**The Gospel of Luke**

**Witness to the Gentiles - #26**

**Luke 9:51-56, 57-62,**

***Samaritan village rejects Jesus as He heads to Jerusalem;***

***Three cannot follow***

**Luke 10:1-12, 13-15**

***Jesus sends the 70; Woes in Galilee***

**Luke 9:51-56 – Samaritan village rejects Jesus**

[***51***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-51.htm) *And the days were drawing near when he was to be taken up to heaven, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,* [***52***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-52.htm)*And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.* [***53***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-53.htm) *But they did not welcome him, seeing that his intention was to proceed to Jerusalem.* [***54***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-54.htm) *When his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we bid fire to come down from heaven, and consume them?* [***55***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-55.htm) *But he turned, and rebuked them.* [***56***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-56.htm) *And they went to another village.*

**Notes and Studies**

1. Here begins the journey of Jesus’ to Jerusalem, which is the goal of the journey. Before that, Jesus was seen in Capernaum (7:1), Nain (7:11), Bethsaida (9:11), and Gerasenes (8:26). Jesus had to pass through Samaritan villages.
2. Earlier this section tells also of the ascension (9:28-36), or literally, “taken up to heaven.” The ascension is mentioned by Luke here and in Acts 1:21, 11, 22, Mark 16:19 and 1 Timothy 3:16. Jesus was “taken up,” a way of saying that this act does not belong Jesus alone but also to the Father*.*
3. Verse 51 literally says, “he set his face,” for Jesus has decided to go to Jerusalem. So, he sent messengers on ahead of him, which is an echo of Malachi 3:1, *“I send my messenger to prepare the way before me.”*

**Who are the Samaritans?**

1. The name Samaritans comes from the Greek ***Samarites***. Originally it is a name of a geographic term of the northern kingdom that was split in 870 B.C and founded by Omri (1 Kings 16:16-23) with a capital Samaria.
2. In time “Samaritans” it became an ethnic and a religious name of the people who lived in the area between Judea and Galilee, west of the river Jordan.
3. The reason for the split from the Jews is cloaked by the lack of historical data. Here are some suggestions by OT scholars:

a. It happened when the Assyrians deported some Jews after the Assyrian conquest in 772 B.C. and brought some non-Jews to live there (2 Kings 17:24).

b. It may have been a group who were opposed to the reconstitution of Jerusalem and the temple after the Babylonian exile (Ezra 4:2-24; Neh 2:19; 4:2-9).

c. The people were of mixed marriage who restricted their faith to the Five books of Moses (Pentateuch) and built their own temple on Mount Gerizim after the conquest of Alexander the Great. But it was destroyed in 128 B. C by John Hyrcanus (***Yohanan Hyrcanus****,* Ιωάννης Υρκανός) who was a [Hasmonean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hasmonean) ([Maccabeean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maccabee)) [leader](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leader) of the 2nd century BC (born 164 BC, reigned from 134 BC until his death in 104 BC).

d. From this time a sharp division became more acute especially when the Samaritans reconstructed their own Pentateuch (See, Benyamim Tsedaka, [*The Israelite Samaritan Version of the Torah*: First English Translation Compared with the Masoretic Version,](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0802865194/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?ie=UTF8&psc=1&smid=ATVPDKIKX0DER) 2013)

**His face was toward Jerusalem**

1. “Face” in Greek is ***prosöpon***, which means “person.” Jesus was aiming at Jerusalem. There all prophecies to be fulfilled. Why the Samaritans refused to receive Jesus is a matter of speculation. But the ethnic background may have been the only reason.
2. The reaction of both James and John was not unusual. In 2 Kings 1:10, Elijah answered the captain of fifty, *“If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty.”* Then fire came down from heaven and consumed the captain and his fifty. Both James and John want to explore the power of Jesus.
3. Jesus rebuked them, for he did not come to destroy but to heal.

[**Luke**](http://biblehub.com/asv/luke/14.htm#25) **9:57-62 – Three failed to follow Jesus**

[***57***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-57.htm) *As they went on the way, a certain man said unto him, I will follow thee whithersoever you go.*

[***58***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-58.htm)*But Jesus said unto him, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests; but the Son of man has not where to lay his head.”*

***59*** *To another he said, “Follow me.” But he replied, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.”*

[***60***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-60.htm) *But he said unto him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead; but go you and preach the kingdom of God.”*

***61****Yet another also said, “I will follow you, Lord; but let me and say good-bye to my people at home.*

[***62***](http://biblehub.com/luke/9-62.htm) *But Jesus said unto him, “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and keep looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.”*

**Notes and Studies**

1. Perhaps the words about the foxes and the birds are disconcerting for those who wanted a fixed accommodation and a resting place. But Jesus did not come to rest but to labor. Here it is certain that Jesus told this person, “Don’t expect a comfortable kind of fellowship.” We are not told what happened as a result of such a disconcerting invitation.
2. “Leave the dead to bury their dead” has been regarded as one of the harsh sayings of Jesus. Some NT scholars even debated its authenticity because it stands in opposition to the Jewish way of life and good morality. A son has an obligation to bury his father and any close member of his family. Here are some interpretations:

a. The “dead,” that is, those who are spiritually dead, can bury the physically dead.

b. Another argued that the Greek work ***nekrous*** is not “the dead” but is a translation of the Aramaic word ***metim*** which is the name of the “pallbearers.” So let the pallbearers (casket carriers) bury the dead.

c. The harshness of the saying is due to the softness of our teaching where the radical sayings of Jesus such as *“He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worth of me”* (Matt 10:37), or “*if you don’t forgive your heavenly father will not forgive*” (Matt 6:14). The radical teaching of Jesus focuses on the total commitment.

1. The third who wanted to bid good-bye was told that he can’t be like someone who wants to plow his field, i.e., “put his hand on the plow,” and look behind him. Such a person is not fit for the kingdom because of his divided and unstable vision.

**A Note from Philemon**

**Harsh words, whole love**

“At the very beginning of my journey with Beloved Jesus, I was troubled by some of his words such as: *“He who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me*”; and “*he who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worth of me.”* I lived with these words, repeating them for many days, meditating on their goal rather on their outward look. My Savior does not want a split love or a divided love, where more love is on one side and less on the other side. True love does not choose what is higher and what is lower. There is one Love that comes for God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and this love is “*shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit*” (Rom 5:5). I paused on the words “worthy of me,” for it is about a full union like that of husband and wife in Ephesians (5:29ff). We are worthy of Jesus if we seek him with our weak and divided life and ask Jesus to heal us and to make us whole.”

**Luke 10:1-12 – Jesus sends the Seventy**

***1****Now after this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them in pairs ahead of Him to every city and place where He Himself was going to come.*

***2*** *And He was saying to them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.*

***3*** *Go; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.* ***4****Carry no money belt, no bag, and no shoes; and greet no one on the way.*

***5****“Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house.’* ***6****If a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.* ***7****Stay in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.*

***8****“Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you;* ***9****and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’* ***10****But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you; go out into its streets and say,* ***11****‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’* ***12****I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.”*

**Notes and Studies**

1. The Seventy received the same instruction like the Twelve (see, Luke 9:1-6).
2. The number Seventy and Seventy Two appeared in some old Greek MSS, the debate is based on the OT 70 elders whom Moses appointed to help him (Exod 24:1; Num 11:16, 24). The Seventy Two may have been just a mistake by the Scribes.
3. The Lord of the harvest (***Kyrios***) is God the Father who revealed his Son to teach the kingdom.
4. “*Lambs among wolves*” is a warning of difficulties ahead. The nature of the lamb and that of the wolf can’t be reconciled. But the mission must take place.
5. “*Greet no one on the way*” meant not just a greeting. It involved talks and sharing food. A similar injunction was given by Elisha to his servant Gehazi (2 King 4:29).
6. “*Peace be to this house*”, is not jut a greeting but wishing salvation. That is why it is followed by “*a son of peace*.” ***Shalom*** is not just peace because the stem “***shlm***” means wholeness. To be worthy of peace means you have peace as you practice peace and also share it.
7. Peace is also God’s given grace, so when you preach the kingdom you bring this peace and it is to stay if the house is that of peace. But if the house is not for peace, your peace will come back to you, that is, you have it back if the others refuse you.
8. “Staying with the people,” not just talking to them. This is the strength of a relationship.
9. Verse 7 says *“the laborer is worthy of his wages.”* In Matthew, the Greek word is ***trophe***, sustenance, but here the Greek word is ***mishos***, pay. No one should be shy about payment if she or he are serving the Lord, (see 1 Cor 9:14; 1 Tim 5:18).
10. How should we read verse 9? Is it the “kingdom of God has come near”? Or …

a. Has approached

b. Has come

c. Has come near

The best way is to see that what has taken place such has healing the sick is certainly God governing as the King now and tomorrow. Thus the Kingdom has come and will continue to come.

**The Dust of the City**

According to the study of John Lightfoot titled, *A commentary on the NT from the Talmud and Hebraica*, when Jews traveled outside Judea and go to Canaanite land, they had to shake off the dust of the foreign land at the border of their land so as not to bring the dust of the Canaanite land into the land of Israel. This dust has the ashes of the graves because the Canaanites and the Assyrians used to dig up the graves and use the ashes as fertilizer. Death is defilement in Judaism and the dust brings this defilement to the land. (Volume 2, 23, 1977) So those who refuse the messengers of Jesus are regarded as defilement.

11. Verse 12 says, *“it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom,”* the city that was destroyed (Gen 19:24-28). The Day of Judgment is a day of condemnation (Luke 10:14; 2 Thess 1:10). When God comes in his glory, who can stand up? (Zech 12:3-4; Isa 10:20; Jer 30:8)

**Luke 10:13-15 – Woes spoken against the towns of Galilee**

***13****“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.* ***14****But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you.* ***15****And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to the skies, will you? No, you will be brought down to Hades!*

**Notes and Studies**

1. Jesus speaks judgment against not only towns but also people who have seen “miracles” but did not change their lives.
2. Chorazin did not survive and its ruins may be those of Tell Chum.
3. Bethsaida witnessed the power of Jesus (Luke 9:1) but seems to have not profited at all in comparison with Tyre and Sidon, which were basically gentile towns. Using sackcloth and ashes were signs of deep distress for regret and repentance (Jonah 3:6, Job 2:8; Isa 58:5). Sackcloth, ***sakkas***, is a Semitic name of a garment made of a goat’s rough hair to cover the naked body as a sign of mourning (Gen 37:34; 2 Sam 3:31; 1 Kings 21:27; Ps 69:11; Isa 20:2;32:11).
4. Capernaum saw miracles (Luke 7:1-10) and will go down to “hades” or “Sheol,” joining all the other old cities where oppression had been common practice (Isa 14:11; Ezek 26:20; 31:16-17)

**A Note from Philemon**

**Evil is like fire**

“Jesus uttered these woes as a warning. Evil is like fire, it consumes itself. God does not inflict evil but evil inflicts its end on itself.”

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