



## Jesus Journeys Toward Jerusalem Luke 9:37-10:42

### Introduction

After the miracle of feeding over five thousand, the people were ready to make Jesus king (John 6:15). After the transfiguration, Peter was ready to make three shelters, stay on the mountain, and forget the needy people below. Jesus' popularity was at its height, His disciples were trained and able to confess who He was, and His glory was revealed. Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem, knowing the future held rejection, suffering, death, and resurrection.

### Outline of Luke 9:37 - 10:42

- I. Despair and Dispute in the Valley - Luke 9:37-50
- II. Destination Jerusalem - Luke 9:51-62
- III. Deployment of the Seventy- Luke 10:1-24
- IV. Discussion with a Lawyer and Two Sisters - Luke 10:25-42

### I. Despair and Dispute in the Valley - Luke 9:37-50

- A. Descent From the Mountain - Luke 9:37; Matthew 17:9-13; Mark 9:9-13

The next day Peter, James, and John descended from the mountain sworn not to tell of their experience *until the Son of Man is risen from the dead* (Matthew 17:9). They were once again met by a crowd and the glow of the mountain top experience faded quickly in the reality of the valley below. The nitty-gritty of life soon distracts even the most transported soul, as Moses also discovered (2 Corinthians 3:13).

- B. Despair Over Demon-Possessed Boy - Luke 9:38-43; Matthew 17:14-23; Mark 9:14-32

1. The desperate father - Luke 9:38-40

A man stepped out from the crowd to ask Jesus to look at his son and have mercy. Luke tells us it was his only son. The father described his son's symptoms, "*He is an epileptic and suffers grievously from a dumb spirit. And wherever it seizes him, lo, he suddenly cries out, and it throws him down in convulsions and he foams and grinds his teeth, and pines away: often he falls into the fire, and often into the water; it hardly departs from him, bruising him sorely*" (The Life of Christ in Stereo, Johnston M. Cheney). The father continued, "*So I implored Your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.*"

2. The Lord's rebuke - Luke 9:41-42

Mark adds Jesus' words to the ineffective disciples, "*O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you?*" (Mark 9:19). He had given them power and authority, and even the disciples wondered why they could not cast out the demon. They asked Him privately, "*Why could we not cast it out?*" (Matthew 17:19). Jesus said, "*Because of your unbelief: for assuredly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there', and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.*"

Even as Jesus approached the boy, *the demon threw him down and convulsed him. Then Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, healed the child, and gave him back to his father.* In this instance it appears that rebuking the demon and healing the boy were two separate things. Jesus did both.

3. Prayer and power - Matthew 17:20; Mark 9:29

Jesus said that power comes through faith and prayer, not formula. "*This kind can come out by nothing, but prayer.*" "*Many ancient authorities add and fasting*" (A Harmony of the Gospels, A.T. Robertson). If we try to use God's power for ourselves or without depending on His Holy Spirit, it will fall flat. "*For without Me you can do nothing*" (John 15:5).

4. Urgency - Luke 9:44-45

As the crowd marveled at what Jesus had done, He spoke to His disciples, "*Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men.*" Jesus urged them to understand, for in a short time He would be betrayed. But they failed to grasp His meaning and were afraid to ask.

- C. Dispute Among the Disciples - Luke 9:46-48; Matthew 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37

1. Who is the greatest? - Luke 9:46

As they walked along and talked of the kingdom and their roles in it, the twelve began disputing about who would be greatest. They were afraid to tell Jesus, but He was aware of their boasting.

## 2. The least - Luke 9:47-48

Jesus set a child in their midst and said, "*Whoever receives this little child in My name receives me; and whoever receives Me receives Him that sent me. For he who is least among you all will be great.*" Jesus made it plain enough that the way up is down.

## D. Forbidding - Luke 9:49-50

John told Jesus that someone outside their group was casting out demons in His name, and the disciples had forbidden him from doing so. Jesus rebuked them, "*Do not forbid him, for he who is not against us on our side.*" Anyone who is not against Jesus may be for Him, even though not in your group, your church, or denomination. Do you exclude others or try to include them?

This episode closes the great Galilean ministry of Jesus. He now turns His face toward Jerusalem.

**II. Destination Jerusalem - Luke 9:51-62**

## A. Major Division of Luke

Most commentators make a major break between Luke 9:50 and 51. *Now it came to pass* (9:51), usually indicates a break in the action or the passage of time. In this case, a new division begins.

## B. Facing Jerusalem - Luke 9:51-62

*When the time had come for Him to be received up...He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem.*

## 1. His determination

The Savior's revelation of Himself had already reached a glorious climax on the Mount of Transfiguration a week after the disciples had confessed that He was the Christ of God (9:20). "He Himself had elected to follow the way of humiliation, suffering, and death in order to carry out the divine plan of salvation. He had pointed out to the disciples what lay before Him. Although He knew only too well everything that was appointed to befall Him, He unswervingly followed the road that led to Jerusalem" (The Biblical Expositor, Carl Henry).

## 2. His preparatory messengers - 9:52-56

*He sent messengers before His face.* Jesus wanted to prepare the towns He would pass through to receive Him. When the Samaritans resisted Him because He was going to Jerusalem, James and John were ready to call fire down on them. Jesus calmed them by reminding them that He had come to save lives not destroy them. This reminder is always timely, and for us as well.

## 3. Three potential followers - 9:57-62

People were attracted to Jesus as a leader but some were not prepared for the cost. This is true today also. Luke gives three examples.

## a. Shallow impulsiveness - verses 57-58

*"Lord, I will follow you wherever you go."* As they traveled, someone thought it would be exciting to join up with Jesus, so He volunteered to follow Him. Jesus gave him the plain facts. Following Him was not the road to pleasure, fame, or fortune. In fact, He did not know where He would sleep that night.

*"Foxes have holes, and the birds...have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head,"* reminds this writer of Winston Churchill's great speech when he became England's wartime Prime Minister (1940). He told the British people he had nothing to offer but "blood, toil, tears, and sweat." Impulsiveness is the wrong motive. Although spiritual blessings and eternal benefits are guaranteed, material blessings may or may not be included.

## b. Subtle procrastination - verses 59-60

Jesus does call people to follow Him, but some say, "Me first!" This person said, "*Lord, let me first go and bury my father.*" His attitude was, "I will do what You want after I first do what I want." He called Jesus "Lord" but did not obey Him as Lord. Jesus' response to him was, "*Let the dead bury their own dead.*" There must have been others who could perform this duty. Duty often becomes a priority only when God exercises His claim on our lives. Do you call Jesus Lord but say "Let me first.....?"

## c. Shameful excuses - verses 61-62

*"I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell."* "Yes, but", is a familiar response. It is cowardice disguised as compliance, another form of "me first." "I do mean to follow You, but there are other things I want to do. Please excuse me, I really will come back -- I think." To this one Jesus said, "*No one having put his hand to the plow and looking back is fit for the kingdom of God.*" It is possible that Jesus did not call him again.

The call to follow Jesus is a call to complete surrender. Is your answer impulsive but shallow, "Me first," or "Yes, but?" What is your excuse for not responding to what Jesus has called you to do? What is your excuse for not following Him now?

**III. Deployment of the Seventy - Luke 10:1-24**

## A. Seventy Sent Ahead - Luke 10:1-12

As if in contrast with the three shirkers, Luke presents the seventy workers. *After these things the Lord appointed seventy... and sent them two by two...into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.* Only Luke records this mission.

## 1. Prayer - 10:2

*"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."* Luke puts this prayer in the context of the sending of the seventy, whereas Matthew puts it before the sending of the twelve. It could have been spoken on both occasions, for it bears repeating. Will you pray it now?

## 2. Instructions - 10:3-12

The instructions to the seventy are similar to the instructions given to the twelve. (See Luke 9:1-6).

- a. Take nothing. The mission was brief - verses 3-4
- b. Stay in one house and receive their hospitality - verses 5-8
- c. Heal the sick and tell them about the kingdom of God - verse 9
- d. Wipe the dust from your feet when not received in a city and tell them the kingdom of God came near to them - verses 10-11.

Jesus added, *"in that Day,"* referring to the day of judgment (Matthew 10:15), *"it will be more tolerable for Sodom than for that city."*

## 3. Differences between the sending of the twelve and the seventy

- a. A different area

Thirty-five teams of two went to Samaria and Judea as Jesus was entering, whereas six teams of two went to the cities of Galilee where He ministered.

- b. A different ministry focus

In sending the seventy, no mention is made of cleansing lepers, curing diseases, casting out demons, or raising the dead, although when they returned they rejoiced that even the demons were subject to them.

B. Woes Pronounced - Luke 10:13-16;  
Matthew 11:20-24

Jesus rebuked the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done because they failed to repent (Matthew 11:20). Cities that did not repent after benefitting from the ministry of Jesus and His disciples received His pronouncement of judgment. They included Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin, cities of Galilee where Jesus had taught, preached, and performed miracles for two years. Pagan, sin-laden cities like Sodom, Tyre, and Sidon will fare better in the judgment than those which received so much light and witness. Will Cairo, Beijing, and Bangkok fare better in the judgment than London, Rome, New York, and Los Angeles? To reject the ministry of God's servants today is still to reject God and His Son Jesus Christ.

## C. Return of the Seventy - Luke 10:17-24

## 1. Joyous report of the seventy - 10:17

*"Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."* This led Jesus to say that He saw Satan fall from heaven, and that their victory would result in even more authority. What is more exciting than experiencing the results of obedience to Christ?

## 2. Joy of Jesus in prayer - 10:18-22

Hearing the report of the disciples caused Jesus to rejoice in His Spirit. He gave four points of praise and gratitude to God His Father.

- a. *"I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth."*
- b. *"You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes."*
- c. *"For so it seemed good in Your sight."*
- d. *"All things have been delivered to Me by My Father."*

This last point has three parts. First, only God really knows who Jesus is. Second, only Jesus really knows who God is. Third, only those to whom the Son reveals it know who both Jesus and God are. Are you one of these? Jesus said He would not cast out anyone who came to Him, and that all who come to Him and believe in Him have everlasting life (John 6:37,40).

## 3. Joy of Jesus with His disciples - 10:23-24

Jesus did not stop with prayer to God, but shared His joy with His disciples too. He reminded them of their

privilege to see and hear things that kings and prophets before them wanted to see and hear. How much more is this true for us two thousand years later?

#### IV. Discussion with a Lawyer and Two Sisters - Luke 10:25-42

##### A. Jesus and the Lawyer - Luke 10:25-37

###### 1. Lawyer's question - 10:25

Luke alone records this lawyer's argumentative questions. Lawyers were trained in the law of Moses. Many were Pharisees as this one probably was. His question was, "*Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*"

###### 2. Jesus' answer - 10:26

Jesus referred him back to the law for the answer. What did the law say? Later on, the apostle Paul would write that the law was a tutor to bring people to Christ (Galatians 3:2). If this man was a sincere student of the law, it should have brought him to Christ. That is what the Scriptures are designed to do.

###### 3. The lawyer's real question - 10:27-29

The man gave the right answer, "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*" Jesus commended him and told him to do so.

But the lawyer's reply revealed his problem. He did not know whom to love. He asked, "*Who is my neighbor?*" The Scripture tells us that he asked this question in order to justify himself. It seems that he was not seeking the truth but was asking with the wrong motives. Jesus' answer surely shut the lawyer's mouth as He answered with one of His best loved parables.

##### 4. The parable of the good Samaritan- 10:30-37

The road between Jerusalem and Jericho was infested with robbers, and everyone could relate to the story of the victimized traveler who had been robbed, stripped, and wounded. Jesus indicted the whole Jewish religious establishment by saying the priest and Levite passed by without helping. He made the hero someone the Jews most despised -- a Samaritan. The Samaritan was the neighbor and the lawyer was told to go and do likewise. Who is your neighbor? To whom will you be a neighbor this week?

##### B. Jesus with Mary and Martha - Luke 10:38-42

Jesus entered a certain village and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. The village was Bethany (John 11:1). The home was Martha's which she shared with her sister Mary and brother Lazarus. As in many families, they displayed quite dissimilar personalities. Martha was active and quick to respond. Mary was meditative and slower in response. Lazarus was quiet. Welcoming Jesus into their home changed their lives. (See John 11).

#### Applications

1. Have you welcomed Jesus into your life? How has that changed everything?
2. Are you like the lawyer, full of questions but unwilling to act upon the answers? What have you learned from the lawyer that you will act upon this week?
3. How has Jesus called you to minister for Him in the world? How has this brought you great joy? Who will you share your joy with?
4. What are the things in your life that are distracting you from what Jesus has called you to do? What is being left undone because you insist upon serving yourself before serving Him? What will you do to change that?





**DAY FIVE: Read Luke 11:33-44. See also Matt.5:15; 6:22-23.**

14. a. In the following Scripture passages, what does “*light*” represent?

Psalm 43:3

Psalm 119:105,130

Proverbs 6:23

John 1:4-5,6-9

2 Corinthians 4:6

b. In Luke 11:33-36, what should this light do for us?

15. What bothered the Pharisee? How did Jesus use it to teach him?

16. a. In Luke 11:42-44, what did Jesus say the Pharisees loved?

b. What did they do, and what did they neglect to do?

c. Apply your answers to a. and b. above, to the way people live today.

**DAY SIX: Read Luke 11:45-54.**

17. For what three actions did Jesus denounce the law experts?

18. List two ways Jesus' enemies showed their hostility in 11:53-54.

19. ♥(Heart Questions) a. What did you apply to your life from this week's lesson?

b. How would you like your group to pray for you as you continue to do so?