**Lesson 12**

**Acts 11 Gentile Baptism and the Church in Antioch**

In last week’s lesson, Peter was very busy. He cured a paralyzed man from Lydda in the name of Jesus Christ. He raised Tabitha from the dead. In Caesarea, a Gentile Centurion named Cornelius looks for Peter after receiving a message from God. Peter had a vision that explains that it is permissible for a Jew to share meals with such Gentiles, even if the food is not Kosher. Peter preaches to Cornelius and his family and they received the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. He baptized them in the name of Jesus Christ. The Jews among Peter’s entourage were amazed that the Holy Spirit fell upon the Gentiles.

1. **When did you feel closest to God this week? Was there a particular verse in Acts 11 that you found inspiring in some way?**
2. **Peter is “confronted” or accused by the faithful Jewish-Christians in Judea. Why are they concerned about Peter’s actions? See Acts 11:1-3, Leviticus 11:1-8, Jubilees 22:16, Leviticus 18:1-3 and Tobit 1:10-12.**

**Acts 11:1-31**Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles too had accepted the word of God. **2So when Peter went up to Jerusalem the circumcised believers confronted him, 3**saying, “You entered the house of uncircumcised people and ate with them.”

**Leviticus 11:1-8 1**The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: **2**Speak to the Israelites and tell them: Of all land animals these are the ones you may eat: **3**Any animal that has hoofs you may eat, provided it is cloven-footed and chews the cud. **4**But you shall not eat any of the following from among those that only chew the cud or only have hoofs: the camel, which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; **5**the rock hyrax,[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Leviticus+11&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-3003c)] which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; **6**the hare, which indeed chews the cud, but does not have hoofs and is therefore unclean for you; **7**and the pig, which does indeed have hoofs and is cloven-footed, but does not chew the cud and is therefore unclean for you. **8**You shall not eat their meat, and you shall not touch their carcasses; they are unclean for you.

**Jubilees 22:16 (Also in the Talmud).**And you also, my son, Jacob, remember my words, and keep the commandments of Abraham, your father. **Separate yourself from the Gentiles, and do not eat with them**, and do not perform deeds like theirs. And do not become associates of theirs. Because their deeds are defiled, and all their ways are contaminated, and despicable, and abominable.

**Leviticus 18:1-3 1**The Lord said to Moses: **2**Speak to the Israelites and tell them: I, the Lord, am your God. **3**You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you once lived, nor shall you do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you; **do not conform to their customs**.

**Tobit 1:10–12** After I was carried away captive to Assyria and came as a captive to Nineveh, every one of my kindred and my people ate the food of the Gentiles, but **I kept myself from eating the food of the Gentiles.  Because I was mindful of God with all my heart**...

1. **Why would Luke repeat the details of his vision again in this text? (It was part of chapter 10 as well.) What does it mean when a writer (or a voice) repeats something several times? See Acts 11:4-12, and John 21:15-17.**

**Acts 11:4-12 4**Peter began and explained it to them step by step, saying, **5**“I was at prayer in the city of Joppa when in a trance I had a vision, something resembling a large sheet coming down, lowered from the sky by its four corners, and it came to me. **6**Looking intently into it, I observed and saw the four-legged animals of the earth, the wild beasts, the reptiles, and the birds of the sky. **7**I also heard a voice say to me, ‘Get up, Peter. Slaughter and eat.’ **8**But I said, ‘Certainly not, sir, because nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.’ **9**But a second time a voice from heaven answered, ‘What God has made clean, you are not to call profane.’ **10This happened three times**, and then everything was drawn up again into the sky. **11**Just then three men appeared at the house where we were, who had been sent to me from Caesarea. **12**The Spirit told me to accompany them without discriminating.

**John 21:15-1715**When they had finished breakfast, **Jesus said to Simon** Peter, “**Simon, son of John, do you love me** more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “**Feed my lambs**.” **16**He then said to him a second time, “**Simon, son of John, do you love me**?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” He said to him, “**Tend my sheep**.” **17**He said to him the third time, “**Simon, son of John, do you love me**?” Peter was distressed that he had said to him a third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” [Jesus] said to him, “**Feed my sheep**.”

1. **Read Acts 11:4-12 again. Find two phrases there that point to a *Divine* source of the vision.**
2. **When did God make the animals clean? Note the repetition of ‘What God has made clean, you are not to call profane.’ See Genesis 1: 21-25.**

**Genesis 1: 21-2521**God created the great sea monsters and all kinds of crawling living creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of winged birds. **God saw that it was good**, **22**and **God blessed them**, saying: Be fertile, multiply, and fill the water of the seas; and let the birds multiply on the earth. **23**Evening came, and morning followed—the fifth day.

**24**Then God said: Let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: tame animals, crawling things, and every kind of wild animal. And so it happened: **25God made every kind of wild animal**, every kind of tame animal, and every kind of thing that crawls on the ground. **God saw that it was good**.

1. **Read Acts 11: 19-26. There is another “mass conversion” in what city? Who was initially preaching to these people?**

**Acts 11: 19-2619**Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that arose because of Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but Jews. **20**There were some Cypriots and Cyrenians among them, however, who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks as well, proclaiming the Lord Jesus. **21**The hand of the Lord was with them and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. **22**The news about them reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas [to go] to Antioch. **23**When he arrived and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain faithful to the Lord in firmness of heart, **24**for he was a good man, filled with the holy Spirit and faith. And a large number of people was added to the Lord. **25**Then he went to Tarsus to look for Saul, **26**and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a large number of people, and it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

1. **What else is significant about events in Antioch in verses 19-26? (Find at least 2.)**
2. **Check your footnotes for information on Claudius in vs 28. In what year or years do these events in Antioch take place?**

**Acts 11: 27- 30. 27**At that time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch, **28**and one of them named Agabus stood up and predicted by the Spirit that there would be a severe famine all over the world, and it happened under Claudius. **29**So the disciples determined that, according to ability, each should send relief to the brothers who lived in Judea. **30**This they did, sending it to the presbyters in care of Barnabas and Saul.

1. **What is a presbyter? Check your footnotes for the answer.**
2. **This chapter ends with another example of a community acting “Christ-like.” What are they doing? Why does this sound “Christ-like?” See Luke 9:11-17, John 21:15-17 above, and Acts 11:27-30.**

**Luke 9:11-17 1**The crowds, meanwhile, learned of this and followed him. He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and he healed those who needed to be cured. **12**As the day was drawing to a close, the Twelve approached him and said, “Dismiss the crowd so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms and find lodging and provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.” **13**He said to them, “Give them some food yourselves.” They replied, “Five loaves and two fish are all we have, unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people.” **14**Now the men there numbered about five thousand. Then he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of [about] fifty.” **15**They did so and made them all sit down. **16**Then taking[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+9&version=NABRE#fen-NABRE-29637g)] the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. **17**They all ate and were satisfied. And when the leftover fragments were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets.