

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 trance¹¹ and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” ¹⁴ But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” ¹⁵ And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” ¹⁶ This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven.

I. The Uncomfortable Leadership of God (9-16) {This occurs when your personal policy does not advance His present purpose}

A. God intrudes upon Peter’s normal pattern of life (9-10) - Both his lunch time and prayer time were interrupted by God’s divine appointment.

B. God challenged Peter’s deep convictions (11-13) - Peter was instructed to eat things which he believed to be religiously unclean. (Lev. 20:25-26)

C. God did not conform to Peter’s wishes (14-16) - “By no means, Lord.” This is a contradictory statement which acknowledges God’s authority but refuses to submit to it. Peter initially refused, but God continued to confront Peter with His will.

God reserves the right to overturn any belief, tradition or practice which are not sourced in His authoritative Word.

II. The Supernatural Activity of God (17-33)

A. God’s pinpoint timing (17-22) - God finishes up with Peter the moment Cornelius’ representatives arrive (See Acts 11:11)

B. Peter’s prolonged discomfort (23-29) - Peter agrees to accompany these Gentiles though not knowing why God wanted him to.

C. Cornelius’ stunning testimony (30-33) - He recounts for Peter the leadership of God on Cornelius’s side. Peter would now sense that God was at work in an unprecedented manner. DO YOU ALLOW ROOM FOR GOD TO LEAD YOU IN A BRAND NEW WAY?

NOTE: many years later, Peter was still struggling with Jewish prejudice against Gentiles as evidenced in Galatians 2:11-15

III. The Paradigm Shift From God (34-48)

A. Jesus Christ was proclaimed (34-43) - The Gentiles were presented the opportunity to believe in Jesus Christ.

B. Holy Spirit affirmed the Gentiles faith in Christ (44-46) – The Spirit did His part in awakening these Gentiles and confirming their salvation.

C. Father’s full plan was being unveiled (47-48) - That the Gentiles would become part of the Kingdom was now revealed.

TRUTH TO REMEMBER:

In Kingdom seasons, there are undoubtedly God-ordained times of change. The followers of Christ must accept the reality that God will initiate and complete changes in individuals, churches, and regions as He operates within the parameters of His divine wisdom.