

- vi. The Mingling of Jew and Gentile (10:17-33)
 - a) The Lord informs Peter not to hesitate to go.
 - Acts 2:17
 - b) Peter isn't stupid, or even dense.
 - c) Peter doesn't flee as Jonah did.
 - Cornelius meets Peter, falls at his feet and worships.
 - Peter has to immediately address Cornelius' Idolatry!

LIVE THE STORY

We must not only love the Gospel Story, we must begin to live the Gospel Story, indeed, to have the Central Character live in us.

- Can you identify aspects of the accounts in Acts 9:32-43 that connect with ideas or images from Isaiah 35? What might this tell you about what is happening in this part of Acts?
- What do you think about the fact that the stories of both Tabitha and Cornelius emphasize their good deeds? What is another way in which those stories are connected?
- Read the quote by Ajith Fernando in the notes. What does it mean that the church is called "saints"? What common misconceptions about saints is not meant?
- What is the significance in the fact that God remembered the deeds of individuals in these accounts and not just churches or organizations? What might that mean for us today?
- Although good works have no merit in the transaction of salvation, why is it important to realize that they are very important? What does Hebrews 6:10 teach us about this?
- How does this text show us that as Gentiles we are not 2nd class citizens in God's kingdom?

A Highway to the Nations

Jerry Cisar — September 14, 2014

Text: Acts 9:32—10:35

Introduction: The Conversion of Cornelius

- A. Details in 3 stories that are grouped together.
 - i. Same promises fulfilled
 - ii. Similar details
 - iii. Good works: A common *evangelical allergy* and a *biblical antihistamine*.
- B. Remember two of the key purposes of Acts:
 - i. Luke 24:45-48,
 - ii. Acts 1:1-8

I. The Highway to the Nations Prepared (9:32-43)

- A. Lydda and Sharon turn to the Lord (9:32-35)
 - i. A stop on the great caravan route for all things in and out of Jerusalem to/from the nations.
 - ii. Joppa is central in the next two stories (14x).
 - iii. Lydda and Isaiah 35:1-3
 - iv. *There shall be there a pure way, and it shall be called a holy way; and there shall not pass by there any unclean person, neither shall there be there an unclean way; but the dispersed shall walk on it, and they shall not go astray. (Isaiah 35:8 LXE)*

God is doing in history a salvation work on the very highway that

would have geographically gone from Jerusalem to the nations.

v. A few observations from this text:

a) Vs 32 Peter goes to visit the **“saints”**

Ajith Fernando: “*The New Testament always uses the word for a group rather than for an individual believer...the term is used 'with reference to the group of believers who belong to God as his own.'* This fits in with a basic meaning of “holy” being *separateness.*”

b) Aeneas has been completely unable to serve God's purpose for 8 years.

c) “*Jesus Christ heals you.*”

B. Death to Life in Joppa

i. The Introduction of Tabitha (9:36)

a) “*abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did.*” (Act 9:36 NASB)

➤ 1 Timothy 5:9-10

➤ Proverbs 31

ii. She dies and Peter is called (9:37-38).

C. The Evidences that Jesus is *the one to come.* (Luke 7:22)

II. The Highway for the Nations Opened (Acts 10)

A. Simon the Tanner's house (9:43)

B. A man named Cornelius, a centurion (10:1-2)

i. Caesarea: the center of Roman governance of Palestine

ii. Cornelius was a man.

a) Another centurion was commended for having faith, such as was not found “*even in Israel*” (Luke 7:9).

b) Cornelius demonstrates something else not typically found in Israel. (10:2)

iii. Modern Problem: How is it that this unsaved Gentile is commended for his good works?

iv. Cornelius' Vision (10:3-8)

a) Why does Cornelius need to send for Peter?

➤ Acts 8

➤ Peter and Paul's Differing Roles

v. Peter's Vision (10:9-16)

a) Peter's response is reminiscent of two things:

➤ **Ezekiel's response** (Ezekiel 4:14)

➤ **Jonah's response** (Jonah 1:2)

b) What has God made clean? What does that mean?

➤ “*Clean*” is not the same as “*holy.*”

➤ All men of every nation are clean (10:28, 34-35).

➤ 11:14 Cornelius was not yet saved.