

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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BEING

INSCRIBED
IN THE HEAVENS

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Living Stream Ministry
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APPOINTING SEVENTY DISCIPLES TO SPREAD HIS MINISTRY

In Luke 10:1-24 we see that the Lord appointed seventy disciples to spread His ministry. In Luke 9:1-9 the Lord spread His ministry through the twelve apostles. That was in Galilee. But now, on the way from Galilee to Jerusalem and through Samaria, the need was much greater. Therefore, the Lord appointed seventy and sent them to spread the jubilee (Luke 4:17-21). Concerning this, 10:1 says, “Now after these things, the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to come.” The Savior appointed seventy disciples to share His ministry, even as Moses appointed seventy elders to share his burden as God charged him (Num. 11:16-17; Exo. 24:1, 9). The fact that He sent them out two by two indicates that they were sent out as witnesses (Deut. 17:6; 19:15; Matt. 18:16).

Luke 10:2 says, “And He said to them, The harvest indeed is vast, but the workers are few; therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest that He would thrust out workers into His harvest.” In His economy God has a plan to accomplish. But this plan still requires His people to beseech, that is, to pray about it. In answering their prayer, the Lord will accomplish what they have prayed concerning His plan. In particular, here the Lord tells the disciples to beseech the Lord of the harvest. The word “harvest” indicates that the kingdom of God is established with things of life that can grow and multiply. Furthermore, the title “the Lord of the harvest” indicates that the Lord is the One who owns the crop.

The way the Lord sent out the seventy in 10:1-24 is very similar to the way He sent out the twelve in 9:1-9. The Lord considered the time of this sending to be the time of jubilee, and in the jubilee no one will be short of anything. This was the reason the Lord charged the seventy not to carry anything for their need. Rather, they were to stay where they were received and eat whatever was set before them (Luke 10:7-8).

In 10:5 and 6 we have an important word concerning peace: “And into whatever house you

enter, first say, Peace to this house. And if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall return upon you.” In these verses the word “peace” is crucial. The Lord even uses the expression “son of peace.” The main thing in the jubilee is peace. We should greet others in peace, and they should greet us with peace. If the one we greet is a son of peace, our peace will remain with him. But if he is not a son of peace, our peace will return upon us.

In [10:10-16](#) we see the seriousness of rejecting the one sent by the Man-Savior. Regarding a city that rejects the Lord’s sent ones, He says, “I say to you that it will be more tolerable for Sodom in that day than for that city” ([v. 12](#)). This indicates that the punishment of God’s judgment is in varying degrees. To reject the Lord’s sent ones will cause more punishment than the sin of Sodom.

THE SEVENTY RETURNING WITH JOY

Luke [10:17](#) says, “And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” The Lord Jesus replied, “I was beholding Satan when he fell like lightning out of heaven” ([v. 18](#)). At the time of his rebellion against God before the creation of

man, Satan was judged and sentenced to be cast into Sheol (Hades), to the recesses, the deepest part of the pit ([Isa. 14:15](#); [Ezek. 28:17](#)). Then God began to execute His sentence on him on different occasions in different degrees, such as through the seventy disciples in [Luke 10](#), through Christ on the cross ([Heb. 2:14](#); [John 12:31](#)), through the manchild and Michael before the great tribulation when he was cast down to the earth ([Rev. 12:5, 7-10, 13](#)), and through the angel before the millennium when he was cast into the abyss, the bottomless pit ([Rev. 20:1-2](#)), until finally he will be cast into the lake of fire after the millennium ([Rev. 20:10](#)) for eternity.

In [Luke 10:19](#) the Lord went on to say to the seventy, “Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” What the Lord gave to the disciples was authority; what the enemy had was power. Authority subdues power. The serpents in [verse 19](#) may signify Satan and his angels ([Eph. 2:2](#); [6:11-12](#)); the scorpions may signify demons ([Luke 10:17, 20](#)). The disciples subdued the evil power by the authority of the Lord.

After telling the disciples that He was beholding Satan when he fell like lightning out of

heaven and after saying that He had given them authority over all the power of the enemy, the Lord said, “However, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are inscribed in the heavens” ([v. 20](#)). Certainly being saved, having our names inscribed in the heavens, is more crucial than casting out demons. Nevertheless, it is easy for believers, especially young ones, to be more excited about the casting out of demons than about having their names inscribed in the heavens. After listening to the report of the seventy, the Lord Jesus was not excited about the subduing of the demons. The Lord told the disciples that they should rejoice, exult, not that the spirits are subject to them, but that their names have been inscribed in the heavens.

THE MAN-SAVIOR EXULTING IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

[Luke 10:21 and 22](#) say, “In the same hour He exulted in the Holy Spirit and said, I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hid these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for so it was well-pleasing in Your sight. All things have been delivered to Me by My Father,

and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.” The Lord’s prayer here involves the Trinity economically. In the Holy Spirit the Son praised the Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. Economically, all things have been delivered to the Son by the Father. Now no one knows who the Son is except the Father and who the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal the Father. The emphasis here is not on the essential Trinity but on the economical Trinity.

In His exulting in the Holy Spirit, the Savior praised the Father, the Lord of heaven and earth. “Father” refers to the Father’s relationship with Him, the Son. “Lord of heaven and earth” refers to God’s relationship with the universe. When God’s people were defeated by His enemy, He was called the God of heaven ([Ezra 5:11-12](#); [Dan. 2:18, 37](#)). But when there was a man standing for God on the earth, He was called the possessor of heaven and earth ([Gen. 14:19, 22](#)). Here in [Luke 10:21](#) the Man-Savior, as the Son of Man, also called the Father the Lord of heaven and earth. This indicates that He was standing on the earth for God’s interest.

The Son in 10:21 praised the Father that He “hid these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to babes.” The “wise and intelligent” may refer in particular to the people of the three cities mentioned in verses 13 and 15, people who were wise and intelligent in their own eyes. The Father’s will was to hide the knowledge of the Son and the Father from such people. The “babes” in verse 21 refer to the disciples, who were children of wisdom. The Father was pleased to reveal both the Son and the Father to them.

We should not regard ourselves as wise and intelligent. If we have such a view of ourselves, we shall not receive the revelation of the Son and the Father. Instead of considering ourselves wise and intelligent, we should regard ourselves as babes, as those who are not knowledgeable. It is well-pleasing in the Father’s sight to reveal the knowledge of the Son and the Father to babes, but to hide it from the wise and intelligent.

In verse 22 the Lord says that no one knows who the Son is except the Father and who the Father is except the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal Him. The word “knows” here denotes full knowledge, not mere objective acquaintance. Concerning the Son, only the

Father has such knowledge, and concerning the Father, only the Son has such knowledge. Hence, to know the Son requires the Father's revelation ([Matt. 16:17](#)), and to know the Father requires the Son's revelation ([John 17:6, 26](#)). The word "wills" in [10:22](#) means to deliberately exercise the will to counsel.

THE THINGS INVOLVED IN THE INSCRIBING OF OUR NAMES IN THE HEAVENS

[Luke 10:23 and 24](#) say, "And turning to the disciples, He said privately, Blessed are the eyes which see the things that you see. For I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to observe the things that you see, and did not observe them, and to hear the things that you hear, and did not hear them." In these two verses the Man-Savior speaks of "the things" three times. What are the things that the disciples saw, the things that many prophets and kings wanted to observe? What are the things that the disciples heard, things that many prophets and kings wanted to hear? Concerning this we should notice that in [verse 21](#) the Lord speaks of "these things," and in [verse 22](#), of "all things." First the Lord exulted in the Holy Spirit that the Father

has hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and revealed them to babes. Then the Lord said that all things have been delivered to Him by the Father. Following this, He privately told the disciples that their eyes were blessed for seeing the things that they see. What are “these things,” “all things,” and “the things”? As we shall see, these all refer to the same things.

“These things” in [verse 21](#), “all things” in [verse 22](#), and “the things” in [verses 23 and 24](#) are all related to the things involved in the inscribing of our names in the heavens. The inscribing of our names in the heavens involves a great deal. Actually, the fourteen Epistles of Paul are needed to describe what is involved in the inscribing of our names in the heavens. We should not expect to find a full explanation of this in the Gospel of Luke. This involves God’s mystery, in particular the mystery of God, which is Christ, and the mystery of Christ, which is the church.

The word about these things, all things, and the things in [Luke 10](#) may remind us of Paul’s word in [1 Corinthians 2:9](#): “But even as it is written, Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not come up in man’s heart, how much God has prepared for those

who love Him.” The things here are the things in God’s New Testament economy. The sphere of what the eye can see is narrow; the sphere of what the ear can hear is broader; and the sphere of what the heart can realize is without limitation. God in His wisdom has ordained and prepared for us many deep and hidden things, such as justification, sanctification, and glorification. All these the human eye has never seen, the human ear has never heard, and the human heart has never realized.

I wish to emphasize the fact that the explanation of these things, all things, and the things is not found in the Gospel of Luke. For this explanation we must come to the Epistles of Paul. In these Epistles we have the New Testament economy of God and the mysteries in this economy. How marvelous and profound are these mysteries! What is revealed in the Epistles of Paul concerning God’s New Testament economy involves the divine Trinity, God’s eternal plan, Christ as the embodiment of God, the church as the Body of Christ, and God’s intention to be expressed through His divine Trinity in the church.

Luke 10:21-24 is very similar to [Matthew 11:25-27](#). However, the word in Matthew is not

as clear or as thorough as that in Luke. In reading [Matthew 11](#) we may not sense the need for the fourteen Epistles of Paul in order to have the proper understanding of the things hidden from the wise and intelligent and revealed to babes. But as we read [Luke 10](#), with the emphasis on these things, all things, and especially on the things, we realize the need for Paul's Epistles, where we have a full definition and explanation of all these things.

In [chapter ten](#) of the Gospel of Luke the Lord Jesus goes quite far in touching the mysterious things that are unveiled in Paul's Epistles. In this chapter the Lord indicates that the reality of the jubilee is in all these things. This means that the reality of the jubilee is not merely in the casting out of demons, in the subduing of the spirits. Rather, the reality of the jubilee is that we are brought into what was ordained for us by God before the foundation of the world. God chose us and predestinated us to enjoy His eternal plan, a plan that is carried out in His New Testament economy. He has also predestinated us to enjoy all the things related to His economy, the things that are fully unveiled in the Epistles of Paul.

I believe that the inscribing of our names in

the heavens involves God's choosing us and His predestination concerning us. Before the foundation of the world, God chose us, and then He predestinated us. That was the inscribing of our names in the heavens.

When Paul was about to speak in Ephesians concerning the mystery of Christ, which is the Body of Christ, he begins by telling us about the Father's choosing and predestination before the foundation of the world. This is our basis for saying that the explanation of these things, all things, and the things in [Luke 10](#) is found in the fourteen Epistles of Paul. The inscribing of our names in the heavens, therefore, points to all the mysteries revealed in Paul's Epistles.

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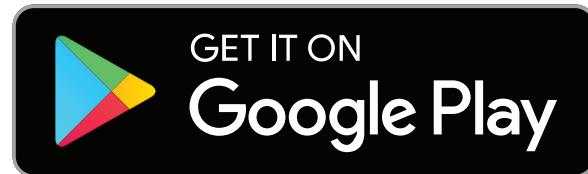
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