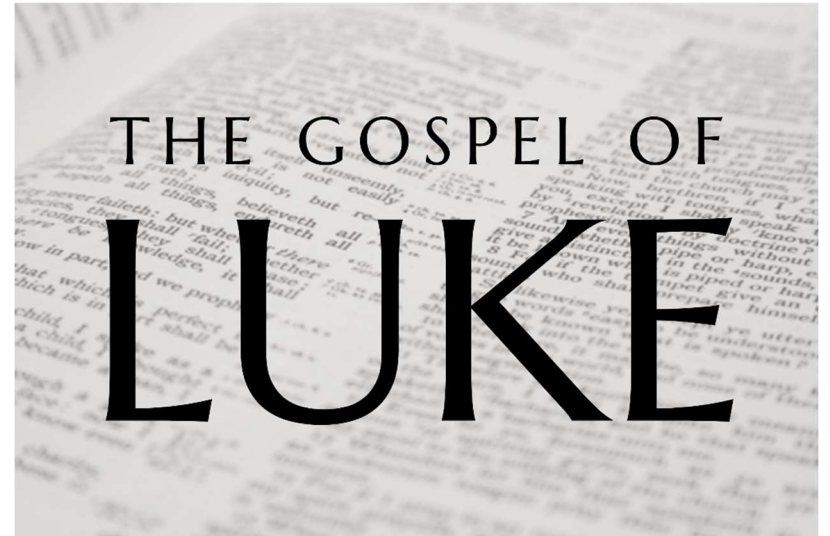


## FAMILY WORSHIP BOOKLET



God tells us that Ezra read from the book of the Law,  
day after day, and that the people of God  
were filled with joy!

**Friday – Luke 10:17-20 – Rejoice that your names are written in heaven.**

V20. Yes, the seventy-two who have returned and are excited about the fact that they have been able to cast out demons in Jesus' name, but, as we have seen this week, the really important thing is what this means in terms of eternity. They have experienced victory over the demons sent by Satan solely because of Jesus' power and authority over Satan. Obviously, these healing events are hugely significant for the person who experienced them and were set free from the demon's bondage. Jesus is not disparaging that fact. What he is doing, though, is drawing their attention to the fact that they should be getting excited about what this defeat means for them and for their eternity.

Getting caught up in the ability to do things in Jesus' name is dangerous. At the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught just how dangerous that could be. "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'" Matthew 7:21-23.

Just because someone can do amazing things, including casting out of demons, doesn't mean that they will be accepted into the presence of God come the Day of Judgement. What matters on that day is whether or not one's name is written in the "Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27). For Jesus, that is the critical point and the only reason for rejoicing and that is all about confession of sin and faith in Christ as your Saviour.

What a wonderful, glorious thing it is to know that your name is written in the "Lamb's book of life" in heaven. That you have been declared justified in the sight of God, accepted by adoption as one of His children, sealed into an eternal inheritance guaranteed by the promised Holy Spirit, to the praise of God's glory, is truly something amazing (Ephesians 1:3-14). If you want to rejoice in the defeat of Sin and Satan's power – then rejoice in the new life you have in Jesus Christ. If you want to get excited – get excited about living daily for the Lord through the love, mercy, and grace of God. That is the most unbelievable and astonishing reality one can experience in life and one to truly rejoice in.

Q1. What is to be the cause of our rejoicing in life? Are you doing so?

Produced by Ottawa RPC to help family worship.  
These notes have been prepared by  
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#### **Thursday – Luke 10:17-20 – What power does Satan have?**

V19. Jesus speaks of the authority that he has given them to tread on, and destroy serpents and scorpions. Is Jesus telling them they can actually stand on a snake or a scorpion and kill it? No, he is talking to them about the power they have in his name to destroy the allies of Satan. Yes, the apostle Paul did survive a viper bite on the island of Malta (Acts 28:5), but that was a unique case of God preserving Paul; this is something entirely different.

Serpents and scorpions are used symbolically in the Scriptures to refer to those who participate with Satan in his spiritual warfare against Christ, and the Kingdom of God. A spiritual warfare that is, and will be, unsuccessful for Satan and those working with him. We have the promise of God to Satan in Genesis 3:15, that the seed of the woman, Christ, will crush Satan's head, and destroy him as he strikes Christ's heel – the cross. David speaks of the destruction of Satan's spiritual allies, the adder, the lion, and the serpents, through their being trodden upon in Psalm 91:13. Christ has now given this authority to these men. And note, it is not just authority over Satan's cohorts; it is an authority over Satan himself – "over all the power of the enemy". The statement, "and nothing shall hurt you", means that neither Satan nor any of those allied with him can inflict with persecution and death at will. Satan does not have that ability. He does not have the power to act when and how he pleases. He is a real spiritual being, who does prowl around the world, like a roaring lion, seeking those he may devour (1 Peter 5:8); but he is only allowed to act when God permits him.

Like all angels, Satan is a created being who depends on God for his existence. Even though he lives that existence in relentless, vengeful rebellion against God, he does so in perpetual subordination to God (Job 1:6). He has limited knowledge and power, and can only be in one place at a time; I Kings 8:39, Isaiah 46:9-10, Daniel 2:27,28, Job 1:12,16,19. Satan cannot tempt without God's permission (Job 1:12). He was only able to tempt Jesus in the wilderness because Jesus had been led into the wilderness to engage with Satan by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 4:1). He can cause no physical harm or kill without God's permission (Job 2:2-6), even though the Bible says that he has the power of death (Hebrews 2:14). Satan can neither mention a believer's name nor force a believer to do anything without God's permission (Job 2:3, Acts 26:18).

Q1. Is Jesus saying that we can stand on a snake and kill it?

Q2. What is Jesus taking about?

#### **Monday – Luke 10:13-16 – Responding to the gospel.**

Jesus is about to send out the seventy-two and has just reminded them that many will reject the gospel. He refers to two Galilean cities who did so and announces judgement on them. But note, the word "Woe" is not used in an angry sense, but as a judicial verdict pronounced with genuine regret because the outcome is truly horrifying. Chorazin and Bethsaida are communities close to where Jesus lives in Capernaum on the west side of the Sea of Galilee, and presumably had experienced a lot of Jesus' ministry, ministry which he cites as "mighty works".

The comparison with the twin Mediterranean Sea ports of Tyre and Sidon is striking. Part of the former Phoenician empire, these cities were commercial centres, renowned for depravity and debauchery. Isaiah (ch23) and Ezekiel (ch28) had made prophetic statements against them, and for Chorazin and Bethsaida to now be compared with them is astonishing and devastating. The idea that Jewish cities could be compared in any way with pagan heathen communities is unthinkable, but the idea that there could be repentance in these two Gentile cities of Tyre and Sidon, well, that is just unbelievable to the Jewish mind. And just in case anyone mishears the word repentance, Jesus adds "sitting in sackcloth and ashes", in other words, broken by grief at their sin.

Such a transformation of two large cosmopolitan Gentile cities would have been remarkable, similar to what took place in Nineveh by God's hand through Jonah. So, why did Jesus not go to Tyre and Sidon if thousands of people could have been saved? It is a question that cannot be answered. Ultimately, God's providence governs all things perfectly according to His eternal decrees, and His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8). That is why we should constantly be seeking to know and walk in God's ways, even if those ways don't always make sense to us.

The sobering conclusion of what Jesus is saying is that, come the Day of Judgement the people who lived in Chorazin and Bethsaida will experience a more terrible punishment than those in Tyre and Sidon. Why? Because they have heard the Truth and rejected it, whereas the inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon didn't have that opportunity. These words would have sent shock waves through those hearing them. The question for you and me is, how are we responding to God's Word?

Q1. In using the word 'Woe', is Jesus being harsh?

Q2. How does Jesus compare Chorazin and Bethsaida with Tyre and Sidon?

## **Tuesday – Luke 10:13-16 - Hearing about Jesus.**

Yesterday, we considered how Jesus' comparison of Chorazin and Bethsaida with Tyre and Sidon shocked his hearers, but there's more. Jesus isn't finished, and what he says now is truly staggering. In V15, "Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades." What? Capernaum is the city where Jesus is living and has witnessed many of his numerous mighty works. The streets of Capernaum are ringing with Jesus' authoritative teaching. No community in the world has been exposed to the power and teachings of Jesus as have the people of Capernaum. They will have assumed that they are heaven-bound, but the reality is that they will join the line of Sodom, Tyre, Sidon, Chorazin, Bethsaida, and others. The ordinary, decent, good people of Capernaum, men and women who have seen and heard Jesus' work firsthand, are doomed to eternal punishment. Why? Because of their refusal to truly confess and repent of their sin, and follow Jesus 'all in'. This is something to take a moment to stop and think about.

V16. As Jesus sends these men out, he leaves them with one thought – 'it's not about you and the people you are going to meet'. Yes, the seventy-two are going to experience rejection, it is inevitable; but, as they go out, they have to remember that it isn't about them, it's about the people and the relationship they have with Jesus and the Father. The seventy-two are being sent out with the most exciting message the world could ever hear – the good news of the gospel. News that will transform many people's lives, but not everyone will greet them with open arms, and they need to be acquainted with, and face, that reality. It is important that they understand and accept this, otherwise they will give up after the first few days.

Nothing has changed today. Christ sends us out with the most exciting message the world has ever heard – the good news of the gospel. Many will reject it, but we must grasp the fact that they are not rejecting us, though it might seem like it. They are rejecting Jesus, and in rejecting Jesus, they are rejecting God the Father. The consequences of that rejection will be eternal, and that is the reason why we must not be deterred from going forward daily with his good news.

Q1. Which community does Jesus refer to in v15?

Q2. What does Jesus say about Capernaum?

Q3. What does Jesus tell the 72 just before he sends them out, and why does he do so?

## **Wednesday – Luke 10:17-20 - What are you rejoicing in?**

The seventy-two men return. We are not told how long they have been away, but it probably wasn't too long, given the number of them, the size of the region, and the fact that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem. What we do know is that they all came back, filled with joy and excitement. Although Jesus had warned them about possible rejection, it seems like they have been well received wherever they've gone, and if not, it hasn't affected them adversely. They are excited about the fact that they have been able to heal people who were demon-possessed.

V18. Jesus doesn't join in their excited chattering, but explains the reason why they have been able to cast out demons in his name. In doing so, he says that he saw Satan fall from heaven. Some commentators think that this is a reference to the day Satan was expelled from heaven, because, in his pride, he rejected the rule of God in his life. Others say that it refers to what happened in the wilderness when Jesus met and defeated Satan by not succumbing to his temptations. And some say they just don't know and want to leave it at that. I favour the first explanation, i.e., that it took place in eternity in heaven, before the creation of the earth.

Jesus describes how he witnessed the fall of Satan. Note, it wasn't with his physical eyes, because it happened when he was in his pre-incarnate form in heaven, not as a man in human form on earth. Jesus says that the fall of Satan from heaven was like lightning. Does that refer to the speed of the fall? Probably, but it could also refer to the sudden and shocking effect of the event. Beyond that, we are not told anything more, so we have to leave it at that.

The point to get is that Jesus is conveying to the seventy-two that their work is part of something that has been going on since before the beginning of time, and that they need to see it in that context. Their joy, therefore, should look to rest on something other than simply the fact that they have been able to cast out demons. Jesus is calling them to think of the eternal nature and extent of what they are participating in. We must do the same. People are often taken with the idea that if something dramatic were to happen to them, it would be really exciting; but what is really dramatic is the fact that each Lord's Day, when God's Word is preached, Christ is doing things that are staggering and for eternity.

Q1. How are the 72 feeling when they return?

Q2. Why are they so excited?

Q3. What does Jesus say and why?