

Called to Mission

Matt 10:1-15
SS Lesson for 04/07/2019

Devotional Scripture: Acts 9:10-19

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Key Verse: Matt 10:1

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

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- Power to do everything (Phil 4:13)
- Power through grace (2 Cor 12:9)
- Power through His presence (1 Cor 5:4)
- Power for endurance (Col 1:11)
- Power that enables us from within (Eph 3:20)

Called by name (2-3)

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- By name because God redeemed and summoned us (Isa 43:1)
- By name so that we will know that God is Lord (Isa 45:3)
- By name because God knew us before we were born (Jer 1:5)
- By name because we are Jesus' sheep (John 10:3)
- By name because we love God (1 Cor 8:3)

Called with a purpose (4)

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- Purpose of belonging to God (Rom 1:6)
- Purpose of being justified and glorified (Rom 8:30)
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- Because of unbelief in the promises of God (Rom 4:18-21)
- Because of unbelief out of ignorance (1 Tim 1:12-14)
- Because of unbelief that can be avoided by standing firm in the faith (1 Cor 16:13)
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- Disciple because of God's kindness (Rom 2:4)
- Disciple because God wants all to be saved (1 Tim 2:2-4)
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- Disciple because there are places available in heaven (John 14:2)

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- God will provide because He knows how to give to His children (Matt 7:11)
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Blessings for those who entertaining strangers (Heb 13:2)
Blessings for those who do not forget to do good to others (Heb 13:16)
Blessings for those who feed the hungry, cloth the naked and look after the sick (Matt 25:35-40)
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Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

The word commission is well known, and the dictionary offers no less than seven definitions, with several sub-definitions, depending on context. Two definitions in Merriam-Webster's that should catch our attention are these: "a formal written warrant granting the power to perform various acts or duties" and "authority to act for, in behalf of, or in place of another." Those definitions are hard to tell apart; it seems like if one definition applies to you, then the other would as well, right? Some might point out that the difference lies in distinguishing between power (the ability to do something) and authority (the right to do something). Others might suggest that the difference is in the part about a commission being written. This kind of commission is well known to Christians, since Matthew 28:19, 20 is our formal written charge to make disciples (contrast Acts 26:12). Commission more in the sense of "authority to act ... in place of another" without the element of being written is also in the Bible, but less well known. That's our topic for this lesson.

Matthew and Luke locate the events of our passage after the 12 disciples had had significant exposure to Jesus' message and work. Another account notes that several disciples mentioned in Matthew 10 met Jesus shortly after his baptism and witnessed his first miracle (John 1:35-2:11). Jesus later encountered Peter, Andrew, James, and John in Capernaum and famously called them from their nets to become fishers "for people" (see lessons 2 and 5). In so doing, he was challenging them to leave their careers and travel with him full-time. From that vantage point, they witnessed Jesus' teachings and healings across the region. Somewhere during this campaign, Matthew the tax collector accepted the call to itinerant discipleship as well (Matthew 9:9-13). As Jesus' mission grew, he urged prayer that God would raise up more people to help with the work (Matthew 9:35-38). Our lesson text today immediately follows this call to prayer.

Key Verse: Matt 10:1

And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

10:1-4. It is not surprising that a listing of laborers follows Jesus' injunction in 9:38 to ask the Father for laborers. **Twelve** of the **disciples** (10:1) who were following Jesus (a "disciple," *mathētēs* was a learner; cf. 11:29) were designated as "apostles." These Twelve were specifically sent forth ("apostle" means "one sent forth to represent an official") by Jesus and given His **authority to cast out demons and heal every kind of disease and sickness. The 12 Apostles** were here named in pairs and probably were sent out in that fashion ("He sent them out two by two" [Mark 6:7]). Each time the 12 Apostles are listed, Peter is mentioned first (because of his prominence) and Judas, last. Jesus had changed Simon's name to **Peter** (John 1:42). Soon after the brothers Peter and **Andrew** followed Jesus, another set of brothers—**James and John**—did the same (Matt. 4:18-22). **Philip**, like Andrew and Peter, was from Bethsaida by the Sea of Galilee (John 1:44). Nothing is known about **Bartholomew**, except that he was possibly known as Nathanael (John 1:45-51).

Thomas was called “Didymus” (twin) in John 11:16; he was one who questioned Jesus’ resurrection (John 20:24-27). **Matthew** referred to himself by his former dubious occupation of **tax** collecting (whereas Mark and Luke simply listed him as Matthew). **James son of Alphaeus** is mentioned only in the lists of apostles; **Thaddaeus** may be the same as Judas, son of James (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13). **Simon the Zealot** had been a member of the revolutionary Jewish Zealots, a political party that sought to overthrow the Roman Empire. And **Judas Iscariot**, of course, later **betrayed** the Lord (Matt. 26:47-50). “Iscariot” may mean “from Kerioth,” a Judean town.

10:5-15. The message the **12 Apostles** were to give concerning **the kingdom** (v. 7) was identical to John the Baptist’s message (3:1) and Jesus’ message (4:17). In addition Jesus told them to limit their proclamation to the nation Israel. In fact He specifically told them **not to go to the Gentiles or to the Samaritans**. The latter were half-breeds, part Jewish and part Gentile, whose origin began soon after 722 B.C. when Assyria conquered the Northern Kingdom and moved conquered peoples of northern Mesopotamia into Israel where they intermarried. The apostles were to **go only to the lost sheep of Israel** (cf. 15:24) because the kingdom **message** was for God’s covenant people. She needed to accept her King, who had arrived. If she did the nations would then be blessed through her (Gen. 12:3; Isa. 60:3). The apostles’ message, like their Lord’s, would be authenticated by miracles (Matt. 10:8; cf. 9:35). They were not to make elaborate provisions for their travel, thus avoiding the impression they were engaged in a business enterprise. Included in the list of items they were **not to take** was **a staff** (cf. Luke 9:3). Mark, however, recorded that the apostles *could* take a staff (Mark 6:8). This problem is solved by observing that Matthew said they were not to “procure” (*ktēsēsthe*) extra items (Matt. 10:9), but Mark wrote that they could “take” (*airōsen*) any staffs they already had. As the apostles ministered, they in turn were to be ministered to by their recipients. In every **town or village** they were to find a **worthy person... and stay** with that individual. Such “worthiness” would obviously be determined by a favorable response to the message preached. Those who rejected the message and failed to **welcome** the apostles were to be passed by. Shaking **the dust off their feet** as they left an inhospitable place symbolized their rejection of the Jewish city as if it were a despised Gentile city, whose very dust was unwanted. The Lord said that judgment on such people would be greater than that on **Sodom and Gomorrah** (Gen. 19) when the final **day of judgment** comes. (**I tell you the truth** occurs in Matt. 10:15, 23, 42; cf. 5:18.)

10:16-23. The Lord’s words to the apostles concerning the response to their ministry were not encouraging. Their task would be difficult for they would be **like sheep among wolves** (cf. 7:15, where false prophets are spoken of as “ferocious wolves”). It would be essential for them to **be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves**, that is, wise in avoiding danger but harmless in not forcibly opposing the enemy. “Innocent” translates *akeraioi* (lit., “unmixed, pure”). It is used only twice elsewhere in the New Testament: Romans 16:19 and Philippians 2:15. In carrying out their ministries the apostles would be taken before their own Jewish leaders and flogged (cf. Acts 5:40) and **be brought before Roman governors and Herodian kings**. But the messengers need **not worry**, for the Holy Spirit, called here **the Spirit of your Father**, would give them words to say that would free them from **arrest**. Even if the persecutions went to the point of betrayal of family members (Matt. 10:21) and extreme hatred (v. 22), Jesus promised them ultimate deliverance. The apostles were to continue their ministries, moving from **place** to place. But even though they moved out for the Lord, they would not be able to reach all **the cities of Israel before the Son of Man** would come. These words of the Lord probably had an application beyond His own lifetime. What was proclaimed here was more fully demonstrated in the apostles’ lives after the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) in the spread of the gospel in the church (e.g., Acts 4:1-13; 5:17-18, 40; 7:54-60). But these words will find their fullest manifestation in the days of the Tribulation when the gospel will be carried throughout the entire world before Jesus Christ returns in power and glory to establish His kingdom on the earth (Matt. 24:14).

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Called into Mission (Matt 10:1-4)

1 And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;

4 Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

Called with power (1)

Power to do everything (Phil 4:13)

13 I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Power through grace (2 Cor 12:9)

9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

Power through His presence (1 Cor 5:4)

4 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present,

Power for endurance (Col 1:11)

11 being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully

Power that enables us from within (Eph 3:20)

20 Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

Called by name (2-3)

By name because God is pleased with us (Ex 33:17)

17 And the Lord said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

By name because God redeemed and summoned us (Isa 43:1)

43 But now, this is what the Lord says — he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

By name so that we will know that God is Lord (Isa 45:3)

3 I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, who summons you by name.

By name because God knew us before we were born (Jer 1:5)

5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."

By name because we are Jesus' sheep (John 10:3)

3 The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

By name because we love God (1 Cor 8:3)

3 But the man who loves God is known by God.

Called with a purpose (4)

Purpose of God using us to work out the good (Rom 8:28)

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Purpose of belonging to God (Rom 1:6)

6 And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.

Purpose of being justified and glorified (Rom 8:30)

30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Purpose of election (Rom 9:11)

11 Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad — in order that God's purpose in election might stand:

Purpose of being saved (2 Thess 2:13)

13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

Directing the Mission (Matt 10:5-8)

5 These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Directions about the unbelievers (5)

Because unbelievers hearts have turned away from God (Heb 3:12)

12 See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.

Because of unbelief in the promises of God (Rom 4:18-21)

18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

Because of unbelief out of ignorance (1 Tim 1:12-14)

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. 13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Because of unbelief that can be avoided by standing firm in the faith (1 Cor 16:13)

13 Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong.

Because of unbelief causing weaknesses and persecutions (2 Cor 12:10)

10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Because unbelief can be combated by being strong in the Lord (Eph 6:10)

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Directions to disciple the lost (6-7)

Disciple because God wants everyone to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9)

9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

Disciple because of God's kindness (Rom 2:4)

4 Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness leads you toward repentance?

Disciple because God wants all to be saved (1 Tim 2:2-4)

2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.
3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

Disciple because God will give them rest (Matt 11:28)

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.

Disciple because there are places available in heaven (John 14:2)

2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

Directions about the method (8)

Method of looking to the Son and believing in Him (John 6:40)

40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

Method of the precious blood of Jesus (1 Peter 1:17-21)

17 Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. 18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20 He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Method of belief in Jesus that removes condemnation (John 3:18)

18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

Method of belief in the gospel of salvation (Eph 1:13)

13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

Warnings about Mission (Matt 10:9-15)

9 Provide neither gold nor silver nor copper in your money belts,
10 nor bag for your journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor staffs; for a worker is worthy of his food.
11 "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and stay there till you go out.
12 And when you go into a household, greet it.
13 If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.
14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.
15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

Warnings about finances (9-10)

God will provide through the glorious riches of Jesus (Phil 4:19)

19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

God will provide through being made rich in every way (2 Cor 9:10-11)

10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

God will provide because He knows us and our needs completely (Ps 139:1-5)

1 O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord. 5 You hem me in — behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

God will provide because He knows how to give to His children (Matt 7:11)

11 If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

God will provide at the proper time and amount (Ps 104:27-28)

27 These all look to you to give them their food at the proper time. 28 When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are satisfied with good things.

Warnings about acceptance (11-12)

Blessings for those who share (Rom 12:13)

13 Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Blessings for those who entertaining strangers (Heb 13:2)

2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

Blessings for those who do not forget to do good to others (Heb 13:16)

16 And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Blessings for those who feed the hungry, cloth the naked and look after the sick (Matt 25:35-40)

35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' 37 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' 40 "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'

Blessings for those who help others as they have the ability (Acts 11:29)

29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea.

Warnings about rejection (14-15)

Rejection is bad because it could cause condemnation (John 12:48)

48 There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day.

Rejection is bad because Jesus is the only way (John 14:6)

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Rejection is bad because it could cause them to be outside heaven (Rev 22:14-15)

14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Rejection is bad because they could miss the inheritance of heaven (Rev 21:6-8)

6 He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. 7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. 8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars — their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Rejection is bad because the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10)

9 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from John Lightfoot

1. And when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

[*And when he had called to him the twelve disciples.*] Concerning the number of twelve, corresponding to the tribes of Israel, see Luke 22:30, Revelation 21:12,14. These were called the twelve *apostles*...under which title Moses and Aaron are marked by the Chaldee paraphrast, Jeremiah 2:1: a word that does not barely speak *a messenger*, but *such a messenger as represents the person of him that sends him*. For The '*apostle*' of any one is *as he himself* from whom he is deputed. See the fortieth verse of this chapter. If you read over the tract of Maimonides here, entitled *messengers and companions*, perhaps you will not repent your labour.

For these ends were these twelve chosen, as the evangelists relate:

I. That they might be with him, eyewitnesses of his works, and students of his doctrine. For they did not presently betake themselves to preach, from the time they were first admitted disciples, no, nor from the time

they were first chosen; but they sat a long while at the feet of their Master, and imbibed from his mouth that doctrine which they were to preach.

II. That they might be his prophets, both to preach and to do miracles. Thence it comes to pass, that the gift of miracles, which of a long time had ceased, is now restored to them.

The 'seven shepherds, and eight principal men,' Micah 5:5, are the disciples of the Messias, according to Kimchi.

[*Power of unclean spirits.*] That is, 'over, or upon unclean spirits': which therefore are called *unclean spirits* that by a clearer antithesis they might be opposed to *the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of purity*.

More particularly *the unclean spirit*, Zechariah 13:2; and *unclean spirits*, Revelation 16:13,14, are diabolical spirits in false prophets, deceiving Pythons.

By a more particular name yet, according to the Talmudists concerning this business: "There shall not be with thee a *necromancer*, Deuteronomy 18:11. He is a *necromancer* who mortifies himself with hunger, and goes and lodges a-nights among the burying-places for that end, that *the unclean spirit* may dwell upon him. When R. Akibah read that verse he wept. Does *the unclean spirit*, saith he, come upon him that fasts for that very end, that *the unclean spirit* may come upon him? Much more would the Holy Spirit come upon him that fasts for that end, that the Holy Spirit might come upon him. But what shall I do, when our sins have brought that on us which is said, 'Your sins separate between you and your God?' Where the Gloss thus; "*That the unclean spirit dwell upon him*: that is, that the demon of the burial-place may love him, and may help him in his enchantments."

When I consider with myself that numberless number of demoniacs which the evangelists mention, the like to which no history affords, and the Old Testament produceth hardly one or two examples, I cannot but suspect these two things especially for the cause of it:--

First, That the Jewish people, now arriving to the very top of impiety, now also arrived to the very top of those curses which are recited, Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28.

Secondly, That the nation, beyond measure addicted to magical arts, did even affect devils and invited them to dwell with them.

2. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;

[*Simon.*] *Simon* is a name very usual among the Talmudists for *Simeon*. By which name our apostle is also called, Acts 15:14.

Let these words be taken notice of, "R. Eliezer inquired of R. Simon concerning a certain thing; but he answered him not. He inquired of R. Joshua Ben Levi, and he answered. R. Eliezer was enraged that R. Simeon answered him not."

[*Peter.*] Christ changed the names of three disciples with whom he held more inward familiarity, Simon, James, and John. Simon was called by him *Peter*, or *Petrosus*, that is, referring to a *rock*, because he should contribute not only very much assistance to the church that was to be built on a *rock*, but the very first assistance, when, the keys being committed to him, he opened the door of faith to Cornelius, and so first let in the gospel among the Gentiles. Of which matter afterward.

[*Andrew.*] this also was no strange name among the Talmudists. *Andrew Bar Chinna*.

3. Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus:

[*Bartholomew.*] Compare the order wherein the disciples are called (John 1) with the order wherein they are for the most part reckoned, and you will find *Bartholomew* falling in at the same place with *Nathanael*: so that one may think he was the same with him: called *Nathanael* by his own name, and *Bartholomew* by his father's; that is, *the son of Talmai*: for the Greek interpreters render *Talmi*, *Tolmi*, 2 Samuel 13:37. And *Tholomaeus* occurs in Josephus.

[*Of Alphaeus.*] The name occurs also in the Talmudists: a word that may admit a doubt pronunciation; namely, either to sound *Alphai*, or *Cleophi*. Hence that *Alphaeus*, who was the father of four apostles, is also called

Cleopas, Luke 24; which sufficiently appears from hence, that she who is called "Mary, the mother of James the Less, and Joses," Mark 15:40, by John is called, "Mary the wife of Cleopas," John 19:25.

[*Lebbeus*, whose surname was *Thaddeus*.] *Thaddai* was a name known also to the Talmudists: *R. Jose the son of Thaddeus. Eliezer Ben Thaddeus*. It is a warping of the name *Judas*, that this apostle might be the better distinguished from *Iscairiot*, He was called *Lebbeus*, I suppose, from the town *Lebba*, a sea-coast town of Galilee: of which Pliny speaks; "The promontory Carmel, and in the mountain a town of the same name, heretofore called Ecbatana: near by Getta *Lebba*," &c.

4. Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscairiot, who also betrayed him.

[*Simon the Canaanite*.] In Luke it is *Zealot*. See who are called *Zealots* in Josephus. Of whose sect, if you should say this Simon was before his conversion, perhaps you would do him no more wrong than you would do his brother Matthew, when you should say that he was a *publican*.

[*Iscairiot*.] It may be inquired whether this name was given him while he was alive, or not till after his death. If while he was alive, one may not improperly derive it from *Skortja*, which is written also *Iskortja*: where, while the discourse is of a man vowing that he would not use this or that garment, we are taught these things;... "These are garments, some, of leather, and some of a certain kind of clothing." The Gemara asketh, "What is *Iskortja*? Bar Channah answered, *A Tanner's garment*" The Gloss is, "A leathern apron that tanners put on over their clothes." So that *Judas Iscairiot* may perhaps signify as much as *Judas with the apron*. But now in such *aprons* they had purses sewn, in which they were wont to carry their money, as you may see in Aruch...which we shall also observe presently. And hence, it may be, Judas had that title of *the purse-bearer*, as he was called *Judas with the apron*.

Or what if he used the art of a tanner before he was chose into discipleship? Certainly we read of one Simon a tanner, Acts 9:43; and that this Judas was the son of Simon, John 12:4.

But if he were not branded with this title till after his death, I should suppose it derived from *Iscara*: which word what it signifies, let the Gemarists speak: "Nine hundred and three kinds of death were created in the world, as it is said, *and the issues of death*, Psalm 68:21. The word *issues* arithmetically ariseth to that number. Among all those kinds, *Iscara* is the roughest death..." Where the Gloss is, '*Iscara*' in the mother-tongue is *estrangulament*. By learned men for the most part it is rendered *angina*, *the quinsy*. The Gemara sets out the roughness of it by this simile, "The *Iscara* is like to branches of thorns in a fleece of wool; which if a man shake violently behind, it is impossible but the wool will be pulled off by them." It is thus defined in the Gloss, '*The Iscara*' begins in the bowels, and ends in the throat. See the Gemara there.

When Judas therefore perished by a most miserable strangling, being strangled by the devil (which we observe in its place), no wonder if this infamous death be branded upon his name, to be commonly stiled *Judas Iscairiot*, or 'that Judas that perished by strangling.'

[*Who also betrayed him*.] Let that of Maimonides be observed: "It is forbidden to betray an Israelite into the hands of the heathen, either as to his person, or as to his goods," &c. "And whosoever shall so betray an Israelite shall have no part in the world to come." Peter spake agreeably to the opinion of the nation, when he said concerning Judas, "He went unto his own place," Acts 1:25. And so doth Baal Turim concerning Balaam; "'Balaam went to his place,' Numbers 24:25; that is (saith he), *he went down to hell*."

5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

[*Into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not*.] Our Saviour would have the Jews' privileges reserved to them, until they alienated and lost them by their own perverseness and sins. Nor does he grant the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles or Samaritans, before it was offered to the Jewish nation. The Samaritans vaunted themselves sons of the patriarch Jacob, John 4:12 (which, indeed, was not altogether distant from the truth); they embraced also the law of Moses; and being taught thence, expected the Messiah as well as the Jews: nevertheless, Christ acknowledges them for his sheep no more than the heathen themselves.

I. Very many among them were sprung, indeed, of the seed of Jacob, though now become renegades and apostates from the Jewish faith and nation, and hating them more than if they were heathens, and more than they would do heathens. Which also, among other things, may perhaps be observed in their very language. For read the Samaritan version of the Pentateuch; and, if I mistake not, you will observe that the Samaritans, when, by reason of the nearness of the places, and the alliance of the nations, they could not but make use of the

language of the Jews, yet used such a variation and change of the dialect, as if they scorned to speak the same words that they did, and make the same language not the same.

II. In like manner they received the Mosaic law, but, for the most part, in so different a writing of the words, that they seem plainly to have propounded this to themselves, that retaining indeed the law of Moses, they would hold it under as much difference from the Mosaic text of the Jews as ever they could, so that they kept something to the sense. "R. Eliezer Ben R. Simeon said, 'I said to the scribes of the Samaritans, Ye have falsified your law without any manner of profit accruing to you thereby. For ye have written in your law, *near the oaken groves of Moreh, which is Sychem,*'" &c....Let the Samaritan text at Deuteronomy 11:30 be looked upon.

III. However they pretended to study the religion of Moses, yet, in truth, there was little or no difference between them and idolaters, when they knew not what they worshipped; which our Saviour objects against them, John 4:22: and had not only revolved as apostates from the true religion of Moses, but set themselves against it with the greatest hatred. Hence the Jewish nation held them for heathens, or for a people more execrable than the heathens themselves. A certain Rabbin thus reproaches their idolatry: "R. Ismael Ben R. Josi went to Neapolis [that is, Sychem]: the Samaritans came to him, to whom he spake thus; 'I see that you adore not this mountain, but the idols which are under it: for it is written, Jacob hid the strange gods under the wood, which is near Sychem.'"

It is disputed whether a Cuthite ought to be reckoned for a heathen, which is asserted by Rabbi, denied by Simeon; but the conclusion, indeed, is sufficiently for the affirmative.

IV. The metropolis of the Samaritans laboured under a second apostasy, being brought to it by the deceit and witchcraft of Simon Magus, after the receiving of the gospel from the mouth of our Saviour himself. Compare Acts 8:9 with John 4:41.

From all these particulars, and with good reason for the thing itself, and to preserve the privileges of the Jews safe, and that they might not otherwise prove an offence to that nation, the Samaritans are made parallel to the heathen, and as distant as they from partaking of the gospel.

9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

[*In your purses, &c.*] these things, which are forbidden the disciples by our Saviour, were the ordinary provision of travellers; to which the more religious added also the book of the law.

"Some Levites travelled to Zoar, the city of palm-trees: and when one of them fell sick by the way, they brought him to an inn. Coming back, they inquired of the hostess concerning their companion. 'He is dead,' said she, 'and I have buried him.'" And a little after, *she brought forth to them his staff, and his purse, and the book of the law, which was in his hand.* So the Babylonian Misna: but the Jerusalem adds also *shoes*: and instead of that which in the Misna is *his purse*, in the Gemara is...an *inner garment*, with pockets to hold money and necessaries.

That also is worthy mention; *Let no man enter into the mount of the Temple with his staff, nor with his shoes, nor with his purse, nor with dust on his feet.* Which words are thus rendered by the Gemara: "Let no man enter into the mount of the Temple, neither with his staff in his hand, nor with his shoes upon his feet, nor with money bound up in his linen, *nor with a purse hanging on his back.*" Where the Gloss thus: '*Ponditho*' is a hollow girdle [or a hollow belt], in which they put up their money. See the Aruch in *Aponda*, and *Ponda*.

10. Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

[*Nor scrip for your journey.*] The Syriac version reads, *No purse...*

A proselyte is brought in thus speaking; "If an Israelite approaching to the holy things shall die, how much more a stranger, *who comes with his staff and his pouch!*"

[*Nor two coats.*] A single coat bespoke a meaner condition; a double, a more plentiful. Hence is that counsel of the Baptist, Luke 3:11, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none." It is disputed by the Babylonian Talmudists, how far it is lawful to wash garments *on the common days of a festival-week*; and the conclusion is, "It is lawful for him *that hath one coat only*, to wash it."

[*Neither shoes.*] That *shoes* are here to be understood, and not *sandals*, appears from Mark 6:9: and that there was a difference between these, sufficiently appears from these very places. The contrary to which I read in

Beza, not without wonder: "But then from this place (saith he), as also from Acts 12:8, it appears that the evangelists put no difference between *shoes* and *sandals* as Erasmus hath rightly observed."

Let the Jewish schools be heard in this matter: "The pulling off of *the shoe* [of the husband's brother, Deuteronomy 25:9] is right: and of *the sandal* if it hath a heel, is right; but if not, it is not right."

"R. Josi saith, I went to Nisibin, and I saw there a certain elder, and I said to him, 'Are you well acquainted with R. Judah Ben Betira?' And he answered, 'I am a money changer in my city; and he came to my table very often.' I said, 'Did you ever see him putting off *the shoe*? What did he put off, *shoe* or *sandal*?' He answered, 'O Rabbi, are there *sandals* among us?' Whence therefore, say I, did R. Meir say, *They do not put off the shoe*? Rabbi Ba, Rabh Judah say, in the name of Rabh, If Elias should come, and should say, 'They pull off the *shoe* of the husband's brother, let them hearken to him': if he should say, 'They pull off the *sandal*,' let them not hearken to him. And yet, for the most part, the custom is to pull off the *sandal*: and custom prevails against tradition." See more there, and in the Babylonian tract *Jevamoth*.

Shoes were of more delicate use; *sandals* were more ordinary, and more for service. *A shoe was of softer leather, a sandal of harder, &c.* There were *sandals* also, whose sole, or lower part, was of wood, the upper of leather; and these were fastened together by nails. There were some *sandals* also made of rushes, or of the bark of palm-trees, &c. Another difference also between *shoes* and *sandals* is illustrated by a notable story in the tract *Schabbath*, in the place just now cited: "In a certain time of persecution, when some were hidden in a cave, they said among themselves, 'He that will enter, let him enter; for he will look about him before he enters, that the enemies see him not: but let none go out; for perhaps the enemies will be near, whom he sees not when he goes out, and so all will be discovered.' One of them by chance put on his *sandals* the wrong way: for *sandals* were open both ways, so that one might put in his foot either before or behind: but he putting on his the wrong way, his footsteps, when he went out, seemed as if he went in, and so their hiding-place was discovered to the enemies," &c.

Money therefore in the girdle, and provision in the scrip, were forbidden the disciples by Christ; first, that they might not be careful for temporal things, but resign themselves wholly to the care of Christ; secondly, they ought to live of the gospel, which he hints in the last clause of this verse, "The workman is worthy of his hire."

That, therefore, which he had said before, "Freely ye have received, freely give," forbade them to preach the gospel for gain: but he forbade not to take food, clothing, and other necessaries for the preaching of the gospel.

Two coats and *shoes* are forbidden them, that they might not at all affect pride or worldly pomp, or to make themselves fine; but rather, that their habit and guise might bespeak the greatest humility.

11. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

[*Who in it is worthy.*] In the Talmudic language, *who deserves*.

14. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

[*Shake off the dust of your feet.*] The schools of the scribes taught that *the dust* of the heathen land defiled by the touch. "The *dust* of Syria defiles, as well as the *dust* of other heathen countries."

"A tradition-writer saith, 'They bring not herbs into the land of Israel out of a heathen land: but our Rabbins have permitted it.' *What difference is there between these?* R. Jeremiah saith, *The care of their dust is among them.*" The Gloss is, "They take care, lest, together with the herbs, something of *the dust* of the heathen land be brought, which defiles in the tent, and defiles the purity of the land of Israel."

"By reason of six doubts, they burn the *truma*: the doubt of a field, in which heretofore might be a sepulchre; the doubt of *dust* brought from a heathen land," &c. Where the Gloss is this; "Because it may be doubted of all the *dust* of a heathen land, whether it were not from the sepulchre of the dead."

"Rabbi saw a certain priest standing in a part of the city Aco, which part was without the bounds of the land of Israel: he said to him, 'Is not that heathen land concerning which they have determined that it is as unclean as a burying-place?'"

Therefore that rite of *shaking the dust off the feet*, commanded the disciples, speaks thus much; "Wheresoever a city of Israel shall not receive you, when ye depart, shew, by *shaking off the dust from your feet*, that ye esteem that city, however a city of Israel, for a heathen, profane, impure city; and, as such, abhor it."

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

In some respects, the mission of the 12 apostles was a test run for the later work of the 70 in Luke 10:1–12, 17. Both missions were pilots for the imperatives of Matthew 28:18–20. These verses have become widely known as the Great Commission, often cited as a convenient summary of Jesus' instructions to all future followers. The church's missionary efforts have long been grounded in that final teaching of Matthew's Gospel. While the Great Commission extends far beyond the area of Jesus' earthly ministry, close inspection reveals that Jesus simply instructs his followers to do what he himself has done. He made disciples; now his disciples are to do the same. In many respects, the Great Commission is a nutshell version of Jesus' own program. The question now is, will you get with the program?

Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary

Men on a Mission - Jesus referred to the 12 men He called to minister with Him as disciples or apostles. The Gospels group three or four of them together with a leader. Peter, followed by Andrew, James, and John; Philip, then Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew; finally, James, and Thaddaeus/Judas brother of James, Simon the Zealot, and Judas. Peter, the natural leader, is always listed first, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Jesus, is always named last.

The Assignment - Jesus first assigned the Twelve to go to their own people, the Jews. God desired for the lost among His chosen people to be the original recipients of the Gospel. The Old and New Testament clearly communicate God's heart, and the Good News about His Son is to be taken to every race and nationality. The disciples put God's power on display as they raised the dead and healed the sick. Jesus instructed the disciples to depend on God to meet their needs through the gracious hospitality of those who would hear them. The people who welcomed the men and their message would be rewarded with God's peace and blessings. But those who refused to receive God's message would face severe judgment.

The Mission Today - Jesus' call to go to the mission field, at home and abroad, is a mandate for all believers. We go, display God's power, explain the Gospel, and depend on the heavenly Father to take care of what we need. We can say, "I'm too young, I'm too old, I don't see the need to go overseas when there are so many needs here in America, I'm having a hard time financially myself." Sadly, these are the conversations often heard among believers when the topic of missions is discussed. Maybe the first step is prayer: "Lord, may the mission on Your heart to reach the lost become the mission of our hearts. Amen."