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Luke 9:51-62

The New Exodus

Many understand [Luke 9:51](#) to be the turning point in Luke's gospel. Roughly halfway through his narrative and Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem.

Just a little before this, Jesus was revealed in his glory on the mount of transfiguration and he spoke with Moses and Elijah. The ESV states that they spoke of Jesus' "departure" but the word is actually "exodus". In the state of transfigured glory, Jesus speaks with Moses and Elijah of the coming "exodus" that he is about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Here in verses 51-52 it is now time for Jesus to make his journey to Jerusalem and accomplish his exodus. And just as the Angel of the Lord went before Moses and the people ([Ex. 23:20](#)), Jesus sends "angels" ahead of him here. For the word for "messengers" is simply ἄγγελος. And just as it was with Moses, Jesus begins to be revealed as a leader who is rejected by the people.

Perhaps inspired by the recent appearance of Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration, James and John ask if they should call down fire from heaven to consume the samaritans. But they are rebuked by Jesus for this. The presence of Elijah and Moses is not here about the bringing of judgement, but about the fact that God's servants have often been rejected and despised in their day, as Jesus will be in the coming days.

For in the exodus that Jesus is about to accomplish, it will not be wicked pharaoh in Egypt who will receive the judgement of God. It will not be the wicked leaders in Jerusalem who have taken the place of Egypt and pharaoh. No, Jesus himself will take upon himself God's judgement on the cross so that he might bring his people into the great Promised Land of eternal life and the forgiveness of sins.

Following Jesus

In verses 57-62 Luke presents three anonymous people who Jesus engages about the prospect of following Jesus. The first comes to Jesus eagerly declaring, “I will follow you wherever you go.” But Jesus pushes back telling him that to follow Christ comes with serious consequences.

The second Jesus seeks out telling the person to “follow me.” But the man says he must go and bury his father, a very serious duty, but Jesus tells him to “leave the dead to bury their own dead.”

The third man tells Jesus that he will follow him but he needs to first say farewell to his home. [Luke 9:62](#) “Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.””

In [Luke 8](#), Jesus spoke about seed that fell among the rocks and the thorns and was choked out by the cares and riches of this life. Following Jesus is the ultimate thing. All other concerns and cares must fall before this one command, “follow me.”

It is often easy to look at all that Christ does in the gospel and eagerly respond to this command, “I will follow you wherever you go.” But there are two things we must consider this Ash Wednesday:

1. The command to follow Jesus is a command that outweighs all other concerns.
2. The command to follow Jesus ultimately leads to Jerusalem, where Jesus is rejected and crucified.

As we move into this season of Lent, remember that the way of Jesus is the way of love and sacrifice. Follow Jesus to the cross knowing that there you are called to suffer and sacrifice for others as Jesus has for you. But also know for certain, that there, at the foot of the cross, you stand forgiven because of the free grace of Christ that was shed abroad for the forgiveness of your sins!