

New Morning Magical – for 7-14-20

Did Peter miss the point?

Start with the book of Acts – Peter's chance – Why didn't Yeshua reveal to him what He did to Paul – and then, having heard Paul's evangel from him, why didn't Peter go with him (Paul)?

Acts Chapter 10:

1 Now a certain man in Caesarea, named Cornelius, a centurion of a squadron called "Italian,"

2 devout and fearing God with his entire house, doing many alms to the people and beseeching God continually,

3 perceived in a vision manifestly, as if about the ninth hour of the day, a messenger of God entering to him and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

4 Now he, looking intently at him, and becoming affrighted, said, "What is it, lord?" Now he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms ascended for a memorial in front of God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and send after a certain Simon, who is surnamed Peter.

6 This man is lodging with a certain Simon, a tanner, whose house is beside the sea."

7 Now as the messenger who is speaking to him came away, summoning two of the domestics and a devout soldier of those who waited on him,

8 and unfolding it all to them, he dispatches them to Joppa.

9 Now, on the morrow, as they are journeying and drawing near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray about the sixth hour of the day.

10 Now he became ravenous and wanted to taste food. Now, while they are preparing it, an ecstasy came on him,

11 and he is beholding heaven open and a certain utensil descending, as a large sheet, with four edges, being let down on the earth,

12 in which belonged all the quadrupeds and reptiles of the earth and the flying creatures of heaven.

13 And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter! Sacrifice and eat!"

14 Yet Peter said, "Far be it from me, Lord, for I never ate anything contaminating and unclean!"

15 And again, a second time, a voice came to him, "What God cleanses, do not you count contaminating!"

16 Now this occurred thrice, and straightway the utensil **[the sheet]** was taken up into heaven.

The Lord to whom Peter was talking went to great lengths to make a hugely important point, as we'll see shortly. Peter was invited into a new paradigm, where God had cleansed what was once considered unclean, and therefore forbidden, under the Law of Moses.

17 Now, as Peter was bewildered in himself as to what the vision which he perceived should be **[Peter had no idea what his vision meant]**, lo! the men who have been dispatched by Cornelius, asking the way through to the house of Simon, stand by at the portal.

18 And, shouting, they inquired to ascertain if Simon, surnamed Peter, is lodging in this place.

19 Now, as Peter is engrossed, concerned with the vision, the spirit said to him, "Lo! three men are seeking you! **[Isn't this great? Peter is all caught up in what the vision meant, when the Lord Himself has to tell him to go answer the door!]**

20 But, rising, descend and go with them, nothing doubting, for I have commissioned them."

21 Now Peter, descending to the men, said, "Lo! I am he whom you are seeking. What is the cause for which you are present?"

22 Now they say, "Cornelius, a centurion, a man just and God-fearing, besides being attested by the whole nation of the Jews, is apprized by a holy messenger to send after you to come into his house, and to hear declarations from you."

Peter had to realize that this was a big deal: It was rare indeed for a Roman centurion to summon you in a friendly way!

23 Calling them in, then, he lodges them. Now on the morrow, on rising, he came away together with them, and some of the brethren from Joppa came with him.

24 Now on the morrow he entered into Caesarea. Now Cornelius was hoping for them, calling together his relatives and intimate friends.

25 Now as Peter came to enter, Cornelius, meeting with him, falling at his feet, worships.

This is unheard of: A Roman centurion worshipping at the feet of a Jew?!

26 Yet Peter raises him, saying, "Rise! I myself also am a man."

27 And, conversing with him, he entered, and is finding many come together.

28 Besides, he averred to them, "You are versed in the fact how illicit it is for a man who is a Jew to join or come to another tribe, and God shows me not to say that any man is contaminating or unclean.

Here we see that Peter DID get the message of his vision. Good for him.

29 Wherefore, without gainsaying, also, being sent after, I came. I am inquiring to ascertain, then, on what account you send after me."

30 And Cornelius **[tells Peter the story that led to searching him out in Joppa. Now jump down to verse 34]**

34 Now Peter, opening his mouth, said, "Of a truth I am grasping that God is not partial, 35 but in every nation he who is fearing Him **[that is, any man who is fearing God]** and acting righteously is acceptable to Him.

36 Of the word He dispatches to the sons of Israel, bringing the evangel of peace through Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all),

37 you are aware, the declaration coming to be down the whole of Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism which John heralds:

38 Jesus from Nazareth, as God anoints Him with holy spirit and power, Who passed through as a benefactor and healer of all those who are tyrannized over by the Adversary, for God was with Him.

39 "And we are witnesses of all that He does, both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem; Whom they assassinate also, hanging Him on a pole.

40 This One God rouses the third day, and gives Him to become disclosed,

41 not to the entire people, but to witnesses who have been selected before by God, to us who ate and drank together with Him after His rising from among the dead.

42 And He charges us to herald to the people and to certify that this One is He Who is specified by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

43 To this One are all the prophets testifying: Everyone who is believing in Him is to obtain the pardon of sins through His name."

When you read these last verses, you see the limitations of Peter's revelation as to why Christ came and died: to judge the living and the dead; and all Peter knows about the reward for believing in Yeshua is the pardon of sins.

44 While Peter is still speaking these declarations, the holy spirit falls on all those hearing the word.

45 And amazed were the believers of the Circumcision **[that is, the Jews]**, whoever come together with Peter, seeing that on the nations **[that is, the Gentiles]** also the gratuity of the holy spirit has been poured out.

46 For they heard them speaking in languages and magnifying God.

The word, Gratuity, in verse 45 means “what is given freely.” It’s important to point out that here as in every other mention of people being filled with the Holy Spirit is that they always begin speaking in Languages, or tongues, as you read in other versions. The only way anyone **knew** that they were filled with the holy spirit was because they spoke in tongues, or languages. We’ll probably get into this much more at another time. For now, though, this is how simple it is to be filled with the Holy Spirit: You ask God to fill you and then you begin to make sounds that, at first, make no sense to your brain, but which become words, phrases, and whole conversations with the Father that He understands even though your brain doesn’t.

47 Then Peter answered, "There can not be anyone to forbid water, so that these are not to be baptized, who obtained the holy spirit even as we."

When Peter gets back to Jerusalem, the Jewish brethren were ready for him and they were loaded for bear.

Acts Chapter 11:

1 Now the apostles and the brethren who are of Judea hear that the nations also receive the word of God.

2 Now when Peter went up into Jerusalem, those of the Circumcision doubted him,

3 saying that "You entered to men having uncircumcision, and you ate with them!"

4 Now Peter begins and expounded it to them consecutively,

And Peter goes through the whole story again that we just read. Let’s pick it up at verse 15:

15 "Now as I begin to speak, the holy spirit falls on them, even as on us also in the beginning.

16 Now I am reminded of the declaration of the Lord, as He said that 'John, indeed, baptizes in water, yet you shall be baptized in holy spirit.'

17 If, then, God gives them the equal gratuity as to us also, when believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I -- able to forbid God?"

18 Now, on hearing these things, they are quiet, and glorify God, saying, "Consequently, to the nations also God gives repentance unto life!"

What’s the point of telling this story? This is my take, of course, but to me, Peter was given the first opportunity to extend the pardon of sins and the gratuity of the holy spirit to the Gentiles, before Paul was commissioned to do just that and much more. Peter recognized the significance of his experience with Cornelius, but he never went beyond that, and as a result,

his outreach was limited, along with James and John, to the circumcision – that is to their fellow Jews. Who knows what could have happened had Peter gone back to Jerusalem and proclaimed the invitation to Gentiles to participate in the salvation through Yeshua and the infilling of the holy spirit?

Thankfully, the Lord knew what Peter would do or NOT do, and had already gotten hold of Saul in Chapter 9. I wonder if Peter ever gave himself a dope slap for missing the opportunity that I think he was given.

How God chooses people is totally unlike how you or I would do it.

So, let's close today with Paul's description of The Father's unique method of choosing those who will serve Him best:

1 Corinthians Chapter 1:

18 For the word of the cross is stupidity, indeed, to those who are perishing, yet to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

19 For it is written, I shall be destroying the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the intelligent shall I be repudiating.

20 Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the discussor of this eon? Does not God make stupid the wisdom of this world?

21 For since, in fact, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God, God delights, through the stupidity of the heralding, to save those who are believing,

22 since, in fact, Jews signs are requesting, and Greeks wisdom are seeking,

23 yet we are heralding Christ crucified, to Jews, indeed, a snare, yet to the nations stupidity,

24 yet to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God,

25 for the stupidity of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

26 For you are observing your calling, brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh; not many powerful, not many noble,

27 but the stupidity of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the wise, and the weakness of the world God chooses, that He may be disgracing the strong,

28 and the ignoble and the contemptible things of the world God chooses, and that which is not, that He should be discarding that which is,

29 so that no flesh at all should be boasting in God's sight.