

CHAPTER 10

INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 10

Ver. 1. *There was a certain man in Caesarea*, etc.] This was the Caesarea formerly called Strato's tower, not Caesarea Philippi; for the former, and not the latter, lay near Joppa:

called Cornelius; which was a Roman name, and he himself was a Roman or an Italian:

a centurion of the band called the Italian band; which consisted of soldiers collected out of Italy, from whence the band took its name, in which Cornelius was a centurion, having a hundred men under him, as the name of his office signifies.

Ver. 2. *A devout man*, etc.] A truly religious person, who had forsaken the Roman idolatry and superstition, in which he was brought up:

and one that feared God: the one only living and true God, the God of Israel; he had the fear of God wrought in his heart, which is a part of the covenant of grace, a blessing of it, and the beginning of wisdom; he was truly a gracious man, a converted person, and who from an internal principle worshipped God externally:

with all his house; he brought up his family in a religious way, as every good man should; and which was very remarkable in a Gentile, a soldier, and an officer:

which gave much alms to the people; to the Jews that dwelt at Caesarea, and therefore was of good report among them, and much beloved by them, (~~4102~~ Acts 10:22) he had regard to both tables of the law, both to the worship of God, and the love of the neighbour: and prayed to God always; every day, at the usual times of prayer; prayed privately in his closet, and with his family, as well as attended public service of this kind.

Ver. 3. *He saw in a vision evidently*, etc.] He was not in a dream, or in a trance, but he was thoroughly awake, and his eyes open, and was himself; it was not in the night, but in clear day:

about the ninth hour of the day; or three o'clock in the afternoon, which was the hour of prayer, (~~400~~Acts 3:1) in which exercise he was now engaged, (~~400~~Acts 10:30) at this time he saw

an angel of God coming to him; into the room where he was at prayer:

and saying unto him, Cornelius; he called him by his name, to let him know that he knew him, as angels are very knowing spirits; and to express his affection and friendship to him, and that he was a messenger, not of bad, but of good news to him; as well as to engage his attention to him; for he might be so intent at his devotion, that had he not called him by name, he would not have minded him.

Ver. 4. *And when he looked on him, he was afraid*, etc.] What with the brightness of his clothing, (~~400~~Acts 10:30) and the lustre of his countenance, and the majestic form in which he appeared, he perceived there was something uncommon and divine in this vision, and therefore was filled with awe and reverence, yea, with something of a panic fear; as it was usual, even with good persons, as the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, Zacharias, the Virgin Mary, and others; from a sense of the greatness of the divine majesty, which they supposed to be near, or this to be an emblem of it, and from a notion that, at the sight of God, they should die.

And said, what is it, Lord what is the matter? what is to be said or done? What is the reason of this unusual appearance? Some of the Latin copies, and the Ethiopic version, read, “who art thou, Lord?” but by the angel’s answer, not this, but the former was the question: for it follows,

and he said unto him, thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God; that is, the prayers which he had put up in faith, for himself and family, and the charitable actions he had performed from a principle of love, were like sacrifices upon the altar, which ascended to God with acceptance; so these sacrifices of prayer and beneficence came up with acceptance from off that altar which sanctifies the gift, or were acceptable to God, through Jesus Christ; these were taken notice of, approved by God, and remembered by him, and the fruits and effects he was shortly to enjoy; for that Cornelius was a believer, need not be questioned; since he was not only a devout and religious person, but one that feared God, which includes the whole of religion, internal and external; and so faith in Christ, without which he could not pray aright: there is no

doubt of it, but he had read the prophecies of the Old Testament, attended the synagogues of the Jews, and believed in the Messiah to come, though he did not know that he was come, and that Jesus of Nazareth was he; so that his faith was of the same kind with that of the saints before the coming of Christ; and in this faith he did all the good works he did, which became acceptable to God through Christ, and without which it is impossible to please him.

Ver. 5. *And now send men to Joppa*, etc.] Which lay near to Caesarea;

and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: the angel was not sent to instruct Cornelius himself, but to direct him to an apostle of Christ, and minister of the Gospel, who should do it; for not angels, but men, are employed in the ministry of the word, which is the ordinary means of spiritual knowledge, and of increasing it. So the eunuch was instructed by Philip, and Saul by Ananias; which shows the excellency and usefulness of the Gospel ministry and ministers, and what dignity is put upon them, what use should be made of them, and in what esteem they should be had.

Ver. 6. *He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner*, &c] Simon the tanner was his host; this man very probably was a good man, and one that lodged strangers; of his trade, (See Gill on “~~40B~~ Acts 9:43”)

whose house is by the sea side; Joppa was a sea port, (⁴²¹⁶2 Chronicles 2:16) (Jon 1:3) hence we read of **wpyd amy**, “the sea of Joppa”, ^{f526}; and also of **wpyl ğ hnyml**, “the port of Joppa” ^{f527}; now Simon’s house was in the outer part of the city, and by the sea side, as well for convenience for his business, as because such trades might not be exercised within a city; being nauseous and disagreeable, because of their skins and manner of dressing them, and the dead carcasses from whence they often took them off; hence that rule of the Jews ^{f528},

“they place dead carcasses, graves, **yqsrwbh taw**, “and a tanner’s workshop”, (in which he dresses his skins,) fifty cubits from the city; nor do they make a tanner’s workshop, but at the eastern part of the city. R. Abika says, it may be made at every part excepting the west.”

The reason of that, as given by the ^{f529} commentators, is, because prayer was made towards the west, where the temple stood, and the divine

presence was. The Ethiopic version very wrongly renders it, “and the house of Cornelius is near the sea”; for not his, but Simon’s is meant:

he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do; he was to tell him words, or to deliver doctrines to him, by which he and his family would be better instructed in the way of salvation, and arrive to a greater degree of knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, and be brought to a submission to his commands and ordinances; (see ~~44102~~ Acts 10:22,32, 11:14), this clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in some others, and in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

Ver. 7. *And when the angel which spake unto Cornelius was departed*, etc.] For when he had delivered his message, he either disappeared, or withdrew, and immediately Cornelius showed himself ready to obey the heavenly vision: for

he called two of his household servants; who were not of the band of soldiers under him, but were servants in his family, and such as feared God with him;

and a devout soldier of them that waited on him continually: besides his household servants, there were soldiers that continually attended him, and among these there was one at least that was a devout and religious man; and him he called out from among the rest, and to him with the two household servants he communicated the vision: these three persons being religious, were very proper ones to be informed of this matter, and to be sent on the errand they were; and three might be particularly pitched upon, being a sufficient number to attest to Peter what they had from the mouth of their master, for by the mouth of two or three witnesses is everything established; and partly for the honour of Peter, and to show a proper respect to him, he would not send a single person, who could have told the story, and done the errand as well as three, but this would not have looked respectful enough.

Ver. 8. *And when he had declared all these things unto them*, etc.] Which he had heard and seen in the vision, and of which he gave them a particular account; partly to engage them the more cheerfully to go on the errand, and partly that they might be able to give a distinct relation of it to Peter, that so he might be moved the more to comply with the request, and come along with them:

he sent them to Joppa; perhaps not that evening, since it was at the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon, when Cornelius had the vision; and some time must be taken up in discourse with the angel, and afterwards in sending for his servants, and relating the affair to them, and giving them their proper instructions. So that it may be they did not set out till early the next morning, as seems from the following verse.

Ver. 9. *On the morrow, as they went on their journey*, etc.] From Caesarea to Joppa; Joppa is said to be six and thirty miles distant from Caesarea; so far Caesarea was from Lydda, but it seems to be further from Joppa; for according to Josephus ^{f530}, from Joppa to Antipatris were a hundred and fifty furlongs, which are almost nineteen miles, and from thence to Caesarea were twenty six miles; unless there was a nearer way by the sea shore, as there was a way by that from Caesarea to Joppa, of which the above author makes mention ^{f531}; wherefore they must either have set out the evening before, or early that morning, to get to Joppa by the sixth hour, or twelve o'clock at noon; as it seems they did, by what follows:

and drew nigh unto the city; that is, of Joppa, were but a little way distant from it:

Peter went up upon the housetop to pray; the roofs of houses in Judea were flat, and persons might walk upon them, and hither they often retired for devotion and recreation; (see Gill on “~~<4007>~~Matthew 10:27”), (see Gill on “~~<4047>~~Matthew 24:17”), it was on the former count, namely for prayer, that Peter went up thither, and that he might, be private and alone, and undisturbed in the discharge of that duty. This being at a tanner's house, though not in his shop, brings to mind a canon of the Jews ^{f532},

“a man may not enter into a bath, nor into a tanner's shop, near the Minchah,”

or time of prayer. Now this was about the sixth hour or twelve o'clock at noon, when Peter went up to pray; at which time the messengers from Cornelius were near the city of Joppa; this was another time of prayer used by the Jews, and is what they call the great Minchah, which began at the sixth hour and an half, and so was as is here said, about the sixth hour (See Gill on “~~<4001>~~Acts 3:1”)

Ver. 10. *And he became very hungry*, etc.] It being in the middle of the day, when it was usual to eat; and perhaps he had ate nothing that day, for

those were reckoned the most religious persons, who eat nothing before the Minchah:

and would have eaten; though the Jews say ^{f533}, a man ought not to eat near the Minchah, not even the least, lest he should continue at it, and so neglect his prayers:

but while they made ready, while Simon's family were getting dinner ready, preparing the food for it:

he fell into a trance; or an ecstasy, or an ecstasy fell upon him; it was what was supernatural, and came from above, and did not arise from any natural cause in him; he was as it were out of the body, and entirely in the spirit; all the bodily organs and senses were shut up, and all sensible objects removed from him; and he was wholly intent on what was proposed to him in the vision, which filled him with wonder and astonishment.

Ver. 11. *And saw heaven opened*, etc.] Not literally, as at the baptism of Christ, and the stoning of Stephen; but in a visionary way, and which was an emblem of the opening and revealing the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles, which in other ages was not made known, as it now and afterwards was:

and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet: which seems to represent the church of God, whose original is from heaven, and consists of persons born from above, who have their conversation in heaven, and were designed for it; and especially as under the Gospel dispensation, which Peter had a vision of in this emblematic way; the doctrines and ordinances of which are from heaven: and which may be compared to a linen sheet for its purity and holiness; through the blood and righteousness of Christ, and the grace of his Spirit, and with respect to its discipline and conversation; and so to a great one for its largeness; for though the number of its members, when compared with the world, are few, yet in themselves are a number which no man can number; and though it was but small at first, yet the Gospel being carried among the Gentiles it increased, and in the last times will be large:

knit at the four corners; which may denote the preaching of the Gospel, and the spread of it, and the planting of churches by it in the four parts of the world; and also the church being knit to Christ, and the members of it one to another:

and let down to the earth; for Peter to see it, and where it was to continue for a while, even to the second coming of Christ, and when the whole church of the firstborn will be let down to earth again; (see ~~6210~~ Revelation 21:2).

Ver. 12. *Wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth*, etc.] Not as if they were painted upon it, and these were only pictures and representations of them made on the linen sheet; but as if they really add actually were upon it alive; since Peter is afterwards called upon to kill and eat: and these design four-footed beasts of every kind, that are tame, as distinct from the wild ones, after mentioned, as horses, camels, oxen, sheep, hogs, dogs, etc.

and wild beasts; lions, tigers, panthers, bears, etc. This clause is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions:

and creeping things; the above copy and versions here add, “of the earth”, which they omit in the first clause; these intend serpents, snakes, worms, &c:

and fowls of the air; birds of all sorts: now the whole of this signifies, that the church of Christ, under the Gospel dispensation, consists of all sorts of persons, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, the one being reckoned clean, the other unclean; of men of all sorts of tempers and dispositions, comparable to wild or tame beasts; and of all sorts of sinners, who before conversion have been greater or lesser sinners; as well as denotes that the distinction of food under the ceremonial law was now ceased. This is not designed to represent that there are good and bad in Gospel churches, as there certainly are and much less that immoral persons are to be received and retained there; but that those who have been of the blackest character, if called by grace, should be admitted into them; and chiefly to show that Gentiles reckoned unclean, when converted, are not to be rejected.

Ver. 13. *And there came a voice to him*, etc.] Formed by an angel, or rather by Christ himself:

rise, Peter, kill and eat; he might be on his knees when he fell into this trance, being at prayer, and therefore is bid to rise; and he is called by name, the more to encourage him to do as he was ordered; and he is bid to kill and eat of all the creatures without distinction, which were represented to him in the sheet; and the design of this was to teach him, that both the distinction between clean and unclean creatures in the law was now

abolished, and men might lawfully eat of whatsoever they pleased; and that he might and should without any difference converse with all sorts of men, Jews and Gentiles, circumcised and uncircumcised, and preach the Gospel to one as to another, and maintain a church communion and fellowship with all equally alike.

Ver. 14. *But Peter said, not so, Lord,* etc.] God forbid I should do this, so contrary to the law of God, and to my own practice, throughout the whole course of my life:

for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean; in a ceremonial sense, which was in common use with Gentiles, but unclean by the law of Moses: this shows that Peter as yet closely adhered to the ceremonial law, nor did he know that it was abolished by Christ; and notwithstanding the commission given to him and the rest of the apostles to preach the Gospel to every creature, and the extraordinary gifts of speaking with divers tongues for that purpose, bestowed on them at the day of Pentecost; yet he and they remained greatly strangers to the calling of the Gentiles, and the admitting of them to a civil and religious conversation with them; the knowledge of every truth was not at once communicated to them, but gradually, as it pressed the Lord to enlighten their minds.

Ver. 15. *And the voice spake unto him again the second time,* etc.] The following words,

what God hath cleansed; that is, hath pronounced clean and lawful to be used, as he now had all sorts of food, (^{<4051>}Matthew 15:11, ^{<5144>}Romans 14:14, ^{<500>}1 Timothy 4:4).

[that] call not thou common; or pronounce it to be unholy or unclean, and unlawful to be used: and the same holds good of men, as well as things; for as hereby the Lord instructed Peter, that there was nothing of itself common, or unclean, and unfit for use; so that no man, not any Gentile, Barbarian, Scythian, or be he who he would, was common or unclean, and his company to be avoided as such. Distinctions both of men and meats were now to be laid aside; and the Jews themselves own, that what is now unclean, will be clean in the time to come, or the times of the Messiah; they say^{f534},

“every beast which is unclean in this world, *the holy blessed God htwa rhj m, cleanses it*, in the time to come, (the times of the Messiah,) as they were at first clean to the sons of Noah (~~GEN~~ Genesis 9:3), wherefore, as the herb was clean to all, and as the beasts were clean to the sons of Noah; so also in the time to come he will loose what he has bound, or forbidden.”

And particularly they observe, that a swine is call *ryzh* from *rzh*, “to return”, because the Lord will return it unto Israel. ^{f535}

Ver. 16. *This was done thrice*, etc.] That is, either the voice spoke the same words three times, or the sheet was let down three times; and it may be both; it may be, that every time the voice was spoke, the sheet was let down: this was done, not with respect to any mystical meaning in the number three, but for the confirmation of Peter, that he might be the more firmly assured of the truth of the things represented unto him:

and the vessel was received up again into heaven; to denote, that when the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, whether Jews or Gentiles, are all gathered in, by the preaching of the Gospel to them, they will be taken up to heaven, their original and native place, and be for ever with the Lord; as well as to certify to Peter, that what was now shown him on earth, concerning the taking away the distinction of men and meats, was ratified in heaven.

Ver. 17. *Now while Peter doubted in himself*, etc.] For notwithstanding what he had heard and seen, he had not at once a full knowledge of this matter. Beza’s most ancient copy reads, “as he was in himself, he doubted”; that is, when he came to himself, for he was before, as it were, out of himself, and was in a trance, or ecstasy; and now being come to himself, and reflecting on what he had seen and heard, he had some doubts and hesitations in his mind:

what this vision which he had seen should mean; what the vessel or sheet should signify, what should be meant by the four-footed beasts, etc. why he should be called to arise, and kill, and eat such creatures, and what should be designed by God’s cleansing them; and while he was revolving these things in his mind, and at some uncertainty about them, something providentially happened, which was a key unto, and opened the whole vision clearly to him:

behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius, had made inquiry for Simon's house; they were come to Joppa, and, according to the direction given them, had inquired and found out the house of Simon the tanner, where Peter was:

and stood before the gate; of the house; perhaps knocking at it, in order to bring out somebody within to them, of whom they might inquire for Peter.

Ver. 18. *And called, and asked*, etc.] That is, they called to the people of the house, Simon's family; and in a civil and courteous manner asked them,

whether Simon, which was surnamed Peter; which they said to distinguish him from Simon the master of the house, and as Cornelius was directed, and they were instructed by him: concerning him they inquired, whether he

were lodged there; the Ethiopic version adds, without any foundation for it, "and the place where they called at was Peter's lodging room".

Ver. 19. *While Peter thought on the vision*, etc.] Which greatly amused him, affected his mind, and employed his thoughts what should be the meaning and design of it:

the Spirit said unto him; the holy Spirit of God, either by an articulate voice, or by making an impulse on his mind;

behold, three men seek thee; the Arabic version leaves out the word "three": the Spirit of God is omniscient, and knows all things; if the deep things of God, then much more man, and the things of man.

Ver. 20. *Arise, therefore, and get thee down*, etc.] From the top of the house where he was:

and go with them; the three men, to Caesarea

doubting nothing; whether it is right or wrong, lawful or unlawful, to go with them, because not Jews, but uncircumcised Gentiles, laying aside all such Jewish scruples:

for I have sent them: the Spirit of God is said to do what Cornelius did at his instigation and direction, signified by an angel he sent to him, (~~4405~~ Acts 10:5,8).

Ver. 21. *Then Peter went down to the men*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “from the third floor”; to the place where the men were: the following clause,

which were sent unto him from Cornelius, is not in Beza’s most ancient copy, nor in the Alexandrian copy, nor in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

and said, behold, I am he whom ye seek; without being called by any of the family he came down, and without being informed in that way who the men were inquiring for; it being suggested to him by the Spirit of God, he declared himself to be the person they were seeking after: and put this question to them,

what is the cause wherefore ye are come? for that was not intimated to him by the Spirit; it was only told him there were three men seeking him, and he was bid to go with them, without any scruple or hesitation; but what they came for, or he was to go with them about, was not suggested.

Ver. 22. *And they said, Cornelius, the centurion*, etc.] A certain person, by name Cornelius, a Roman or Italian, as his name shows, and by office a “centurion”, that was over an hundred soldiers: a just man; before God, and in his sight, through the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to him; and who was a new man, created in righteousness and true holiness; and lived soberly, righteously, and godly, and did justice between man and man; and so was just in the sight of men, which was very rare in a Gentile, and in a soldier:

and one that feareth God; the true God, the God of Israel, and worshipped him, both internally and externally; for both sorts of worship are included in the fear of God:

and of good report among all the nation of the Jews; that knew any thing of him, especially at Caesarea, where many Jews, and even many of their most celebrated doctors lived: and this is the rather observed, to induce Peter, a Jew, to go along with them to him, since his character was so very good, and he was in so much credit and esteem with the people; for he must be something extraordinary to have their good word, who had such an abhorrence of uncircumcised Gentiles in general: this man, they add,

was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house; they intimate hereby, that he did not send for him of himself, he was not led

to it by any fancy of his own, or any curiosity in him; nor should he have presumed to have used such freedom with Peter, but that he had some instructions from God himself, who had sent an holy angel to him, and had ordered him to send men to Joppa, and fetch Peter from thence to his house, for the end next mentioned: *and to hear words of thee*: the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it: that being taught by the one, he and his might submit to the other.

Ver. 23. *Then called he them in*, etc.] Into Simon's house; not "into his own house", as the Ethiopic version adds; as yet they stood without, before the gate of the house; he took them in, no doubt, with the leave of Simon, his host, and set provisions before them, and lodged them that night:

and in the morning Peter went away with them; the next morning he set out with them towards Caesarea:

and certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him; there were six of them, as appears from (⁴¹¹²Acts 11:12) these went with him, not only to bear him company, and out of respect to him; but to be witnesses of what might be seen, heard, said, or done, and for Peter, should there be any occasion for it, as there afterwards was.

Ver. 24. *And the morrow after they entered into Caesarea*, etc.] So that they were one day, and part of another, on their journey:

and Cornelius waited for them; he had an eager desire to hear the word from Peter's mouth; and was longing and looking for the coming of him, with the men he sent for him; and he and his family were in a waiting posture, and ready to hear the word, when the apostle of Christ should come: it would be well if this was always the case of the hearers of the word, to assemble before their ministers come; and be waiting for them, and in full expectation of them, and ready to receive them, and the words of grace which drop from their lips:

and had called together his kinsmen and near friends; or necessary ones: not only his relations according to the flesh, which might be in the Italian band, but his most familiar acquaintance, with whom he was in the strictest friendship; who may be called "necessary", as they are both by the Greeks and Romans, because they are often necessary for assistance and counsel: this shows the true grace of God in him, which wherever it is, puts a man

on seeking after the spiritual and eternal welfare of all with whom he is concerned, and especially his relatives and friends.

Ver. 25. *And as Peter was coming in*, etc.] Not into the city of Caesarea, for his entrance there is mentioned before, but into the house of Cornelius:

Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet; to testify his great affection for him, and reverence of him:

and worshipped [him]; not with a religious adoration, or with worship due to God; for that would have been contrary to his character as a devout man, and one that feared God; but with civil worship and respect, in which he might exceed just bounds, and therefore is reprov'd by Peter: nor could he take him for an angel of God, or for one sent immediately from heaven to him; for he had been inform'd who he was, and what he was, and from whence he came, and what he was to do.

Ver. 26. *But Peter took him up*, etc.] As he lay at his feet, and lifted him up and set him on his legs:

saying, stand up; and continue in this posture:

I myself also am a man; a mortal man, a man of like passions with others, no better than others by nature: and it was by grace, and not any merit of his own, that he was a believer in Christ, and an apostle of his; and therefore he chose not to have any distinguishing homage and respect paid to him, and especially in any excessive and extravagant way; which though not designed, might carry in it a suggestion, as if he was more than a man.

Ver. 27. *And as he talked with him*, etc.] About the excessive respect he showed him, and his own infirmity and frailty, and unworthiness, as a creature:

he went in; to Cornelius's house, at the door, and through the porch, to some interior room and apartment in it:

and found many that were come together; besides his family, many of his relations and intimate friends, whom he had got together on this occasion, that they might receive some advantage, as well as himself.

Ver. 28. *And he said unto them*, etc.] The whole company that were met together, who were chiefly, if not altogether Gentiles:

ye know that it is an unlawful thing; what is forbidden by the law of Moses, (~~Exodus~~ Deuteronomy 7:2,3) and by the traditions of the elders, which carry the matter further than the law did, and made it very criminal:

for a man that is a Jew, to keep company with, or come unto one of another nation; besides entering into covenants and marriages with them, which were forbidden by the law, though they allowed of trade and commerce with the Gentiles, yet not any familiar conversation with them; it was prohibited to eat and drink any sort of liquor with them in their houses ^{f536}, nor might they walk with them in the streets, or on the road; says Maimonides ^{f537},

“it is forbidden a Jew to unite himself to Gentiles, because they are suspected of shedding blood, and he may not join himself with them in the way; if he meets a Gentile in the way, he causes him to turn to the right hand; if they ascend by an ascent, or descend by a descent, the Israelite may not be below, and the Gentile above: but the Israelite must be above, and the Gentile below, lest he should fall upon him and kill him; and he may not go even with (or along side by him) lest he break his skull.”

It is said ^{f538} of some Rabbins, that they saw a certain man coming;

“says R. Chiyah, let us be gone, perhaps this man is an idolatrous Gentile, or one of the people of the earth, and it is forbidden to join with him in the way.”

They looked upon the houses of Gentiles unclean, and therefore would not enter into them: (See Gill on “~~Exodus~~ John 18:28”).

yea they say ^{f539}, that:

“the court of a stranger (or Gentile) is as the habitation of a beast.”

Such an aversion was there in that people to all civil society with Gentiles: and so Apoltonius says of them ^{f540}, that

“they not only departed from the Romans, but from all men, living a separate life from others; nor did they communicate at table with others; neither in things sacred, nor in any ceremonies;”

and this was well known to Jews and Gentiles:

but God hath showed me; partly by the vision he had seen, and partly by discourse with the men that came from Cornelius to him; and by comparing the vision and their message to him together, he saw that he was not obliged to abide by the customs and laws of the Jews: but was showed, as he says,

that I should not call any man common or unclean; that is, in a ceremonial sense; for otherwise, all by nature are morally unclean; and none are pure, but such who are washed in the blood of Christ, and are justified by his righteousness, and sanctified by his Spirit: he saw there was now no difference between Jew and Gentile; that the one was not clean because of his circumcision, nor the other unclean on account of his uncircumcision, or to be avoided for that reason; that the Gospel was to be preached to all; and that every believer of whatsoever nation, was acceptable to God, and ought to be regarded by his ministers and people.

Ver. 29. *Therefore came I unto you, without gainsaying*, etc.] Readily and cheerfully, without objecting to it, or saying one word against it, or making any excuse to put it off:

as soon as I was sent for: he immediately consented to go, as soon as ever the messengers from Cornelius acquainted him with their message, being previously directed so to do by the Spirit of God; though he did not set out with them till the next day, it being more suitable and convenient:

I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? this he said, not as ignorant of the true cause, for he had inquired of the messengers, who had informed him of the reason of it; but he was willing to have it from the mouth of Cornelius himself; not only for further confirmation's sake, but for order sake, to lead him on regularly to what he had to say.

Ver. 30. *And Cornelius said*, etc.] The Syriac version adds, "to him", to the apostle; the following he said, in a very submissive and humble manner:

four days ago I was fasting unto this hour; in the Greek text it is, "from the fourth day unto this hour I was fasting": which looks as if he had been fasting four days, and was still fasting at that hour; though the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the phrase "I was fasting": but the sense which our version and others give is the truest; that four days ago, or reckoning four days back, Cornelius was fasting on that day, until such time in that day as now it was in this present day; and which perhaps might be the ninth hour, or three o'clock in the afternoon: the account of days

exactly agrees; as soon as Cornelius had had the vision, he sends men to Joppa, which was one day; on the morrow they came to Joppa, which makes two days; Peter lodged them all night there, and the next day set out on the journey with them, so you have three days; and the day after that, which was the fourth, he entered into Caesarea, and came to Cornelius's house, where he now was:

and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house; which was one of the stated times of prayer; (see Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 3:1”).

And behold a man stood before me in bright clothing; or “in a white garment”, as the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read: which was an emblem of the excellency, glory, and purity of the angel, and of the divine majesty in him: he calls him a man, because he appeared in the form of one, as angels used to do.

Ver. 31. *And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard*, etc.] What he was now particularly making to God, as well as others he had before put up to him:

and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God; (See Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 10:4”).

Ver. 32. *Send therefore to Joppa*, etc.] (See Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 10:5”), (see Gill on “^{<400>}Acts 10:6”).

who when he cometh shall speak unto thee, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions, but agrees with (^{<400>}Acts 10:6,22).

Ver. 33. *Immediately therefore I sent unto thee*, etc.] This he said, to show his obedience to the heavenly vision, and his faith in it; and to remove from himself any suspicion of pride, vanity, and imperiousness: he did not send for the apostle of himself, but by a divine order; which as soon as he had, he executed; for the very same hour, he called his servants and gave them their instructions, and sent them away:

and thou hast well done, that thou art come; a phrase expressive of benignity and goodness in Peter, and of thankfulness to him for his coming; it was not only doing that which was right in the sight of God, but was kind in him, and acceptable to Cornelius and his house:

now therefore are we all here present before God; the searcher of hearts, the omniscient God, who knew the sincerity of their intentions in meeting

together, and the eagerness of their souls, and their fervent desire to hear the word: it is a sort of an appeal to God, for the truth of all this: in Beza's most ancient copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, it is read "before thee"; before the apostle: to hear all things that are commanded thee of God; or "of the Lord", as the Alexandrian copy and the Vulgate Latin versions read; that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ; and designs all things, both with respect to doctrine and practice, which Christ had commanded his apostles to teach: and particularly, what he had ordered Peter to instruct Cornelius and his friends in.

Ver. 34. *Then Peter opened his mouth,* etc.] (See Gill on "⁴⁰⁸⁵Acts 8:35")

And said, of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; which is to be understood, not of the substances of men, but of the outward state and condition, circumstances and qualities of men; he respects the proper persons of men themselves, but not because of their outward appearances; he does not prefer or despise men, because of their being of this or the other nation, as Jews or Gentiles; or because they are circumcised, or not circumcised; or because they are high or low, rich or poor, free or bound, or the like: the true sense here is, that God valued no man the more, because he was a Jew and circumcised, nor anyone the less, because he was a Gentile and uncircumcised; and this the apostle found to be a most certain truth, of which he was fully persuaded; partly by the vision which he himself saw, and partly by that which Cornelius had, and which the more confirmed him in this matter: these words do not at all militate against the doctrines of personal election and reprobation; and indeed, those acts in God, are not according to the outward state and condition of men, or any circumstances that attend them, or any qualities they have, internal or external; but entirely proceed from the sovereign will of God; (See Gill on "⁴¹¹¹Romans 2:11")

Ver. 35. *But in every nation,* etc.] In any Gentile nation in the Roman empire, and in any part, even in Scythia, or in the most uncultivated parts of the universe, as well as in Judea:

he that feareth him; God, not with a slavish fear, or with the fear of punishment to be inflicted by him, with a fear of hell and damnation, with which Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and even the devils themselves have feared him; nor with an hypocritical fear; but with a godly filial fear; which is a new covenant blessing, springs from the love of God, is a grace implanted in the soul and regeneration, and includes all true religion, both external

and internal; and faith among the rest, without which it is impossible to please God, or do works of righteousness acceptable in his sight, as it follows:

and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him; that is, he who from such principles, as the fear of the Lord; love to him, and faith in Christ, does works of righteousness, particularly alms, as Cornelius did, and which the Jews often call *hqdx*, “righteousness”; (see Gill on “~~400~~ Matthew 6:1”), such an one is acceptable, or well pleasing to God, let him be of what nation he will: it should be observed, that though God accepts of such who fear him, and work righteousness from a right principle, and to a right end, without any regard to their being circumcised, or not circumcised, or to their being of this or the other nation, yet their fear of him, and working righteousness, are not the ground of their acceptance; but are to be considered as descriptive of the persons, who are accepted by him in Christ; for there is no acceptance of persons or services, but in Christ Jesus: the Jews themselves say, that

“the godly of the nations of the world shall have their part and portion in the world to come. ^{f541}”

Ver. 36. *The word which God sent unto the children of Israel*, etc.] Now the apostle enters on his sermon or discourse, of which the above were only a preface, or an introduction; and his sense is, that the doctrine which he was now about to preach to them, was the doctrine of the Gospel; which it pleased God, of his infinite wisdom and rich grace, to send first to the people of the Jews, by the ministry of the apostles: this word is sometimes called the word of God, of which he is the author; and the word of Christ, of which he is the sum and substance; and the word of salvation, salvation by Christ alone being the principal part of it; and the word of righteousness, because therein is the righteousness of Christ revealed, from faith to faith; and the word of faith itself, because it is the means by which faith comes; and the word of truth, because it contains nothing but truth; and sometimes, the word of reconciliation, because it publishes peace and reconciliation by Christ, as is hereafter signified: this word God is said to send; which shows that it comes from him, and is of a divine original, and therefore ought to be received, not as the word of man, but as: the word of God; and it may be said to be “sent”, because the apostles were sent with it by Christ; who ordained them, and sent them forth to preach it in the several cities of Judea; and which shows that Christ is God, who sent this

word by them, and so the text is a proof of his deity; and this was sent to the children of Israel and to them only at first; the apostles were forbidden going in the way of the Gentiles, or entering into any of the cities of the Samaritans; and though their commission was now enlarged, and they might go to the Gentiles, as yet they had not done it, only published the Gospel to the Jews: the substance of which was,

preaching peace by Jesus Christ: that word preached, or the apostles in the ministry of it preached; or rather God, who sent the word by them, preached through them the doctrine of peace and reconciliation, by the blood of Christ; and this being so principal a doctrine of the Gospel, the whole is called from it, the Gospel of peace, and the word of reconciliation: by “peace” here is meant, not peace with the creatures of the earth, the beasts of the field, which, through the sin of men, are become troublesome to them; nor peace with men, which is desirable, and to be sought after, and to a good man the Lord makes his enemies to be at peace with him; nor peace with the saints, which ought by all means to be maintained, and which should rule in the hearts of God’s people, and to which the Gospel calls them; but peace with God, which was broken by the sin of man, which filled his mind with enmity to God; and now he is incapable of restoring it, and reconciling himself to God; he has neither disposition, nor ability to perform it; but Christ is the sole author of it: a council of peace was held, in which the scheme of it was drawn; a covenant of peace was entered into, between the Father and the Son; Christ was provided, promised, and prophesied of, as the peace maker; he came into the world for this purpose; the chastisement of our peace was laid on him, and he procured it by his obedience, sufferings; and death: and this is what the Gospel publishes; not peace made by men, by their repentance, humiliation, and works of righteousness; but made by Christ, the Prince of peace, by his blood and sacrifice: and not as to be made by him, or any other, but as already made; being not only a plan drawn, but executed, a finished work; and that not conditionally, if men will repent, believe, and obey, but absolutely, as a thing done, and not dependent on any condition required of man; and a wonderful blessing this is, being made on honourable terms, and so lasting, and bringing with it a train of other blessings; and this being an article in the Gospel, makes that to be good news, and glad tidings indeed: and these doctrines of peace with God by the blood of Christ, and reconciliation for sin by his sacrifice, were to be preached to them that were afar off, and to

them that are nigh, both to the Jews and Gentiles; to strengthen which observation, the following clause put into a parenthesis is added,

he is Lord of all: of the whole world, and all things in it; of all the nations of the world, Gentiles as well as Jews, and particularly of God's elect among them both; and therefore he will have the Gospel preached to one, as to another; (^{<4027>}Ephesians 2:17).

Ver. 37. *The word [I say] you know*, etc.] By common fame and report, which had for some years past been published by John, Christ, and his apostles, in Judea and Galilee; especially some parts of it, or points in it, such as the apostle hereafter mentions must have reached their ears:

Which was published throughout all Judea; by Christ, his twelve apostles, and seventy disciples; who were sent out by him into all places, where he himself would come:

and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; that is, after John had began to preach the ordinance of water baptism, and to administer it; which were done, to set the Jews inquiring after the Messiah, and to make him manifest in Israel; upon which the word of the Gospel quickly began to be preached by Christ and his apostles, and that in Galilee; for here Christ began to preach himself, and here he called his apostles, and sent them forth to preach it.

Ver. 38. *How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth*, etc.] And so declared him to be the Messiah, that was promised to the Jews, and expected by them; the anointed prophet, priest, and King; who because his parents lived at Nazareth, and he was educated there, and there he chiefly preached and wrought his miracles, he was by way of contempt called Jesus of Nazareth: and him God anointed, with

the Holy Ghost and with power; with the gifts and graces of the Spirit, without measure; signified by the descent of the Spirit, as a dove upon him at his baptism, and is what in (^{<4027>}Psalm 45:7) is called, "the oil of gladness". The person anointed is elsewhere represented as a divine person; as God, and the Son of God, (^{<4026>}Psalm 2:6,7, 45:6,7) but here under his most contemptible character, by which he was known among men, because it was in his human nature, that he was anointed; and this anointing belongs to him, as considered in his office capacity; from whence he is called the Christ, or anointed of God. The anointer of him is God, which must be understood of God the Father, who is the God of Christ,

and the same that anoints his people, (~~40021~~2 Corinthians 1:21) and none but God can anoint with the Holy Ghost; and he it is, with whom Christ is here said to be anointed; who is compared to oil, in allusion to the anointing oil under the former dispensation, used for the anointing of persons, prophets, priests, and kings, and of the tabernacle, and the vessels of it; to the oil that was poured on Aaron's head, which ran down to the skirts of his garments, emblematical of the Spirit poured on Christ, the head, and which from him descends to all the members of his body; and to common oil, both for ornament and refreshment: "power" is added, which is but another name for the Holy Spirit, (~~02149~~Luke 24:49). And one particular branch of the extraordinary and immeasurable gifts of the Spirit, bestowed on him as man, was a power of doing miracles: for it follows,

who went about; the land of Judea and all Galilee; which shows laboriousness, diligence, and delight:

doing good; both to the bodies and souls of men; to the latter, by preaching the Gospel to them; and to the former, by curing all their diseases, of whatsoever sort: he did what none of Adam's sons could do, for there is none of them that does good, no not one, (~~810~~Romans 3:10) he was good himself, essentially and naturally good, and therefore he did good, and he did nothing but good: he knew no sin, he did none, nor could any be found in him; and he always did good, that which was according to the will of God, and well pleasing in his sight; and without him no good is done, even by his own people; they have all the grace and strength from him, by which they perform the good things they do: he is the reverse of Satan, who goes about doing all the mischief he can; and he is to be imitated by his followers, who, as they have opportunity, should do good to all men, especially to the household of faith.

And healing all that were oppressed of the devil; both in body, as "lunatics, epileptics, and demoniacs"; and in soul, such as were led captive by him:

for God was with him; as his Son, essentially, through union to him; and as man, from his cradle to his cross, supporting and assisting him, and with his gracious presence comforting him; and by various instances, showing that he came from heaven, and had a divine mission and commission; which had he not, he would never have been encouraged and assisted as he was, as man, and could never have done the things he did: the Ethiopic version very wrongly reads, "for God was with them"; (~~810~~John 3:2, 8:29)

Ver. 39. *And we are witnesses of all things*, etc.] That is, Peter, and the rest of the apostles, were witnesses, even eyewitnesses, of Christ's going about from place to place, and of the good he did every where, and of the miracles which he wrought; and even of every thing

which he did both in the land of the Jews; which takes in not only Judea, but Galilee, and beyond Jordan;

and in Jerusalem; the metropolis of Judea:

whom they slew and hanged on a tree; whom the Jews put to death; for since it was by their instigation, and at their request, it is ascribed to them; and who not content with any death, desired he might be crucified, or hanged on a tree; partly because of the pain and torture of it, and partly because of the shame and ignominy that attended it; as well as to throw off the scandal of his death from themselves to the Romans, crucifixion being a Roman punishment.

Ver. 40. *Him God raised up the third day*, etc.] According to the Scriptures, particularly (^{<3812>}Hosea 6:2). The resurrection, of Christ, though it is sometimes ascribed to himself, as God, whereby he was declared to be the Son of God, yet generally to God the Father, as here:

and showed him openly; in a glorious body, and yet numerically the same he before lived and suffered in, so as to be heard, seen, and handled; by which full proof was given of the truth of his resurrection, in which he appeared to be the conqueror over death and the grave.

Ver. 41. *Not to all the people*, etc.] Of the Jews, who crucified him; nor to the whole body of the Christians, though at one time to a large number, even five hundred brethren at once:

but unto witnesses chosen before of God; by Christ himself, who is God:

even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; namely, to the apostles, with whom he familiarly conversed by times, for the space of forty days after his resurrection; and Beza's most ancient copy; and the Ethiopic version here add, "forty days"; and particularly he did sometimes eat and drink with them; (^{<4240>}Luke 24:42,43, ^{<4312>}John 21:12,15) and though drinking is not mentioned, it is included in eating, as in (^{<4076>}Luke 7:36) wherefore there is no need to connect the last clause,

“after he rose from the dead”, with the latter part of the preceding verse, as some do, on that account.

Ver. 42. *And he commanded us, to preach unto the people*, etc.] Not only of the Jews, but of the Gentiles; to all nations, to the whole world, and every creature; for the apostle seems to refer to the commission given to him, and the rest of the apostles, after Christ’s resurrection, (~~4189~~ Matthew 28:19-20 ~~4165~~ Mark 16:15-16).

And to testify that it is he which was ordained of God, to be the Judge of quick and dead: the preaching of the Gospel is a testification of Christ, or a bearing a testimony for him; and among the rest to this truth, that he was from all eternity in the council and covenant of grace; appointed by God to have all power in heaven and in earth; and not only to judge and govern his church and people on earth, but to be the Judge of all men at the last day, of such who will be found alive at his coming, and of those that are dead; who will be raised again, and stand before his judgment seat, to receive their proper sentence; and though this is not expressed in the commission given the apostles, yet is implied therein; (~~4188~~ Matthew 28:18) That there will be a general judgment at the last day is certain, from the reason of things; from the relation of creatures to God as their Creator, to whom they are accountable for their conduct and actions; from the justice of God, which requires it, which does not take place in the present state of things; and it has a testimony in the consciences of men, which the most daring of infidels, at times, show by the fears they are possessed of about it; and it is abundantly clear from revelation, from the writings of the Old and New Testament; from whence it appears that it is future, it is yet to come; that it is certain, being appointed by God, though the time to men is uncertain; that it will be universal, and reach to all men, righteous and wicked, quick and dead, and to all actions, good and bad, open and secret; and that it will be a righteous one, and be administered according to the strictest rules of justice and equity; and that it is an eternal one; not that it will be ever carrying on, but will issue in the determination of the states of men to all eternity: now Christ he is appointed to do this work, he was ordained to unto it in the purposes of God from everlasting; this was settled in the covenant between them; and for the execution of which, he has all power and authority given him as Mediator: and for it he is every way qualified: he is of great and infinite majesty, being the mighty God; of great sagacity and wisdom, having, as Mediator, the spirit of wisdom and knowledge upon him, whereby he is of quick understanding and discernment; and he is

of great faithfulness and integrity, and will judge not after the sight of his eyes, and the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness and equity, and will do the thing that is right; and especially, inasmuch as he is omniscient, and knows the secrets of all hearts, and so capable of bringing every work into judgment, with every secret thing; and also omnipotent, and so able to raise the dead, summon all nations before him, separate the wicked and the righteous, and not only denounce the proper sentences upon them, but execute them.

Ver. 43. *To him give all the prophets witness*, etc.] As David, (^{<3931>}Psalm 32:1,2,5 103:3 ^{<3425>}Isaiah 43:25, 44:22, 53:5, 55:7 ^{<2613>}Jeremiah 31:34 ^{<3625>}Ezekiel 36:25) (^{<2109>}Daniel 9:9,24 Hos 14:2,4 ^{<3078>}Micah 7:18 ^{<3804>}Zechariah 3:4,9 13:1 ^{<3873>}Malachi 3:17)

that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive the remission of sins; the meaning is, that whoever believes in Christ with a right and true faith, with the heart, he shall receive, not as what his faith procures or deserves, but as a gift of God's grace, the free and full forgiveness of his sins, through Christ; through the effusion of his blood, and the virtue of his sacrifice. Christ was set forth in the purposes of God, in the types, figures, and sacrifices of the law, and in the promises and prophecies of the Old Testament, as he that should obtain the remission of sins by his blood, without which there is no remission; he came in the fulness of time, and shed his blood for this purpose, and accordingly it is procured by it; and this is published in the everlasting Gospel, that whoever believes in Christ, not with an historical or temporary faith, or in profession only, but with the faith of God's elect, which is the gift of God, and the operation of his Spirit, which works by love, and makes Christ precious, shall receive it as a free gift; for it is not to be purchased by money, nor obtained by works of righteousness, nor procured by repentance, or by anything done by the creature, but is according to the riches of divine grace and mercy: through the name of Christ: through the blood of Christ, which was shed for it; through the power of Christ, as God, who is able to forgive it; and through the hands of Christ, as Mediator, who is exalted to bestow it; and for the sake of Christ, and his mediation, whose blood calls aloud for it; and whoever looks by faith to him for it, shall have it, of whatsoever sex, state, or condition they be, of whatsoever people or nation, and how great sinners soever they have been, and whether they are weak or strong believers. Some copies read, "through his blood".

Ver. 44. *While Peter yet spake these words*, etc.] As he was thus discoursing concerning Christ, his person, his miracles, his death and resurrection, and the efficacy of his blood for pardon, before he had done speaking,

the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. This is not to be understood of the operations of the Spirit of God upon the souls of men, under the ministry of the word; though true it is, that the Spirit of God attends the preaching of the Gospel, and not only qualifies men for it, and assists them in it, but makes it effectual to many that hear it: hearers of the word lie in the way of the gracious operations of the Spirit; and the gifts and graces of the Spirit are given to persons, or the Spirit falls upon them under such means: which may denote the original of the grace of the Spirit, it falls down from above, from heaven; the freeness of it, it is bestowed on whom he pleases, under the same ministry; the suddenness of it, it comes at once, unthought of, and undesired, as well as undeserved; the power and efficacy of it, it falls with weight, it melts the heart, and converts the sinner; and the plenty of it, it falls in abundance, it is exceeding abundant with faith and love; and the permanency of it, it continues where it falls, and is a well of living water springing up unto everlasting life: and also the invisibility of it unto others. But this is not here intended, at least it is not only designed; for though the Spirit of God, in the operations of his grace, might fall upon them that heard the word, whereby they were regenerated, converted, and sanctified, and so became proper subjects for baptism; yet also the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit came upon them, as they were hearing; not upon the men, the believing Jews, that came along with Peter; but upon Cornelius and his family, and upon all his relations and friends, who came together to hear the word at his invitation, and now were hearing it; and as they were, the Holy Ghost, in his miraculous gifts of speaking with divers tongues, fell upon them in a visible form, as upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost; for that it was in the same way seems probable from (⁴¹¹⁵Acts 11:15). These extraordinary gifts of the Spirit were necessary at the first preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, for the confirmation of it: as well as for the further confirmation of Peter, that he was right in so doing; as also for the sake of the believing Jews he brought along with him.

Ver. 45. *And they of the circumcision which believed*, etc.] Or “of the Jews that believed”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; the circumcised Jews who believed in Jesus Christ:

were astonished, as many as came with Peter; who were six brethren, as appears from (^{<4112>}Acts 11:12) these were amazed,

because that on the Gentiles also was poured out of the gift of the Holy Ghost; which they before thought was peculiar to the Jews; and this was according to their former notions, and the sentiments of the whole nation, that the Shekinah does not dwell without the land, and only in the land of Israel^{f542}; yea, they sometimes say, only upon the families in Israel, whose genealogies are clear^{f543}: the same they say of prophecy^{f544}, which is one of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and was one of those which were now bestowed. They own, that before the giving of the law, the Holy Ghost was among the Gentiles, but from that time ceased to be among them^{f545}: hence even these believing Jews wonder at the pouring it forth upon them; which they needed not, had they known that the legal dispensation was now at an end, and the Gospel dispensation had taken place; in which it had been foretold the Spirit should be poured forth on the dry ground of the Gentiles.

Ver. 46. *For they heard them speak with tongues*, etc.] With divers tongues, which they had never learned, and before did not understand: and magnify God; they spoke of the wonderful works of God in these languages, as the apostles did at Pentecost, (^{<4211>}Acts 2:11) they spoke greatly in the praise of God, and gave thanks for his rich grace and mercy bestowed on them:

then answered Peter; as follows.

Ver. 47. *Can any man forbid water*, etc.] The use of his river, or bath, or what conveniency he may have for baptizing persons: which shows, that it required a place of some quantity of water, sufficient for baptism by immersion, otherwise it would not be in the power of any man to hinder them having a little water, to be sprinkled or poured on the face: unless rather by water should be meant baptism itself; and then the sense is, who can forbid these persons the ordinance of baptism, or deny the administration of it to them? for such who have the Spirit of Christ, are openly Christ's, and therefore have a right to his ordinances; such, being enlightened by him, are able to see to the end of the ordinance; and to such only can it be of use, and they only can please God in it: nor should it be forbidden them; this is to withstand God, act contrary to the commission of Christ, and resist the Holy Ghost; no, not though Gentiles: converted Gentiles, have as good a right as any to this ordinance; descent from

Abraham gives no right to it; there is no difference among men under the Gospel dispensation; Christ's commission reaches both to Jews and Gentiles; and there is but one baptism for both.

That these should not be baptized; though they are uncircumcised Gentiles:

which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we; the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; though, no doubt also, they had received the Spirit, as a spirit of illumination and conviction, as a spirit of regeneration, sanctification, and conversion, and as a spirit of faith and adoption, and as a witness, earnest, and pledge of future glory: and receiving him supposes, that they were without him before, and that he is a gift of God's free grace unto them; and which is no other than the baptism of the Spirit, and is a necessary pre-requisite to water baptism; and they that have the one, are right subjects of the other; nor ought it to be denied them. From hence it appears that water baptism is an ordinance of Christ, to be continued under the Gospel dispensation; it was not only what was practised in the times of John and of Christ, but what was practised by the apostles after the ascension of Christ, in compliance with the commission he gave, which could have respect to no other baptism; since the apostles were not capable of baptizing with any other, not with the baptism of the Spirit: and it is certain from hence, and by other instances, that they did baptize in water; and from the apostle's question it seems, that it must be by immersion in water, as before observed; and from what follows it is clear, that such who are partakers of the Holy Spirit and his grace, are the proper subjects of it.

Ver. 48. *And he commanded them to be baptized,* etc.] By some of the six brethren that came with him from Joppa, who might all of them, at least some of them, be ministers of the Gospel: and this he ordered to be done

in the name of the Lord; that is, of the Lord Jesus Christ, though not to the exclusion of the Father, and of the Spirit: perhaps the phrase, "in the name of the Lord", may stand connected with the word commanded; and the sense be, that in the name of the Lord, and by authority from him, he ordered them to be baptized:

then prayed they him to tarry certain days; partly to express their gratitude to him for the favour they had received through him as an instrument, and partly that they might be more instructed and established by him. And these baptized persons very likely laid the foundation of a Gospel church state in this place, which we find to continue in succeeding ages; in the "second"

century Theophilus presided over it; and in the “third” century Origen and Pamphilus, were presbyters of it; and in the same age, succeeding one another, Theoctistus, Domnus, and Theotecnus were bishops of it; and in the beginning of the “fourth” century, Eusebius the famous ecclesiastical historian was bishop of this church, after him Acacius; in the fifth century Gelasius the successor of Eunomius bore the same office in it; and in the “sixth” century the bishop of this place was present in the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the “seventh” century it appears there was a church in this place: in which century the Arabians, after they had besieged this city seven years, took it, and killed seven thousand persons in it; and since it has been in the hands of the Turks; and this seems to have put an end to the ecclesiastical state of this place, as Christian^{f546} .