



MATTHEW 10:14-25
MESSIAH ON A MISSION (PART 18)
“Did Jesus Promise The Road Would Be Easy?”

INTRODUCTION

The poignancy of the mission is exemplified in Matthew chapters eight and nine. The mission that we have is not and cannot be different than Jesus' mission. The passage that has given so many people trepidation has been a misquotation of Proverbs 29:18:

*“Where there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint,
but blessed is he who keeps the law.”*

The pressure to create a vision statement is fraught with pitfalls as one may be tempted to create a vision statement congruent to one's own goals and aspirations or the needs of the culture as the felt needs of that culture are leveraged against the objectives of the church.

In his book
“In the Name
of Jesus”,
Henri Nouwen
comments on
Christian
leadership:

“[Future leaders] will think of themselves as enablers, facilitators, role models, father or mother figures, big brothers or big sisters, and so on, and thus join the countless men and women who make a living by trying to help their fellow human beings to cope with the stresses and strains of everyday living. . . . But that has little to do with Christian leadership because the Christian leader thinks, speaks, and acts in the name of Jesus, who came to free humanity from the power of death and open the way to eternal life. . . . The task of future Christian leaders is not to make a little contribution to the solution of the pains and tribulations of their time, but to identify and announce the ways in which Jesus is leading God’s people out of slavery, through the desert to a new land of freedom.”

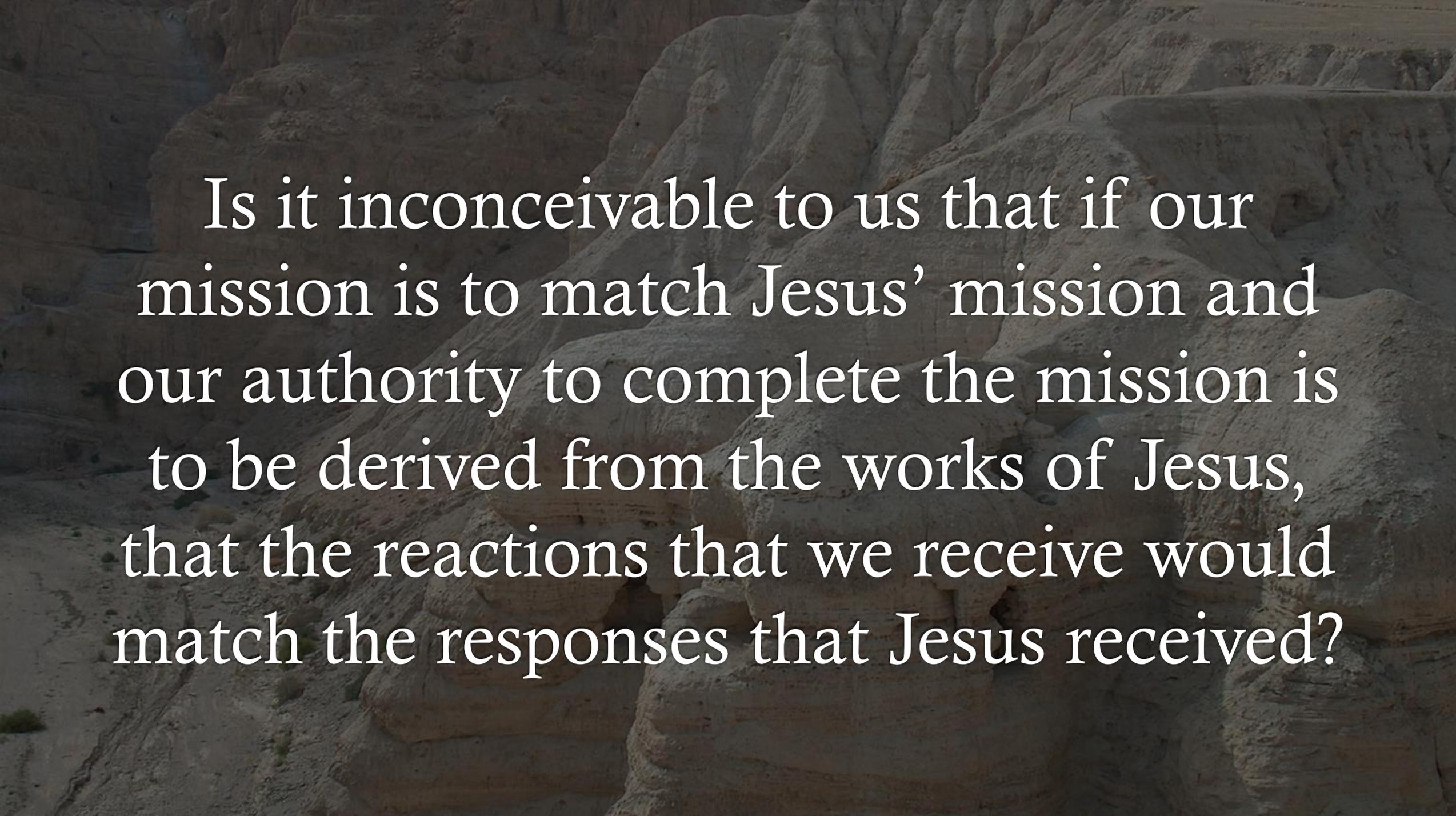
(Matthew 10:15)
Sodom and Gomorrah.

Sodom rejected God's messengers
(Gen. 19:4-5).

Biblical prophets used Sodom as the epitome of
wickedness, often applying the image to Israel
(Deut. 32:32; Is. 1:10; 3:9; Jer. 23:14; Ezek. 16:46-49).

God rained brimstone on these cities turning the natural
terrain into an inhospitable wilderness matching the
inhospitableness of their hearts and spirits.





Is it inconceivable to us that if our mission is to match Jesus' mission and our authority to complete the mission is to be derived from the works of Jesus, that the reactions that we receive would match the responses that Jesus received?

The Promise of the Spirit in Difficulty

“For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.”
(Matthew 10:20, NASB)

This is not an affirmation of the unprepared. This speaks to the suddenness of the attack or persecution. So sudden that one cannot possibly have a preformed opinion of the situation or prepared statement to accommodate the need of the moment. This is the promise of the Spirit to assist you in surprising but distressing situations. One can see an example of this in the assistance that the Spirit gave when aiding Stephen in Acts chapter seven (cf., Acts 4:7–14; 5:27–32; 7:1-60).



Divided Families (Matthew 10:21-22)

Jesus promises opposition so severe that it will divide even families. The hatred of all (v. 22) on account of Jesus' name (Matthew 5:11-12; John 15:19-21) will extend even to those in closest relation to us. The gospel is offensive to those who reject its demands or whose culture, tradition, attitudes and reigning paradigms it challenges.

"Through the Fire"

A song by the Crabb Family

He never promised that the cross would not get heavy

And the hill would not be hard to climb.

He never offered a victory without fighting.

He said help would always come in time.

Just remember when you're standing in the valley of decision

And the adversary says give in, Just hold on.

Our Lord will show up

And He will take you through the fire again

FOOTNOTE 1:

Archeological Study Bible: GENESIS 19

According to Genesis 19:24 burning sulfur “rained down” on Sodom and Gomorrah, obliterating both of these cities, as well as the surrounding region (vv. 25, 29). To date, the location of Sodom is still disputed (but note possible location of Sodom and Gomorrah indicated by a box and arrow on "Map 1" in the back of this Bible). Some people place it on the southwestern side of the Dead Sea, others on the north side of this body of water near the mouth of the Jordan and still others at modern Bab edh-Dhra on the southeastern side of the Dead Sea.¹

Recently archaeologists have focused significant attention upon Bab edh-Dhra, where they have found evidence of several **Early Bronze Age**² occupation levels. Although a layer of ash and burned debris has been discovered in excavations there, the most dramatic evidence that this may indeed be the site of ancient Sodom comes from a nearby cemetery. The dead had been interred in charnel houses, or mausoleums, constructed above ground. Five of these structures were excavated and found to have been burned. A detailed examination of the largest of these (26 ft x 51 ft [8 m x 15.5 m]) indicated that the fire had begun on the roof. Geological investigations determined that an earthquake had added to the devastation.

FOOTNOTE 1 (cont):
Archeological Study Bible: GENESIS 19

Since there were several distinct occupation levels at Bab edh-Dhra (evidence of habitation at the site during various time periods), evidence had to be handled carefully. For example, there is a substantial ash layer associated with the occupation in Early Bronze I (the oldest of the Early Bronze occupation levels), but this cannot be associated with the Biblical destruction of Sodom because its ruins point to a date far earlier than the time of Abraham. In fact, this earlier, fire-related damage appears to have been the work of invaders. The Early Bronze III city is more likely to be the Biblical Sodom. A much larger city, evidence points to its destruction by a combination of earthquake and fire in approximately 2350 B.C. People evidently reoccupied this site in Early Bronze IV, but it appears to have been permanently abandoned for some reason around 2150 B.C.

Archeological Study Bible: Zondervan page 32

FOOTNOTE 2:



FOOTNOTE 3:

The New Testament In Antiquity

A Survey of the New Testament Within Its Cultural Context

THE VOICE OF JESUS IN ROMANS

In chapters 12-16 Paul unveils the ethical implications of the gospel. These commands often parallel the teachings of Jesus. As a result, scholars suggest that Paul has access to some of the same sources used by gospel writers.¹ Compare, for example, the following texts:

Romans	Gospel Parallel	Paul's Instruction
12:14	Luke 6:27-28	Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
12:17	Matt. 5:39	Do not repay anyone evil for evil.
13:7	Mark 12:17	If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue.
13:8-9	Mark 12:31	Love your neighbor as yourself [sum of commandments].
14:10	Matt. 7:1-2	You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister?
14:14	Luke 11:41; Mark 7:19	I am convinced... that nothing is unclean in itself.
16:19	Matt. 10:16	Be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.