

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Acts 11: 1-18.

1. And it came to pass that the apostles and brethren that were in Judaea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God, and they were mightily perplexed and super-miffed.
2. And when Peter was come up unto Jerusalem, they that were of the circumcision (1) contended with him,
3. Saying, Thou wentest in to men uncircumcised, and didst eat with them. And Peter wondered what the connection was, and how it was that they knew of the men's state, but durst not ask. And from that moment on he dursted no more.
4. And Peter rehearsed the matter from the beginning, and checked the lighting, and once he had got his story right he pulled up a chair, and expounded it by order unto them, saying,
5. I was in the city of Joppa praying and it was about the time of dinner and verily I had but drunk one aperitif, albeit an huge one: and in a trance I saw a vision, A certain vessel descend, as it had been a great sheet – I said sheet - let down from heaven by four corners; and it came even to me, and I saw that it was laundered and starched nicely. No embroidery mind:
6. Upon the which when I had fastened mine eyes (for they were a bit bleary, let the reader understand), I considered, and saw four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts with huge horns, and creepy-crawly things, and fowls of the air. And they did foul the sheet mightily. (2)
7. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat. And I trembled a bit for I was alone, and knew it was not my stomach. And I was sore and afraid.
8. But suddenly I said, having guessed it was an heavenly voice, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth, not even if they be on sale at half price or on special offer. And definitely no crabs.
9. But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. And I wondered at the manner of the speaking, for it was hugely ungrammatical, verily.
10. And this was done three times as is proper in Jewish story telling form: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And not a mark was left on the ceiling, though there was a tang of the farmyard in the air. Lots of whiff.
11. And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Caesarea unto me. And I wondered if they were from the synagogue for I was behind in my tithing, and they were heavy with purposeful countenances.
12. And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six (3) brethren (4) accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house (5):
13. And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house (6), which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;
14. Who shall tell thee words or perform in mime, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.
15. And as I began to speak and do charades, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Mightily. Causing us to raise arms, do interpretive dances and make ecstatic utterances like they will do in a place to be named Toronto.
16. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, though we did not understand at the time. I mean, who would?
17. Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God? But did we still need godparents?
18. When they heard these things, they held their peace, though not for long, for then they glorified God upon lutes and harps that just happened to be lying around, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. So this becomes membership policy, right? And we can now eat crabs, yes? And the scribe noting down these things did wish they spoke in phrases more easily understood. With much better grammar.

Notes

- (1) This description is cut in some copies.
- (2) This play on words was a Restoration Period idea, and not in the original manuscript as far as we are aware.
- (3) Some scholars believe that Peter was seeing double at this point.
- (4) Here some later manuscripts add the names of the companions: Aristodes, Herman, Melville, Posthumous, Gavin and Judas (not that one).
- (5) Yes, it was indeed an house.
- (6) The manner of this showing is unspecified but scholars believe it to have been a series of stained glass windows. Or one of those painted ornaments that were on sale in most chariot boot sales at that time.