

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 10 (PART 1)

AS WE FINISHED MATTHEW 9, JESUS LOOKED AT HIS DISCIPLES AND SAID ESSENTIALLY: "THE NEEDS IN THE WORLD AROUND US ARE GREAT. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE IN NEED - ASK THAT GOD WOULD SEND PEOPLE OUT TO MEET THOSE NEEDS!" AS MATTHEW 10 OPENS, JESUS SENDS HIS EMISSARIES OUT INTO THE REGION MODELING HIS OWN MINISTRY WORK.

MATTHEW 10:1-4 - JESUS' 12 DISCIPLES

SIMON (PETER) AND ANDREW ARE BROTHERS. JAMES AND JOHN ARE ALSO BROTHERS. MATTHEW IS A TAX COLLECTOR AND SIMON IS A ZEALOT. JUDAS ISCARIOT WILL END UP BETRAYING JESUS. THERE ARE SOME NAME DISCREPANCIES AMONGST THE GOSPELS WHICH MAY LIKELY BE A RESULT OF GREEK/HEBREW NAMES BEING USED IN DIFFERENT CASES (LIKE SIMON V. PETER). BUT JESUS CALLED 12 DISCIPLES TO BE CLOSE WITH HIM AND BE SENT BY HIM. THE NUMBER 12 IS SIGNIFICANT AS JESUS IS CREATING A NEW PEOPLE OF/FOR GOD WITH AN ALLUSION TO THE 12 TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

THE WORD "APOSTLES" IS USED 8X IN THE GOSPELS, AND ONLY ONCE IN MATTHEW. IT'S FROM THE GREEK WORD MEANING SENT ONE OR ONE SENT ON A MISSION. LATER THE TERM "APOSTLE" (WHERE IT IS USED 29X) WILL BE USED OF THE ORIGINAL 12 APOSTLES MENTIONED HERE WHO WALKED CLOSEST WITH JESUS DURING HIS EARTHLY MINISTRY. THERE IS A SPIRITUAL GIFT OF APOSTLESHIP ALSO USED BY PAUL (WHO MAY BE THE MOST FAMOUS "APOSTLE") MENTIONED IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:28. SOME VIEW THE OFFICE OF APOSTLE AS EITHER SOMEONE SENT TO DO A WORK GENERALLY OR MORE COMMONLY THOSE WHO SPECIFICALLY HAVE BEEN COMMISSIONED TO DO SOMETHING BY JESUS HIMSELF (THUS PAUL'S TITLE AS APOSTLE).

V. 1 - JESUS GIVES HIS 12 DISCIPLES/APOSTLES AUTHORITY AND CALLS THEM TO FOLLOW HIS OWN MINISTRY MODEL (CP. MATTHEW 9:35 ETC).

MATTHEW 10:5-15 - 12 DISCIPLES SENT OUT TO PREACH & MINISTER

- 1 - ONLY GO TO THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL
- 2 - PREACH THAT THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND (COMING SOON)
- 3 - HEAL THE SICK, RAISE THE DEAD, CLEANSE LEPERS, CAST OUT DEMONS.
(JESUS HAD ALREADY DONE ALL OF THESE THINGS HIMSELF (RECORDED IN MATTHEW 8-9) AND NOW GIVES AUTHORITY TO THE 12 TO DO THE SAME.)
- 4 - BE SWIFT AND MOBILE IN THIS MISSION. DON'T ACCUMULATE A BUNCH OF THINGS BUT BE READY TO GET UP AND GO.
- 5 - THOSE THEY MINISTER TO WILL HELP TAKE CARE OF THEIR NEEDS (FOOD, HOUSING ETC). IF SOMEONE ACCEPTS YOU, BLESS THEM.
IF SOMEONE REJECTS YOU, DON'T BLESS THEM.

"SHAKE THE DUST OFF YOUR FEET" WAS A PROPHETIC ILLUSTRATION MEANT TO COMMUNICATE LEAVING THE PEOPLE/CITY BEHIND AND ON THEIR OWN. THE PROPHET/EVANGELIST DID THEIR JOB TO PROCLAIM GOD'S MESSAGE. THOSE WHO REJECT THIS MESSAGE WILL HAVE TO GIVE ACCOUNT BEFORE GOD.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH ARE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE MOST WICKED OF CITIES/PEOPLE (THEIR STORY IS GENESIS 13-19).

MATTHEW 10:16-25 - INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MISSION

Q - WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SHEEP IN THE MIDST OF WOLVES? Q - WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SHREW AS SERPENTS AND INNOCENT AS DOVES? (V. 16)

JESUS PREPARES HIS DISCIPLES AHEAD OF TIME FOR THE DIFFICULTY OF THIS MISSION. THEY WILL NOT BE RECEIVED BY EVERYONE AND WILL FACE STRONG PUSHBACK & PERSECUTION - EVENTUALLY LEADING TO ARREST, INTIMIDATION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL, PHYSICAL ABUSE & WE KNOW LATER EVEN DEATH.

THE FIRST MISSION OF THE 12 APOSTLES WILL NOT LEAD TO THESE EXTREMES BUT JESUS' WORDS RECORDED IN MATTHEW WOULD SERVE THEM WELL ON THEIR FIRST MISSION AND EVERY ONE THAT WOULD FOLLOW.

BUT ALONG WITH THE SOBER WORDS THEY WOULD HEAR, THEY ALSO WILL HEAR THAT GOD'S SPIRIT WILL EMPOWER THEM AND SUPPORT THEM - EVEN IN WHAT THEY WILL NEED TO SAY IN THESE PRESSURE PACKED MOMENTS.

THE TESTIMONY OF ACTS CONFIRMS THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED. THESE UNREMARKABLE FISHERMAN AND TAX COLLECTORS AND "NOBODIES" IN THE WORLD'S EYES WOULD STAND BEFORE COURTS, SYNAGOGUES, GOVERNORS AND KINGS AND THE SPIRIT OF THEIR FATHER WOULD INSPIRE THEM TO SPEAK WITH BOLDNESS AND POWER!

V. 22 - YOU WILL BE HATED BY ALL BECAUSE OF MY NAME - BUT THE ONE WHO ENDURES TO THE END WILL BE SAVED.

IT SURELY COULD HAVE BEEN A TEMPTATION TO FEEL SPECIAL BECAUSE OF BEING SENT BY THE MESSIAH TO DO THIS WORK. BUT ANY OF THAT TEMPTATION TO BE ARROGANT OR HIGH MINDED WOULD HAVE BEEN SQUASHED AS THE DISCIPLES LISTENED TO JESUS TO TELL THE WHOLE STORY.

THE DISCIPLES WERE NOT BEING SENT TO BECOME FAMOUS OR POPULAR OR GAIN SUCCESS - THEY WERE BEING SENT WITH THE MESSAGE OF SALVATION AND JUDGMENT. THEY HAD TO KNOW THIS AND BE MOTIVATED BY THE RIGHT MOTIVATIONS OR ELSE THEY WOULD QUIT AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE.

AT THIS POINT IN THEIR DISCIPLESHIP TO JESUS, THEY HAD HEARD ENOUGH AND SEEN ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HE WAS THE MESSIAH, THAT THE KINGDOM WAS COMING AND THAT THERE WAS POWER IN HIS NAME. SO FOR THEM TO BE SENT, KNOWING THERE WOULD BE REJECTION AND OPPOSITION, IT MEANT THAT THEY KNEW THE MESSAGE WAS TRUE AND ALSO NEEDED FOR THE WORLD.

AND THIS SALVATION WOULD MOTIVATE THEM TO NOT QUIT WHEN THINGS GOT HARD.

MATTHEW 10:26-33 - ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE MISSION

JESUS GIVES SOME INCREDIBLE PERSPECTIVE TO FUEL HIS FOLLOWERS' MISSION:

1 - DON'T FEAR: EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE REVEALED AND EXPOSED (V. 26-27)

2 - DON'T FEAR: THE ONES WHO CAN KILL YOU CAN'T DESTROY YOU (V. 28)

3 - DON'T FEAR: YOU ARE INCREDIBLY VALUABLE TO GOD (V. 29-31)

4 - YOU STAND FOR CHRIST NOW, YOU'LL STAND BEFORE GOD IN THE END. YOU DENY CHRIST NOW, YOU'LL BE DENIED BY CHRIST IN THE END.

THESE TRUTHS REQUIRE AN ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE. THE DISCIPLES AREN'T LIVING FOR NOW, THEY'RE LIVING FOR THE AGE TO COME. THEY'RE NOT FOCUSED ON NOW, THEY'RE FOCUSED ON THE KINGDOM TO COME. THEY CAN'T BE CONSUMED WITH TODAY, THEY NEED TO BE CONSUMED ABOUT THE LAST DAY.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST IS NOT ABOUT LIFE IMPROVEMENT OR TEMPORAL BENEFIT, THOUGH THOSE THINGS MAY BE REALITIES THAT A DISCIPLE EXPERIENCES. THE GOSPEL IS ABOUT THE FUTURE AND ABOUT THE COMING KINGDOM OF GOD. THIS GOSPEL WHICH WAS PROCLAIMED AND DEMONSTRATED BY JESUS HAS WON THE HEARTS OF THESE 12 DISCIPLES. THEY WILL TAKE THIS CALL SERIOUSLY AND LIVE IN A RADICAL WAY IN COMPARISON TO THE COMMON WAY AND GO WITH THE FLOW COURSE OF LIFE.

AND ANYONE WHO HEARS, UNDERSTANDS AND BELIEVES THE GOSPEL TODAY WOULD BE A FOOL TO TRADE ETERNAL GLORY AND EVERLASTING LIFE FOR WHAT THE WORLD OFFERS NOW. WE MAY NOT ALL STAND BEFORE GOVERNORS OR KINGS AND IT'S RARE THAT OUR LIVES WILL BE ON THE LINE - BUT WE CANNOT BE LULLED TO SLEEP BY THE WORLD'S WICKED LULLABY AND GET DECEIVED INTO LIVING FOR THAT WHICH WILL BE DESTROYED.