

Here begins the second discourse

## The mission of the Twelve

A common process ➤

prophets training disciples to carry on  
the prophetic work

Jesus sees his disciples exercising the role  
of *shaliakh* – agent, representative

*apostolos* = one sent

Note: the ability to work wonders and healing is not  
a quality peculiar to divinity

Matthew 10:1–4 (NRSV)

**10** Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. <sup>2</sup> These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, **Simon, also known as Peter**, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

Petrine pre-eminence is stressed in Matthew

Matthew 10:5–15 (NRSV)

<sup>5</sup> These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Go nowhere among the Gentiles, and enter no town of the Samaritans, <sup>6</sup> but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. <sup>7</sup> As you go, **proclaim the good news, ‘The kingdom of heaven has come near.’** <sup>8</sup> Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. You received without payment; give without payment. <sup>9</sup> Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, <sup>10</sup> **no bag for your journey**, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. <sup>11</sup> Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. <sup>12</sup> As you enter the house, greet it. <sup>13</sup> If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. <sup>14</sup> If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. <sup>15</sup> Truly I tell you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

**Jesus is sending the disciples to Galilean Israelites**

**The disciples extend the mission of Jesus**

No bag – **Jesus prohibits begging**

- *they live simply*
- *they are to rely on Eastern hospitality*

**Rejecting the disciples = rejecting Jesus**

**A host is honour-bound to see to the comfort, care and protection of a guest**



Matthew 10:16–23 (NRSV)

<sup>16</sup> “See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.

<sup>17</sup> Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; <sup>18</sup> and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. <sup>19</sup> When they hand you over, do not worry about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; <sup>20</sup> for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

<sup>21</sup> Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death; <sup>22</sup> and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. <sup>23</sup> When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly I tell you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes.

**Jesus promises to empower the disciples in the face of opposition**

Irrelevant to the first mission – applies more to Matthew’s time

**The mission will inevitably bring persecution**

**Families will be divided where Jesus’ priorities are rejected**

Matthew 10:24–31 (NRSV)

<sup>24</sup> “A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above the master; <sup>25</sup> it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher, and the slave like the master. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign those of his household!

<sup>26</sup> “So have no fear of them; for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered, and nothing secret that will not become known. <sup>27</sup> What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops. <sup>28</sup> Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell (**Gehenna**). <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. <sup>30</sup> And even the hairs of your head are all counted. <sup>31</sup> So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Jesus refers to himself as head of the house – a familial term

**Gehenna** – seen as a place of punishment for Satan, fallen angels and condemned human beings

Positive statements about the value of the disciples in Jesus’ eyes



Jesus is expecting allegiance to him and confession about himself that Jews would normally offer to God — this is implicit high Christology

<sup>5</sup> Put no trust in a friend,  
have no confidence in a loved one;  
guard the doors of your mouth  
from her who lies in your embrace;  
<sup>6</sup> for the son treats the father with contempt,  
the daughter rises up against her mother,  
the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;  
your enemies are members of your own household.

Micah 7:5–6 (NRSV)

## Priorities

Matthew 10:32–39 (NRSV)

<sup>32</sup> “Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup> but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven.

<sup>34</sup> “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

<sup>35</sup> For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law;

<sup>36</sup> and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household.

<sup>37</sup> Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup> and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup> Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.



Matthew 10:40–42 (NRSV)

<sup>40</sup> “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

<sup>41</sup> Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous; <sup>42</sup> and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

Hospitality and  
kindness will not go  
unrewarded

Jesus sees his  
agents as  
prophetic  
figures



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Little ones – the easily oppressed,  
the powerless



Matthew 11 (NRSV)

11 Now when Jesus had finished instructing (*diatassein*) his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities. <sup>2</sup> When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup> and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup> Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup> the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup> And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

Early Christians saw this deliverance fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ

## JESUS

- gave teachings and instructions
- was concerned for the well-being of those who were being reached – not the well-being of those reaching out

➤ Reflects John's wrestle with doubt

## Signs of the Messiah

61 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the  
oppressed,

to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;

<sup>2</sup> to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour,  
and the day of vengeance of our God;  
to comfort all who mourn; Isaiah 61:1–2 (NRSV)

(Lk 7:24–35)

<sup>7</sup> As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John:

“What did you go out into the wilderness to see?

A reed shaken by the wind?

<sup>8</sup> What then did you go out to see?

Someone dressed in soft robes?

Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces.

<sup>9</sup> What then did you go out to see?

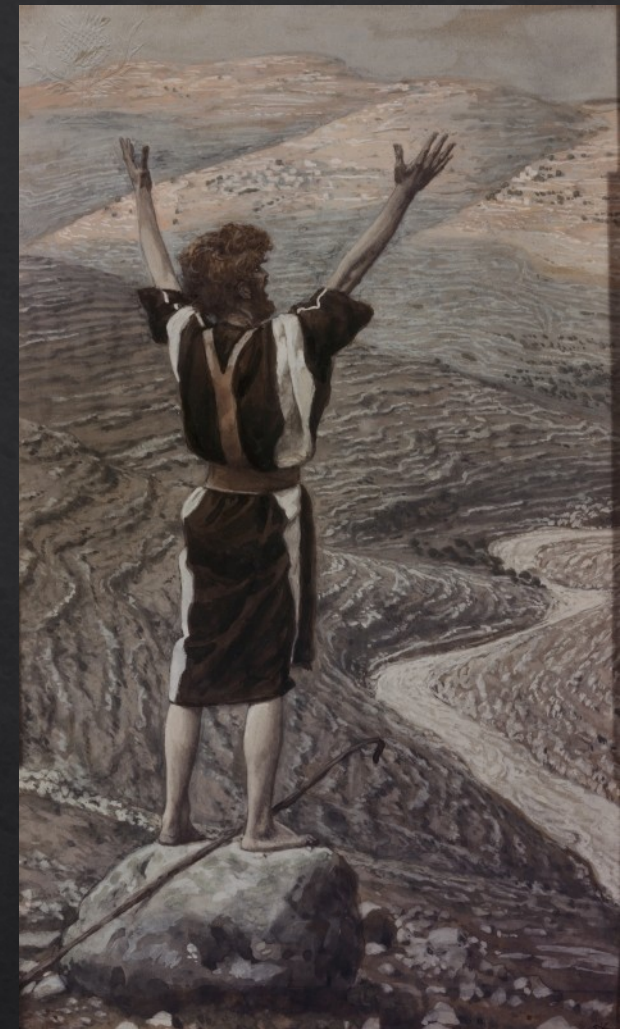
A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

<sup>10</sup> This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

**John is more than a prophet**

- **he introduces the eschatological age**



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<sup>11</sup> Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

<sup>12</sup> From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and **the violent take it by force.** <sup>13</sup> For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John came; <sup>14</sup> and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. <sup>15</sup> Let anyone with ears listen!

About Joseph “there is not among his brethren one greater than he,” and about Moses “there is not in Israel one greater than he.”

Mekhilta

Not to be taken as  
blanket judgments

Metaphor

spiritual warriors taking the kingdom through their passionate commitment to Christ

Open your ears and truly  
hear what is being said

Think about it!

*Do we recognise the prophets in our time?*

Chorazin

Capernaum



People were never satisfied  
and were not disposed to  
recognise truth

- truth did not meet their  
misguided expectations

Chorazin and Bethsaida had  
the advantage of seeing  
Jesus' deeds of power – and  
still rejected him

<sup>16</sup> “But to what will I compare this generation? It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to one another,

<sup>17</sup> ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;

we wailed, and you did not mourn.’

<sup>18</sup> For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon’; <sup>19</sup> the Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds.”

<sup>20</sup> Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. <sup>21</sup> “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.



<sup>22</sup> But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. <sup>23</sup> And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to Hades. For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. <sup>24</sup> But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Opportunity can never be found in closed-minded people

Powerful contrast between Capernaum and Sodom

The Galilean towns were not open to the signs





## Reversal of values

Indicates a unique relationship between God  
and Jesus

## Paradox

Jesus' yoke brings tranquillity, rest

Matthew 11:25–27 (NRSV)

<sup>25</sup> At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants;

<sup>26</sup> yes, Father, for such was your gracious will.

<sup>27</sup> All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

<sup>28</sup> “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”



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*The Peshitta, Mt 11:29*

His burden is light because it is not weighed down by desires and  
the need to accumulate and control

# CONFLICT

<sup>21</sup> Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even in plowing time and in harvest time you shall rest.

Exodus 34:21–22

Many of Jesus' teachings are closer to those of the Pharisees than to any other party

Conflicts often become most severe among groups closely connected

Jesus clings to a sensitive reading of Scripture

Matthew

argues Jesus' ethics show a more perceptive reading of Scripture than the Pharisees' approach

Priority people before regulations

Deeper principles of Scripture are more important than ritual observances

<sup>12</sup> At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the sabbath; his disciples were hungry, and they began to pluck heads of grain and to eat.

<sup>2</sup> When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the sabbath." <sup>3</sup> He said to them, "Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry? <sup>4</sup> He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests.



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<sup>5</sup> Or have you not read in the law that on the sabbath the priests in the temple break the sabbath and yet are guiltless? <sup>6</sup> I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. <sup>7</sup> But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. <sup>8</sup> For the Son of Man is lord of the sabbath."

מִי־מֵחֻט־כֹּהֲנִים נִשְׁבָּחֵיךָ יְיָ מִי־כֹהֲנִים

Jesus clings to a sensitive reading of Scripture

Matthew

argues Jesus' ethics show a more perceptive reading of Scripture than the Pharisees' approach

Priority

people before regulations

Deeper principles of Scripture are more important than ritual observances

Matthew 12:9–14 (NRSV)

<sup>9</sup> He left that place and entered their synagogue; <sup>10</sup> a man was there with a withered hand, and they asked him, “Is it lawful to cure on the sabbath?” so that they might accuse him. <sup>11</sup> He said to them, “Suppose one of you has only one sheep and it falls into a pit on the sabbath; will you not lay hold of it and lift it out? <sup>12</sup> How much more valuable is a human being than a sheep! So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath.” <sup>13</sup> Then he said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and it was restored, as sound as the other. <sup>14</sup> But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him, how to destroy him.

*Tension rises*

*Hostility increases*

Jesus typically answers a question with a question

- Jesus considers the Sabbath to be the ideal day to give a person rest from affliction
  - this is the intention of Shabbat

שָׁבַת = cease, desist, rest

**YESHUA** portrayed as the embodiment of divine wisdom



## Suffering Servant = the Jewish people

Messiah Yeshua is being identified with the Jewish people

Messiah will be gentle on the powerless, the weary, the oppressed, the bruised and abused

Reinforces Matthew's emphasis on Jesus reaching out to the marginalised

*A mind committed to compassion is like an overflowing reservoir - a constant source of energy, determination and kindness*

Dalai Lama

Matthew 12:15–21 (NRSV)

<sup>15</sup> When Jesus became aware of this, he departed. Many crowds followed him, and he cured all of them, <sup>16</sup> and he ordered them not to make him known. <sup>17</sup> This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah:

<sup>18</sup> “Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased.

I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles.

<sup>19</sup> He will not wrangle or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.

<sup>20</sup> He will not break a bruised reed or quench a smouldering wick until he brings justice to victory.

<sup>21</sup> And in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

Matthew 12:22–32 (NRSV)

<sup>22</sup> Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. <sup>23</sup> All the crowds were amazed and said, “Can this be the Son of David?” <sup>24</sup> But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, that this fellow casts out the demons.” <sup>25</sup> He knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand. <sup>26</sup> If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand? <sup>27</sup> If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. <sup>28</sup> But if it is **by the Spirit of God** that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

**Jesus** is dealing with severe spite

- where rhetoric and gossip count more than facts and truth

Jesus refutes the accusation that he is a magician or sorcerer

A perfect rabbinic style of logical argument

The person and work of Yeshua mark the presence of the reign of God

Satan has lost control over people's lives

- in Jewish tradition this signals the end of the age



<sup>29</sup> Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his property, without first tying up the strong man? Then indeed the house can be plundered. <sup>30</sup> Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. <sup>31</sup> Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. <sup>32</sup> Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

- **Jesus has entered Satan's domain**
  - **has overcome Satan**
    - **is stronger than Satan**

➤ Permanent hardness of heart makes one incapable of conversion or repentance

*The worst prison would be a closed heart*

St John Paul II

If you want to know someone's mind listen to their words.  
If you want to know their heart, watch their actions.

Anonymous

Garbage in, garbage out

Gentle words calm tense situations, but  
harsh words cut like whips.

Leland F. Wood

Matthew 12:33–37 (NRSV)

<sup>33</sup> “Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. <sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; <sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”



Matthew 12:38–42 (NRSV)

<sup>38</sup> Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.”

<sup>39</sup> But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. <sup>40</sup> For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so for three days and three nights the Son of Man will be in the heart of the earth. <sup>41</sup> The people of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the proclamation of Jonah, and see, something greater than Jonah is here! <sup>42</sup> The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and see, something greater than Solomon is here!

A sign performed out of compassion is good

A sign performed to show off or prove something is not good

The ultimate sign will be seen after Jesus’ death and resurrection

The prophetic sage who embodies Wisdom itself is here

Matthew 12:43–45 (NRSV)

<sup>43</sup> “When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it wanders through waterless regions looking for a resting place, but it finds none. <sup>44</sup> Then it says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ When it comes, it finds it empty, swept, and put in order. <sup>45</sup> Then it goes and brings along seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and live there; and the last state of that person is worse than the first. So will it be also with this evil generation.”

## Parable of the empty house

The empty house is vulnerable  
and defenceless

We need to feed ourselves with good values,  
aspirations and emotions and then put our gifts at the  
service of others

*All empty souls tend towards extreme opinions*

William Butler Yeats



# Discipleship

Relationship with Jesus through commitment  
is far better than relationship with him by  
accident of birth

Acknowledgement of female disciples

Matthew 12:46–50 (NRSV)

<sup>46</sup> While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. <sup>47</sup> Someone told him, “Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.” <sup>48</sup> But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, “Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” <sup>49</sup> And pointing to his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>50</sup> For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

# JESUS

Does not water down his message

~ leaves a measure of complexity, mystery

Sees himself revealing God's truth – has a unique relationship with God

Regards himself as prophet and dispenser of Wisdom

Provokes audience to think more deeply

Deals maturely with opposition

Told his followers he would expect a lot from them

Reaches out with compassion to the marginalised and powerless