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## Acts 10

I remember speaking to a Sunday school teacher one morning about the vision Peter had in Acts 10. This is the vision where Peter saw all kinds of animals coming down from Heaven in a sheet and heard a voice saying to kill and eat. Yet, Peter refused. When I told him that this was about the Gentiles, he looked at me with a blank face and said, "I've never thought of that before." His whole premise of understanding Acts 10 was on the basis of food only. The sad part of this is that the purpose of the vision has NOTHING to do with food. Let's read the text.

### Acts 10:9-17

<sup>9</sup>And on the next day, as they were on their way, and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. <sup>10</sup>And he became hungry, and was desiring to eat; but while they were making preparations, he fell into a trance; <sup>11</sup>and he beheld the sky opened up, and a certain object like a great sheet coming down, lowered by four corners to the ground, <sup>12</sup>and there were in it all *kinds of* four-footed animals and crawling creatures of the earth and birds of the air. <sup>13</sup>And a voice came to him, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat!" <sup>14</sup>But Peter said, "By no means, Lord, for I have never eaten anything unholy and unclean." <sup>15</sup>And again a voice *came* to him a second time, "What God has cleansed, no *longer* consider unholy." <sup>16</sup>And this happened three times; and immediately the object was taken up into the sky. <sup>17</sup>Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, behold, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions for Simon's house, appeared at the gate;

I've heard some say, "*If God didn't want Peter to eat the unclean animals in that sheet, then why did he tell him to?*" With this in mind, then why did God tell Abraham to kill Isaac? Did He REALLY want Abraham to kill his son? Of course not. Consider the fact how even Peter was curious as to the meaning of the vision.

### Acts 10:17

*Now while Peter was greatly perplexed in mind as to what the vision which he had seen might be, ...*

Now, why couldn't he just accept it at face value? Why was he perplexed for the meaning? If you were given a vision of a sheet coming down from heaven filled with innocent people and a gun, then you heard a voice say, "*Take the gun. Shoot and kill,*" would your response not be the same as Peter's? Why - because you consider that a basic command of the Lord to abide by. Would you not be disturbed by that vision knowing that He commanded you to do something that you KNOW is contrary to His word?

Likewise for Peter, this was a basic and elementary command for a Hebrew to follow. And if unclean animals were **now** clean for food, why all these years later after Christ was Peter **STILL** not eating unclean animals? He made it very clear that he had **NEVER** eaten such animals and had no intention to eat these. He saw the vision three times, and three gentiles came to the door. Verse 28 shows Peter's conclusion to the meaning of the vision.

**Acts 10:28 28 ... But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean.**

Food is never mentioned as part of the interpretation as to what God was showing him - *never*. Peter had not eaten **ANY** of these unclean animals all this time since Christ. Doesn't it only make sense that **IF** the vision was to include the cleansing of unclean animals for food that Peter would have made mention of it?

Like Peter, we need to stay grounded in the Word so we do not allow ourselves to be carried away by error. The vision of the unclean animals representing Gentiles and then becoming holy/set apart is not unique. The prophets already spoke of this using the exact same language!

**Ho 2:18**

**And in that day will I make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground: and I will break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely.**

**Ho 2:23**

**And I will sow her unto me in the earth; and I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God.**

God reveals His plan to the prophets first (Amos 3:7). Peter was not receiving anything new, just something that was already established *as true*. Even when Peter explains it all to the brothers in Jerusalem (found in chapter 11:1-18), it's not mentioned regarding food - *never*. Peter even informed the brothers of his refusal to eat the unclean animals in the vision he had from the Lord.

**Acts 11:8 "But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'**

If the other brothers were eating unclean animals under the belief of the Lord calling them clean, wouldn't Peter's confession to refuse the Lord be an embarrassment to him? As it is, Peter uses it for his defense to the brothers that he was being obedient to the written word of God. Look at the conclusion decided then by the brothers in Jerusalem.

**Acts 11:18**

**When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."**

Not one thing mentioned about unclean animals as food here - not one. This is one of the few visions where we actually receive the interpretation in the text itself, not once but twice. What sense does it make to inject our own interpretation of the vision and ignore the interpretation given to us? Twice. Not only this, the implication *is clear* through it all that Peter and the disciples continued in the dietary instructions found in the law.

Think about it. It would have been equally HUGE news to the Jews to hear the unclean animals were now considered "food." So, why is it not made mention of? *Because that wasn't the purpose of the vision.* The whole purpose of the vision was to get the Jews out from under the influence of the Pharisees and teachers of the law. Look at what Peter said when he arrived at the house of Cornelius.

### **Acts 10:28**

He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean."

Nowhere in the scriptures do we find this to be true. This was NOT God's law. It was man's law. Strictly rabbinical and NOT of God. And so, the Father brought this vision to bring His people back to the true meaning of who Israel is to be, as stated in the book of Numbers.

### **Num. 15:15**

<sup>15</sup> The community is to have the same rules for you and for the alien living among you; this is a lasting ordinance for the generations to come. You and the alien shall be the same before the LORD. <sup>16</sup> The same laws and regulations will apply both to you and the alien living among you.

We hope you have enjoyed this teaching. For further study, on this topic, please go to the FAQ page at [www.testeverthing.net](http://www.testeverthing.net).

Remember, continue to test everything.

Shalom

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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