Josephus,—36 miles from Ptolemais (a day’s  
journey, Acts xxi. 8),—30 from Joppa;—  
one of the largest towns in Palestine, with  
an excellent haven, built by Herod the  
Great, and called Sebastos (Augustus) in  
honour of Cæsar. It was, even before the  
destruction of Jerusalem, the seat of the  
Roman Procurators (see ch. xxiii. 23 ff.;  
xxiv. 27; xxv. 1), and is called by Tacitus  
the *capital of Judæa*. It was chiefly  
inhabited by Gentiles, but there were also  
many thousand Jewish inhabitants. It  
was built by Herod the Great. Beforetime  
there was only a fort there, called the  
tower of Strato. It was fortified, provided  
with a haven (see ch. ix. 30; xviii. 22),  
and in honour of Cæsar Augustus named  
Cæsarea, more fully Cæsarea Sebasté.  
Vespasian made it a Roman colony. Abulfeda speaks of it as in ruins in his time  
(A.D. 1300). At present there are a few  
ruins only, and some fishers’ huts.

**a centurion**] The subordinate officer commanding the sixth part of a cohort, or  
half a maniple.

**of the band called  
the Italian band**] i.e. of a *cohort levied  
in Italy, not in Syria*.

**2. a devout  
man, and one that feared God**] i. e. he  
had abandoned polytheism, and was a  
worshipper of the true God: whether a  
proselyte of the gate, or not, seems uncertain. That he *may* have been such,  
there is nothing in the narrative to preclude: nor does Meyer’s objection apply,  
that it is not probable that, among the  
many thousand converts, no Greek proselyte had yet been admitted by baptism  
into the church. Many such cases may  
have occurred, and some no doubt had:  
but the object of this providential interference seems to have been, to give *solemn  
sanction* to such reception, by the agency of  
him who was both the chief of the Apostles,  
and the strong upholder of pure Judaism.  
It is hardly possible that the words “*of  
good report among all the nation of the*

*Jews*” (ver. 22) should have been said of a  
Gentile not in any way conformed to the  
Jewish faith and worship. The great point  
(ch. xi. 3) which made the present event so  
important, was, that Cornelius was an *uncircumcised* person. Doubtless also among  
his *company* (ver. 24) there must have been.  
many who were *not proselytes*.

**gave  
much alms to the people**] i.e. to the  
Jewish inhabitants, see ch. xxvi. 17, 23;  
xxviii. 17; John xi. 50; xviii. 14, and elsewhere.

**prayed to God alway**] From  
Cornelius’s own narrative, ver. 31, as well as  
from the analogy of God’s dealings, we are  
certainly justified in inferring, with Neander, that the subject of his prayers was that  
he might be guided into truth, and if so,  
hardly without reference to that faith which  
was now spreading so widely over Judæa.  
This is not matter of conjecture, but is implied by Peter’s words, “*ye know,*” &c., in  
ver. 37. Further than this, we cannot infer  
with certainty; but, if *the particular difficulty present in his mind* be sought, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that it was  
connected with the apparent necessity of  
embracing Judaism and circumcision in  
order to become a believer on Christ.

**3. in a vision evidently**] not in a trance,  
as ver. 10, and ch. xxii. 17,—but *with his  
bodily eyes*: thus asserting the objective  
truth of the appearance.

**about the  
ninth hour of the day**] It here appears  
that Cornelius observed the Jewish hours  
of prayer.

**4. for a memorial**] i.e.  
‘*so as to be a memorial*’—There has been.  
found a difficulty by some in the fact that  
Cornelius’s works were received as well pleasing to God, before he had justifying faith  
in Christ. But it is surely easy to answer,  
with Calvin and Augustine, that Cornelius  
could not have prayed, without faith. His  
faith was all that he could then attain to,  
and brought forth its fruits abundantly in  
his life: one of which fruits, and the best  
of them, was, the earnest seeking by prayer