

## THE GREAT WENCHOSTER BIBLE

Proper 6 – Year A

Matthew 9: 35 – 10: 23

### 9

35. And Jesus went about all the cities and villages and hamlets and secluded cottages, and even unto the abodes of the solitaries who were not pleased to have their silence disturbed, teaching in their synagogues, eating the bread of the bakeries and savouries of the pie shops, and all the while preaching the gospel of the kingdom – but not with his mouth full - and healing every sickness and every disease among the people, even the unmentionable ones that doth seep fluids.
36. But when He saw the multitudes who had gathered in the hope of a free lunch, He was moved with compassion on them, because they swooned and fainted and did pant like thirsty dogs, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd, or as goats having no goatherd, or as chickens scattered from their coops and depositing their eggs on the ground. But no mention of asses.
37. Then saith He unto His disciples, Look at this shower and behold. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; and the disciples understandeth Him not, which was not unusual, for it was still early summer and the harvest was not yet ripened. But He continued;
38. Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into his harvest, and they shall be refreshed with fine cider and many pasties.

### 10

1. And when He had called unto Him His twelve disciples, He gave them power against unclean spirits, to perform exorcisms and to cast them out, and giveth He unto each of them a bell, a book and a candle. And granteth He them also the power and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease, but cautioned them to wear a face covering and to sanitise their hands after each encounter.
2. Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother (of James that is, not Zebedee);
3. Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas (who was called the twin on account of him having a sibling who looketh a lot like him with hirsute appearance which was unfortunate for her), and Matthew the publican (who did always give full measure); James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;
4. Simon the Canaanite (whose manner of calling is not recorded [1]), and Judas Iscariot, (who, that ye not forget, was naughty and also betrayed Him.)
5. These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles nor into the Street of an Hundred Doorways, for ye shall find many temptations therein blocking your passage, but eschew their invitations. And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not, for I have not yet told thee the tale of the goodly Samaritan:
6. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and even unto the thick-headed goats and unthinking cattle which are manifold.
7. And as ye go, preach, saying, Behold, look and be aroused. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.
8. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils and reveal the mysteries of freshly-brewed coffee: freely ye have received, freely give.
9. Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor IOUs or shop coupons,
10. Nor scrip for your journey, whatever that means, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. But take ye a change of underwear and some fragrant oils, for the journey will be warm and ye wish not to arriveth stinking.
11. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and go, knock them up and say unto them, Have ye a room for the night, or maybe longer? Preferably en suite. And if they say, Yay, there abide till hence ye go thence.
12. And when ye come into an house, salute it saying, Hail. Nice décor and furnishings. And I especially like the fresh flowers in the vase in the hallway. And those cushions!
13. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it and declare, Peace on you from on high. But if it be not worthy and they say, Peace off, let your peace return to you.

14. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet and brush down your cloak and wave your undergarments at them. Like this!
15. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.
16. Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: and the disciples did mutter, Again with the sheep metaphor. And he continued, Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. And Matthew did think of his last encounter with a dove and the washing of clothes that followed it. And Thomas did furrow his brow and doubt.
17. And Jesus said, But beware of men, especially the ones down at the docks: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and – O do pay attention, Thaddeus - they will scourge you in their synagogues, and say nasty things about you to the press;
18. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. And in future times you shall be subject to something called the Spanish Inquisition which none of you will expect. And then will come synods and archdeacons [2] and consistories, and all manner of scary trials [3.]
19. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak, probably on a note secretly handed to you by a maidservant.
20. For it is not ye that speak, (and here it gets super-deep) but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you. Oh yes!
21. And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death, and cousins shall depose their relations even unto the third removal. Yes I know it happens already in some peripheral estates, but that's not the point.
22. And ye shall be hated of all men and women and divers others for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. And Thaddaeus did begin to wonder about what he hath gotten himself into, but James and John did grin and declare themselves ready. [4]
23. And Jesus concluded, But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another, for this seemeth goodly wisdom and practicality: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come. And the disciples did sing an hymn and a chorus as departed they, departed they, departed they unto their mission. And Jesus went unto Bethany for a lie down.

Notes:

[1] Many scholars believe it to be in one of the Cities of the Plains in the Jordan Valley. And we all know what that means, don't we?

[2] Here the Greek is uncertain.

[3] Later manuscripts describe how the disciples crossed themselves at this point, but mainstream exegesis thinks this is unlikely.

[4] Codex αγενής says that they made hand gestures at this point, but it is generally agreed that, as the words are written in finger paint, they are unreliable.