

Daily Bread with Brother Hwa-Chi (Not reviewed by the speaker, for personal use only)

Luke 10: 12-24

Brothers and sisters, peace be with you, this is Hwa-Chi. Thank the Lord, it's time to read the bible again. Today, we will continue reading Luke chapter 10, verses 12 to 24.

Earlier we read about Jesus sending out the 70 disciples, two by two, to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God. He instructed them to stay in the house of a son of peace, and to receive whatever hospitality was offered to them. If anyone did not receive them, they were to shake off the dust of that city from their feet when they departed — signifying that those people had rejected the gospel on their own accord, and the responsibility did not rest on the disciples.

Verse 12: "But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that Day for Sodom than for that city."

Today we are in the age of grace. What we proclaim is the gospel of grace — whoever is willing to receive it may freely receive the gospel of the Kingdom of God. But one day, the door of grace will close, and when that time comes, it will be the Day of Judgment. Jesus says that in that day, Sodom — that city of wickedness — will fare better than such a city.

In Genesis 19:24, because of the deep and grievous sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, which had reached up to God, He sent His angels to destroy both cities. Verses 24–25 record: "Then the LORD rained brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, from the LORD out of the heavens. So He overthrew those cities, all the plain, all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground." Here Jesus warns that when a city refuses the peaceful gospel of God, judgment will one day come upon it.

Verse 13: "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes."

Chorazin and Bethsaida were twin cities situated on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had performed many works there. And so He says: the mighty works done among you, had they been done in Tyre and Sidon — Tyre and Sidon being to the north of Galilee, lands where the Gentiles dwelt — the people there would have long since repented in sackcloth and ashes.

Verses 14–15: "But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades."

Capernaum was at that time the center of God's work on earth. Jesus moved in and out of Capernaum, performed many miracles and signs there, proclaimed the way of the Kingdom of God, and preached the gospel extensively. Jesus says to Capernaum: I have performed so many miracles, wonders, and mighty works among you, and spoken so much of the way of the Kingdom of God — and yet you still have not repented? When the heavenly blessings of the Kingdom of God came to you and you did not receive them, the day will come when you will face God's judgment, and the entire city will be left desolate. Regarding the workers whom God sends out, Christ makes no special demands on them. Go into every city, find a son of peace, and accept whatever hospitality is offered. As for those who do not receive the message you preach or welcome you, the responsibility lies entirely with them — they must face their own judgment.

Verse 16: "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

God grants His workers a very high standing — we are, in effect, ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. We are sent out by Jesus Christ to proclaim the gospel of His Kingdom; when an ambassador goes forth, he represents Jesus Christ. Therefore, whoever listens to us and is willing to receive the gospel of Christ is listening to Jesus Christ Himself; and whoever rejects us is rejecting Jesus Christ. What we are required to do is to be faithful to our commission. Where God directs us to go east, we go east; where He directs us west, we go west; where He directs us forward, we go forward; where He calls us to remain, we remain. As for the fruit of the work, that is not a responsibility we bear. Thanks be to the Lord — in this way Jesus sent out the 70 disciples, two by two, to represent Jesus Christ in the world and to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Verse 17: "Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.'"

After the seventy had been sent out for a period of time, they returned to give their report to Jesus. Throughout the Gospels, the pattern is consistent: those who are sent out by someone return and report to that same person. There are no statistics, no accounts of achievements, no detailed reports of results — but rather what these seventy had received in and through their work. It was not how much they had accomplished for God or what numbers they could report, but rather what God had manifested through them and in them as He worked.

How so? They said, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name." They clearly understood that they had gone out in the Lord's name as ambassadors of His kingdom. When we go out in the name of the Lord — these disciples said — even the demons submitted to us. For when Jesus sent them out, He had not instructed them to cast out demons; He had told them to heal the sick and to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Yet when they returned and gave their report, what they had witnessed surpassed all they had anticipated — even unclean spirits and evil beings had submitted to them.

Verses 18–19: "And He said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.'"

Jesus said: I have seen that Satan has already been judged — Satan has already fallen from heaven like lightning. And moreover, when Jesus sent them out, He gave them authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, upon evil spirits and all their works. He also gave them power to overcome every ability of the enemy. He was therefore fully confident that nothing could harm them. Though they were sent out like sheep into the midst of wolves, it is our Lord who protects us, and He has given us the power to overcome every enemy.

Verse 20: "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

In their experience, the disciples were very elated, very joyful, and very honored, because it seemed that even the demons listened to them and were subject to them. But Jesus told them not to rejoice because the spirits were subject to them; do not rejoice because of the results of your work. More importantly, rejoice because your names are written in heaven. Although we rejoice when the work is victorious; although we rejoice when there are results; although we rejoice when many signs and wonders accompany us; yet the Lord tells us here that the true source of joy is our salvation—we have eternal salvation.

For a person to receive salvation is more important and more joyful than for us to have power. What we proclaim is the gospel of life, so that people may receive life and joy. Healing the sick, casting out demons, signs and wonders—these are not the goals we pursue. What we truly pursue is our salvation and the growth of our life. Here Jesus clearly tells His disciples to rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

Verse 21a: "In that hour Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit and said, 'I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.'"

The word "rejoiced" here means an exceedingly great joy. Then Jesus offered a prayer of praise, saying, "Father," indicating the life connection between Him and the Father; and then He called Him the Lord of heaven and earth. Heaven is the place where the Father rules—He is the Lord of heaven, without question. Now through Jesus sending out the seventy disciples, and their report that the work had great results and many obeyed the gospel, the Father also became the Lord of the earth. Because of this, Jesus was very excited and uplifted, and He prayed in praise to the Father: Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank You, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes.

Verses 21b–22: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him."

When we come before Christ and before God the Father, we do not need our own intelligence or wisdom; we only need to turn and become like little children. All that we have is simply what we have received. Just as all that Christ has was delivered to Him by the Father, so all that we have has been delivered to us by Christ. No one knows who the Son is except the Father. In other words, the fact that today we can know Jesus Christ and are willing to receive Him as the Savior of our lives is because the Father chose us before the foundation of the world. He made us willing and gave us the opportunity to know and accept Christ as the Savior of our lives.

Likewise, no one knows who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. Once we accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of our lives, He is willing to reveal the Father in our hearts, so that we may truly know the Father. The Triune God is such a profound mystery that the human mind can scarcely

comprehend it. Yet through our receiving Jesus Christ, in our experience we are able to enjoy it. We are able to receive the Lord Jesus Christ because the Father first entrusted us to Him, and we are able to know the Father's great love because it is revealed to us through Jesus Christ. This is a great mystery. Although the human heart cannot fully comprehend it, in our experience we can truly partake of it. The mystery of the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—is not merely a theological issue, but something for us to experience and enjoy in our life.

Verses 23–24: "Then He turned to His disciples and said privately, 'Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see; for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see what you see, and have not seen it, and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it.'"

These were the words Jesus spoke to the disciples at that time; in fact, they are also words spoken today to every disciple who belongs to Him. Today every Christian, in our subjective experience and in the revelation of Jesus, sees and hears more than all the prophets and kings of the past were able to see and hear, and therefore we are even more blessed. Therefore, each of us should carry a heart of gratitude and joy, letting what we see and hear become our daily enjoyment and supply in life.

Let us pray together: Lord, how grateful we are! In our lives, we are able to truly know You, and to receive You as the Savior of our lives. And not only that — once we know You, all the riches of the Father take on visible, tangible form that we can actually see, hear, and even experience. Lord, help us, through our daily time with You in reading Your Word, in prayer, and in fellowship, to enjoy Your riches, to allow Your glory to flow out from us, and to cause our lives to rise higher and higher day by day, and our lives to grow a little more each day. May we become people who bear witness to Your name and bring glory to Your name. Thank You for blessing our lives today. We pray in the holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen.