

# LUKE

Leon L. Combs, M.A., M.Div., Ph.D.

## Chapter Ten

Verses 1-24 give us a preview of the advance of God's kingdom that is unstoppable for Jesus will triumph.

### Luke 10:1-9

*Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come. (2) And He was saying to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. (3) "Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. (4) "Carry no money belt, no bag, no shoes; and greet no one on the way. (5) "Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house.' (6) "If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. (7) "Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.(8)"Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; (9) and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'*

Now Jesus appoints another group to send out as an advance team as He progresses toward Jerusalem. The manuscripts describing this event are evenly split as to calling the group consisting of 70 or 72 and the two numbers are interchangeable in Jewish traditions. The Septuagint has the number as 72 and is significant as it represents six times twelve that foreshadows sending out missionaries to the entire world. The total number of missionaries sent by Jesus during His ministry is seven times twelve. Seven symbolizes completeness, perfection, or wholeness in Scripture and twelve represents the tribes of Israel.

Jesus then tells them that there are many people needing their message but the number willing to be sent on the mission is small. Few are willing to work under such conditions that He will ascribe when so little earthly reward will be given. The disciples are urged to pray since the harvest is God's harvest and not theirs. Jesus is also called the "Lord of the harvest" and this Christology is critical for all to understand. The allusion of wolves primarily refers to the officials of the cities into which they will enter. Wolves hunt in packs and we have often seen how they group to attack Jesus and His disciples and prophets of OT times as well: "*Her princes within her are like wolves tearing the prey, by shedding blood and destroying lives in order to get dishonest gain.*" (Ezek 22:27) The princes refers to the city and religious leaders.

Jesus then gives them rules similarly to those given the previous group of 12 apostles He sent on mission. They are not to take a money bag or even shoes that are a token of impoverishment (15:22). Forbidding them to give greetings as they travel is to emphasize the importance of their mission and not to dawdle along the way. This is a similar warning given to those involved in another mission: *Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins and take my staff in your hand, and*

*go your way; if you meet any man, do not salute him, and if anyone salutes you, do not answer him; and lay my staff on the lad's face."* (2 Kings 4:29) When they enter a house they are to use the greeting "peace" using the Greek word *eirene* that has a rich connotation. The word expresses that peace is to exist between individuals or a national security. In Christianity it is the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly existence. They are then to determine if a man of peace lives there for such a person would be open to the gospel message. The response of the person they greet will determine if they stay there. They are then to stay in that house rather than moving around from house to house as a freeloader. The command to eat what is set before them would horrify a Pharisee and this admonition might foreshadow the issue of food in the mission to Gentiles (Acts 11: 1-18; Gal 2:11-21). They are then to carefully let those they heal know that the healing is from God and that the kingdom of God has come near to them.

### **Luke 10:10-16**

*"But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, (11) 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' (12) 'I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. (13) 'Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. (14) 'But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you. (15) 'And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades! (16) 'The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me."*

If the teaching they deliver is not well received they are to warn the entire town that the kingdom of God has come near them but their refusal to accept it means the offer of peace is withdrawn and replaced with a pronouncement of perdition. Sodom went up in smoke (Gen 19:24-29) and is used as a warning sign as to what will happen to the godless:

- Rom 9:29 *And just as Isaiah foretold, "UNLESS THE LORD OF SABAOth HAD LEFT TO US A POSTERITY, WE WOULD HAVE BECOME LIKE SODOM, AND WOULD HAVE RESEMBLED GOMORRAH."*
- 2Peter 2:6 *and if He condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction by reducing them to ashes, having made them an example to those who would live ungodly lives thereafter;*
- Jude 1:7 *just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire.*

The warning to that city also means that if there is any peaceful person there they should flee. Jesus then gives some severe warnings to two cities that were near where Jesus fed the five thousand. Bethsaida is the town of Andrew, Peter, and Philip (John 1:44; 12:21).

Jesus then compares the Gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon to the north that are cursed throughout the OT for their sin and oppression of the Jews (Isa 23; Ezek 26-28). To the Jew, saying that they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes long ago would be inconceivable and makes clear

that rejecting Jesus and His message is far more serious than any other sin. Jesus mentioned Capernaum in His first sermon in Nazareth when He said they would ask Him to do in their hometown what He had done in Capernaum. Those mighty deeds (4: 31-42) apparently did not do Capernaum much good since they did not seem to repent. Jesus then asked them a question expecting a negative response as they will not be exalted to heaven but will be cast into Hades. These threats were fulfilled in the Jewish revolt against Rome (AD 60-70). Because they refuse to heed God's message they will be cut off from the people of God forever.

Jesus then makes it clear that rejecting His missionaries is the same as rejecting Him and God who sent Him. We will see later the parable of the vineyard that illustrates the inevitable results waiting those who reject the servants and Jesus (20:9-17).

### **Luke 10:17-18**

*The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." (18) And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.*

This group of 70 or 72 is just as successful as the first group of twelve (9:10). They seem especially joyful and maybe surprised that the demons are subject to the name of Jesus. Note that the demons are subject not to their names but to the name of Jesus. The power of the name of Jesus is for all who faithfully use it for God's glory:

- Acts 3:6 *But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene--walk!"*
- Acts 3:16 *"And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.*
- Acts 4:10 *let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by this name this man stands here before you in good health.*

Jesus is uniquely qualified to see the fall of Satan and his demons from an eternal perspective. The disciples have had success against a small group of Satan's minions but the ultimate result will be his total defeat at the End Times. Saying that He saw Satan fall from heaven can be interpreted as meaning at this particular time or at the End Times. Seeing lightning hit the ground visualizes its coming from heaven to the earth and is illustrative of the fall of Satan from his former seat of power:

- Isa 14:12 *"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations!"*
- Rev 12:9 *And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

From our study of Revelation we know the following taken from my notes on Rev 12:9:

We are greatly encouraged to know that Satan and his minions are no match for God's forces. Satan and his angels were then thrown down to earth and he no longer had direct access to God in heaven. Satan is a powerful being but he is not omnipresent nor is he omnipotent or omniscient. He apparently has been on earth with his angels since the time of

the birth of Jesus since we have accounts of his interactions with Jesus on earth and other Scriptural discussions of his activities on earth such as:

- Eph 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*
- Luke 10:18 *“And He said to them, ‘I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.’”*
- Luke 22:31 *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat;”*

Of course Satan’s total defeat was suffered at the cross so that Jesus could say, *“Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.”* (John 12:31)

We could infer then that John is being given a vision of what happened in heaven sometime before or shortly after the birth of Jesus, but his total defeat and binding away from doing any harm would come later. There was a great victory by Jesus on the cross and with His resurrection.

#### **Luke 10:19-20**

*“Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you. (20) “Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven.”*

Jesus then tells them they will be protected from scorpions and snakes and all power of the enemy but this is not to be taken as meaning to be applied to all people of all time who go forth on missionary trips for Jesus. Jesus is not giving people the ability to handle snakes (Mark 16:18) but is a statement that the gospel message will go out to the entire world and nothing can stop its progress. But regardless of their joy over what they accomplished in the name of Jesus they should be rejoicing that their names are recorded in heaven. Satan has fallen from heaven but they will rejoice in heaven. The heavenly book with names of the righteous is traditional:

- Mal 3:16-17 *Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. (17) “They will be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.”*
- Phil 4:3 *Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*
- Heb 12:23 *to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,*
- Rev 3:5 *He who overcomes will thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.*

Their boast should then be that God has accepted them and promised them salvation:

- Rom 5:1-2 *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (2) through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*
- Gal 6:14 *But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*

### **Luke 10:21-24**

*At that very time He rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. (22) "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." (23) Turning to the disciples, He said privately, "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, (24) for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them."*

Jesus now takes time to praise the Father who He says is Lord of heaven and earth. Jesus has been anointed by the Holy Spirit (3:22; 4:18) and led by the Spirit (4:1) so He now rejoices in the Holy Spirit. Jesus praises the Father for hiding the spiritual things from the wise and intelligent but revealing them to infants, including the disciples. This statement differentiates general revelation (Rom 1:20) from special revelation given to specified people. Jesus rejoices that the Father has chosen to reveal His true person and character to the disciples. Of course we will see that their understanding of Him is very limited until after His ascension. Jesus praises the Father for His choosing of this method of revealing revelation. Matthew also reports Jesus saying that all authority has been given to Him: *And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (Matt 28:18)* He also relates that only He knows the Father and nobody yet knows His identity as the Son. He also states that nobody can know the Father unless the Son wills to reveal the identity of the Father. Jesus then turns to privately say to these disciples that they have been truly blessed to see the things that they have seen. Even many chosen prophets and kings have wished to see such things and have been denied. Paul also praises God for this revelation:

*1Cor 2:9-10 but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." (10) For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.*

The remaining verses of this chapter demonstrate that one cannot place any limits on whom one must love as a neighbor.

### **Luke 10: 25-28**

*And a lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (26) And He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How does it*

*read to you?" (27) And he answered, "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND; AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF." (28) And He said to him, "You have answered correctly; DO THIS AND YOU WILL LIVE."*

In this era, teachers sat and students stood so the lawyer is showing proper deference to Jesus as the teacher. However Luke lets the reader know that the lawyer's questions are less than sincere as he means to test Jesus. This fundamental question had probably been asked of Jesus many times and we will read of another person who is a serious seeker asking it (18:18). Jesus replied with a question to the lawyer as to how the Law reads to him about this question. The lawyer then responds with the Shema (Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18) that all Jews would have known. The problem in the community of the Jews was the identification of neighbor. Jesus answered in such a way that did not state the man had achieved eternal life for He told him to practice what you preach. Only having right answers does not mean that one knows God.

### **Luke 10:29-37**

*But wishing to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" (30) Jesus replied and said, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among robbers, and they stripped him and beat him, and went away leaving him half dead. (31) "And by chance a priest was going down on that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. (32) "Likewise a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. (33) "But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, (34) and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn and took care of him. (35) "On the next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper and said, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I return I will repay you.' (36) "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" (37) And he said, "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do the same."*

The Pharisees always desired to justify themselves and now the lawyer asks the question that bothered them. They wanted to not have to love everyone, especially those who openly hated their God. He wanted to know where to draw the line as the question implies that there is a non-neighbor. Lev 19:17-18 identifies the neighbor as a "fellow Israelite" and does not encompass all humans. However Lev 19:33-34 commands them to love even the alien who resides with them. They certainly had a hard time including the Samaritans as a neighbor to love. So this question was of considerable importance and discussion among the teachers of the Law.

Jesus replied with a story that would have been a common occurrence among these people as they traveled and had problems with robbers. The Jericho road was especially notorious for having robbers along the way. Jerusalem was at 3600 feet above sea level and Jericho was 1300 feet below sea level so it was a hard road to travel. The priest and the Levite both decided this man in trouble was not a neighbor for they chose to pass by without offering any help. It would have been a shock for the Jew to hear of a Samaritan having compassion upon a Jew. However

the Samaritan would be under the same Mosaic Law as was the lawyer, priest, and the Levite so the issue is not about natural law but the claim of the Mosaic Law. The Samaritan does not ask the identity of the hurt person but immediately begins to bandage him and pour oil and wine on the injured area. He then put him on his own beast and took him to an inn. The Samaritan pays a considerable amount to the innkeeper and told him to take care of the man and to not spare any expense in taking care of him as he would repay the innkeeper when he returned.

Jesus then asks the lawyer who proved to be a neighbor to the hurt man. Note the question is as to the identity of the neighbor. The lawyer replies correctly in that the neighbor is the one who acts with compassion and mercy to help someone in need. The lawyer is forced to recognize a positive lesson regarding the Samaritan and a negative lesson regarding the priest and the Levite. Jesus then tells the man to go and do the same.

### **Luke 10:38-42**

*Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. (39) She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. (40) But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." (41) But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; (42) but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."*

They continued on their way and came to a village where Martha welcomed Jesus into her home. Male and female space was divided in the ancient world and usually they did not mix. To seat at someone's feet meant that they were studying under the person. Mary was listening to Jesus implying that she was learning from His every word. There were now many things doing on in Martha's home as the guest had to be attended to and meals prepared, but also there was a teaching going on between Jesus and Mary. So Martha was distracted by all that was going on. She then came to Jesus and addressed Him as Lord. However she admonished Him for not caring about her when her sister could be helping instead of listening to Jesus. Surely Martha expected Jesus to tell Mary to go and help her sister with the work needed to care for His needs. But instead Jesus admonished Martha as the repetition of her name emphasizes. When presented with so many details and choices of what to do, Mary chose to devote herself to Jesus and that devotion would last her forever. Martha chose to try to take care of all the details of taking care of her guest and those activities would cease to be important when Jesus left. Martha is an example for us to prioritize and delegate items of lesser responsibility.