

**Two Tales of Joppa:
The Son of Jonah &
the Prophet Jonah**

Background Leading Up to Acts 10:9

- Jesus ascends to His throne. The Holy Spirit-led apostles & disciples are persecuted, yet the believers & the gospel spreads.
- Saul, initially, becomes the greatest enemy of the early church.
- Jesus blinds Saul so that he can truly see. Saul believes.
- Saul preaches Jesus in Damascus & the Jews plot to kill him.
- Saul visits Jerusalem, meets the apostles, & the Jews try to kill him.
- Peter re-enters the story of Acts healing a paralytic & heads to Joppa & raises Tabitha from the dead.
- Cornelius, the centurion, enters the story with an angelic vision.

Acts 10:9-14 (ESV) ⁹ The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. ¹⁰ And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. ¹³ And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

As the servants go from Caesarea to Joppa, God gives Peter visions.

Simon, son of Jonah (called Peter), is in Joppa & doesn't yet know God's vision is about the Gospel for the Gentiles. The prophet Jonah was called to speak judgement to the Gentiles (with potential mercy) but uses Joppa to flee.

Will you reflect God's character of being full of mercy & grace?

Acts 10:15-18 (HCSB) ¹⁵ Again, a second time, a voice said to him, "What God has made clean, you must not call common." ¹⁶ This happened three times, and then the object was taken up into heaven.

¹⁷ While Peter was deeply perplexed about what the vision he had seen might mean, the men who had been sent by Cornelius, having asked directions to Simon's house, stood at the gate. ¹⁸ They called out, asking if Simon, who was also named Peter, was lodging there.

Peter, who once denied Christ 3 times, is directed in sets of 3 here and previously by Jesus in John 21. The ancient prophet Jonah was also given multiple opportunities to feel mercy for the Assyrian people.

When the Lord speaks to us, sometimes it takes a little time for His message to sink in, but He can use others to help expedite the process.

Will you show God's mercy to all people groups?

Acts 10:19-22 (NIV₂₀₁₁) ¹⁹ While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. ²⁰ So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them." ²¹ Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?" ²² The men replied, "We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people. A holy angel told him to ask you to come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say."

Peter is still unsure about the vision, but God will reveal it in His timing as Peter obeys.

In Jewish culture, Jews did not go to the homes of Gentiles, so this was a challenging request, but Peter is beginning to understand why God gave him the visions.

In Peter's obedience, he still wants to know what God has in store for him.

Will you be obedient, when God's call challenges you?