of Moses can't forgive sins but Christ can  
(ye could not be justified by the law of Moses)

The Jews turned away from Paul's teachings but the gentiles wanted to know more.

Acts 13:44-50

[44] And the next sabbath day came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

[45] But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.

[46] Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

[47] For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.

[48] And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.

[49] And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region.

[50] But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

What is the reason Paul gives for preaching the gospel to the Gentiles?

(seeing ye put it from you... we turn to the Gentiles)

Joseph Smith

"And so it came to pass that as Israel in those days rejected the Gospel of the kingdom which was first offered to them, so God also rejected them; and they have stood rejected to this day; smitten and trodden under foot of the Gentile races, a scoff, a hiss, and a byword in every land that they have inhabited; while the kingdom of God first offered to them was left to other people, to the Gentiles, who for a season, brought forth the fruits thereof."  
(History of the Church, 1:39)

How would you compare the reaction of the Gentiles to Paul's teachings to that of the Jews?

(when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord)

(But the Jews stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts)

Next the missionaries went to the city of Iconium

Acts 14:1-7

[1] And it came to pass in Iconium, that they went both together into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed.

[2] But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.

[3] Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

[4] But the multitude of the city was divided: and part held with the Jews, and part with the apostles.

[5] And when there was an assault made both of the Gentiles, and also of the Jews with their rulers, to use them despitefully, and to stone them,

[6] They were ware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about:

[7] And there they preached the gospel.

Which group actively apposed Paul and his message and how did they try to stop

him?

(when there was an assault made... to use them despitefully, and to stone them)

Paul and Barnabas visit Lystra

Acts 14:8-20

[8] And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked:

[9] The same heard Paul speak: who stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

[10] Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

[11] And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in the speech of Lycaonia, The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men.

[12] And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker.

[13] Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people.

[14] Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,

[15] And saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein:

[16] Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.

[17] Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.

[18] And with these sayings scarce restrained they the people, that they had not done sacrifice unto them.

[19] And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

[20] Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.

What did Paul perceive about the crippled man that prompted him heal him?

(stedfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed)

What does that teach us about be healed?

Spencer W. Kimball

“The need of faith is often underestimated. The ill one and the family often seem to depend wholly on the power of the priesthood and the gift of healing that they hope the administering brethren may have, whereas the greater responsibility is with him who is blessed.... The major element is the faith of the individual when that person is conscious and accountable.



‘Thy faith hath made thee whole’ (Matthew 9:22) was repeated so often by the Master that it almost became a chorus.” (“Administration to the Sick”, New Era, Oct. 1981)

Again we see leaders of the Jewish community persuading the people turn away from Paul and to stone him

Paul and Barnabas return from their mission and remind the converts that experiencing tribulation is essential to entering the kingdom of God

Acts 14:21-28

[21] And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

[22] Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

[23] And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

[24] And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

[25] And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

[26] And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

[27] And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

[28] And there they abode long time with the disciples.

#### The Conference in Jerusalem – Law of Moses

Paul returned from his first mission to attend a conference in Jerusalem.

A Jewish church members taught that circumcision was essentially for salvation.

Paul and others disagreed. This question was discussed at the Jerusalem Conference

Acts 15:5-11

[4] And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them.

[5] But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

[6] And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

[7] And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.

[8] And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;

[9] And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

[10] Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

[11] But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be

saved, even as they.

Why do you think that some Jewish converts thought that they should continue to conform to rituals from the Law of Moses?

Dean L. Larsen

"This loyalty to and affinity for programs that were an outgrowth of the ritualism and regimentation of the past proved to be a great obstacle to accepting the simple, basic principles of the gospel. For the converted Jews, whose lives had been so filled with the programmed requirements of the law and whose religious commitment had been demonstrated by their outward observance of these requirements, the religious life outlined by the gospel of Christ must have seemed very open and unregulated. It was not easy for them to leave the feeling of security provided in the total regimentation of the Jewish law." ("Some Thoughts on Goal-Setting," Ensign, Feb. 1981)

What evidence does Peter give that these outward rituals are no longer necessary?

(giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us  
no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith  
through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they)

Romans 7:6

But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

James added to Peter's remarks and suggested that a letter be sent to the different churches

Acts 15:19-24,28

[19] Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God:

[20] But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.

[23] And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:

[24] Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment:

[28] For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things;

Note that Peter and James didn't want to "put a yoke upon the neck of the

disciples”

Or, “trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God”

Or, “lay upon you no greater burden”

Why do you think the Jewish traditions were an unnecessary burden for the early church members to bear?

The law of Moses had been fulfilled in Christ

John Taylor

“The law [of Moses] was added not as a peculiar kind of a blessing that some people speak of, but as a peculiar kind of a curse—the law of carnal commandments, 'a yoke that we nor our fathers were able to bear.' And when Jesus came, what did he bring? Why, the Gospel.... that everlasting, eternal, unchangeable principle that brings men into relationship with their God, unveils the heavens and the purposes of God to the human family, and leads them in the paths of life.” (JD, 14:356)

By comparison, what did Jesus say about taking upon us His burden?

Matt 11:28-30

[28] Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

[29] Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

[30] For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Regarding the scribes and Pharisees

Matt 23:4

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.

I don't know why they held onto “meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled”. The only answer I came across was that may have been a compromise, but that was from a non-LDS source.

## Paul Begins His Second Mission

[35] Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord, with many others also.

[36] And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.

[37] And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.

[38] But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work.

[39] And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus;

[40] And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.

[41] And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.