

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 255: PETER'S VISION
ACTS 10:9-16

The next day they were coming near Joppa about noon, when Peter was going up to the roof to pray. He was hungry and wanted to eat. But while they were preparing the food for Peter to eat, he had a vision. He saw something coming down through the open sky. It looked like a big sheet being lowered to the ground by its four corners. In it were all kinds of animals, wild beasts, reptiles and bugs, and birds. Then a voice said to him, "Get up, Peter; kill anything here and eat it." But Peter said, "I can't do that, Lord! I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." (which means "I have never eaten anything that is not pure or fit to be used for food.") But the voice said to him again, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." (which means 'God has made these things pure. Don't say they are unfit to eat.') This happened three times. Then the whole thing was taken back up into heaven.

Peter saw things on this sheet that would cause him to become ceremonially unclean according to his Jewish custom. Just having the vision of such animals probably aroused fear in his heart.

The Old Testament shows us how God had separated His people from other nations. He did not want them to participate in the practices of other nations. In Leviticus 11 we read about the things God declared unclean and how He did not want anything of these unclean things around His people.

By the time Jesus was on earth, these practices were no longer acts of obedience to a personal God, but rather ceremonial practices used to establish self-righteousness.

Many of the priests and religious leaders had added on a lot of their own ideas to God's Word. That is what tradition is. This had also become a way and means for the religious leaders to become rich, as the sacrifices the people tried to bring to God were rejected for ones provided by the temple vendors at a high price. **The standard of God is more important than the traditions of men.**

In other words, what God was asking Peter to do would be considered "unlawful." It may have seemed like a contradiction to Peter. But God was now offering salvation found in His son Jesus to the entire world. For the gospel to spread the Jews that were becoming Christians would have to break out of their tradition and share the gospel with the Gentiles. God is more concerned with a personal relationship with us than He is in rules and regulations.

Peter's response to this vision was born out the tradition of his people. All he could see when he looked at this vision was un-holiness and un-cleanliness. The Lord was doing this in order to show him that the Gentiles can be saved also, even though it went against his tradition.

Peter knew that these animals came from God. Now Peter was going to learn the truth of Titus 1:15, "To the pure all things are pure." Everything we receive from the Lord is pure. Titus 1:15 goes on to explain that evil comes from inside us; man is born with it. Even our thoughts and our plans cannot always be 100% pure. Paul wrote in Romans 14:14, "I know and I am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

The Lord was preparing Peter for the work that He was going to do within the lives of the Gentiles. The Jews were taught that the Gentiles were repulsive, unclean and completely unfit for salvation, but God did not teach that. He loved the Gentiles every bit as much as His chosen people; He desired to redeem them and have relationship with them as well. With the sacrifice of Jesus completed no one seeking to be restored to God would be rejected because of ethnic background. **The standard of God is more important than the tradition of men.**

Isn't it a wonderful truth that God will accept anyone who will come to Him. Jesus said, "whosoever will may come." Have you desired to come to Jesus to have your sins forgiven and to receive eternal life? If you have not you can today. Just realize that you have sinned and then ask Jesus to forgive you and come into your life. He promises to do that. Do not worry about keeping a tradition. We cannot get to heaven any other way than by accepting Jesus.

PETER'S VISION

(ACTS 10:9-16)



“And he saw heaven open up, and something that looked like a big sheet being lowered to the ground by its four corners.” **ACTS 10:11**

255. PETER'S VISION

ACTS 10:9-16

MEMORY VERSE:

"...What God has cleansed you must not call common." ACTS 10:15

Review Questions

True or False

1. The next day as they went to Joppa, Peter went down into the basement to pray.
2. Peter became very hungry as he was praying on the roof.
3. While the people were preparing the food for Peter to eat, he had a vision.
4. Peter saw the heavens open up and something that looked like a refrigerator came down to earth.
5. Peter saw something that looked like a sheet being lowered down to earth by its four corners.
6. The sheet had all kinds of animals, wild beasts, reptiles and bugs, and birds of the air on it.

Questions

1. What did Peter go onto the roof to do?
2. What did Peter see in his vision?
3. What did the voice tell Peter to do?
4. Did Peter say he would kill and eat the things on the sheet that he saw?
5. What did Peter say when the voice told him to kill and eat anything on that sheet?
6. Why didn't Peter want to eat the things from the sheet?
7. What did the voice say to Peter when he didn't want to kill any of those things and eat them?

Lesson 255 Activities

Is It in the Word?

Make a 4' square with tape in the floor. Have the children use paper plates as Frisbees and let them try to get them in the square on the floor. If it makes it in, they win, if not they lose.

Explain that God's Word is our "IN." If a lesson or concept is in the Word of God, it is true; if it is not, it is false, no matter what the world says about it. There are many things we accept as fact because of our tradition, but if it's not from God's Word it must be re-evaluated. Everything that we think or do needs to line up with God's Word.

Truth or Tradition? (older children would do better with this)

On the board write several popular phrases. These will either represent truth from God's Word or traditions of men. Have the children try to discern from God's Word whether these are truth or tradition. Some suggestions are:

You win some you lose some (truth; Ecclesiastes 3:6).

A penny saved is a penny earned (truth; Proverbs 6:6-8).

Do unto others as they have done to you (tradition; Matthew 7:12 teaches about our conduct, not our response – The REAL true verse Jesus taught is "Do unto others as you would have THEM do unto YOU! – In other words, treat other people the way you would like other people to treat you!).

Knowledge is power (truth; Proverbs 24:5-6).

I think therefore I am (tradition; Ephesians 1:3-6 shows us we "are" because of the creation and good pleasure of God).

To love others you must first love yourself (tradition; Philippians 2:3 teaches that we must esteem others higher than ourselves).

Forgive and forget (truth; Jeremiah 31:34 teaches that the Lord will remember our sins "no more"; we are to forgive as we have been forgiven).

Jesus loves you (truth; John 3:16).

God is love (truth; I John 4:7-8).

Obey your parents (truth; Ephesians 6:1-3).

Peter's Picnic (great for all ages)

Use a very large sheet of paper to represent the sheet in Peter's vision. Let the children draw pictures representing the people of every race and kindred on the large sheet of paper (the printer has some long sheets of paper on the floor near it). If you have magazines, they can cut pictures of people of different ethnicities and glue to their sheets).

Explain how the gospel was to the Jew first, but God also intended it for the Gentiles; this was something the first century Jew could hardly even imagine, even though it was prophesied. God used the unclean food to give Peter a message about spreading the good news of Jesus. Now we know that God loves and saves ALL people who call upon the name of Jesus!

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to test everything by the Word of God, trusting that [the standard of God is more important than the traditions of men](#). If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.