



### **Simon Peter and Simon a Tanner**

Smell is one of our senses! All of the senses are important to us, though there are many around us who are lacking one or more of them. The house of a Tanner, if located any where near his work, would take on the smell of his work. Simon Peter **“tarried many days in Joppa with one Simon a tanner”** (Acts 9:43).

In chapter nine of the book of Acts, we find a rendering of Peter, by the power and grace of God, healing a disciple (a follower of Christ) by the name of Tabitha (also called Dorcas). She had been sick and died near Joppa and other disciples sent for Peter to come. Acts 9:42 tells about Peter’s healing of Dorcas and how the word of it spread, **“And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord.”** It was during this time and shortly afterward that Peter tarried in Joppa with Simon a tanner.

Why is it important that we note of Peter’s time with this man Simon? It was important enough that Luke (the writer of Acts) relates of his staying there three different times (Acts 9:43, 10:6, 10:32). The occupation of tanner is mentioned only these three times in the bible. By dwelling with a tanner (one who deals with dead animals and their skins), Peter is being influenced and God (who knows all things) will use a vision of a sheet with all types of animals being let down, to teach Peter a viable lesson before going to meet with a Gentile by the name of Cornelius.

Orthodox Jews would naturally be leery of being around a tanner’s place because of the unclean animals and possible contamination which they abstained from in their ceremonial laws. However, it would serve Peter well when **“there came a voice to him”** and told him to **“Rise, Peter; kill, and eat”** (Acts 10:13). When the voice spake a second time it said, **“What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common”** (vs 15).

Notice this point: By Simon Peter dwelling a while with Simon a tanner, God was preparing Peter for what God (by His Providence) would have him to do when he met with the Gentile Cornelius. Remember, Cornelius was not saved to eternal

heaven by Peter as he was already **“A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway”** long before Peter ever shared the good news of the gospel with him. The gospel does not save one to Paradise, but it tells us the good news of his Salvation so that we may rejoice and be obedient while we live our lives on God’s earth.

One other note! Simon a tanner’s house and work area was **“by the seaside.”** In this period of time in history, tanneries were always located outside the cities, and often times would be found near the seashore where they used the sea water to clean the hides and prepare them to be used as leather. How wonderful our Lord is that He led Luke to pen down the connection between Simon Peter and Simon a Tanner.

So, what do we learn from this? We learn the Providence of God takes care of us and prepares us for whatever we face in life. In addition, it also reminds us of how the Lord used the work of a potter and his **“power over the clay”** (Romans 9:21) to show the Sovereignty of God and the Providential care of His creation. This is certainly **“Something To Think About.”**