

TOPIC: MISSION OF THE DISCIPLES:

MISSION OF THE TWELVE: MATT. 10:1-15; MK. 6; 7- 13.

The mission of the disciples was part of Jesus' preparation of His followers for full evangelical activities. They had worked with Him for some time, and at this stage, He sent them out on their own for brief practice, as part of the training for the ministerial task ahead.

After Jesus had taught His disciples both privately and publicly, He decided to send them out to practice what they had learnt. The followings were the instructions given to the twelve disciples:

1. They were charged to preach that the kingdom of God is at hand.
2. They were given authority to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the leper and cast out unclean spirits.
3. They were directed to go only to the lost sheep of Israel and not the Gentiles or Samaritans. They were grouped two by two.
4. They were instructed to take no money, no belts, no bag, no staff, no two tunics, no sandals, no bread or food, for a labourer deserves food. Note instructions given.
5. They received healing powers freely, therefore they should give without payment.

MISSION OF THE SEVENTY: LK. 10: 1-20.

The instructions given to the seventy were similar to those of the twelve sent earlier. Jesus sent the seventy ahead of him, they were sent two by two into every town and place He Himself was about to come.

1. They were not to carry purse, bag and sandals
2. They were not to salute anyone on the road.
3. Whatever house they enter, they should first say "Peace be to this house". "And if the son of peace is there your peace shall rest upon him, but if not, it shall return to you."
4. They are to remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for a labourer deserves his wages.
5. When they enter a town and they receive them, they are to heal the sick in it and preach to them that "the kingdom of God has come near."

DIFFERENCES IN THE SYNOPTIC ACCOUNTS OF THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE:

1. Matthew had the Jewish audience in mind; Luke has a more universal outlook. Matthew alone records that Jesus instructed His disciples to go nowhere among the Gentiles and not to enter any house of the Samaritans, but to go to the lost house of Israel. Mark and Luke were silent on this.
2. Matthew made mention of Gomorrah, while Luke and Mark were silent about it.
3. Mark alone records that the disciples were sent out in twos. Luke and Matthew did not point this out.
4. Matthew's account does not allow staff and sandals, whereas Mark allows them.
5. Only Matthew stated that the disciples would be persecuted for the sake of the gospel.
6. Only Matthew mentioned the names of the disciples, who were sent on the mission. Mark and Luke were silent on this

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE TWELVE AND SEVENTY DISCIPLES

Mark recorded that the disciples made tremendous achievements. They were able to cast out demons, and anointed with oil sick people and healed them.

The seventy returned with joy, recounting how they were able to cast out demons in the name of Jesus; how demons obeyed them, hearing the name - Jesus. Jesus was thrilled and even conferred on them more powers, especially over serpents, scorpions and even Satan himself.

However, Jesus admonished them not to rejoice as a result of the success of their mission, especially their triumph over the demons, but because their names had been written in the book of life in heaven.

#### DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES IN THE MISSION OF THE TWELVE AND THE SEVENTY DISCIPLES

1. All the synoptic gospels gave accounts of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:1-15, Mk. 6:7-13; Lk. 9:1-6).
1. Only Luke gave an account of the mission of the seventy (Luke 10:1-24).
2. Jesus told the disciples in all the gospels to go and preach, to heal and make disciples.
2. The two missions were important, but the mission of the twelve. In His orders to the seventy, the disciples were charged not to greet anybody on the way.
3. The instructions Jesus gave them was similar.
3. There were slight differences when others are compared with Mark's account.
4. The two missions closed with rebuke  
of those who refused to welcome and  
accept the disciples and their message.  
Jesus rebuked them also for their unbelief
4. However, in the mission of the seventy, Luke went into detail. He mentioned some major cities and the punishments awaiting them. He also concluded by telling His disciples that they were blessed for what they had seen and heard.

#### LESSONS TO LEARN FROM THE TWO MISSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

1. Jesus' charge against taking money, two tunics, bags and saluting people on their way meant that the mission was urgent, hence, unnecessary luxuries should be avoided
2. Jesus' warning that he was sending the disciples out as lambs in the midst of wolves meant that they were bound to face persecution and stiff challenges in their ministry.
3. Jesus' decision to send out the seventy on the same mission he had earlier sent the twelve points to the importance of the assignment.
4. Sending them out was a way of exposing them to what they would do after his death, hence, Jesus needed to assess their ability before hand.
5. Just like Jesus sent out His apostles and disciples, He, today can also send us on assignment.