

**Valley Bible Church**  
**Sermon Notes for September 8, 2013**

**The Vision to Cornelius**  
**Acts 10:1-8**

Acts 10 begins a very significant section in Acts which shows God's supernatural work with Cornelius that set in motion the development of the church's New Testament ministry.

**1. The report of Cornelius (10:1-2)**

a. His role (10:1)

Cornelius lived in Caesarea, a city built by Herod the Great and named after Augustus Caesar, adopted son of Julius Caesar. It was the Roman capital of the province of Judea.

A centurion led 100 soldiers as part of a 600 soldier cohort. The first Gentile in Jesus' public ministry was also a centurion (Matthew 8:5-12). In Matthew 8:11, Jesus announced that many Gentiles would be included in the kingdom of heaven and this centurion is the beginning of the fulfillment of these words.

Unlike the Gentile Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:25-40), this Gentile centurion represented the people who had invaded Judea. God chose a man from the Roman enemy to bring salvation to the Gentiles.

b. His religion (10:2)

Cornelius was devout, which speaks to his sincerity, and feared God, which speaks to his status.

Luke uses the term "God-fearer" (cf. Acts 10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 43, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17; 18:7) to mean a person who was favorable toward Judaism but had not become a full proselyte by becoming circumcised.

**2. The revelation to Cornelius (10:3-6)**

The ninth hour of the day (3:00 p.m.) was a time of prayer for the Jews (Acts 3:1), so it is likely that Cornelius had adopted this practice for himself.

The vision Cornelius received was the reality of an angel from God, beyond merely a dream (cf. 10:30-33). Encounters with angels are not only rare but frightening (Luke 1:12; cf. Acts 24:25).

The prayers and gifts were called a “memorial” (literally, a “remembrance”) as God responded to Cornelius with not only the order to send for Peter but also for the purpose of hearing his message (cf. Acts 10:22; 11:13-14).

This story of Cornelius is viewed by some as evidence that someone can know God simply by being devout, apart from the knowledge of Christ.

However:

- The knowledge of Christ is essential (Acts 4:12; John 14:6).
- Cornelius’ sincerity was a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- As Cornelius responded he learned more (John 7:17).
- Acts 10 shows Cornelius’ progress toward God (Acts 11:14).

### **3. The response of Cornelius (10:7-8)**

Cornelius responded immediately and selected people who he trusted and who shared the same interest (cf. 10:2).

When God brings revelation to us, we ought to respond with eagerness.

May God move us to embrace God’s revelation to us, and may God use us to represent that revelation to others.