

Matthew 10

In 9:36-38, Jesus asked His disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest will send out workers into the harvest. In this chapter, Jesus will select twelve of His disciples, whom He began calling in 4:18-22, and send them out into the harvest. After giving their names (10:1-4), Matthew tells us that Jesus commissioned them to preach the gospel of the kingdom to Israel (10:5-15). Jesus warns them of persecution which will come (10:16-23), that they should fear only God (10:24-31), that they should confess Christ as they go (10:32-33), even when it brings division within families (10:34-39). Yet the rewards for faithful work will be given by the Father (10:40-42).

TRANSLATION - 10:1-4:

1 Then after calling His twelve disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits so that to cast out them and to heal every disease and every malady. **2** And of the twelve apostles, the names are these: First, Simon, the one named Peter and Andrew, his brother, and 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 Thaddeus, **4** Simon the Canaanite and Judah, the Iscariot, even the one betraying Him.

WORDS:

The word “to call” (ver. 1) is used 29 times in the NT, here for the first time in Matt (10:1; 15:10, 32; 18:2, 32; 20:25). “Disciples” was first found in 5:1. “Spirit” was first seen at 1:18, 20. There it referred to the Holy Spirit. Here it refers to “unclean” spirits known as demons. “Unclean” is used here for the first time (used in Matt again only at 12:43), out of 32 in the NT. “To heal” was used first at 4:23-24. “Disease” was first found at 4:23-24. “Malady” was also found first at 4:23 (9:35; 10:1).

“Apostle” (ver. 2) is used here first, out of 80 occurrences. This is its only use in Matt. “Simon” was first seen at 4:18 (“Simon” is found 75 times in the NT), where “Peter” is found first also (“Peter” is found 156 times). “Andrew” was found first in the same text (4:18), out of 13 times, 4 times in Mark, 5 in John. “James” was seen first at 4:21, out of 42 times. “Zebedee” was also found first at 4:21, out of 12 uses. “John” was seen first at 3:1, referring to John the baptist. “John” is found 135 times.

“Philip” (ver. 3) is found 36 times, 12 times in John, 16 times in Acts. “Bartholomew” is found 4 times (10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14; Acts 1:13). “Thomas” is found 11 times. “Matthew” is found 5 times (9:9; 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). “Tax collector” was first found in 5:46. “Alphaeus” was seen first here, out of 5 times (Mark 2:14; 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13). “Thaddeus” is seen only here and Mark 3:18. “Canaanite” (ver. 4) is used only here and Mark 3:18. “Judas” is found 44 times in the NT, 10 times in Matt. “Iscariot” is found 11 times (10:4; 26:14 in Matt.). The designation seems to refer to a village of Kerioth (Josh. 15:25). Matthew refers to Judas Iscariot more than any other apostle besides Peter. “To betray” was first seen at 4:12; 5:25. It is used 119 times in the NT (31 in Matt.); it can mean to “hand over.”

PARALLELS:

The twelve apostles are given in other places (Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:13). The differences in the lists are trivial. Luke 6:12 tells us that Jesus spent a night in prayer before choosing His apostles. Matthew’s other name is Levi; James, son of Alphaeus, was also designated “James the less,” to distinguish him from the brother of John, son of Zebedee. Matthew’s father is also named “Alphaeus” (Mark 2:14); there is no other indication that these two were brothers (as were Peter and Andrew and James and John). We do not know. Bartholomew might be the same person as Nathaniel from John 1.

COMMENTS:

Since Jesus called on His disciples to pray God will send more workers into the harvest (9:36-38), He now does His part to fulfill that prayer: He sends out workers into the harvest. Jesus began calling disciples in chapter 4. "Disciples" refers to the large group of followers Jesus had. Among that larger group of disciples, He chose twelve of them to become the well-known "apostles." As an "apostle," these men were ambassadors, operating under the authority of the Sender (Jesus Christ), without the authority to change the message or negotiate its conditions. He gave them authority over Satan's demons as well as the ability to heal sicknesses and diseases, which He did in chapters 8 & 9; see 4:23; 9:35. Now He gives that same mission to His apostles. Mark (6:7) tells us He sent them out in pairs, perhaps reflecting the Law empowering two as witnesses (Deut. 19:15).

Simon Peter is listed "first" but that does not mean that he has priority over the other apostles. Nothing else in the NT suggests Peter had priority over the other eleven apostles. Peter, James, John, and Andrew were allowed on a few narrow assignments with Christ: Mark 5:37; Mark 13:3; Matt. 17:1; 26:37. James was the first apostle murdered for his faith (Acts 12:2), around AD 44. James and John were nicknamed "sons of thunder" by Jesus (Mark 3:17). The designation "Zealot" describes Simon (Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13), but the designation is not understood completely. It might mean "zealous" or it might refer to a movement that grew and later became instrumental in antagonizing the Romans which led to the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70. Judas, the betrayer, was a thief (John 12:6) who allowed Satan to manipulate His heart (John 6:70-71; 13:2).

APPLICATION:

Jesus identifies the twelve apostles as reflecting the twelve patriarchs and twelve tribes of Israel in 19:28, to judge the new Israel of God (cf. Gal. 6:16; Rom. 2:28-29; Phil. 3:3; James 1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1). They do this, judging the church of Christ, the kingdom of God, through their words: Eph. 2:19-22. That band of apostles and their early converts turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6). For one to be an apostle, he had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrection of Christ and to have been a follower of Christ throughout His earthly ministry (Acts 1:21-22). It is therefore evident that no one can be such an apostle today.

The word "apostle," meaning "one sent," can also be used in a broader sense than one sent with the authority of Christ: John 13:16; Rom. 16:7; 2 Cor. 8:23; Phil. 2:25. In this latter sense, it had more the denotation of a "missionary." Jesus is an Apostle of the Father (Heb. 3:1). Saul of Tarsus becomes an apostle called specially by Christ (1 Cor. 15:8-10). After Judas hangs himself, Matthias is chosen by God to replace him (Acts 1:14-26).

TRANSLATION - 10:5-15:

5 These twelve Jesus sent after commanding them saying, "Into the path of the Gentiles do not go and into the city of the Samaritans, do not enter. **6** But go, rather, to the sheep, having been lost, of the house of Israel. **7** And going, preach, saying that "the kingdom of heaven has come near." **8** [Ones] being sick, heal, dead raise, lepers cleanse, demons cast out. Freely you received, freely give. **9** Do not acquire gold nor silver nor copper, for your belt, **10** neither a traveler's bag into the way nor two tunics nor candles nor a staff. For worthy [is] the worker for his food. **11** And into whichever city or village you enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there remain until when you depart. **12** And entering into the city, greet it. **13** And if perhaps the house may be worthy, let your peace come on it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. **14** And whoever may not receive you nor may hear your words, going out from the house or that city, shake off the dust from your feet. **15** Truly I say to you, more bearable it will be for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.

WORDS:

"To send" (ver. 5) is the verb form of the noun used above, "apostle." It was first seen at 2:16; 8:31. "To command" or "to instruct" is used 32 times, in Matt at 10:5; 15:35. "Gentiles"

was used first at 4:15; 6:32. "Samaritans" is used here, for the first and only time in Matt, out of 9 uses in the NT. "Sheep" (ver. 6) was first seen at 7:15; 9:36. "To be lost" was first seen at 2:13; 5:29-30; 8:25; 9:17. "Israel" is used 68 times in the NT to designate, primarily, the people of Israel under the Law of Moses, the descendants of Abraham. "To preach" (ver. 7) was seen first with John the baptist (3:1) and with Jesus (4:17, 23). "To be near" was first seen at 3:2; 4:17.

"Sick" (ver. 8) is seen here first, also at 25:36, 39, out of 33 times. "Dead" was first seen at 8:22. "Lepers" was first seen at 8:2. "To cleanse" was seen at 8:2-3 with the leper. "Demons" were seen first at 7:22; 9:33-34. "To acquire" (ver. 9) is used only here in Matt, out of 7 times (10:9; Luke 18:12; 21:19; Acts 1:18; 8:20; 22:28; 1 Thess. 4:4). "Bronze" is used 5 times: here; Mark 6:8; 12:41; 1 Cor. 13:1; Rev. 18:12.

"Traveler's bag" (ver. 10) is found here; Mark 6:8; Luke 9:3; 10:4; 22:35-36. "Tunic" was found first at 5:40. "Staff" is found here and only here in Matt, among 12 uses. "Food" was seen first at 3:4; 6:25. "Village" (ver. 11) is used 27 times, four in Matt (9:35; 10:11; 14:15; 21:2). "To depart" is used only at 2:8; 10:11; John 21:12. "To remain" is used first here (three times in Matt: 10:11; 11:23; 26:38), out of 118 uses.

"To greet" (ver. 12) was first seen at 5:47. This is the first time "peace" (ver. 13) is found in the NT, only here and at 10:34 in Matt, out of 92 times. "To return" is used here (12:44; 13:15; 24:18 in Matt), out of 36 times. "To receive" (ver. 14) is used 56 times in the NT, 10 times in Matt. "To hear" is found 428 times, first at 2:3, 9, 18, 22. "To shake" is found here; Mark 6:11; Acts 13:51; 18:6. "Dust" is found here; Luke 9:5; 10:11; Acts 13:51; 22:23. "More bearable" (ver. 15) is found at 10:15; 11:22, 24; Luke 10:12, 14. "Sodom" is used 9 times in the NT (10:15; 11:23-24); "Gomorrhah," 4 times (10:15; Rom. 9:29; 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7). "Judgment" was seen first at 5:21-22. This is the first use of the phrase "day of judgment" in the NT: 10:15; 11:22, 24; 12:36; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:7; 1 John 4:17.

GRAMMAR:

"Having been lost" (ver. 6) translates a verb in the perfect tense suggesting a current condition resulting from a past action. "Has come near" (ver. 7) is also a perfect tense, showing the nearness of the kingdom, based on past action. This statement, repeated now for the third time (3:2; 4:17), argues strenuously against the idea that there is yet to be established a kingdom sometime in the distant future. There is only one kingdom and only one iteration of that kingdom, which was established in Acts 2 when Jesus assumed His throne as King.

PARALLELS:

As above, the parallels are found in Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6.

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

God's prophets can be paid, but they should not preach *to be* paid for that would make them hirelings, susceptible to changing God's message to receive more pay (2 Kings 5:20-27). For Israel as "lost sheep," see Jer. 50:6; Isa. 53:6; Ezek. 34.

ARCHAEOLOGY:

"Samaritans" (ver. 5; Matthew's only use) originated with the Assyrian exile (722 B. C.) and the deportation of leaders *out of* Samaria and the northern lands of Israel and moving other *exiles* into the land of Israel. This created the "mixed breed" of Gentile-Israelite living in the northern part of Palestine.

At the time the "Samaritans" are formed, in the Assyrian invasion, it is the 7th century, but the earliest reference we have to a *religious* community is in the 2nd century, with their community based at Mt. Gerizim near Shechem (Sirach 50:25-26; 2 Macc. 5-6; Testament of Levi 5-7; Jubilees 30).

There are many beliefs that the Samaritans and the Jews shared in common¹:

1. They believed and worshiped one God.
2. They avoided images in worship.
3. They were loyal to the law of Moses (Sabbath, circumcision, festivals).
4. They believed they were the “chosen people” with a special right to the land of Palestine.
5. They looked forward and anticipated a glorious future.

But the divisions between the Samaritans and Jews grew over a period of *centuries*. The separation will really begin during the Persian period of biblical history.

There are some Samaritan religious texts that date to the fourth century before Christ. The major difference between the two groups was the Samaritans’ adherence to Mt. Gerizim as the place to worship rather than to Mt. Zion (i.e., Jerusalem) (*Ant.* 2.7.1-8.7 [297-347]). Josephus says that the temple at Mt. Gerizim was built during the reign of Alexander the Great and there is some archaeological confirmation of this.

Yet, during that Greek period, the Greek leaders (Macedonian leaders), took political leadership away from Israelites and so some noble families from Samaria moved to Shechem, the ancient village with deep roots in patriarchal history (mentioned 68 times in the Bible, primarily from Genesis through Judges). These families rebuilt Shechem and built a sanctuary there on the holy mountain of Gerizim.

John Hyrcanus, a member of the Maccabean family, two hundred years later would destroy that temple at Mt. Gerizim, which obviously would inflame bad relations between the two groups. Samaritans, however, still worshiped at Mt Gerizim and still considered it a holy site (John 4:20).

The Samaritans had their own priesthood, which they traced back to Aaron, through Eleazar. Later Samaritan theologians would claim that Eli the priest, in the days prior to Samuel, is the one who changed the priesthood and established the center of worship at Shiloh instead of Shechem.

The Samaritans preserved their own copy of the Law of Moses, the Samaritan Pentateuch (abbreviated SP). It dates at least to the second century before Christ. Only the first five books of the OT, the Torah, were accepted as authoritative, a view they shared with the Sadducees. The SP contains some dialectical peculiarities and changes that fit the interests of the Samaritan worshippers.

Some Samaritans rejected, with the Sadducees, a belief in life after death. They also anticipated a prophet like Moses to arise, in fulfillment of Deut. 18:18, whom they called the “*ta’eb*” (“the one who restores”), but there were *many* messianic varieties of expectations in this inter-testamental period. Compare the statement of the Samaritan woman: “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us” (John 4:25). “Samaritans” are mentioned eleven times in the NT: Matt. 10:5; Luke 9:52; 10:33; 17:16; John 4:9, 39-40; 8:48; Acts 8:25.

“Sodom” (ver. 15) and “Gomorrah” were destroyed for homosexuality as well as other sins in Genesis 19. The two cities became proverbs for God’s wrathful judgment on sin (Isa. 1:9; 13:19; Jer. 23:14; 50:40; Amos 4:11). “Sodom” is mentioned 9 times in the NT, 3 times in Matt (here; 11:23-24). “Gomorrah,” the less well-known city destroyed in Genesis 19, is mentioned four times: Matt. 10:15; Rom. 9:29; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7.

COMMENTS:

Jesus’ plan (the Father’s plan; Rom. 1:9-10; 15:8-9) was to preach first to the “lost sheep of the house of Israel” (cf. 9:36-38). Therefore He told His apostles not to preach to the Gentiles, not at this time. This does not mean Jesus will completely limit Himself to Jews; He has already healed a Gentile (8:5-13; see also 8:28-34; Luke 9:51-56; 17:11-19; John 4). But, His focus and His apostles’ focus will be on the OT people of God. The message they are to

¹ Ferguson, 500.

preach is the same message John preached (3:2) and the same message Jesus preached (4:17). If the apostles went north or east, they would go into Gentile territory. If they went south, it would be Samaritan territory.

Just as Jesus performed such miracles in the preceding two chapters, He gives that authority to His apostles: healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing the lepers, casting out demons. Jesus challenges them that they have received freely from the Father and they should give to others freely.

To illustrate trust in God and His provisions, the apostles were not to take any financial support with them, not gold, silver, copper, or a money bag. They were not to take excessive coats, sandals, or staffs. Jesus gives a universal principle which Paul quotes later: "the worker is worthy of his support" (1 Tim. 5:17-18). Jesus was not calling His followers to be paupers or beggars but to keep their priorities in order.

As the apostles traveled around the area of Galilee, they were to find Jews who were worthy of the gospel, in other words who accepted the gospel, and stay with them in that city. They were to greet that city or house and give them their blessing, the blessing of the peace of the gospel. But if the house or city refused their welcome, they were not to give them their blessing. If someone refused to receive them, Jesus tells the apostles to shake the dust of that city or house off their feet. That reflected the thinking of Jews at that time that paganism was associated with the land; in that case, they would be treating these Jewish cities as if they were pagan. Jesus cautions that judgment will be easier, more tolerable, for the wicked OT cities of Sodom and Gomorrah than for those Jewish cities which rejected the message of the Messiah.

Matthew records 32 statements by the Lord which begin with "truly" (ver. 15). This illustrates the authority with which Jesus taught (7:28-29).

APPLICATION:

The early church went out from Jerusalem, into Judea, then Samaria, and then into the Gentile lands: Acts 1:8; 2:5-11; 8:5-17; 13:46; 18:6; 19:9-10; 28:25-28. Paul subsequently went to the "Jew first, then to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). Paul will refer to his own floggings in 2 Cor. 11:23-24.

If our message does not conform, word for word, to the message of Jesus through His apostles ("book, chapter, and verse"), then we are not being faithful to Jesus. At the end of Jesus' mission on earth, He will give what is known as the "great commission," in which He will send His followers into all the world, to both Jew and Gentile alike (Matt. 28:19-20). The apostles raised the dead in Acts 9:36-43 (Peter) and Acts 20:9-12 (Paul). Ministers are worthy to be paid, Paul teaches (1 Cor. 9:8-14; Gal. 6:6; 1 Tim. 5:17-18), quoting Luke's version of verse 10 (Luke 10:7). The apostles challenge Christians to be hospitable (Rom. 12:13; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9; 3 John 5-8). The Hebrew writer argues that rejection of Jesus Christ is worse, and will bring a worse penalty, than the Jews' rejection of the Law of Moses (10:26-31).

TRANSLATION - 10:16-25:

16 Behold, I, myself, am sending you as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be prudent as serpents and innocent as doves. **17** And beware of men; for they will deliver you unto the Sanhedrin and in their synagogues they will flog you. **18** And before rulers and kings you will be brought for My sake for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. **19** And whenever they will deliver you, do not be anxious how or what you will say; for it will be given to you in that hour what you will say. **20** For not you are those speaking but the Spirit of your Father the One speaking in you. **21** And brother will deliver over brother unto death and father, child, and children will rebel against parents and will put them to death. **22** And you will be hated by all on account of My name; but the one after enduring unto the end this one will be saved. **23** And whenever they will persecute you in this city, flee unto the other; for truly I say to you, you will not at all finish the cities of Israel until when may come the Son of Man.

24 He is not a disciple above the teacher nor a slave above his lord. **25** Enough to the disciple that he may be as his teacher and the slave as his lord. If the house master “Beelzebul” they will call, how much rather those of his household?

WORDS:

“Wolves” (ver. 16) was first seen at 7:15. “Prudent” or “wise” was first seen at 7:24. “Serpent” was first seen at 7:10. “Innocent” or “pure” is used three times: 10:16; Rom. 16:19; Phil. 2:15. “Doves” were found first at 3:16. “Beware” (ver. 17) was first seen at 6:1; 7:15. “To deliver” was first seen at 4:12; 5:25; 10:4. “Sanhedrin” was first seen at 5:22. “To flog” is used 7 times: 10:17; 20:19; 23:34; Mark 10:34; Luke 18:33; John 19:1; Heb. 12:6. “Rulers” (ver. 18) is used 20 times, first at 2:6. “Kings” was seen at 1:6; 2:1-3, 9. “To be brought” is used 69 times, four times in Matt (10:18; 21:2, 7; 26:46). “Testimony” was first seen at 8:4.

“To be anxious” (ver. 19) was first seen in chapter 6 (6:25, 27-28, 31, 34). “Death” (ver. 21) was first seen at 4:16. It is the root word for the verb “put to death” used later in this verse. The verb is used 11 times; in Matt at 10:21; 26:59; 27:1. “To rebel” or to “rise up in rebellion” is used only by Matt: 10:21; 13:12. “To hate” (ver. 22) was used first at 5:43; 6:24. “To endure” is used 17 times in the NT, in Matt, here and 24:13. “End” is used 40 times, 6 in Matt. “To be saved” has been used extensively since 1:21. “To persecute” (ver. 23) also means to “pursue.” It was first seen at 5:10-12, 44. “To finish” or “to complete” was first seen at 7:28.

“Disciple” (ver. 24) was first seen at 5:1; it is used 261 times. “Teacher” was used first at 8:19. “Slave” was first seen at 8:9. “Lord” was first seen at 1:20, 22, 24. “House master” (ver. 25) is a compound word combining “master” (the Greek word gives us “potentate”) and “house.” The word is used 12 times, in Matt at 10:25; 13:27, 52; 20:1, 11; 21:33; 24:43. “Beelzebul” is used 7 times: 10:25; 12:24, 27; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15, 18-19. “Household” is used only here (ver. 25) and in verse 36.

PARALLELS:

The parallels to this paragraph are found in Mark 13:9-13; Luke 21:12-17.

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

The serpent is described in Genesis 3:1, in the LXX, with the same word Jesus uses here of serpents.

ARCHAEOLOGY:

For “courts,” or “Sanhedrin,” see under “Archaeology” at 5:22. For “synagogue,” see under “Archaeology” under 4:23. “Beelzebul” (ver. 25) might mean “lord of flies” or “lord of dung” or “master (lord) of the house.” It was a designation for a Canaanite god (2 Kings 1:2-3) and came to be used for Satan. The “flog” performed in the synagogues was done while the accused laid on the flour. A strap of woven leather was whipped across the back 40 times according to the Law of Moses (Deut. 25:1-3). Later, it was changed to 26 times on the back and 13 times across the chest.

COMMENTS:

Jesus cautions His apostles to be shrewd, wise, and prudent as they faced persecution, yet, they should also be innocent, pure from evil. They would otherwise be defenseless as sheep as they preached among wolves. Some of those wolves would be unbelievers; some would be false teachers. He warns them they will be handed over to courts and be flogged in the synagogues. This punishment envisions Jewish authorities. The next punishment, being brought before governors and kings, envisions Gentile authorities. Their preaching would be “testimony” to them that Jesus’ message was true, proven so by the miraculous abilities they performed (cf. Mark 16:17-20; Heb. 2:3-4).

In verses 19-20, Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, through Whose power He was born (1:18, 20), would guide them and breathe His words into them, just as He had done the

prophets of the OT (cf. 2 Sam. 23:2). This begins to fulfill the promise made in 3:11; it will be fulfilled completely in Acts 2:1-4. In that way, they would not have to worry what they would say, think, or write. Thus, it is superfluous to say that Matthew was a tax collector, and therefore accustomed to taking notes on the life of Jesus. He would not *have to take notes!* In fact, it was not them who wrote or spoke, but the Holy Spirit speaking through them. Let us be careful to uphold the same view of the apostles' teaching as Jesus here teaches!

If the apostles thought that service to Him would be all peace, He clarifies that misconception in verse 21. Family will betray family, even children and parents. His apostles will be hated by "all," due to their relationship to Jesus Christ and His gospel, yet the one who "endured" or "persevered" to the end of their life would be saved. This "end" could be the end of their mission or the end of the world, but the context argues Jesus is talking about the end of their lives. When they are persecuted in one city, they should not force themselves into martyrdom. There is no future success in preaching in forced martyrdom. Jesus calls His apostles to flee into other cities, as long as they are still free to preach the gospel of Christ.

Notice how important Christ is in all this message. He uses "for My sake" or "in My name" several times. Only God the Father could place such an emphasis on His name (Exo. 3:15; 6:3; 9:16; 20:7). This emphasis, again, sets Jesus on a level with the Father.

They will not completely finish their preaching before "the Son of Man comes." There has been considerable debate over the "coming of the Son of Man." Here are some options:

1. Jesus would follow the apostles' shortly (Luke 10:1). In the context of persecution, we do not believe this option carries sufficient weight.
2. With the context of Daniel 7:13-14 (the "Son of Man" theme, which Jesus has utilized already) in the background, Jesus is referring to the coming of the Kingdom on the day of Pentecost, which is closely tied to His enthronement in His kingdom (Acts 2:36; see also Matt. 16:28). While this could be true *theologically*, the context of Matthew 10 argues for a period of time in which the apostles are persecuted. That does not suggest the time before Pentecost. The strength of this argument is that it makes the "coming of the Son of Man" parallel to the coming of the kingdom. We know the kingdom was established on Pentecost, without a doubt. Jesus did come then, but perhaps that is not the idea in this context.
3. The coming of the Son of Man in judgment against Jerusalem in A. D. 70. This is the most likely interpretation since it gives time for the apostles to preach the gospel through the cities of Galilee and it allows time for opposition and persecution against the apostles to arise.
4. Those who believe in premillennialism believe the coming refers to the second coming of Christ. This is obviously false for many reasons, not the least of which is that it ignores the immediate context of Matthew 10, the audience of Matthew 10 (the apostles who are, by now, dead), and the idea of the original audience being persecuted. In addition, there is no text that teaches Jesus is coming back *to earth*.

Jesus continues, in this paragraph, pointing out that if the Son of Man is persecuted, then His disciples should expect to be persecuted. The disciple is not "above" his teacher nor the slave, his master. If the head of the house is called "Beelzebul," which could be interpreted "lord of the house" so that Jesus is making a play on words, with "Beelzebul" being an epithet for Satan, how much more will the members of the house of the Lord be verbal or otherwise abused. The designation is used again of Jesus in Matt. 12:24, 27. There is a price to pay to be a follower of Christ.

APPLICATION:

The guidance of the apostles by the Holy Spirit is elaborated in John 14-16 (14:15-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:13-15) and illustrated in Acts 4:8; 7:55-60; 13:9. See also 1 Corinthians 14:37; 2 Tim. 3:16-17. Paul changes the sheep / wolf metaphor in Acts 20:29, saying that false teachers are wolves dressed as sheep. Paul encourages Christians to be wise in Rom. 16:19; Phil. 2:15.

Christians are encouraged to suffer with patience (John 15:20; Rom. 12:12; 1 Pet. 2:20-21; 4:1). Jesus withdrew from hostile places to preach in peace in other places (Matt. 12:15; 15:21; John 6:14). The early Christians did flee from one city to the next (Acts 8:1; 14:6).

If Jesus suffered persecution, even death, Christians should not be surprised when persecution comes (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul and Barnabas literally shook the dust off their feet in Acts 13:50-51. Paul spoke words which echo this idea in Acts 18:6. Paul would appear before governors Felix and Festus and before King Agrippa. Jesus, of course, would appear before governor Pontius Pilate and King Herod.

The apostles encourage Christians to be more like Jesus Christ: Rom. 8:29; 13:14; Eph. 4:20-24; Col. 3:1-11; 1 John 3:2.

TRANSLATION - 10:26-31:

26 Therefore, do not fear them. For there is nothing having been concealed which will not be revealed and secret which will not be known. **27** What I say to you in the darkness, speak in the light, and what into the ear you hear, preach on the roof. **28** And do not fear from those killing the body but the soul are not being able to kill. But fear, rather, the One being able both soul and body to destroy in hell. **29** Are not two sparrows for an assarion are sold? And one from them does not fall on the ground without your Father. **30** But even your hairs of the head all are having been numbered. **31** Therefore do not fear; of many sparrows you are more valuable.

WORDS:

“To fear” (ver. 26) was used first at 1:20; 2:22. “To be concealed” is used in Matt at 8:24; 10:26. The verb “to be revealed” is used here for the first time, out of 4 in Matt (10:26; 11:25, 27; 16:17), 26 times in the NT. Its noun form gives us the name for Revelation. The word “secret” was used extensively in Matt 6:4, 6, 18. “To know” is used 222 times in the NT, first at 1:25, out of 20 uses in Matt. This is the first use of “darkness” (ver. 27) in the NT (from 16 uses), and the only use in Matt. “To preach” has been used frequently in Matt (3:1; 4:17, 23; 9:35; 10:7). “Rooftop” is used 7 times (10:27; 24:17; Mark 13:15; Luke 5:19; 12:3; 17:31; Acts 10:9).

“To kill” (ver. 28) is used here for the first time in Matt, out of 13 times, 74 in the NT. “Body” is used often in the NT (142), first at 5:29-30. “Soul” is used 103 times (in the NT), first in Matt at 2:20. “To destroy” is also used often, 90 times, first at 2:13; 5:29-30. “Hell” was first used at 5:22, 29-30. See there for comments on *Gehenna*.

“Sparrow” (ver. 29) is used here (10:29, 31) and Luke 12:6-7. “Assarion” as a unit of money is found only here and Luke 12:6. “To sell” is used 22 times, 6 in Matt (10:29; 13:44; 19:21; 21:12; 25:9). “To be more valuable” (ver. 31) or “to be superior in value” is found 13 times, in Matt at 6:26; 10:31; 12:12.

GRAMMAR:

The verb “to be concealed” (ver. 26) is a verb in the perfect tense, which refers to something *now* concealed because it was *hidden* in the past.

PARALLELS:

See also Luke 12:2-7. For similar thoughts, see Luke 21:18; Acts 27:34.

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

Nothing happens to us without God looking (Psa. 121:4-5).

ARCHAEOLOGY:

The sparrow was the cheapest food sold in the marketplace. In Luke 12:6, Jesus states that five sparrows could be purchased for an assarion, 1/16 of a day's wage.

COMMENTS:

Jesus draws His discussion to a conclusion, as He begins ver. 26 with “Therefore.” “Do not fear” is used three times in this section: 10:26, 28, 31.

The apostles are about to enter into a time of severe persecution (“flogging”) and they are responsible for teaching the words of the Holy Spirit (10:19-20). Jesus tells them not to fear because nothing concealed from them will remain concealed. It will be revealed. Nothing will be hidden that will not be made known. We take this to mean that they will be given all the information they need to relate Jesus Christ and His kingdom to all OT prophecies so that the apostles will have all the information they need in preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God (Rom. 16:25; Eph. 3:3-5). Jesus words this comment in a different way in verse 27. When Jesus speaks to them in “darkness,” or in “parables,” they will reveal that “in the light,” that is in a way that is understandable. What they hear whispered in the ear, they should preach on the (flat) roof tops, perhaps the location where other heralds would announce important community news.

Again in verse 28, Jesus challenges His apostles not to fear those who kill the physical because they cannot touch the spiritual. Rather, they should fear the One who can destroy the physical and spiritual in the fires of *gehenna*, hell. The word “destroy” here does not refer to annihilation. Clearly the “destruction” of the body does not include “destruction” of the soul. It refers to the destruction of happiness, the destruction of hope and joy, the destruction of pleasure. Hell is eternal, lasting as long as heaven does (25:46). Another point to show from this text is that the human being is composed of at least two parts: body and soul. In this context, Jesus clearly has in mind an eternal destination for the body (the physical which will transform into the spiritual; 1 Cor. 15:44-46), and the soul (referring to the spiritual part of man).

To illustrate the care the Father has for the apostles, in verse 29, Jesus points out that sparrows, which were cheap, could not fall to the ground without the Father knowing about it. So knowledgeable and caring is the Father, that even the hairs of the head are numbered (see Luke 21:18; Acts 27:34)! “So,” Jesus concludes these thoughts (ver. 31), “do not fear,” since God’s disciples are more valuable to Him than many sparrows. Jesus proved that same point earlier when He allowed 2,000 pigs to be destroyed for the care of two men (8:28-34).

APPLICATION:

In contrasting the Father’s knowledge of sparrows with His concern for human beings could not better bring out the love and concern the Father has for His disciples (cf. 1 Pet. 5:7). While 10:28 argues for a dual nature of man (physical and spiritual), it is not at all clear if man is actually triune in nature (physical, spiritual, and psychical), designated by: 1) soul, 2) spirit, 3) body. “Soul” and “spirit” seem to be distinguished only in two passages: 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 4:12. Otherwise, it appears that “soul” and “spirit” both designate the unseen part of man, whether psychical or spiritual, if those two can be distinguished.

For further passages on the resurrection of the wicked to eternal punishment in hell, see John 5:29; Acts 24:15; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 14:10; 20:10, 15; 21:8.

TRANSLATION - 10:32-33:

32 Therefore all which he will confess in Me before men, I will confess even also in him before My Father, the One in the heavens. **33** And whoever may deny me before men, I will deny also even him before My Father, the One in the heavens.

WORDS:

“To confess” (ver. 32) or “to acknowledge” is used 26 times, in Matt at 7:23, here and 14:7. “To deny” (ver. 33) is used in Matt here and at 26:70, 72. It is used in the NT 33 times.

PARALLELS:

Luke’s parallel is in 12:8-9. Peter makes the greatest confession in Matt. 16:16. Jesus made the confession before the governor, Pilate (1 Tim. 6:16). Paul refers to the confession in

Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Tim. 6:12. The nobleman from Ethiopia was immersed for the forgiveness of sins after making the great confession (Acts 8:37).

COMMENTS:

Observe in this paragraph what a central role Jesus plays in His disciples' life. This confession is far broader than the confession one makes when he or she is immersed into Christ (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37). This "confession" refers to one's way of life, words, actions, attitude, behavior, relationship to Christ's teachings. If one is courageous and faithful to confess Jesus in their life, He will confess them ("I know him / her;" see 7:23) before the Father in heaven. The counter position is also true; if one is fearful and unbelieving and denies knowing and following Christ before men, Christ will deny knowing them before the Father in heaven.

APPLICATION:

Courage to teach the gospel and remain faithful to Christ is paramount in the Christian walk. Jesus emphasizes this in John 15. The "fearful" in Revelation 21:8, who will have their part in the lake of fire, are likely those who were too fearful of others to stay faithful to Jesus Christ and His gospel. Some in Galatia were fearful and turned their backs on Christ (Gal. 1:6-9).

TRANSLATION - 10:34-39:

34 Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace but a sword. **35** For I came to divide man against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, **36** and enemies of a man [are] his household. **37** The one loving father or mother more than Me is not of Me worthy, and the one loving son or daughter more than Me is not of Me worthy. **38** And who does not take his cross and follows behind Me is not of Me worthy. **39** The one finding his soul will lose it, and the one losing his soul for My sake will find it.

WORDS:

"To think" (ver. 34) was first used at 5:17 (also 10:34 and 20:10 in Matt.). "Peace" was used first at 10:13, 34 (only in Matt) of 92 uses. "Sword" is used here for the first time in Matt; it is used especially in 26:47, 51-52, 55. It is used 29 times in the NT. "To divide" (ver. 35) is used only here in Matt. "Daughter-in-law" is used only here in Matt, out of 8 uses. "Mother-in-law" is used 6 times, first with Peter's mother-in-law at 8:14. "Enemy" is used 32 times, first at 5:43-44. "Household" is used here, at 10:25, 36.

"To love" (ver. 37) is the verb *phileo*, first seen at 6:5. "Cross" (ver. 38) is used here for the first time in the NT (also at 16:24; 27:32, 40, 42 in Matt) out of 27 times. "To follow" was first used at 4:20, 22, 25. "To find" (ver. 39) is used at 1:18; 2:8; 7:7-8, 14. "To lose" is found first at 2:13; 5:29-30, out of 90 uses.

PARALLELS:

For similar thoughts, see Luke 9:23; 12:51-53; 14:26-27. Verse 39 is one of the most frequent statements recorded of Jesus: 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25.

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

The Messianic age was supposed to be an age of peace: Isaiah 9:6; 26:3; 53:5. In verse 35, Jesus quotes from Micah 7:6, illustrating that the divisive nature of Christ's gospel is not any different than that of the prophets.

ARCHAEOLOGY:

This is the first reference to a “cross” in the NT. Thousands of criminals died by crucifixion. Jesus’ audience would be intimately familiar with this form of punishment. Criminals, as Jesus did, would have to carry their cross-beam to the crucifixion site.

COMMENTS:

The command “do not think” is very strong. Jesus did not want to paint a rosy picture of discipleship. Jesus is the “Prince of Peace” and He came to bring peace between man and God (John 14:27; 2 Cor. 5:16-21) and between men, if each will submit to His rule. However, it is not always possible to live in peace with others, especially when the gospel rebukes their sin (cf. Rom. 12:18) and men love darkness rather than light (John 3:19-20).

Therefore, the “gospel of peace” can cause division (a “sword”) between those who love the truth and those who do not. Jesus quotes Micah 7:6 showing that following God has always caused division within humanity (think of Cain and Abel, Gen. 4), even within one’s own family. In verse 37, Jesus sets an ultimatum: love for Him absolutely must take priority over family.

In a time when thousands of criminals were crucified and the average person was quite familiar with the process, even carrying the crossbeam of the crucifixion to the site, Jesus tells His apostles they must be willing to take their cross and follow Him (“daily,” Luke 9:23). This “cross” is not referring to daily frustrations or daily hassles of life. Jesus is suggesting that His followers may have to be willing to sacrifice fortune, family, friendships, or fame if they are to be faithful to Him. The promise of faithful discipleship is given in verse 39. If an apostle (or disciple) allows his life to be taken, for the sake of his relationship to Christ, he will “find” his life in the spiritual realm. On the contrary, one who refuses the cost of discipleship to promote his own life and joy will forsake that life in the world to come.

APPLICATION:

It is good to know that even if our parents do not love and support our decision to become a follower of Jesus Christ, God loves us more than our parents (see Psa. 27:10). Jesus’ own family did not follow Him during His earthly ministry (Mark 3:20-21, 31-35; John 7:1-9). Paul felt that he died daily for the cross of Christ in 1 Cor. 15:31 (see also 2 Cor. 4:10-11). Jesus recognized the value of familial relationships in passages such as 15:4-6; 19:19.

Jesus came to bring peace between man and God, and man and man, if man will obey Him: Luke 2:14; Eph. 2:14-18. This peace is a spiritual peace, not necessarily peace in this world (John 14:27; Gal. 5:22). In 1 Corinthians 7:12-16, Paul allows that a Christian’s spouse might desert him or her because they are faithful to Christ. In that case, Paul says, the Christian is under a higher bondage to Christ, to remain faithful to Him, than to the spouse. While he does not give the Christian the right to remarry due to desertion, he does allow that the Christian spouse can allow the other to leave.

TRANSLATION - 10:40-42:

40 The one welcoming you, Me he welcomes and the one Me welcoming, welcomes the One sending Me. **41** The one welcoming a prophet in the name of a prophet, the reward of a prophet he will receive, and the one welcoming a servant in the name of a servant, the reward of a servant he will receive. **42** And whoever may give to drink one of these little ones a cup of cold [water] only in the name of a disciple, truly I say to you, he will not lose his reward.

WORDS:

“To welcome” (ver. 40) or “to receive” is used first in verse 14, out of 56 uses in the NT. “To send” was seen at 10:5. It was first used at 2:16. “Prophet” (ver. 41) was first seen at 1:22. “Reward” was seen first at 5:12, 46. “Servant” was first seen at 1:19; 5:45; 9:13. “To give to drink” (ver. 42) is used 15 times, in Matt at 10:42; 25:35, 37, 42; 27:48. “Little one” is found 46

times, in Matt at 10:42; 11:11; 13:32; 18:6, 10, 14; 26:39, 73. "Cup" is used 31 times, in Matt at 10:42; 20:22-23; 23:25-26; 26:27, 39. "Cold" is found only here and in Rev. 3:15-16.

OLD TESTAMENT REFERENCES:

The woman of Zarephath received the prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 17:9-24 while the Shunnamite woman received the prophet Elisha in 2 Kings 4:8-37.

COMMENTS:

In this final paragraph, Jesus sets the apostles, due to their message, on the same level He is. If one receives or welcomes the apostles and their teaching, then they are receiving and welcoming Jesus Himself. By extension, when one receives or welcomes Jesus, he is receiving and welcoming the Father. The principle is given again in verse 41, relative to prophets. If one receives a prophet, he will receive a reward for such kindness and generosity. If one receives a servant, he receives the one who sent the servant. If one gives a cup of cold water, and only that, to a follower of Christ (designated "little ones" out of affection), he will receive his reward. This is now the 10th, 11th, and 12th uses of the word "reward" in Matthew's gospel.

APPLICATION:

While Matthew does not record the apostles fulfilling this limited commission, Mark (6:12) and Luke do (9:6). They were getting the Jews ready for the kingdom to be established on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after the resurrection of Christ. If one receives the messengers of Christ, he is receiving Christ. Saul of Tarsus learned that to persecute messengers of Christ is to persecute Christ (Acts 9:1-5).