

Last week we began looking at Dr. George Antonius' critique of Pastor David O'Steen's video showing that Cornelius was not saved into the body of Christ.

- The first thing we saw was that Dr. Antonius was correct when he said that Pastor O'Steen contradicted himself. By saying that Cornelius was part of the prophetic program, and not the mystery program, but Peter didn't understand what was going on, he had boxed himself in. If what was happening to Cornelius was part of the prophecy program, Peter should have understood it.

Luke 24:45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

The error that both men make is by making up phrases that are not found in the scriptures. * There are no such things in God's Word called the prophecy program or the mystery program.

We looked at verses showing that mysteries were revealed before the dispensation of grace began, and that there were prophecies in the dispensation of grace. By creating unscriptural phrases and assigning their own meanings to them, both men erred. *

- The second thing we saw is the common mistake that Cornelius and his house were gaining personal eternal salvation. Most Christians accept this because in **Acts 11:14**, Cornelius tells Peter that the angel said that Peter "shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved."

We looked at how Gentiles were saved until the dispensation of grace began, and Cornelius and his house had done all of that. We then compared Cornelius to the other centurion in Matthew 8 and Luke 7. After Jesus healed his servant (which he wouldn't have done for an unsaved Gentile), he said to his followers:

Matt 8:10-12 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. **11** And I say unto you, **That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.** **12** But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

* So many Gentiles are going to sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This doesn't mean that they just pull up a chair and sit with them a while; this means that many Gentiles will literally inherit the promised land along with Israel.

* We looked at this map of the world to understand what that means. Cornelius and his house's salvation wasn't eternal soul salvation. It was salvation into that land. They were given the privilege of inheriting the promises made to Israel.

- An illustration of this can be seen when we compare the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 with Cornelius in Acts 10. Both were proselytes. The eunuch was coming to Jerusalem to worship; Cornelius was a devout man who feared God, gave alms to the people and prayed to God always. The eunuch learned that Jesus was the Christ and was baptized. Cornelius and his house learned that Jesus was the Christ THEN RECEIVED THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST, and then were baptized.
 - The Ethiopian eunuch already had eternal life. He was already saved into this kingdom*. When he said: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," he was water baptized and saved into this kingdom* and received the inheritance promised to Israel.
 - Cornelius and his house received the gift of the Holy Ghost, as the men of Israel had at the beginning, after hearing these words and believing them: **Acts 10:42-43** And he commanded us

to preach unto **the people**, and to testify that it is **he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.** 43 To him give all the prophets witness, **that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.**

- THEN Peter commanded him to be baptized. Why? To be saved into the inheritance of Israel.

Remember why the angel had originally told Cornelius to call for Peter: “he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.” The thing that Peter told them to do – commanded them to do – was to be water baptized.

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There is more information that I’m going to have to skip over for the sake of time. If you are interested, you can look at my notes which will be online when I put this lesson on the site.

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Now we pick up the video where Pastor O’Steen is explaining his belief that the purpose of Cornelius’ baptism was for power.

* Video

- Pastor O’Steen contends that the water baptism of Acts 2 and Acts 10 were for power (Acts 1:8).
- Dr. Antonius believes that the baptism of Acts 2 is for individual, eternal salvation (the remission of sins).

Here is the problem with each argument: First, Pastor O’Steen -

Acts 1:4-8 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me. **5** For John truly baptized with water; but **ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost** not many days hence. **6 ¶** When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? **7** And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. **8** But **ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:** and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

Is there anywhere in this passage that says that water baptism will give them power? Power comes from the gift of the Holy Ghost, not water baptism. In Acts 8, the Samaritans are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, but they don’t receive the Holy Spirit until Peter comes north and lays his hands on them. Water baptism does not imbue them with power, the Holy Ghost does.

Baptism is always about identification and sometimes also cleansing. * If you want to understand baptism, go to our YouTube channel. Unfortunately, much of what is on our YouTube channel hasn’t be migrated back to our website since the catastrophic site crash. On our channel, then, click on Playlists. * You will see something like this. * Then scroll down until you find Baptism. There are 14 messages on there, and you should pretty much understand what baptism is all about after watching them.

One thing it is never about is what Dr. Antonius counters with. *

Acts 2:37-38 ¶ Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? **38** Then Peter said unto them, **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,** and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Now, to give credit to Dr. Antonius, just reading these two verses, one would have to conclude that he is correct. But, as always when studying the Bible, you have to know who is speaking, who are they speaking to, and what are they speaking about. So if we just back up one verse, we see that Peter is not talking about personal, individual salvation here. *

Acts 2:36 Therefore let **all the house of Israel** know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Peter is speaking to all the house of Israel. How can the nation have its' sins remitted?

- First, the leadership and individual Jews must believe that God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. The same message preached throughout the gospels. That is the repentance part. *

John 20:31 But these are written, that **ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God**; and that believing ye might have life **through his name**.

- Then the leadership and the individual Jews must be baptized in water for the remission of the nation's sins. It is the same baptism of repentance that John the Baptist preached. It is for the ceremonial cleansing of the nation and being identified with the believing remnant. It has nothing to do with personal salvation.

* Video

Once again both men believe something that isn't true. When we use the word 'gospel', we always assume that it means person eternal salvation. The same as when we use the word 'saved'. The same problems arise with assuming that gospel is about personal salvation as does assuming saved always refers to individual salvation.

He specifically refers to Mark 16:16, so let's go there.

The first thing we know about the so-called commission in Mark 16 is that it is specifically for the time of Jacob's Trouble. The reason we know this is

Mark 16:17-18 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; **18** They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. *

These are all powers that will be given because of what will be happening at that time.

They will cast out devils because once again the war will be on the earth as it was when Christ was on the earth. And remember: **Rev 12:7-9** And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, **8** And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, **and his angels were cast out with him**.

All the devils will now be on the earth.

They will speak with new tongues because they will have to be able to communicate with every creature.

*They will take up serpents when the sixth trumpet sounds and an army riding horse-like creatures with heads of lions and tails of serpents are loosed, neither the flames of their mouths or the poison of their serpent's tails will affect those that believe.

If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them when the third trumpet sounds and the fountains of water become wormwood. Many will die because of the bitter water, but it won't affect believers.

They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover because there will great pestilence in the land, and healing was one of the first two signs given to Israel.

Understanding that this commission is for that time, and understanding that prophetically Israel was about to enter that time, it shows and re-enforces why Cornelius needed to be baptized.

Mark 16:15-16 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. **16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;** but he that believeth not shall be damned.

If you understand that the Ethiopian eunuch already had eternal life, but when he heard the message being preached to Israel and believed it, he was saved into the land inherited by Israel

AND

You understand that Cornelius and his house already had eternal life, but was told to send for Peter and: “he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.” And what Peter commanded him to do was to be baptized,

THEN

Mark 16:16 is not so very difficult.

The gospel of the kingdom includes personal eternal salvation, but it includes more than that. The gospel of the kingdom, whether you are a Jew or a Gentile, is the gospel that gets you the full inheritance of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. *

It is the water baptism part that allows you entrance. We looked at that last week. Without the ceremonial cleansing of water, no one gets into that land. Whether Jew or Gentile, that baptism is identifying you with the little flock that inherits the kingdom.

What must a believer in the dispensation of the kingdom believe to get eternal life?

That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

What must a BELIEVER do to obtain salvation into the kingdom inheritance?

Be baptized in water. That is the salvation of baptism in the gospel of the kingdom.

1Pet 3:21-22 ¶ The like figure whereunto **even baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: **22** Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Peter is saying that that ceremonial washing doesn't save them from the sins of the flesh; but salvation comes from the resurrection of Christ. But take away the parenthesis and read it again. Baptism saves them by the resurrection of Christ. So if water baptism doesn't save them from their sins, but when put together with belief in the risen Christ it saves them, what salvation would that be? *

That salvation is into the kingdom inheritance of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

When the angel tells Cornelius: “Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God,” it means that the Gentiles who already have eternal life through believing in Israel's God are not being forgotten. They won't be subjugated to the nations outside of Israel's inheritance. Their faith and their faithfulness will be rewarded.

This works the same way for Jews. Even well into the dispensation of grace, believing disciples were being reached with the message and being saved into that inheritance.

Acts 19:1-7 ¶ And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, **2** He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. **3** And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. **4** Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. **5** When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. **6** And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied. **7** And all the men were about twelve.

This is why, in Acts 15, the Jerusalem saints were still going to go to the circumcision. Believing Jews and Gentiles would be part of that circumcision, and many of them would not yet have heard of Jesus Christ. So then the earthly disciples of Jesus still had a message to proclaim to a targeted audience.

To unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, however, they were all accounted as heathen. They are who Paul would go to. They would be saved into the body of Christ.

Information not included in lesson:

Let's go back to Acts 10 and look at what the angel tells Cornelius:

Acts 10:4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, **Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.**

Acts 10:30-31 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, **31** And said, Cornelius, **thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God.** *

What is God remembering? What memorial is Cornelius' alms and prayers before God that he would pour out His Spirit on Gentiles as he did the believing remnant?

In the book of Malachi, God tells Israel something about those who fear Him and think on His name.

Mal 3:16-18 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and **a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD,** and that thought upon his name. **17** And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. **18** Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

We already saw in Matthew 8 that Christ says many will come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Sitting down with them isn't just pulling up a chair beside them, it is taking a place with them. It is having residence in the land that was given them as an inheritance. Christ says this right after he says that the centurion had greater faith than anyone in Israel. The implication being that the Gentile centurion would gain inheritance with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

It is my opinion that the centurion was written in the book of remembrance described in Malachi. That book was written specifically for Israelites who feared God and thought on His name, but Christ said that Gentiles would also gain inheritance in the nation.

I would submit that the salvation that is given to Cornelius and his house is salvation into the inheritance of Israel, and he will have a seat with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom.

When Jesus talks about the judgment of the sheep and goat nations in Matthew 25, those nations that are saved into the kingdom aren't saved into the land promised to Israel. They are saved back into their nations. They will have the obligation to come up to the land once a year for the feast of tabernacles. These are the nations that Israel, as a kingdom of priests, will go out and teach.

So now, let's just look at one more thing. Why did the Holy Ghost fall on these Gentiles before they had the ceremonial cleansing of water baptism?

In Acts 10, did God know that He was going to separate out Barnabas and Saul? Did God know He was going to change Saul's name to Paul and reveal to him the dispensation of the grace of God along with a different message of salvation for both Jews and Gentiles?

Did Peter, the apostle of the circumcision know that?

If Paul and Barnabas had gone off and preached what they did without any kind of revelation to the believing remnant of Israel, do you think that they would have accepted that?

So when the issue of whether the Gentiles needed to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses came up, what did Peter understand?

Acts 15:6-11 ¶ And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. **7** And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. **8** And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, **even as he did unto us;** **9** And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. **10** Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? **11** But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ **we shall be saved, even as they.**

Peter, who now understands Paul's message, settles the matter because he was sent to Cornelius. The message of Acts 10 & 11 is that God is preparing the believing remnant of Jewish believers that things are going to change. It is that there is going to be a deviation from revealed prophecy, and Gentiles are going to be a part of that deviation.

Finally, look at the change from verse 8 to verse 11. In verse 8, what God was doing with the Gentiles was 'even as he did us.' Gentiles were receiving what the believing Jews already had.

Now, in verse 11, Jews had to receive the same salvation as the Gentiles. In verse 8, there is a middle wall of partition; in verse 11, that middle wall is gone.