

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS
KKK. Christ's Call To Israel's People
(Luke 10:1-24)

I. Introduction

- A. Israel's leaders had refused to believe that Jesus was the Messiah and Son of God, so it remained to be seen if Israel's people might believe in Him (J. D. Pentecost, The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, 1991, p. 296).
- B. To that end, Christ sent seventy-two disciples out to evangelize Israel's people ahead of Him, Luke 10:1.
- C. We view the passage for our insight, application and edification (as follows):

II. Christ's Call To Israel's People, Luke 10:1-24.

- A. The leaders of Israel had irreversibly decided to reject Christ and were bent on leading the people to reject Him, too, Ibid. "Before the decision was finalized" by the people, and thus by the nation, "Christ appointed seventy-two and 'sent them two by two ahead of him to every place where he was about to go' (v. 1), Ibid.
- B. "The round number seventy had special significance to the Jews," Ibid. Moses had appointed seventy elders to help him administrate the nation, there were seventy men on the Sanhedrin, Israel's religious ruling body in Jesus' day, so Christ's appointing seventy-two as His representatives signaled He was trying to reach Israel's people with the message of His identity as Messiah and Son of God that they might believe in Him, Ibid.
- C. Jesus then commissioned the seventy-two to evangelize the people of Israel as described in Luke 10:1-16:
 - 1. Christ told the seventy-two to pray that more messengers would be raised up to join them in gathering the harvest, for the harvest was plenteous but the laborers were too few for the harvest, Luke 10:2; Ibid.
 - 2. However, their ministry was fraught with danger as Christ's messengers were being sent forth like helpless lambs among the dangerous spiritual wolves of hostile unbelievers, Luke 10:3, Ibid. Christ's messengers were thus to act with wisdom in several ways as follows (Luke 10:4-12, 16):
 - a. They were to trust God for their protection and material provisions, taking no extra money or clothing and to make no customary greetings on the way due to the urgency of their mission, verse 4, Ibid., p. 296-297.
 - b. When offered typical hospitality, Christ's messengers were to say, "Peace to this house," and if someone there who promoted peace, the peace offered by Christ's messengers would rest upon them, Luke 10:4-6a NIV. If the household rejected them, the peace offered by the messengers would return to them, verse 6b.
 - c. The messengers were to stay in the first house that granted them hospitality in each town and eat what was given them without moving from house to house to show they were not greedy, but humble men, v. 7-8.
 - d. The seventy-two messengers were to heal the sick and say that the kingdom of God had come near to them, but if they were not welcomed, they were to denounce it, wiping off the dust of their feet in repudiation of the town's rejection, but still stating that the kingdom of God had come near to them, 9-11. It would be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for such a city in Israel, Luke 10:12. Those who accepted the seventy-two accepted Christ, and those who rejected them rejected Him, v. 16.
 - e. Jesus thus denounced the cities of Chorazin and Capernaum for having rejected Him, Luke 10:13-15.
 - 3. The seventy-two messengers went forth performing their ministries and then returned to report to Jesus about the results, claiming that even the demons had been subject to them in Jesus' name, Luke 10:17.
- D. Jesus replied that He had given them the power over serpents and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy, that nothing would harm them as seen in Christ's having witnessed Satan fall like lightening from heaven, Luke 10:18-19. However, Jesus urged the seventy-two to rejoice not so much over the power they had been given by Him, but that they were saved, their names having been recorded in heaven, Luke 10:20.
- E. Christ then rejoiced over those who had believed in Him, Luke 10:21-24:
 - 1. Jesus joyfully thanked the Father for hiding spiritual truths of Himself from wise and prudent unbelievers while revealing them to spiritual babes who had believed in Him, that it was good in God's eyes, verse 21.
 - 2. Christ added that those who had not had God's truths revealed to them were unbelievers who functioned in blindness, that Christ revealed them only to those He chose to reveal them, those being believers, v. 22.
 - 3. Jesus then turned to His disciples and blessed them as those who had been recipients of God's insight, that they had witnessed what many prophets and kings and wanted to see, Luke 10:23-24.

Lesson: When Israel's leaders rejected Christ, He sent out seventy-two messengers to evangelize Israel's people. However, Christ revealed His spiritual truths only to the few who believed, not to unbelieving people or leaders!

Application: May we believe God's Word to be given the insight that God gives only to those who believe His Word.