

## Part 44 Rejoicing in God's Sovereignty (10:17-24)

### 1. The disciples rejoice in their success.

'The kingdom of God is ... joy in the Holy Spirit', said the apostle Paul<sup>□1</sup>. At this crucial point in the story, many people in Israel are hearing of God's kingdom. Jesus and His disciples are full of joy in the Holy Spirit.

□1 Rom 14:17

1. **The disciples rejoice in their success.** The seventy-two disciples return from their mission full of joy. They have experienced many blessings, the greatest of which is the experience of seeing evil spirits leave the people when the disciples give a word of command<sup>□1</sup>.

□1 10:17

### 2. Jesus rejoices over Satan's defeat

• *The humblest Christian has authority to fulfil God's will*

2. **Jesus rejoices over Satan's defeat.** Jesus is also rejoicing. He has perceived in His own heart that Satan is losing his influence and power ('falling from heaven') as the disciples have done their work<sup>□1</sup>. Luke 10:18 is one of many passages that say that Satan is ruined by the ministry of Jesus. 'The great dragon is thrown down'<sup>□2</sup>. Like the king of Babylon, he has 'fallen from heaven' (Isaiah 14:4,12; compare Luke 10:15). He is 'cast out'<sup>□3</sup> and bound (Revelation 20:1-3; the interpretation is of course disputed). He may be crushed under the feet of Christians<sup>□4</sup>. This defeat takes place in the ministry of Jesus and His disciples (see also Luke 11:20). They have authority over snakes<sup>□5</sup>; the 'snakes' and 'scorpions' are a piece of picture language referring to spiritual forces of darkness.; Satan cannot withstand any believer acting in the name and will of Jesus.

□1 10:18

□2 Rev 12:9

□3 John 12:31

□4 Rom 16:20

□5 10:19

• *They are to rejoice over their relationship to God*

However Jesus gives the disciples a word of warning<sup>□1</sup>. They are not to rejoice over their work; they are to rejoice over their relationship to God. Their names are written in heaven, and it is that which is to be their supreme joy.

□1 10:20

### 3. Jesus rejoices over God's choice of the disciples

• *God chooses the most despised kind of people, the poor and the foolish*

3. **Jesus rejoices over God's choice of the disciples.** On the same occasion, Jesus is given delight and satisfaction in the Holy Spirit, because of another aspect of the matter. The disciples are humble, ordinary people. Yet God has greatly used them. Jesus thanks His Father for them<sup>□1</sup>. 'You have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and have revealed them to babes', He says<sup>□2</sup>. There is a doctrine of predestination here. God is not obliged to reveal Himself to anyone. He can leave us as we are and so allow the blessings of His kingdom to remain hidden from us. When anyone comes to faith and understanding it is because of God's pleasure in the way He reveals Himself, and God chooses the most despised kind of people, the poor and the foolish. 'Has not God chosen the poor?'<sup>□3</sup>. There are a few exceptions (Paul said 'Not many' in 1 Corinthians 1:26; he did not say 'Not any'). Yet generally the rich and the clever are left aside. Jesus rejoices that the conceited and proud are left aside. If the rich and clever experience God's kingdom at all they have to 'glory in their humiliation'<sup>□4</sup>.

□1 10:21a

□2 10:21b

□3 Jas 2:5

□4 Jas 1:10

### 4. Jesus rejoices in His position as God's Saviour

4. **Jesus rejoices in His position as God's Saviour.** The previous thought leads Jesus on to make a statement about Himself. 'All things have been given to me by my Father...' <sup>□1</sup>. The Father alone has supreme knowledge of Jesus, His Son, and it is the Father who reveals Jesus<sup>□2</sup>. The Son alone has supreme knowledge of God the Father, and it is Jesus God's Son who reveals God to us<sup>□3</sup>. It is a very rich

(i) *Jesus is God's Mediator and Representative*

(ii) *Only God the father fully understands Jesus*

(iii) *No one but Jesus understands the Father or can reveal Him*

statement concerning Jesus. (i) Jesus is God's Mediator and Representative. Every plan and purpose of the Father has been put into the hands of Jesus. With His power is all authority to reveal God, all control and mastery of everything in heaven and earth, all judgement, all power over the entire human race to give eternal life to the Father's chosen ones. (ii) The person of Jesus is so profoundly deep and mysterious no one but God understands Him or can reveal Him. (iii) The same thing is true the other way round. The person of God – the Father – is so profoundly deep and mysterious that no one but Jesus understands Him or can reveal Him. Jesus is the one who fulfils the Father's plan of predestination. Only those 'to whom the Son chooses to reveal God' ever come to know God.

The Father and the Son together have a mutual knowledge of each other that no one else in the universe has. The Father and the Son are participants in the divine incomprehensibility and mystery. The Father and the Son are equally participants in a predestined plan of salvation. They give support to each other. The Father reveals the Son to God's chosen ones; the Son reveals the Father to God's chosen ones. They share the same mysterious nature; they accomplish the same mysterious plan.

10:22  
10:23a  
10:23b

**5. Jesus rejoices that His days are days of fulfilment**

- *The kingdom has arrived!*
- *The way into the holy of holies is made open*

**5. Jesus rejoices that His days are days of fulfilment.** 'Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see...' 10:24. For many centuries God had been announcing that one day He would come as the King to His world. Prophets and kings had longed to see this day, but now it is here. Satan has fallen from heaven. Salvation is opened up for anyone to whom the Father reveals Jesus. The disciples have a privilege that has never been given to any generation previously. They are the first to experience the fall of Satan from his position of authority. The power of God's kingdom is already working; the message of salvation is already being preached. The kingdom has arrived! Great blessings were made known to kings and prophets. David and Abraham and Elijah had rich experiences of God. But the humblest Christian may have experiences of God in Jesus Christ which go further than anything known before the days of Jesus. The way into the holy of holies is made open.

10:24

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