

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus Sends-Out His Apostles

⁵ These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. ⁶ Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

Q1. *The lost sheep of Israel*: Who are the "lost sheep of Israel"?

Q2. *Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans*: Why did Jesus instruct His disciples to avoid Gentiles and Samaritans? (See ↓ Matthew 15:24; John 1:11-12)

Matthew 15:24 [NIV-1984]

He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel."

 "Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus acted with a crystal-clear sense of His purpose. Eventually, all nations of earth would be blessed through Israel, in the person of Jesus, as the Son of God gave His life as the sacrifice for the sins of humanity. For that to happen, however, Jesus needs to accomplish certain things within the people of Israel. So, for now, Jesus has come to serve and heal God's chosen people as the promised Messiah. Only after His own people officially reject Him will the offer be made for all to come into the family of God through faith in Christ ([John 1:11-12](#) ↓). . . . He has not been sent by His Father to heal the Gentiles, yet." [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/15/Matthew-15-24.html>, accessed: 06-10-2026.]

John 1:11-12 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

¹¹ He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. ¹² But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.

 God has had a long and troubled history with His chosen people ([Deuteronomy 7:6](#)) the Jewish people.

It seems to be the nature of humankind, in general, to eventually 'bite the hand that feeds you'; to grow weary of that which we know is good for us and to turn to evil, if only for an exciting, titillating moment. The history of humankind is filled with lesson, after lesson, after lesson, in which humans excel and persevere, followed by a time of ever-increasing self-aggrandizement, followed by a downfall (or societal collapse) or devastating war. Humankind cycles through history thinking about how smart we are, followed by a time of dire troubles. We do not seem to learn from past mistakes.

Think back to when you were a teenager. How often were you 'on your best behavior' when suddenly you made an unwise choice that had serious repercussions – someone no longer trusted you to make wise choices, or you were

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

marked by the choice that you could not recant (no do-overs), or suffered the shame of a label or a withdrawn privilege? Countries, or societies, or people-groups are like teenagers in that they are 'on their best behavior', and then they collapse.

The Old Testament is filled with a history that tells of cycle after cycle of God's Chosen People thriving under God, turning against God, suffering the consequences of their rejection, and finally seeking forgiveness and reinstatement as God's Chosen People — then the cycle repeats. We are so fortunate that God is patient and forgiving.

The Old Testament prophecies point to the coming Messiah starting way back in [Genesis 3:15](#). Because of God's claim upon the Jewish people as His Chosen, God sent His Son Jesus to the Jews, first because they are His Chosen People, then in fulfillment of prophecy. He wanted to give them His cherished Son, and to allow the Jews to either revere His Son or to murder Him. (I'm reminded of the Parable of the Tenants, which is found in [Matthew 21:33-46](#); [Mark 12:1-12](#); [Luke 20:9-19](#).)

Even though Jesus was sent to the Jewish people, the Gospels are sprinkled with examples in which our Lord — thankfully — reached out to Gentiles (non-Jews). In fact, in Christ Jesus's Great Commission, He included Jews and Gentiles, alike when He commanded, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." [Matthew 28:18-20].

⁷ As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.'

Q3. ***Preach this message:*** What did Jesus mean by "*preach*"? (Were they to enter a community and loudly proclaim [like a herald]? Or restrict their message to the weekly synagogue service? Or go up to someone and shyly ask if they know Jesus? Thoughts?)

Matthew 10:7^a [various translations]

[ESV] And proclaim as you go, saying

[NASB] And as you go, preach [footnote: 'or proclaim']

[NLT] Go and announce to them

Q4. ***The kingdom of heaven is near:*** To what "*kingdom*" is Jesus referring?

Matthew 3:1-2 [NIV-1984]

¹ In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Matthew 4:17 [NIV-1984]

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Matthew 11:12 [NIV-1984]

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Matthew 12:28 [NIV-1984]

[The full event is found in [Matthew 12:22-29](#); verse 28 is an excerpt that references the “*kingdom of God*”.]

But if I drive out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.

Matthew 16:13-20 [NIV-1984]

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

²⁰ Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

Q5. *The kingdom of heaven is near*: What did Jesus mean by “*near*”? (After all, Jesus is standing in the midst of them; He’s ‘here’! not ‘near’. Does God have a role? Does [Revelation 3:20](#) ↓ provide any help?)

Revelation 3:20 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

John 6:44-45 [International Children’s Bible (ICB)]

⁴⁴ The Father is the One who sent me. No one can come to me unless the Father draws him to me. And I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘God will teach all the people.’ [[Isaiah 54:13](#)] Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

Ephesians 1:13-14 [NIV-1984]

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Q6. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons: Would miracles get attention?

Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

Q7. *Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons*: This must have been awesome. . . and pride-inspiring ("Look at what I can do!"). How might the God-head cause the Apostles to remain humble?

Q8. *Freely you have received, freely give*: Why would Jesus remind the Apostles to "*freely give*"? (Was this directed at Judas Iscariot? Or aimed at the general greed of humankind? Would a grateful recipient of a healing want to willingly contribute money or gifts to the healer? Or something else?)

John 12:3-6 [NIV-1984]

³ Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

⁴ But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, ⁵ "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year's wages." ⁶ He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it.

Matthew 26:14-15 [NIV-1984]

¹⁴ Then one of the Twelve — the one called Judas Iscariot — went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and asked, "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" So, they counted out for him thirty silver coins.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

⁹Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; ¹⁰take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep.

Q9. ***Do not take . . . any gold or . . . bag . . . or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff:*** Why did Jesus stop His Apostles from taking any ‘travel essentials’ on their journey? (What was Jesus teaching them?)

Q10. Do not take . . . any gold or . . . bag . . . or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff: Do these restrictions apply to us missionaries, today?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

 In Matthew 10:9-10, Jesus instructed His apostles to carry nothing – no money, no luggage, no ‘hobo bindle’, no change of clothes – just go with the clothes on your back. Then, at the conclusion of the Last Supper, Jesus reversed His instruction to His disciples/apostles as recorded by Doctor Luke (↓) in [Luke 22:36](#).

Luke 22:35-36 [NIV-1984]

³⁵ Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you without purse, bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

"Nothing," they answered.

³⁶ He said to them, "But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don't have a sword [see Ephesians 6:17 (↓)], sell your cloak and buy one.

 Uh, oh. Does Jesus expect us to carry weapons? That seems to be the exact opposite of Jesus’s message of mercy, compassion, servanthood, and to allow God to seek justice and retribution for harms.

There are two teaching moments from Jesus’s instructions that He provided in Luke 22:36.

① Jesus performs a final act of mercy before He submits to humankind’s crucifixion. At the conclusion of the ‘Last Supper’, Jesus provides the instruction recorded in Luke 22:36 (↑), which compels Simon Peter to carry a sword into the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus goes to pray. When the crowd, instigated by the Jewish religious leaders, captures Jesus, Peter swings his sword into action and cuts-off the right ear of the high priest’s slave Malchus ([John 18:10](#)). Jesus’s final healing miracle restores Malchus’s ear — a miracle that touches the heart of the house of the high priest — the same person who is pursuing Jesus’s death with a raging intensity. It can be argued that Jesus’s instruction and Peter’s obedience to carry a sword provides this final miracle, this final sign to the high priest.

② Christ Jesus through the writings of the Apostle Paul in [Ephesians 6:10-17](#), then clarified His “sword” instruction when he advised us Believers to dress with the ‘Full Armor of God’. Specifically, in [Ephesians 6:17](#), Paul writes, “And take [up] the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” The “*Word of God*” is our Holy Bible given to humankind by Christ Jesus through the Holy Spirit to various writers throughout history! If there is any doubt, John’s Gospel tells us exactly Who is referenced by the phrase “*Word of God*” — the “*Word of God*” is Jesus. See [John 1:1-2, 14, 17](#); through these verses the Apostle John uses progressive elaboration to reveal Jesus as the “*Word of God*”. See also [StudySheet: Lesson 6: Matthew 5:13-20, pages 5 & 6](#).

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹¹ "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave.

Q11. Search for some worthy person there and stay at his house: How might an Apostle identify a "worthy person"?

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.....

 The Apostles were to meet Jews where they were – in their homes, in the marketplace, preparing their nets on the lakeshore, filling their jars at the water well, conducting business at the city gates. It was not to be a single encounter during a special time, like a weekly synagogue service. Although, if they were invited, the opportunity to teach at a weekly synagogue service would provide an additional instance to reach more people.

While all of these various teaching encounters served to reach and minister to more people, it instilled confidence in the hearts and minds of these common laborers, now itinerant missionaries; and it proved to them of God's care as they obediently became Jesus's feet, hands, and voice to the nonbelieving communities in which they ministered.

Q12. *Stay at his house until you leave*: Based on Jesus's instructions, were the Apostles to 'bounce from house to house'? Or stay in one location? Why?

Bounce? Stay? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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¹² As you enter the home, give it your greeting. ¹³ If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you.

Q13. *If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it*: How significant would this "greeting . . . [of] peace" be to a home? And to the host? (See also [Matthew 25:31-46](#), esp. 40 & 45)

Home?

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Host?

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 Luke 10 provides a parallel version of this story. Again, Matthew focused on the apostles and did not provide the same level of detail as the other Gospel writers.

Luke 10:5 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

[In preparation for their two-by-two missionary journey, Jesus instructed His disciples:]

"Whenever you enter someone's home, first say, 'May God's peace be on this house.'

 "Now Jesus tells them that when they enter their host's home, they should 'greet it'. Luke quotes Jesus more fully in this instruction as telling the apostles to say, 'Peace be to this house!' (Luke 10:5 ↑). This was more than a

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

polite greeting. As representatives of Jesus, the apostles carried His peace with them. By His power, they were, apparently, able to place that peace upon others and their homes...” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/10/Matthew-10-12.html>, accessed: 06-13-2026.]

 “Jesus has told them to find someone worthy when they come into a town or village and to stay with that person ([Matthew 10:11-12](#)). Hospitality was a high cultural value at this time and in this part of the world. Most people felt obligated to welcome those in need of a place to stay into their homes. Jesus, though, is telling the disciples that they are the ones who will be giving the greater gift by allowing others to host them.

“By worthy, Jesus means those who receive the message of the disciples about the coming of the kingdom of heaven. In receiving Jesus' representatives, they will be receiving Jesus ([Matthew 10:14](#)).

“Now Jesus tells the disciples to let their peace be upon the house if it is worthy. Otherwise, they must let that peace return to them and move on. Jesus had given to these apostles the authority to heal and to cast out demons. Now we see they also have the authority to place His peace upon a place and to remove it. In a chaotic world, the Son of God carried the peace of heaven with Him. Those who hosted His ‘sent ones’ would enjoy that peace during their stay.” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/3/Matthew-3-3.html>, accessed: 06-13-2026.]

 It could be argued that the Jewish blessings upon a home originated way-back in their history to the first Passover, when God was judging the Egyptians and forcing them to expel their Jewish slaves. In Exodus 12:7&11^b God said to Moses: “*Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the doorframes of the houses where they eat the lambs. . . . it is the Lord’s Passover.*”

 Additional Old Testament Bible verses can be used to ‘bless a home’:

Joshua 24:15^b “*But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.*”

Psalms 4:8 “*I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*”

Proverbs 24:3-4 “*By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.*”

Psalms 122:7 “*May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels [homes].*”

Q14. *If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you:*
The Apostles bestowed a gift – a blessing – on behalf of God’s Son. How might this “*let your peace return to you*” impact the household? Was it a judgment (discernment + consequence)?

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

¹⁴If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

Q15. ***Shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town:*** What did this action symbolize? (Remember that the Apostles were ministering to their Jewish brothers and sisters.)

 The commentator Albert Barnes observed:

Shake the dust off your feet: “The Jews taught uniformly that the dust of the Gentiles was impure, and was to be shaken off.

“To shake off the dust from the feet, therefore, was a significant act, denoting that they regarded them as impure, profane, and paganish, and that they declined any further connection with them. It is recorded that this was actually done by some of the apostles. See [Acts 13:51](#); [Acts 18:6](#). [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/10-14.htm>. Accessed: 06-14-2026.]

Q16. ***I tell you the truth:*** Since Jesus does not lie, why did He need to make this assertion?

Q17. ***It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah:*** What happened to the cities of “Sodom and Gomorrah”? Why?

 G D J D D

Why?

Genesis 13:13 [NIV-1984]

Now the men of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.

Genesis 18:20 [NIV-1984]

Then the Lord said, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is so great and their sin so grievous

Genesis 19:12-14, 24^a [NIV-1984]

¹²The two men [angels in human form] said to Lot, "Do you have anyone else here — sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, ¹³because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it."

¹⁴So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who were pledged to marry his daughters. He said,

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

"Hurry and get out of this place, because the Lord is about to destroy the city!" But his sons-in-law thought he was joking.

¹⁵ With the coming of dawn, the angels urged Lot, saying, "Hurry! Take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be swept away when the city is punished." . . .

^{24a} Then the Lord rained down burning sulfur on Sodom and Gomorrah.

Q18. (Apologetics) ***It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah:*** "All of those people! I thought God was love! How could He destroy so many people!" How would you respond to someone asking this agonizing question?

Q19. It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town: What is the "day of judgment"?

Revelation 20:11-15 [NIV-1984]

[The Great White Throne Judgment]

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. Earth and sky fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what he had done. ¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵ If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Q20. ***It will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town:*** There is one significant difference between "Sodom and Gomorrah" and the town that caused the Apostles to "shake the dust off your feet". What is that difference?



"Jesus has given detailed instructions to His hand-picked group of twelve men. These are the "apostles," from a Greek term that refers to those "sent out" by a master to carry His message. They will travel from town to town in Galilee, preaching Christ's message that the kingdom of heaven is near, calling all to repent and follow the Messiah ([Matthew 10:5-12](#)).

"Jesus knew that not everyone who heard the message would believe it. Some would reject the gift of this revelation from God through His Son and His Son's apostles. When that happens, Jesus has told the apostles to shake the dust off their feet on the way out of the house or of the town, if all refuse the truth ([Matthew 10:13-14](#)).

"Now Jesus declares that this symbolic action taken by the apostles will be a sign of God's coming judgment on that place. Even though they are Israelites, those who reject the Messiah will experience great suffering. Jesus says

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

that the day of judgment will be more unbearable for them than for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah.

“Every Israelite would have been familiar with God's dramatic and terrible judgment on the towns of Sodom and Gomorrah in the time of Abraham ([Genesis 19](#)). Fire and sulfur rained from the sky and wiped everyone out. Jesus and other New Testament writers often used the judgment they faced as a point of comparison for God's coming judgment on those who reject the gospel of Jesus and the kingdom of heaven. . . .

“Rejecting Jesus' representatives on this mission would come with a high price. He was trusting them with great responsibility to hold their countrymen accountable for accepting or rejecting the Messiah.” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/10/Matthew-10-15.html>, accessed: 06-15-2026.]

Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus Promises Persecution For Those Who Follow Him

¹⁶I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Q21. ***I am sending you out:*** ① Who is “sending”? ② Who is being “sent”? ③ What gravity (seriousness or importance; consequence) is behind these five words? (Are they acting as an agent or emissary?)

① Who is “sending”?

② Who is being “sent”?

③ What gravity is behind these words?

Q22. ***Like sheep among wolves:*** ① Who are the “sheep”? And why did Jesus call them “sheep”? ② Who are the “wolves”? And why did Jesus call them “wolves”? ③ What relationship do “wolves” have with “sheep”?

① Who would be like “sheep”? And why?

② Who are the “wolves”? And why?

③ What relationship do “wolves” have with “sheep”? W O L V E S E T S H E E P

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

John 10:11-15 [NIV-1984]

¹¹ [Jesus taught:] "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So, when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me — ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father — and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Q23. ***Be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves:*** ① Thinking back to Genesis 3 (↓), was the serpent (snake) shrewd, crafty, and sinister? ② What is your perception of the “dove”?

① Shrewd? Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

② The “dove”?

Genesis 3:1 [NIV-1984]

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

Leviticus 1:14 & 5:7 [NIV-1984]

¹⁴ "If the offering to the Lord is a burnt offering of birds, he is to offer a dove or a young pigeon. . .

⁷ "If he cannot afford a lamb, he is to bring two doves or two young pigeons to the Lord as a penalty for his sin — one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering.

Matthew 3:16 [NIV-1984]

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him.

¹⁷ "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues. ¹⁸ On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles.

Q24. ***Be on your guard against men:*** Why did Jesus provide this warning?

Q25. Men . . . will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues: Did this really happen to the Apostles?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Acts 5:39^b-42 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

^{39b} The Jewish leaders agreed with what Gamaliel said. ⁴⁰ They called the apostles in again. They beat [flogged] the apostles and told them not to speak in the name of Jesus again. Then they let them go free.

⁴¹ The apostles left the [Sanhedrin] full of joy because they were given the honor of suffering disgrace for Jesus. ⁴² The apostles did not stop teaching people. Every day in the Temple and in people's homes they continued to tell the Good News — that Jesus is the Christ.

Acts 22:17-19 [NIV-1984]

[Paul had a vision and confessed to the Lord Jesus about heinous acts he had performed prior to believing in Him.]

¹⁷ "When I returned to Jerusalem and was praying at the temple, I fell into a trance ¹⁸ and saw the Lord speaking. 'Quick!' he said to me. 'Leave Jerusalem immediately, because they will not accept your testimony about me.'

¹⁹ " 'Lord,' I replied, 'these men know that I went from one synagogue to another to imprison and beat those who believe in you. ²⁰ And when the blood of your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there giving my approval and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.'

²¹ "Then the Lord said to me, 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

2 Corinthians 11:24–25 [NIV-1984]

[Paul recounted the persecutions and hardships he had faced as a missionary for Christ Jesus.]

²⁴ Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea,

Q26. *Men . . . will hand you over to the local councils and flog you in their synagogues:* Does Jesus's warning apply to us, today? (Do we face persecution for our faith?)

Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

 A film was produced about one such tragic encounter and recounts how God used the tragedy to change lives and further His Kingdom.

"*End of the Spear* is a 2005 American biographical adventure drama film based on a book with the same name... The film recounts the story of Operation Auca, in which five American Christian missionaries attempted to evangelize the Waodani people of the tropical rain forest of Eastern Ecuador.

"Based on actual events in 1956, wherein five male missionaries were speared by a group of the Waodani tribe, it is told from the perspective of Steve Saint (son of Nate Saint, one of the missionaries killed in the encounter), and Mincaye, one tribesman who participated in the attack. The two formed a lifelong bond that continued until Mincaye's death in April 2020." [Quotation from the Wikipedia article "[End of the Spear](#)", which is released under the [Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike License 4.0](#). Accessed: 06-16-2026.]

Q27. *On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles:* There was one primary Apostle whose mission was to testify about Jesus to the Gentiles; what was his name?

Acts 9:15-16 [NIV-1984]

¹⁵ But the Lord [Jesus] said to [a disciple] Ananias, "Go! This man [Saul (Paul)] is my chosen instrument to

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. ¹⁶ I will show him how much he must suffer for my name."

Acts 22:21 [NIV-1984]

"Then the Lord [Jesus] said to me [Paul], 'Go; I will send you far away to the Gentiles.' "

Q28. On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles: Did this prophecy occur?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Acts 24:24-27, 25:13-14, 25:22-25 [NIV-1984]

[Examples in which the persecuted Paul testified to Roman government officials and to eventually Caesar.]

^{24:24} Several days later [Roman Governor] Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him as he spoke about faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁵ As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, "That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you." ²⁶ At the same time he was hoping that Paul would offer him a bribe, so he sent for him frequently and talked with him. ²⁷ When two years had passed, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but because Felix wanted to grant a favor to the Jews, he left Paul in prison. . . .

^{25:13} A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived at Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. ¹⁴ Since they were spending many days there, Festus discussed Paul's case with the king. He said: "There is a man here whom Felix left as a prisoner. . . .

^{25:22} Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I would like to hear this man myself."

He replied, "Tomorrow, you will hear him."

²³ The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the audience room with the high-ranking officers and the leading men of the city. At the command of Festus, Paul was brought in.

²⁴ Festus said: "King Agrippa, and all who are present with us, you see this man! The whole Jewish community has petitioned me about him in Jerusalem and here in Caesarea, shouting that he ought not to live any longer. ²⁵ I found he had done nothing deserving of death, but because he made his appeal to the Emperor [Paul had demanded, "[I appeal to Caesar!](#)"] I decided to send him to Rome.

 See also [Acts 4:1-22](#); [Acts 12:1-4](#); [Acts 14:5](#).

Philippians 4:22 [NIV-1984]

[Paul, while imprisoned in Rome, successfully preached to members of Caesar's house! As Paul concluded his Letter to the Philippians he wrote:]

All the saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

 "Caesar" is the imperial title given to Roman emperors and used to address to them.

 Since Paul as a citizen of Rome [appealed to Caesar](#), Paul was transported to Rome and again imprisoned. (By the way, the man, who held the title of Caesar at this time in history, was none other than Nero, who later died by suicide in 68 A.D. For the history aficionados, there is an interesting article at <https://www.history.com/articles/did-nero-really-fiddle-while-rome-burned>, entitled "Did Nero Really Fiddle While Rome Burned?", which attributes Nero of accusing/blaming Christians for the fire and then summarily executing them.)

Jesus had assured Paul that he would testify before "[Gentiles and their kings](#)". While Paul's appearance before Nero is not documented in the Bible, we assume that Paul did testify before him. According to tradition Nero commanded Paul to be executed and Paul was then crucified (upside down).

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

 Regarding the Apostle Paul's imprisonments in Rome, Pastor Paul M. Sadler wrote the following:

“Approximately two years after being delivered into the hands of Roman authorities, things had apparently gone well for the apostle, therefore he anticipated his soon release from prison. Thus, he writes to the church at Philippi: ‘For I know that this [their prayer for his release] shall turn to my salvation [deliverance from prison]’ ([Philippians 1:19](#)).

“We believe that Paul did in fact enjoy a short period of freedom which enabled him to continue his apostolic journeys. We know, for example, that according to the Acts record the apostle never visited Crete on any of his previous apostolic journeys. Paul did sail around the island on his way to Rome as a prisoner, but it was not until his release from his first Roman imprisonment that he actually visited Crete. The apostle's brief stay on the island was long enough to see that the churches there were in a state of chaos ([Titus 1:10-16](#)). Consequently, Paul leaves Titus behind, his companion in travel, ‘to set in order the things that were wanting’ ([Titus 1:5](#)).

“Probably from Crete Paul made his way to Corinth where he writes to Titus to inform him that he planned to winter in Nicopolis ([Titus 3:12](#)). It could well be that the apostle was apprehended at Nicopolis and taken again to Rome for preaching Christ. This time however, the sentence would go against him. So, without hesitation he writes to Timothy, since it was nearing winter, to bring his cloak and also the Parchments ([2 Timothy 4:13](#)).” [©2025 by Pr. Paul M. Sadler, Berean Bible Society, Germantown, WI. <https://bereanbiblesociety.org/pauls-two-roman-imprisonments/>, accessed: 06-18-2026.]

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁹ But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, ²⁰ for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Q29. (Verses 19 & 20): What is one of the roles of the Holy Spirit in our evangelizing?

Q30. ***Do not worry about what to say***: Do we generally take these verses to mean that God promises to give us words to properly minister to a nonbeliever?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q31. ***But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say***: What can we assume happened to cause the “arrest”?

What happened before “arrest”?

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Q32. ***But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say:*** Can we substitute “persecution” for “*arrest*”? (Or does “*arrest*” mean exactly what is translated: arrest, imprisonment? “*Arrest*” is not a metaphor.)
Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q33. ***But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say:*** ① Are we take the first step/action in faith? ② Or do we wait for the Holy Spirit to tell us what to do, to give us words to say?

① Are we take the first step? Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

② Do we wait for the Holy Spirit? Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

Q34. ***But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say:*** ① If we take the first step/action in faith, what does that tell God? ② What might that first step/action do for our faith, our spirit?

① What does that tell God?

② What might that do for our faith? Our soul?

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

²¹ "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. ²² All men will hate you because of me, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Q35. Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death: Do we know of any events in which Jesus’s prophecy was fulfilled?

Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

Micah 7:6 [NIV-1984]

For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law — a man's enemies are the members of his own household.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

 New Testament examples of persecution against Believers in Christ Jesus include:

- † Jesus's own family declared, "*He [Jesus] is out of His mind!*" as recounted in Mark's Gospel: [Mark 3: 20-21](#).
- † [Stephen](#) was stoned to death, thereby becoming the first Christian martyr.
- † Paul before his conversion mercilessly persecuted Believers ([Acts 8:3](#); [Acts 9:1](#)), and after his conversion suffered greatly for his faith ([2 Corinthians 11:24-27](#)) as Jesus had foretold ([Acts 9:16](#)).
- † The man born blind was healed by Jesus. Then his parents, when questioned by the Pharisees, fearfully denied knowing how their son was healed and said to them, "*Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.*" ([John 9:18-21](#)). They 'threw their son under the bus', so to speak.

While it can be argued that these examples do not demonstrate Jesus's literal prophecy (*brother will betray brother*, etc.), they do demonstrate persecution for belief in the saving grace bestowed upon humanity by Jesus. That said, in the third example, Paul before his conversion, persecuted Believers in Christ Jesus with a rabid fervor. Logically, Paul did not stand on the street corner and ask passers-by if they believed in Christ; he relied upon accusations (betrayals) from friends, relatives, parents, and children to identify whom to persecute.

Later in this chapter (in a subsequent StudySheet), we will study [Matthew 10:34-36](#), in which Jesus expands on His prophecy in [Matthew 10:21-22](#) (↑) and promises, "^{10:34} *Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.* ³⁵ *For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.* ³⁶ *And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.*" Arguably, this prophecy remains future to us.

As a point of interest there are several instances in the historical narrative of the Old Testament (Genesis, specifically) in which a family member(s) conspired against another:

- † [Genesis 4:1-16](#): the sons of Adam and Eve: Cain kills Abel in a fit of jealousy.
- † [Genesis 16:1-16](#); [Genesis 21:1-21](#): Rivalry between Abram/Abraham's sons Ishmael (born of Sarai's handmaid Hagar) and Isaac (born of Abram's wife Sarai/Elizabeth) results in Ishmael's banishment.
- † [Genesis 25:20-34](#); [Genesis 27:1-45](#): Isaac, who was Abraham's legitimate son, fathered (born of wife Rebekah) fraternal twins Esau and Jacob. While Esau was the firstborn twin, his brother Jacob used deception so that, instead of Esau, his father Isaac gave Jacob the blessing and honor reserved for the firstborn son.
- † [Genesis 37:1-11](#); [Genesis 37:50](#): Of the twelve sons of Jacob (whom God renamed Israel), most of the eleven sons conspired against the twelfth – Joseph, who was Jacob/Israel's favorite son. The brothers sold Joseph into slavery, and presented evidence to their father Jacob/Israel that implied Joseph had been killed ([Genesis 37:31-33](#)).

Old Testament prophets who suffered for their faith in God:

- † Moses: was the great liberator of the Jewish people from Egyptian slavery. The very people he had help to liberate from the Egyptians later threatened to stone him. ([Exodus 17:4](#))
- † Prophets in Elijah's time: "Obadiah was a devout believer in the Lord. While [Queen] Jezebel was killing off the Lord's prophets, Obadiah had taken a hundred prophets and hidden them in two caves, fifty in each, and had supplied them with food and water." ([1 Kings 18:3b-4](#))
- † Jeremiah: The prophet Jeremiah was put into stocks ([Jeremiah 20:1-2](#)); nearly executed by religious officials ([Jeremiah 26:11](#)); and forcibly dropped into a muddy cistern to starve ([Jeremiah 38:6](#)). Jewish tradition report that Jeremiah was stoned to death in Egypt.

† Other prophets: there are nine other Old Testament prophets listed in the section "The Scriptural Pattern Of Prophetic Persecution" at https://biblehub.com/q/Evidence_for_prophets_persecution_2.htm, accessed: 07-04-2026.

 Salem Witch Trials (1692 A.D. to 1693): "In America, Salem's events have been used in political rhetoric and popular literature as a vivid cautionary tale about the dangers of isolation, religious extremism, false accusations, and lapses in due process." [Quotation from the Wikipedia article [Salem witch trials](#), which is released under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share-Alike License 4.0, accessed: 06-18-2026.]

 While this commentator cannot verify the truth of such claims, several internet sites report Christian persecution – family members betraying Christian family members; examples include:

- † Raymond Ibrahim (Middle East expert): "[‘Choose — Conversion, Exile, or Submission’: The Muslim Persecution of Christians, May 2025](#)". Accessed: 06-19-2026.
- † MSN.com: "[Muslim family chops off hands of family member who becomes Christian](#)". Accessed: 06-19-2026.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

Q36. *All men will hate you because of me*: Do we understand Jesus's prophecy to be literal – "all men will hate us"?

Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

Q37. *He who stands firm to the end will be saved*: What does "stands firm to the end" mean to you?

²³When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. I tell you the truth, you will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

Q38. *When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another*: When we are persecuted, are we to 'lie-down' and accept it?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q39. *When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another*: ① How do you define "*flee*"? ② Why should the Apostles "*flee*" when persecuted? ③ Should we "*flee*" when persecuted?

① Define "*flee*"?

② Why should the Apostles "*flee*"?

③ Should we "*flee*"? Yes? No? (Thoughts?)

 Definition: flee (flē); v. fled (flēd), flee·ing, flees [Syn: run away, leave, escape, bolt, vanish, cut and run, skedaddle, etc.]
v.intr. 1. To run away, as from trouble or danger: *fled from the house into the night*.
2. To pass swiftly away; vanish: "*of time fleeing beneath him*" (William Faulkner).
v.tr. To run away from: *flee the scene of an accident*.

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 The commentators at Got Questions Ministries provide this explanation:

"A common misunderstanding of Christ's teaching on violence and persecution is that believers are to passively and meekly do nothing while they are being assaulted or murdered. While revenge and violence are not, at all, part of a biblical response ([Romans 12:19](#); [John 18:36](#)), that does not mean believers cannot seek to avoid harm when possible. Here, for instance, Jesus tells His apostles to flee persecution in one town by moving to another town. In this way, the message of the good news about faith in Jesus will spread throughout the towns of Israel.

Lesson 17: Matthew 10:5-23

“Christ also adds a comment which is controversial, and difficult to understand that these men will not have made it through ‘all of the towns in Israel before the Son of Man comes’. Scholars are divided about exactly what Jesus means in this remark.

“Some understand that Jesus has returned to talking about the more immediate mission of the Twelve to the towns of Israel while He is still alive. In that case, He is saying that He, as the ‘Son of Man’, will come to them before they finish preaching and healing in all the towns of Israel. The problem with that idea is that we don't know of any persecution of the apostles before Jesus' death.

“Other scholars believe Jesus was talking about the coming of the Son of Man — meaning Himself — in judgment against Israel, and that this was fulfilled in AD 70, when Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. In that case, Jesus pictures these apostles experiencing persecution until that moment, as they carried the gospel from town to town in Israel.

“Another view is that Jesus is describing His own return to earth to establish His physical kingdom, what is often described as the Second Coming or the day of the Lord. The question with this view is why Jesus seems to say that it will happen before the apostles can finish taking the gospel to each town in Israel when, in fact, it has still not taken place long after the apostles have died.

“Other views and variations on those views exist, as well. None of them is held too strongly by a majority of scholars. All easily agree, however, that Jesus is clearly communicating that the persecution of His followers will serve the purpose of moving them from place to place, spreading the preaching of the gospel far and wide. This is exactly what happened during the century following Jesus' death, resurrection, and return to the Father.” [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/10/Matthew-10-23.html>. Accessed: 06-20-2026.]

Acts 8:1, 4 [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

¹ Now Saul approved of putting Stephen to death. And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they [Believers] were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except for the apostles [who remained in Jerusalem]. . . .

⁴ Therefore, who those had been scattered went through places preaching the word.

Acts 11:19-21 [NIV-1984]

¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews. ²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

Q40. You will not finish going through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes: Is it ever okay to tell a nonbeliever that we, who believe, “just don’t know”?

Yes? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

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