

## Acts 9:10 “The Gospel Goes to the Gentiles” 2024-07-14.

### **Intro & Review:**

We have been seeing how the gospel has gone out geographically starting in Jerusalem then to Judea and Samaria. It started with the Jews first and is now going to the gentiles as Paul himself says in Rom 1:16. Christianity was first comprised of Jews only and then half Jew, Samaritans begin to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ as king, then a full Gentile to Jew convert (the Ethiopian eunuch), and in today’s story, we have a gentile, God-fearer converted. This was highly controversial as we’ll talk about more next week.

In our introduction, however let’s look at what God had previously said about “the nations.” In the Greek translation of the OT (Septuagint or LXX), the phrase in Hebrew “nations” was translated “gentiles.”

Is 42:6, 49:6, 52:10, 60:3

This theme is such a big deal that it will show up in Paul’s letters (epistles) multiple times including but not limited to Romans, Ephesians, and Galatians.

Spoiler alert, it will be the theme of the Jerusalem council in Acts 15.

Honestly, what I’d almost like to do today is preach Is 42:1-8 which Matthew partially quotes in 12:18-21, or I’d like to go to Habakkuk 2:14 “For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of Yahweh, As the waters cover the sea.”

Turn to Is 42:1-8 and let’s read it.

In Is 49:6 “light to the nations (gentiles)”. Paul later quotes this passage in Acts 13 for the reason that he was turning to the gentiles.

This vision goes back to Genesis 1:26-28 known as the cultural mandate. It was the reason that God did what He did in creating humanity. We are to be His vice-regents on planet earth. We are to extend His rule and reign. He picked a people to be a light to the gentiles (Is 42:6, 49:6).

With all that in mind, let us turn to the text at hand and walk through it.

### **Questions:**

*What was a roman centurion (v1)?*

Leader of 100 soldiers. Notice that he was not commanded to leave the army contra some of the so called Christian passivists that oppose any kind of violence from or by Christians.

*What does it mean that Cornelius was a “god fearer” in verses 2 & 22?*

He was as close to converting to Judaism as you could get without being circumcised. As you can imagine that requirement caused many a man to examine his commitment seriously. Cornelius is described in v2 as being “devout.”

*What point was being made in the vision that Peter saw (vs.11-16)?*

That God was making what they viewed as unclean, clean. God was preparing Peter for the giving of the Spirit to the gentiles, not just the Jews.

*Why was Peter hesitant (v14)?*

Because he was a good Jew & the law prohibited such actions. The dietary law in the Old Testament said not to eat such kind of animals.

*What theological point is made in v34?*

God is not just the God of the Jews. He does not show partiality. He is Lord of all. He is king of heaven and earth and all that is in it. See v35. He commands that all men everywhere repent and believe the gospel. Everyone that fears him is welcome. Jew or gentile.

*Starting in v36 Peter explains the gospel. What does he say about Jesus in v36 concerning his rule?*

He is lord of all!

*What theological point is made in v42 about Jesus? Why does this matter?*

He is judge of the living and the dead. Everyone will give an account before Him. The Father has appointed and anointed Him as the one by whom every person who has ever lived will face.

*What was the reaction of the Jewish believers to the gentiles having received the Holy Spirit in v45? Why did they have this response?*

The were “astonished.” They were shocked! Flabbergasted! It would have been previously unbelievable. We don’t think anything about gentiles believing the gospel because at this point, the gospel primarily goes to gentiles but in this time, it was a very big deal.

**Application:**

*What phrase is repeated in vs.42-43? What impact does that have on us?*

“Bear witness” That is our job. To be witnesses. To testify as to what God has done in Jesus Christ. To preach the good news.

*What happened to these that received the Holy Spirit?*

They were baptized. Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord should obey Him and be baptized. Your children also. This is the New Testament norm.

*What is baptism? How is it related to the covenant? Who all was baptized?*

Sign and seal of the covenant. In the OT, God’s people had a sign which was circumcision. Now the sign of the New Covenant is baptism. It seems clear that heads of households were saved and they and all their children were baptized.

Closing Prayer:

Father, make us a people with an outward focus towards You and Your gospel. Make us a missionary people reaching out into the cities and countryside in our area of responsibility. Make us bold to proclaim the gospel knowing that both persecution and conversion are the outcomes of such behavior. We know that Your Spirit uses Your word in the mouths of Your people to bring about salvation. Would you make it so, for Christ’s sake we pray. Amen.

**Questions:**

What was a roman centurion (v1)?

What does it mean that Cornelius was a “god fearer” in verses 2 & 22?

What point was being made in the vision that Peter saw (vs.11-16)?

Why was Peter hesitant (v14)?

What theological point is made in v34?

Starting in v36 Peter explains the gospel. What does he say about Jesus in v36 concerning his rule?

What theological point is made in v42 about Jesus? Why does this matter?

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**Application:**

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