

THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Luke 10: 1-11, 16-20

1. After these things (of which, Theophilus, if thou needest reminding, then turneth thee to the former chapter which I posted to you last week) the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two (like the song goes) before His face into every city and place, whither He himself would come. And Thomas did say, Lord, why not send us out in threes, for surely this ranketh higher than a pair.
2. But, raising His eyes unto heaven in a Johannine way, saith He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest. And the seventy did wonder for they knew not about scythes and oxen and other such things. Some did, however, have ruddy faces and gnarl-ed hands, but that was for other reasons.
3. And suddenly He commandeth them, Off you go! Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves. And Thomas did raise his eyebrows at this further metaphor.
4. And Jesus continueth, Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way, nor entertain him with fine wine and cake.
5. And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, What-ho! and Peace be to this house.
6. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: but if they say Peace off! it shall turn to you again
7. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give, be it a cold collation or a roast ox, or some of those little birds in aspic: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house for thou hath but a single pair of sandals, and thou dost not wish to wear them out with extra journeying. And don't linger on street corners. (Let the reader understand.)
8. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you, even their local delicacies which may be of unfamiliar meats or pastries.
9. And heal the sick that are therein, especially those with food poisoning, which shall come to pass, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you, yea, even as close as that spew pot. Then move the pot closer.
10. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets and back passages of the same with an damp flannel, and say,
11. Tish and tush! [1] Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: and thou shalt wipe thyself. Every part of you, especially those super-naughty parts. And proclaim to them, Be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. Yes, you!
16. He that heareth you heareth me; he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. And the seventy set forth, trying to work out that last bit.
17. And after some time (which I am told, Theophilus, was a period of forty days and forty nights – like the hymn will go,) the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Ooh Lord! We had a devil of a time!
18. And He said unto them, I have been meditating and eating mushrooms, and lo, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Kerplunk! Seriously good, it was!
19. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Well, it might sting a bit. And Thomas, anxious to redeem himself before John's Gospel was written, did warn his companions that once again the Lord speaketh in metaphors and they were not to dally with snakes. And also give scorpions a very wide berth. But some did doubt, and did declare that they were immune, and they snuffed it exceedingly.
20. And Jesus said, Notwithstanding all thou hast achieved rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven, although not all of you. (He said this to indicate the way the plot would develop.) And the seventy did rejoice with exceeding joy, and, returning to Bethany, much wine was drunk and cheese eaten. And it was dark.

[1] Again, most (but not all) scholars believe that this was an interpolation by the Elizabethan translators. A contrary argument may be read in: “Tilly-tally with Gilead Balm! – a Study of Galilean Ejaculations.” pp 410-412. Kevin Fosdyke-Macquarrie. OUP 1951. (Out of print.)