

Lesson 23: Lord of the Harvest

Matthew 9:35-10:15; Ezekiel 34

- I. **THE SCATTERED FLOCK** (9:35-36; Num 27:16-17) — Ultimately the prayer of Moses and the promise to David finds fulfillment in Jesus Christ.
- A. **The Compassionate Heart** (36)—*deeply moved with pity*
- B. **The Distressed Sheep** (Jer 50:6; Ezk 34)
1. **Harassed** – They were weary, neglected, burdened and abused by those who misrepresented God and falsely mishandled His Law.
 2. **Helpless** – Sheep cannot protect or provide for themselves
 3. **Without a Shepherd** – Jesus does not despise the sheep; He longs to gather them.
- C. **The Greater David** (9:27; Ps 78:70-72; Isa 40:11; Ezk 34:23-24)—*the “Son of David”*
1. **Israel’s King**—the right to rule
 2. **Israel’s Shepherd**—rules the nation like a shepherd tends his flock of sheep
- II. **A Great Harvest** (9:37-38; Isa 5:1-2; Mat 3:8)—
- A. **Ingathering of Souls** (Rev 14:14-19)—*many saved before the Final Judgment*
- B. **Need for Harvesters** (Rom 10:13-15)
1. **Why are workers needed?** (Rom 10:13-15) **To take the Gospel to the world**
 - a. **The Season of Harvest** (Mat 24:14; Heb 3:7-8)—until Jesus returns
 - b. **The Abundance of Harvest** (Rev 7:9-10)—a great international multitude
 2. **How should we respond to the need?** (38) **Pray**
- C. **Lord of the Harvest**—The Son of Man in Daniel and Revelation
1. **His Authority**—Those who work for Jesus must be invested with His authority.
 2. **His Workers** (Acts 13:2)—He chooses and sends.
 3. **His Field**—We are not in competition with other Christian ministries!

III. The Apostles' Training (10:1-10)—A major part of Jesus' ministry was training Apostles.

A. Authority

1. **Is Real**—Spiritual authority is not a human management position.
2. **Is Needed**—We do not have the power to stand against Satan on our own.
3. **Is Given**—Satan must give way before those who bear the authority of Christ.

B. Commission

1. **To the Lost Sheep of Israel** (Rom 1:16 & 2:9-10;)—*first to Jews*, then to Gentiles
2. **To Preach the Kingdom of Heaven**—It is near (repent).
3. **To Do Miracles of Mercy**—Care for sick, dying, outcast, rescue souls from Satan.

C. Support

1. **No Charge** (8b)—The Gospel is free!
2. **No Supplies** (9)—Short term, training mission; build faith and experience of Apostles.
 - a. **This is God's work.** It does not depend upon your planning and resources.
 - b. **The Lord will provide.** (Mat 6:33) All you need while you are doing His business.
 - c. **Those who are served should support.** (10b) The workman is worthy of his hire.

IV. MESSENGERS OF PEACE (10:11-15)

A. **Seeking a Worthy Person**—God has already prepared somebody where you are going.

B. **Blessing a Home**—traditional Jewish greeting is “Shalom” (peace); not mere formality

1. **The Resting of Peace**—God will bless the home that welcomes Christ's messenger.
2. **The Return of Peace**—Their rejection does not need to ruin your peace; you keep it.

C. **Handling Rejection** (10:14-15)

1. **Move On** (Mat 7:6)—Practice Christ's teaching on discernment.
2. **Shake the Dust from Your Feet**—Sign (duly noted) and warning,
3. **Wait for the Judgment of God**
 - a. It is not your place to punish.
 - b. God will judge and punish fairly.