

Acts 10 - Common or Unclean

Acts 10:1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

Acts 10:2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

- **The chapter starts out explaining about a Gentile.**

Acts 10:3 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.

- **An angel of God—a messenger from Heaven—had been sent to him.**

Acts 10:4 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.

- **The angel was aware of his prayers ascending and was sent in answer to that prayer.**

Acts 10:5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

- **The angel was responsible for sending a message of guidance and direction from God.**

Acts 10:6 He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

- **Notice the specifics given through this heavenly intelligence.**

Acts 10:7 And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed, he called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually;

- **Cornelius was aware of when the angel appeared and when the angel left.**

Acts 10:8 And when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa.

Acts 10:9 ¶ 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:

- **We see the providence of God working with the Gentiles and with the Jews at the same time. Peter was impressed to pray at this time for a specific purpose.**

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

- **God waited for a time when Peter was hungry to illustrate this shocking and important visual message.**

Acts 10:11 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:

Acts 10:12 Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

Acts 10:13 And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.

Acts 10:14 But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.

Acts 10:15 And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

Acts 10:16 This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

Acts 10:17 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 enquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate,

- **Peter “doubted in himself what this vision” should mean. Therefore, we cannot understand it ‘as it reads.’ This vision must have a deeper meaning than what is described on the surface.**
- **In that providential moment, someone knocked on the door.**

Acts 10:18 And called, and asked whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there.

Acts 10:19 ¶ While Peter thought on the vision, the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.

Acts 10:20 Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing: for I have sent them.

- **Peter’s thoughts were interrupted by a message, likely given by that same angel (called a spirit in Hebrews 1:7) who had visited Cornelius just moments before. Angels are said to have the “testimony of Jesus” which is the “spirit of prophecy,” mentioned in Revelation 19:10. Angels are not "the Holy Spirit" but are used of God as spirits that are holy. (There are evil spirits--which are angels, so why not holy spirits?)**
- **The angels were mentioned by Christ as “ascending and descending upon the Son of man,” in John 1:51 with, no doubt, messages of assurance and love.**

Acts 10:21 Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from Cornelius; and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what is the cause wherefore ye are come?

- **Peter was instructed by the heavenly intelligences about the situation before even meeting those men. Notice, Peter had spoken first.**

Acts 10:22 And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee.

- **It wasn’t unusual to speak of an angel visitation, as some shepherds not long before had a similar story to tell. See Luke 2:8-16**

Acts 10:23 Then called he them in, and lodged them. And on the morrow Peter went away with them, and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

Acts 10:24 And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius waited for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.

Acts 10:25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him.

Acts 10:26 But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man.

Acts 10:27 And as he talked with him, he went in, and found many that were come together.

- **The missionary party had arrived, and Peter was not one to accept worship, as he knew his position as a servant, not a god. Peter “went in and found many” Gentiles gathered.**

Acts 10:28 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.

- **It was here that Peter gave the interpretation of the message that had been sent by God through the expression of the “testimony of Jesus” when he was on the roof. God had shown Peter about “unclean” animals, as the Jews understood the Gentiles to be “unclean.” Peter realized that he was not to call “any man common or unclean.”**

Acts 10:29 Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?

Acts 10:30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

- **The angel here is described as a man. See Hebrews 13:2.**

Acts 10:31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.

Acts 10:32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.

Acts 10:33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

- **Peter realized that God treats people equally, no longer would he think that the Jews were the only ones who could received God's message of mercy and love.**

Acts 10:35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

- **“Every nation” was a brand new concept for Peter, as he was a Jew—one of God's special people at that time. Now was the time for Peter to share the good news of the gospel with the Gentiles:**

Acts 10:36 The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)

Acts 10:37 That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

Acts 10:38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 10:39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:

Acts 10:40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;

Acts 10:41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

Acts 10:42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Acts 10:43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Acts 10:44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

- **The Spirit fell upon those who were willing to receive the words spoken by God's representative.**

Acts 10:45 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.

- **Again, this was a new idea that Gentiles could receive the gospel and be blessed of God as they, the Jews, were.**

Acts 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

Acts 10:47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

- **The gift of the Holy Ghost was now available to all the world.**

Acts 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts 11:1 And the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

Acts 11:2 And when Peter was come up to Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision contended with him,

Acts 11:3 Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them.

- **Peter faced opposition from his colleagues in the faith, as they were unprepared to fellowship with the Gentiles, so Peter had to explain:**

Acts 11:4 But Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,

Acts 11:5 I was in the city of Joppa praying: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet, let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me:

Acts 11:6 Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.

Acts 11:7 And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

Acts 11:8 But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

Acts 11:9 But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

Acts 11:10 And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

Acts 11:11 And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me.

Acts 11:12 And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

Acts 11:13 And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

Acts 11:14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

Acts 11:15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

Acts 11:16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 11:17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

Acts 11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

- **Peter explained the entire vision again and the application to the Gentiles. The Jews were willing to understand and receive that concept, and glorified God—not that they could eat anything because of the vision that they used to call unclean and common—but rather, that they were able to consider the Gentiles as brothers in the faith, instead of common and unclean.**

From His Tail to His Snout! *By John T. Reagan*

Ps. 34:11

Do you think, brother, that in God's great plan
When He was prescribing the best food for man
That He made a mistake in leaving the swine out.
For he was not good from his tail to his snout!

1 Cor. 3:17

Oh, the carcass of an old dead horse or a cow
Don't get too rotten for a dirty old sow;
Though we holler a lot about boils and gout,
We eat Miss Piggy from her tail to her snout.

Ezek. 33:11

We couldn't eat the buzzard, we'd think it a crime,
But how much more filthy is he than the swine;
That we make into pie, or we cook him with kraut,
And eat him or die, from his tail to his snout!

Isa. 66:2-4

We cook him with cabbage or boil him with greens,
With his mangy old hide we season our beans;
With his scabs and his boils within and without
Sweet Piggy we eat from his tail to his snout.

On filth they feast, while in stink-holes they lay
And still for their carcass our money we pay;
The preacher, professor, or the judge on his bench,
Eat the carrion-eater, his filth and his stench.

Ezek. 22:26

In the filth you can see him clear up to his eyes
His slimy old carcass all covered with flies;
Most dead with cholera (due to butcher, no doubt).
We still think him good from tail to snout.

11 Cor. 6:17

We eat the old grunter, we eat the young shoat,
The fat that we fancied may be pus or bloat;
It would smell as good, and as healthy, no doubt,
As the hoofs and the hide, the tail and the snout.

Isa. 66:17

We may like him lean, or we may like him best fat
Just as well eat the dog, or else eat a cat;
Just as well eat the buzzard, the owl or the bat
The lizard or the snake, the mouse or the rat.

Rom. 12:1

Our most sensitive natures would almost run wild,
If we handled the corpse of a man or a child,
But we sit at our table and cram down our throat
With greatest relish—the corpse of a shoat.

Deut. 14:8

God made him a scavenger, He says he's unclean
What other creature is as filthy and mean?
If we eat his flesh, or touch his dead carcass,
With sin and disease it surely will mark us.

Lev. 11:7, 8

Tis sad, brother, although God's word is just,
We eat the slop-eater, for eat him we must;
The dirtiest of beasts we will not do without.
But eat him we will, from his tail to his snout!

Matt. 15:8

Now we sing and we talk of God's love so divine,
Like vultures, then feast on the dirty old swine.
We might shun many ills, and diseases, no doubt,
By not eating him—from his tail to his snout.

1 Cor. 10:31

Yes, we worship the Lord, and pray and shout.
But that old hog flavor we can't do without;
For ham, bacon, and sausage; we go the whole route.
And eat the whole hog from his tail to his snout.

11 Pet. 2:22

In God's word we find he is classed with the dog
No matter how highbred he still is a hog
Though you wash him, or teach him if you will,
He still will go back to his mire and his swill.

Gen. 1:29

We'd be better off if we obeyed God's command,
And ate vegetables, grain and fruit of the land
Then it wouldn't take half of the tonic and pills
To relieve all mankind of their swine-fed ills.

Gen. 9:5

You may think of fresh pork as a very rare treat,
But our bodies are made of just what we eat,
And the food he has eaten, the filth of the land
Goes into our body as food second-hand.

III Jn. 2

No wonder we are weak and heart beats are slow,
Sanitariums full, hospitals o'erflow,
For we eat such unclean, abominable things,
That are creeping, crawling, or flying with wings.

Ps. 119:105

God forbade us to eat these dirty old creatures,
No matter what is the theory of preachers;
If left to man's opinion—we'd not know the right,
But thank the Lord, in His Word there is light.

Lk. 4:2, 3

And now, my brother, you may no doubt recall—
Indulgence of appetite caused Adam's fall.
Our Savior was tempted on this point, no doubt,
Then why do we eat from his tail to his snout?

Rev. 22:11, 12

Now I've told you my story, recited my piece;
If you can eat pork with your conscience at ease,
If sin, filth, or disease, you care little about—
Keep on eating the brute,

From his tail to his snout!

A returned Missionary Baptist Minister with ten letters after his name, writes upon receiving the poem, "From His Tail to His Snout," as follows:

"Literature received, glad to get it. Forty-five years ago when in inland China, I saw hogs eating dead children. At once I ceased eating hog, my stomach trouble, dyspepsia and indigestion disappeared, so that was proof positive what caused it. So I say to people, "If you want cancer for breakfast, rheumatism for dinner and tuberculosis for supper, eat hog. I don't want any, for God classes it with rats and mice. We use vegetable shortening. It's cheaper and better. Long may you live and scatter the truth."