



The Gospel of Luke - Chapter Ten

V. [Luke 9:51-19:27 - The Journey to Jerusalem \(continues\)](#)

V.a [Luke 9:51-13:21 - The first mention of the journey to Jerusalem \(continues\)](#)

Summary of Chapter Ten

We have an account of Jesus sending out 72 of his disciples to teach and heal in towns and villages that he would also be going to. He told them that the fields were ready for harvest but that the workers were few. They were sent as sheep among wolves and were instructed to take no extra provisions but to travel light. Their mission was to tell people that the Kingdom of God was coming. The towns that would reject them were, in fact, rejecting God and would be so judged at the right time.

They returned to Jesus speaking jubilantly about the successes they had witnessed but Jesus reminded them that their joy should be that their names were now written in heaven, not because of their recent mission but because they had chosen to follow Jesus.

One expert in the law asked Jesus what he needed to do to obtain eternal life. After Jesus said 'What does scripture say?' the man replied, 'Love God' and 'Love your neighbour'. Jesus told the man he was right in what he said. The man then asked Jesus, in a way to try to deflect the next requirement, 'Who is my neighbour?' Jesus then told the parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus then asked the man 'who was the good neighbour?' so the man said, 'The one who was kind to someone in need'. Jesus told him to go and do likewise.

We then have Jesus in Bethany at the house of Mary and Martha. Martha complains to Jesus that Mary was not doing her share in helping prepare the meal but was spending her time listening to Jesus instead. Jesus rebuked Martha and pointed out that Mary was doing what was really important, hearing about the Kingdom of God.

V.a.iii [Luke 10:1-24 - Jesus sends out the seventy-two](#)

Jesus, having sent out the Twelve in Luke 9:1-6 on their mission, now sends 72 more disciples on a further mission of healing and Gospel proclamation. The difference here is that they are told to go to the towns and villages that Jesus intends calling in to on his way to Jerusalem. It is always assumed they would have been all men but it is possible that male/female pairings could have been sent but only if they were closely related, e.g. husband/wife; mother/son;

father/daughter; but there still remains the concern of physical safety. Had women gone, they would most likely have only preached to a female audience for cultural reasons and acceptance.

¹ After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

Luke 10:1

Seventy-two. Many very old and reliable Greek manuscripts have seventy-two here and in v.17, while many other old and reliable manuscripts have seventy; all interpreters agree that it is difficult to decide which number was in the original of Luke's Gospel.

The case for seventy comes, in part, from the number of Israelite elders chosen to support Moses, see Exodus 24:1, 24:9, and Numbers 11:24-25. The passage: <<Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water>> (Exodus 15:27), is seen by many to represent the 12 apostles and the 70 disciples sent out by Jesus. We also have 70 elders chosen by King Ptolemy to transcribe the Pentateuch from Hebrew to Greek to form the basis of the Septuagint. This is also the number of Israelites recorded to have settled in Egypt under Jacob and Joseph in Genesis 46:27.

Most modern translations have decided in favour of seventy-two, based on basic principles for determining manuscript readings. In any case, no doctrinal issue is at stake although the number probably has symbolic significance representing the number of nations in the world as confirmed in Genesis Chapter 10.

This group may have been those that made up part of the early church of 120 before the Spirit was given at Pentecost: <<In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty)>> (Acts 1:15), and from whom Matthias was chosen as a replacement for Judas Iscariot because it was: <<necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us>> (Acts 1:21).

Sending them out two by two fulfils the OT requirement for two witnesses, although that was primarily meant for trials. For example: <<On the testimony of two or three witnesses a man shall be put to death, but no-one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness>> (Deuteronomy 17:6), and: <<One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offence he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses>> (Deuteronomy 19:15). It was probably considered to be the best use of resources while providing fellowship and physical security.

They were sent out to every town and place where he was about to go to preach the Gospel and to heal in Jesus' name, thus the people seeing them would be waiting in great anticipation for Jesus himself to pass through. The towns and places would have marked his intended route to Jerusalem, which was through Samaria, where Jesus had met opposition from some local villagers, as we saw in Luke 9:51-56.

² He told them, The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³ Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves.

Luke 10:2-3

I am sending you out. Although only the Twelve are named apostles in the technical sense, as in Luke 6:13, 9:10, 22:14, and Acts 1:26, other disciples are also sent ones.

Like lambs among wolves. Jesus warns the disciples about the persecution that missionary disciples will endure and their need of a shepherd: <<The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it>> (John 10:12).

Lambs implies that the disciples should not attempt to gain converts by force. The spread of the Gospel is to come through preaching the good news of Jesus Christ and inviting hearers to respond willingly to messages like: <<Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest>> (Matthew 11:28), or: <<He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God>> (John 1:11-12), or: <<Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord>> (Acts 3:19), or: <<How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news! But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our message? Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ>> (Romans 10:14-17), and: <<The Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life>> (Revelation 22:17).

The principle that genuine faith commitment cannot be compelled by force, sets Christianity in clear contrast to significant segments of Islam, Hinduism and many tribal religions.

⁴ Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.

Luke 10:4

No sandals probably means not to take an extra pair since Jesus is telling them what they should not take.

Do not greet is not to be read as being rude or ignoring people but to ensure they do not get sidetracked from their mission. Such greetings were lengthy and time-consuming, as recorded in the story of the Shunammite's son who was restored to life: <<Elisha said to Gehazi, Tuck your cloak into your belt, take my staff in your hand and run. If you meet anyone, do not greet him, and if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face>> (2 Kings 4:29).

⁵ When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house'.

Luke 10:5

Any individuals, whether in their homes or towns, who receive the greeting peace to this house, will have recognised the disciples as God's emissaries.

The expression peace is the Hebrew word shalom, which has a much richer connotation than the English word does since it conveys, not merely the absence of conflict and turmoil, but also the notion of positive blessing, especially in terms of a right relationship with God, and also, as a result, the idea that 'all is well' in one's life. This may be manifested most clearly amid persecution and tribulation.

⁶ If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you.

Luke 10:6

Man of peace is one who has found the peace that comes with salvation. That is, someone who has fully accepted the Gospel that the disciples are proclaiming.

It will return to you. If faith is not present the blessing will be nullified. This is not the faith that the Jews would have had in Yahweh but the faith needed to come to Christ.

⁷ Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

Luke 10:7

Eating and drinking whatever they give you. Accept hospitality as it is given, neither declining nor asking more than what is given. It is never to be considered as charity for anyone who is genuinely working for Christ.

For the worker deserves his wages. Paul alludes to this saying in 1 Corinthians 9:14 <<In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel>>, and quotes it as scripture in 1 Timothy 5:18 <<For the Scripture says, Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain, and The worker deserves his wages>>.

⁸ When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. ⁹ Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you'.

Luke 10:8-9

Heal the sick assumes the same bestowal of power and authority as in Luke 9:1 <<When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases>>. This is confirmed in v.19.

The Kingdom of God is near you. See Luke 9:2, 11:20, 16:16 and 17:21 for similar references.

The Kingdom of God in this present age is not an earthly, military or political kingdom but is the rule and reign of God in people's hearts and lives. It is manifested both in people following Jesus and his teaching, and in the miraculous healings that God brought through the disciples, giving a foretaste of resurrected life in the age to come. It is, by definition, the place where the King has dominion.

¹⁰ But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say,

Luke 10:10

Go into its streets. The symbolic act of judgment against a town will be visible and public as we saw in Luke 9:5 <<If people do not welcome you, shake the dust off your feet when you leave their town, as a testimony against them>>.

¹¹ 'Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near'.

Luke 10:11

The dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Those who reject our Gospel message should be treated with love, respect and pity but not with anger or distaste for they are perishing souls.

Later rabbinic sources note that Jews, who returned from Gentile regions, were to shake off the dust that is on their feet as a form of cleansing. Here it also serves as a sign against them. For the missionaries, it is a sign of judgment on those rejecting the Gospel as there is no human militancy in the proclamation of Jesus' message. God is the sole judge. The act of shaking off the dust is an illustration of the fact that their rejection of God's message leaves the town accountable to God.

Jesus repeats, for emphasis, the heart of the message: the Kingdom of God is near as in v.9. The Jews still saw this as a future event that would be the restoration of Jewish influence and power throughout the region, and indeed the world, when God's Messiah arrived. They failed to realise that he would not be a political or military Messiah, at least not on his first coming, and it was a Spiritual Kingdom that was to be established, in order that souls might be brought into the eternal Kingdom of God. This would be within the human spirit of each believer and therefore Jesus can claim the nearness of the kingdom.

¹² I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town.

Luke 10:12

More bearable on that day demonstrates that increased understanding of God's revelation means increased personal responsibility. It is a clear reference to the day of judgement.

¹³ Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. ¹⁴ But it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you.

Luke 10:13-14

The judgment of Tyre and Sidon will be less severe than that of Chorazin and Bethsaida as in Matthew 11:20-22 <<Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you>>, **for the former cities would have repented had they experienced Jesus' ministry.**

Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum were the towns in which most of Jesus' miracles were performed and yet the majority of their occupants rejected Jesus' mission and remained unrepentant.

As previously noted, Bethsaida was just northeast of where the Jordan flows into the Sea of Galilee from the north. Research since the 1980s has focused on et-Tell as the site for Bethsaida. This site does have residential remains from around NT times including an apparent fisherman's house with ancient fishing equipment atop an earlier Iron Age, i.e. OT-era settlement. Excavation geologists suggest that the Sea of Galilee originally extended closer to this site than it does today.

Chorazin has been identified with Khirbet Karazeh, just northwest of Capernaum.

Tyre and Sidon were Gentile cities in Phoenicia and they were often the object of condemnation by OT prophets for their Baal worship and arrogant materialism. Excavations have unearthed many remarkable finds at both Tyre and Sidon. Tyre evidences both Roman and Byzantine structures including, largely from after Jesus' time: a hippodrome; an immense bathhouse; a forum; a theatre; and tombs. Tyre was originally an offshore island, later connected to the mainland during a siege in the days of Alexander the Great in the 4th Century BC.

Sitting in sackcloth and ashes was an expression of mourning and repentance. Sackcloth is rough cloth made from goat's hair. Ashes were either placed on the head, as in the story where David's daughter Tamar is raped by her brother Amnon: <<Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the ornamented robe she was wearing. She put her hand on her head and went away, weeping aloud as she went>> (2 Samuel 13:19), or to be sat upon as with Job's misery: <<Then Job took a piece of broken pottery and scraped himself with it as he sat among the ashes>> (Job 2:8), or by the Ninevites at Jonah's prophecy of their pending destruction: <<When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust>> (Jonah 3:6).

¹⁵ And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.

Luke 10:15

Capernaum will receive the severest judgment because they witnessed Jesus' ministry and miracles to such a great extent, see Luke 4:23 and 7:1-10, as well as Matthew 4:13.

Excavations at Capernaum, now Talhum, have revealed residential structures, a synagogue and an octagonal Christian site. Capernaum's prominent, well-preserved synagogue has been dated, based on thousands of coins found below its pavement, to the 4th or 5th Century AD, although some argue it is earlier. However, beneath this were found walls of a previous structure, which is very likely the synagogue of Jesus' day. The 5th Century octagonal building, designed like many Byzantine commemorative Christian holy places, stands over a 4th Century church built by modifying a 1st Century house. This marks the traditional site of Peter's home, although there are those who believe he came from Bethsaida originally.



The Octagonal Church and Peter's House

Will you be lifted up to the skies? Some translations say: exalted to heaven. Due to having witnessed and rejected Jesus' ministry, they will be go down to the depths or be brought down to Hades, the place of the unrighteous dead as with the rich man in the story of Lazarus (Luke 16:22-26).

¹⁶ He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.

Luke 10:16

He who listens to you listens to me, or hears you hears me, emphasises the solidarity of Jesus and his disciples.

Rejects the one who sent me. By rejecting Jesus, people are rejecting God. This verse is another example of step parallelism, where the second clause enhances the statement made in the first. We have seen this in: <<Then he said to them, Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all – he is the greatest>> (Luke 9:48). These two statements are very similar in their overall intention.

¹⁷ The seventy-two returned with joy and said, Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.

Luke 10:17

Having completed their mission, as confirmed in vv.1-12, the seventy-two disciples are filled with joy at seeing the Kingdom of God advance and people being set free from their bondage to demonic oppression.

Even the demons submit to us in your name. The demons not only recognise Jesus as the **Christ**: <<Moreover, demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Christ>> (Luke 4:41), they also recognise his disciples who are operating under his authority. See v.19 later.

Jesus response is that we should not so much rejoice in the success of our work, or even be despondent at its perceived failure, because we are only fulfilling our duty to God. What we should always rejoice in is the reality of our own salvation. This also means that we should not grumble about our work or our lives in general!

¹⁸ He replied, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

Luke 10:18

I saw Satan fall can also be translated 'I was watching Satan fall'. It is not clear whether Jesus is speaking of a vision by which he saw something in the spiritual realm, or if it is simply a graphical declaration of what has been happening, but in either case Jesus indicates that Satan's authority and power over people has been decisively broken. His actual fall occurred around the time of creation, but here it is about taking ground by spreading the Gospel. This can be seen in Jesus' instruction to Paul, as he recounts it to King Agrippa: <<I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me>> (Acts 26:17b-18). We must remember that angels became

demons through the trappings of pride: <<may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil>> (1 Timothy 3:6b).

Like lightning describes the suddenness of the fall, as described in Isaiah 14:12 <<How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations!>>.

¹⁹ I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.

Luke 10:19

I have given you authority. As in Luke 9:1 <<When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases>>, **Jesus' great power over demons has been delegated to his disciples.**

Snakes and scorpions are physical dangers that the disciples will face in their preaching and are also symbolic of demonic opposition. **But going out in the power of the name of Jesus, they will be able to:** <<tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent>> (Psalm 91:13).

Overcome all the power indicates both aggressive and defensive power. The first is in order to proclaim the whole truth in any situation and the second in the knowledge that no harm can come except through providential requirement. This is confirmed by: <<And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them or their words. Do not be afraid, though briars and thorns are all around you and you live among scorpions. Do not be afraid of what they say or terrified by them, though they are a rebellious house>> (Ezekiel 2:6), and: <<The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea>> (Isaiah 11:8-9).

Nothing will harm you. We read a similar account in Luke 21:18 <<But not a hair of your head will perish>>, and, as with the account of Paul when shipwrecked on Malta: <<Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, Justice has not allowed him to live. But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects>> (Acts 28:3-5).

We should all be aware that the statement in Mark 16:18a <<they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all>>, was added in later manuscripts. It is not recommended that we try this for ourselves! As it says in Isaiah 7:12b <<I will not put the LORD to the test>>.

²⁰ However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

Luke 10:20

However or nevertheless indicates that Jesus warns against rejoicing too much in what God has done through them, for an even greater blessing is their eternal salvation.

Your names are written by God in heaven is confirmed in Philippians 4:3 <<Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of

the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers, whose names are in the book of life>>, [in Revelation 3:5](#) <<He who overcomes will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out his name from the book of life, but will acknowledge his name before my Father and his angels>>, [and](#): <<If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire>> ([Revelation 20:15](#)).

²¹ At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

[Luke 10:21](#)

This prayer of Jesus can also be found in [Matthew 11:25-27](#).

[Full of joy through the Holy Spirit](#). We have seen this on several occasions in Luke Chapters Three and Four. The mark of a disciple is the joy they reflect whatever their personal situation.

[Father](#) is Patēr in Greek and Abba in Aramaic, the everyday language spoken by Jesus. It was the word used by Jewish children for their earthly fathers. However, since the term in both Aramaic and Greek was also used by adults to address their fathers, the claim that Abba meant Daddy is misleading and runs the risk of irreverence. Nevertheless, the idea of praying to God as 'Our Father' conveys the authority, warmth and intimacy of a loving father's care.

[Lord of heaven and earth](#) is the term used by Paul when addressing the Areopagus on Mars Hill in Athens: <<The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands>> ([Acts 17:24](#)).

Jesus notes, with irony, it is the [wise and learned](#) of this world who nonetheless have rejected the Gospel, often through lack of understanding. The message and activities of the Kingdom of God require faith and humility to grasp. Those who are wise in the world's eyes, but who are unrepentant and stubbornly refuse to accept the Gospel, will never have true understanding. As it is written: <<He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble>> ([Luke 1:51-52](#)), [and](#): <<I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate>> ([1 Corinthians 1:19b](#)).

Jesus' rejoicing is primarily due to God's having [revealed](#) in v.22, the presence of the kingdom and Satan's fall in vv.17-18, to [little children](#), i.e. to the disciples who have or even require childlike faith themselves (v.23).

Those that have Christ for their God and Saviour have a great deal of reason to rejoice, i.e. to rejoice in spirit as Christ did here.

²² All things have been committed to me by my Father. No-one knows who the Son is except the Father, and no-one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

[Luke 10:22](#)

[All things have been committed to me](#). This reveals the profound divine self-consciousness of Jesus, as well as the supreme authority of the Father within the Trinity, by which he has delegated all authority over all things to the Son. 'All things' probably refers to everything

needed with respect to the carrying out of Christ's ministry of redemption, including the revelation of salvation to those to whom he chooses to reveal the Father. In both Jesus' incarnate state, and his eternal state as Son, the Father and the Son share an exclusive relationship including a direct and immediate knowledge of each other.

Those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. Salvation is offered only through Jesus: <<Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me>> (John 14:6), and: <<Salvation is found in no-one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved>> (Acts 4:12).

²³ Then he turned to his disciples and said privately, Blessed are the eyes that see what you see. ²⁴ For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

Luke 10:23-24

Many blessed and good people lived looking forward to the Messianic times and wished it to come in their own lifetime. It is interesting that, even today, there are some people who wish that they had lived at that point in history in order to witness his works and hear his teaching, yet we have it all: <<No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so that you may obey it>> (Deuteronomy 30:14).

V.a.iv Luke 10:25-37 - The parable of the good Samaritan

This parable is an example of how the wise and understanding (v.21) do not understand even the simplest commands of scripture, as confirmed in v.27c and Leviticus 19:18, which says: <<Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the LORD>>.

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. Teacher, he asked, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 10:25

The expert in the law desired only to justify himself (v.29). He was not genuinely seeking to be taught by Jesus and ended up condemning himself instead. Although many of them believed they were doing the work of God, they had in fact become what Scunthorpe Baptist Church Lead Pastor Rich Webb would call 'database' disciples. They have all the knowledge of God stored away but don't understand or apply it properly.

What must I do? A good question as we read elsewhere. Examples are in Luke 18:18 <<A certain ruler asked him, Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?>>, in Acts 2:37 <<When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?>>, and Acts 16:30 the Philippi jailer: <<then brought them out and asked, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?>>. We have further confirmation in Luke 3:10-14 where the crowd, the tax collectors and some soldiers, all ask John the Baptist: <<What should we do?>>.

Eternal life is a synonym for entering the Kingdom of God. We see this in Luke 18:18 <<A certain ruler asked him, Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?>>, and Jesus telling his disciples that: <<no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life>> (Luke 18:29b-30), and in Acts 13:46-48 <<Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: We had to speak the word of God to you first.

Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For this is what the Lord has commanded us: 'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth'. When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honoured the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed>>.

In John 3:16 we have the most famous summary of the Gospel in the entire Bible. For explains what happened to make it possible that someone can have eternal life, that is only through believing in the Christ. God so loved the world was an astounding statement in that context because the OT and other Jewish writings had spoken only of God's love for his chosen people Israel. God's love for the world makes it possible for whoever believes in the Christ and not Jews alone to have eternal life. God's love for the world was not mere sentiment but led to a specific action: he gave his only Son, which John elsewhere explains as sending him to the earth as a man to suffer and die, and thereby to bear the penalty for sins. The purpose of giving his Son was to make God's great gift of eternal life available to anyone, indeed to everyone; to whoever believes in him, that is, whoever personally trusts in him and accepts him as their personal Saviour. Not perish means not perish in eternal judgment, in contrast to having eternal life, the life of abundant joy and immeasurable blessing in the presence of God forever. Those who believe in the Christ have that eternal life and already experience its blessings in this present time, not yet fully but in some significant measure.

²⁶ What is written in the Law? he replied. How do you read it?

Luke 10:26

What is written in the Law? For Jesus, the OT is the definitive, unerring standard of faith and practice. This is confirmed in Luke 18:19-20 with: <<Why do you call me good? Jesus answered. No-one is good – except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony, honour your father and mother'>>.

²⁷ He answered: '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, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'.

Luke 10:27

To love the Lord your God involves having faith in him and also delighting in him above all else. All the Synoptic Gospels: Matthew, Mark and Luke include the words heart, i.e. emotions, will and deepest convictions; soul, i.e. the immaterial part of a person's being; and mind, i.e. reason. Mind is lacking in Deuteronomy 6:5 <<Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength>>.

Matthew 22:37 alone lacks the term strength, i.e. how a person uses the abilities and powers that one has as an indication of the total devotion of one's entire being that is required.

This command was repeated twice daily by faithful Jews and encapsulates the idea of total devotion to God, including the duty to obey the rest of God's commandments. Heart, soul and mind do not represent rigid compartments of human existence but rather together refer to the whole person.

In summary, we have a teachable scribe or theological scholar, probably of the Pharisaic faction, holding a friendly dialogue with Jesus. He asks what he should do to gain eternal

life. Instead of answering directly, Jesus puts the question back to him asking what scripture tells us. He replies with the word of God that is of fundamental importance and central to everything else. The most important commandment is to love the Lord your God completely. Second to this is to love your neighbour as yourself. The faithful covenant-keeping God asks the objects of his love to love him and other human beings too, as Jesus seems to confirm.

²⁸ You have answered correctly, Jesus replied. Do this and you will live.

[Luke 10:28](#)

You have answered correctly. There is nothing wrong with the lawyer's answer.

Do this and you will live. Knowledge of: <<What must I do to inherit eternal life?>> (v.25), is insufficient. One must do this.

Jesus is about to show the lawyer that he falls far short of following these commands. Jesus initially seems to agree with the young man's framework which is essentially 'do well and you will inherit the kingdom'. But he is about to show the man how far short he falls of keeping the most important commandment.

²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

[Luke 10:29](#)

He wanted to justify himself reveals the lawyer's insincerity and his self-condemnation.

Who is my neighbour? An improper question because the lawyer was trying to exclude responsibility for others by making some people non-neighbours. A more appropriate question would be 'How can I become a loving neighbour?'

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half-dead.



Modern Day Jericho

Luke 10:30

Jericho is not the ancient city of OT fame, see Joshua Chapters 5 and 6, but the new Jericho nearby about a mile or 1.6km to the south. This new Jericho surrounded a huge palace complex, first built by the Hasmoneans in the 2nd Century BC and which Herod the Great expanded. The route of the Jericho road, still visible today, included long stretches of rocky terrain that made it a useful base of operations for robbers. The road descended about 3,200 feet or 975m from Jerusalem to Jericho along this 18-mile or 29km route, hence the term 'going down'.

³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:31

A priest would have been a descendant of Aaron, who had priestly responsibilities in the Jerusalem temple.

Passed by on the other side is a tangible way of describing his unwillingness to love his neighbour by offering him help.

³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side.

Luke 10:32

A Levite would have been a member of the tribe of Levi but not a descendant of Aaron and therefore not a priest. The Levites assisted in the priestly duties.

³³ But a Samaritan, as he travelled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.

Luke 10:33

Samaritan. Culturally it would have been unthinkable for a Samaritan to help a Jew, as we saw at the well in Sychar in John 4:9 <<The Samaritan woman said to him, You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink? (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans)>>. And in John 8:48 <<The Jews answered him, Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?>>. Thus Jesus makes the additional point that to love one's neighbour involves showing care and compassion, even to those with whom one would not normally have any relationship. Jesus also commands us: <<But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you>> (Luke 6:27), and: <<But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked>> (Luke 6:35).

The Samaritan did not react in the same way that the priest and Levite did. Their lack of compassion perhaps echoes the words of James: <<If one of you says to him, Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?>> (James 2:16). His response was more in line with: <<Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?>> (Isaiah 58:7). By showing compassion to this foreigner, the Samaritan is more likely to receive a blessing, even though this was not in his mind: <<and if you spend yourselves on behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will

become like the noonday>> (Isaiah 58:10). In the words of King Lemuel: <<She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy>> (Proverbs 31:20).

As previously noted, the Samaritans were a racially mixed group of partly Jewish and partly Gentile ancestry who were disdained by both Jews and non-Jews. It was the king of Assyria, probably Shalmaneser V (727-722BC), who brought foreign people to settle in Samaria in 722BC after defeating the northern tribes of Israel and taking them into captivity. However, God sent lions to attack the new immigrants as they worshipped other gods, so the king sent one of priests back to teach them about God from the books of Moses. However, they continued to worship their own gods as well. See 2 Kings Chapter 17 for the full account.

The Samaritans claimed it was Esarhaddon (681-669BC), who was responsible for repopulating the land. This would have to have been a later influx due to the time lapse between the capture of the land and its repopulation.

Over time, they had intermarried with some Jews who had remained in the area. Many inhabitants of this region between Judæa and Galilee were descendants of the OT northern kingdom of Israel, although from the Jewish perspective these Samaritans were assimilated strongly into non-Jewish culture and had intermarried with Mesopotamian colonists. The Samaritans had their own version of the Pentateuch, their own temple on Mount Gerizim, and their own rendering of Israelite history. They still celebrate The Passover on Mount Gerizim today.



Mounts Gerizim (Blessings) and Ebal (Curses)

For the significance of these two hills refer to Deuteronomy Chapters 11 and 27, and Joshua Chapter 8. For additional information on Mount Gerizim, see the comments made on Luke 9:52 of this account.

³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.

³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him', he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have'.

Luke 10:34-35

Bandaged his wounds. The Samaritan ministers to the injured and suffering robbery victim. <<He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds>> (Psalm 147:3).

He put the man on his own donkey as he was too injured to walk. Not only would the Samaritan have to walk but it would delay his journey further by doing so. Also, the stay in the inn would add more time and expense to his trip.

The Samaritan brought him to an inn, where he cared for him and gave the innkeeper two silver coins or denarii, about two days' salary, to continue caring for him. Jesus underscores the Samaritan's compassionate care extending to any extra costs and care that may be needed.

³⁶ Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?

Luke 10:36

Which of these three do you think was a neighbour? Jesus' question corrects the lawyer's improper question of v.29. The question is not 'who is my neighbour?' but 'how can I be a good neighbour?'

³⁷ The expert in the law replied, The one who had mercy on him. Jesus told him, Go and do likewise.

Luke 10:37

Go and do likewise. Once again, Jesus' call is for his disciples to take action and not just to sit around talking about their faith.

The Jews often read the law as only applying to them and their race, and do not apply it to their attitude towards Gentiles, but even this does not excuse the actions of the priest or the Levite, as the man was a Jew. Some commentators point out that many priests and Levites lived in Jericho and would frequently travel up to Jerusalem to fulfil their duties at the temple. This would be considered urgent work and they may have tried to justify their actions in this way. This too is not acceptable under the teachings of Jesus or the Law of Moses, both of which require us to do whatever is needed. Hugo Grotius, who is reputed to have defined natural law, said the covenant is 'equally binding on both sides'.

V.a.v Luke 10:38-42 - At the home of Martha and Mary

The account here is again not chronological but topical as Bethany is close to Jerusalem and Jesus is yet to reach Jericho on his final journey to Jerusalem. This account could have happened on an earlier visit, as we know that Jesus was a good friend of this family, e.g. John Chapter 11 and the raising of Lazarus, their brother.

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!

⁴¹ Martha, Martha, the Lord answered, you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.

Luke 10:38-42

According to John 12:1 Bethany is a village where Martha and Mary lived: <<Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead>>.



Bethany is identified in John 11:18 as being less than 2 miles or 3.2km from Jerusalem and is the Bethany most commonly mentioned in the Gospels, but it is clearly different from the Bethany mentioned in John 1:28, which is on the other side, i.e. east of the River Jordan.

It is almost certainly the modern village of El-Azariyeh, an Arabic place-name, which likely recalls the name Lazarus and is on the eastern slopes of the Mount of Olives. See the image.

A 4th Century chapel was built over a rock-cut tomb traditionally thought to have been the tomb of Lazarus. Other 1st Century tombs are found in the hillside around this chapel.



Who sat at the Lord's feet. A disciple's proper place as with the man healed of demon possession in Luke 8:35. Unlike almost all men in his culture, Jesus encouraged women to study the scriptures.

It is perhaps a testimony to that friendship that Martha could speak so boldly, if inappropriately, to Jesus. Although she meant well, as she wanted to be a good host to Jesus and his disciples, she was gently rebuked by Jesus for failing to understand that Mary had chosen something of far greater importance than our worldly routine and responsibilities. Sitting at the feet of Jesus and being taught by him is somewhere we should all desire to be.

You are worried and upset about many things. It is confirmed in Luke 8:14 that: <<The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature>>, or in Luke 12:11 <<When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say>>. Luke 12:22-30 states: <<Then Jesus said to his disciples: Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes. Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn;

yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds! Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest? Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith! And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows what you need>>, [and in Luke 21:34](#) <<Be careful, or your hearts will be weighed down with dissipation, drunkenness and the anxieties of life, and that day will close on you unexpectedly like a trap>>.

Jesus gently rebukes Martha even though he is a guest in her house and she is working to feed him and his disciples. The message is for us to learn what is important and to expect those who are worldly to try to undermine those who sit at his feet. Although the gift of hospitality is important, we must realise the potential dangers it can bring if we forget the purpose of the gift: <<When you sit to dine with a ruler, note well what is before you, and put a knife to your throat if you are given to gluttony. Do not crave his delicacies, for that food is deceptive>> ([Proverbs 23:1-3](#)).

[Mary has chosen what is better](#) or the good portion echoes OT passages, where the greatest possession is close fellowship with the Lord as one's portion in life. This is confirmed in [Psalm 16:5](#) <<LORD, you have assigned me my portion and my cup; you have made my lot secure>>, or in [Psalm 27:4](#) <<One thing I ask of the LORD, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple>>, or in [Psalm 73:26](#) <<My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever>>, and in [Psalm 119:57](#) <<You are my portion, O LORD; I have promised to obey your words>>, and in [Psalm 142:5](#) <<I cry to you, O LORD; I say, You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living>>, and in [Joshua 18:7a](#) <<The Levites, however, do not get a portion among you, because the priestly service of the LORD is their inheritance>>.

The tribe of Levi did not get a share in the division of the Promised Land by divine decree. That was shared by ten tribes and a double portion going to Joseph through his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, as blessed by Jacob, who claimed them as his own in [Genesis 48:5](#) <<your two sons born to you in Egypt before I came to you here will be reckoned as mine; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine>>.

[Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her, neither then to help Martha in the kitchen nor for all eternity!](#)

[Hebrews 3:14](#) states: <<We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first>>, and [Romans 8:17](#) states: <<Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory>>. This indicates that we are both [partakers of Christ](#) and [partakers in Christ](#).