



ShalomAZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"In a World of Hostility, Who is My Neighbor?"

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Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Passages (TLV): Luke 10:21-37; Luke 9:55-56 (NASV); Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Deut. 22:1-4; Ex. 23:4-5; Ps. 36:10; Dan. 12:2

There are some questions that only surface when we find ourselves in a land of hostility. When our faith is affirmed and welcomed, we can speak easily and confidently. But when our message and our faith is resisted—when people are suspicious, wounded, or openly hostile—different questions begin to emerge. Questions like: *How do I live faithfully here? Who am I responsible for? And what does love actually look like when it costs me something?* As we continue in Luke 10, those are the kinds of questions that Yeshua faces as He deliberately leads His followers through Samaria—a land marked by rejection, pain, and hostility toward religious people.

Samaria was not neutral ground. It was a land shaped by suspicion, rejection, and long-standing hostility toward religious people. It was the kind of place others avoided because it was uncomfortable and unpredictable. And yet, Yeshua deliberately walks into this land of hostility. He does not respond to rejection with destruction, nor does He retreat for safety. Instead, He engages, teaches, and forms His disciples there. The land that pushes back is not a detour—it is the classroom. And it is here that a sincere question about eternal life opens a conversation that reshapes what it means to love God and love people. **Challenge:** Where has God placed you in a space that feels resistant or hostile to faith? Ask Him how He wants to shape you there rather than remove you from it.

1. A QUESTION THAT REVEALS WHAT WE'RE REALLY SEEKING

The Torah scholar's question—“*Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?*”—is not casual. This man studies the Torah. His role is to interpret, defend, and safeguard God's Word. In context, his question is responsible. Crowds are following Yeshua. Reports of miracles and authority are spreading. And in a region known for religious confusion, this scholar is doing what he has always done—testing whether a teacher is trustworthy. Yeshua is not threatened by the question. He is not offended by scrutiny. He welcomes it, because the stakes are eternal.

The question also reveals something deeply personal. The scholar does not ask in the abstract; he asks, “*What must I do?*” This is a question about meaning, destiny, and what lies beyond this life. The Scriptures speak of eternal life, and the assumption is that life is more than survival or routine. Yeshua responds not with a speech, but with a question of His own: “*What is written in the Torah? How do you read it?*” Before offering something new, Yeshua brings the conversation back to what God has *already* revealed. **Challenge:** Are you willing to bring your real questions to God—even the ones that challenge what you think you already know?

2. THE WORD WE KNOW—AND THE LIFE IT DEMANDS

The Torah scholar answers Yeshua perfectly. He recites the heart of the Torah: *Love ADONAI your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind—and love your neighbor as yourself.* Yeshua affirms the answer without hesitation. “*You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.*” This is not a call to earning salvation through works. It is a call to relationship. Loving God is the central purpose of humanity, and loving people is the inevitable fruit of that love.

At this moment, the roles reverse. The one who came to examine Yeshua is now being examined himself. The conversation is no longer theoretical. It is no longer about correct answers. Luke

tells us the scholar, wanting to justify himself, asks another question: *"Then who is my neighbor?"* If the category can be narrowed, responsibility can be managed. Self-justification becomes a way to restore the **appearance** of rightness without doing anything about the **substance** – a way to appear faithful without being transformed. **Challenge:** Where are you tempted to substitute right answers for obedient living? Ask God to show you where love must move from knowledge into action.

3. THE NEIGHBOR WE NEVER EXPECTED

Yeshua answers the scholar's question with a story. A wounded Jewish man lies half-dead on a dangerous road. A priest passes by. A Levite passes by. These are the expected helpers—the religious professionals. But they do nothing. Then comes the most unlikely hero: a Samaritan. The enemy. The outsider. The one no one would expect to embody Torah faithfulness. And yet, he is the one who stops, binds wounds, spends his own resources, and commits to ongoing care.

The Samaritan's mercy is not minimal or symbolic. It is costly and inconvenient. He does not simply help and move on. He takes responsibility. When Yeshua asks who proved to be the neighbor, the scholar cannot even bring himself to say the word "Samaritan." He answers instead, "The one who showed mercy." Yeshua's command is simple and piercing: "Go and do the same." The question is no longer who qualifies as a neighbor, but whether we are willing to become one. **Challenge:** Who have you passed by because love felt inconvenient, uncomfortable, or costly? Ask God to open your eyes to the person He is calling you to move toward.

CONCLUSION

At the heart of this entire conversation is the command to love—not as an idea, but as an action. Love God. Love your neighbor. Love that moves toward the wounded rather than stepping aside. Yeshua does not end with theological discussion. He ends with obedience. *"Go and do the same."* Let what you know about God shape how you treat the person lying along your path. We live in a world that pushes back—where faith is misunderstood and people are wounded by religion. But Yeshua does not call us to retreat, justify ourselves, or harden our hearts. He calls us to embody mercy. When we choose compassion over self-justification, we are not earning eternal life—we are living it. Kingdom life is not just future hope; it is present obedience. So go. Walk the road. Love God. Love people. And let mercy be the loudest witness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why do questions about faith often surface most clearly in places of resistance or hostility?
2. What stands out to you about Yeshua's response to the Torah scholar's sincerity and self-justification?
3. In what ways do we try to narrow the definition of "neighbor" in order to limit responsibility?
4. Why do you think Yeshua chose a Samaritan as the hero of this story? What does that challenge in us?
5. What would it look like for you to "go and do the same" in a practical, tangible way this week?

CLOSING PRAYER:

Avinu Malkeinu, Our Father, Our King. You have loved us when we were wounded, helpless, and unable to save ourselves. Teach us not merely to speak about love, but to live it. Open our eyes to those lying along our path. Soften our hearts where we have grown guarded. Give us courage to move toward people with mercy, even when it costs us. May our love for You be made visible through how we love others. Help us walk the Yeshua way in a world that pushes back. *B'Shem Yeshua*, in the Name of Yeshua, Amen.