

THEY WENT ABOUT FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE...

(Luke 9: 9-10, 13-17, 18, 23-26)

YAHSHUA well knew that His days on the earth were approaching when He was to fulfill His Father's will. Soon or later He was to take His position as the Lamb of God Who was to be sacrificed for the sins of the world. He had accomplished much in a short time of His ministry which was to last three years. Nicodemus, the Pharisee who came to see Him sometime in the past, said, "No one can do the things that You do unless God is with him". The disciples had witnessed, but they had never experienced the power of God to do the miracles YAHSHUA had performed until He called them apart and gave them power, authority over all demons and (power) to cure disease (Luke 9:1). Power and authority must be given together for the work of God to be done successfully. No, they did not need to spend years in seminary studying, but just a few hours being taught and directed by the Son of God. At that time, they were sent to the house of Israel, announcing, preaching the kingdom of God, and bringing healing to those in need of. YAHSHUA instructed them not to take anything extra for their journey. Nothing was to interfere with God's provision while on the mission. No walking stick, nor wallet, no food, no money, no more than one garment or tunic, not even moving from place to place. God's faithfulness and power were to be witnessed through His provision, even in the necessities of life.

And departing, the Bible says, they went about from village to village, preaching everywhere the Gospel and restoring the afflicted to health (vv.6). They preached and announced the Gospel and restored people to health. Amazing work they performed by the power of God and none of their own. I am sure they were amazed at what was happening. Returning, they related all to YAHSHUA. As a result, He took them to a secluded place, where He withdrew with them before they had an opportunity to spread all that they had done. The Lord saw the need for them to be refreshed spiritually and as it was His custom, after a busy day, to withdraw to be alone, He withdrew with them to a solitary place. We often read that about Him. The good Shepherd does restore the soul of those who love and serve Him. The psalmist David so expressed his relationship with the Shepherd: He restores my soul; He leads me in the path of righteousness for His name sake (Psalm 23: 3). The disciples might not have realized the need to be alone with YAHSHUA after such experience, but He did. It was essential that they be at His feet after such an experience to learn more and understand the meaning of all that YAHSHUA was trying to show them. That was the time for them to be prepared to carry on the work the Lord YAHSHUA was leaving behind.

People all over seemed to have a hunger to be with YAHSHUA. They had heard of His healing work and many came to be healed and ministered to through the word of YAHSHUA. The crowds were from different countries around Israel. They had come to witness and experience

YAHSHUA'S miracles. Even Herod, when hearing about the work of YAHSHUA, desired to meet Him, which he did, at YAHSHUA'S trial. These men and women and children represented the world in need of the Living Bread. They stayed there for the entire day listening to Him; the spiritual food they were being fed with kept them physically satisfied, until the disciples felt concerned for them and presented the problem to YAHSHUA saying, Dismiss the crowds and send them away, so that they may go to the neighboring hamlets and villages and the surrounding country and find lodging and get a supply of provisions, for we are here in an uninhabited place (vs. 12). But He directed them saying, "You give them [food] to eat." Here was another door for the disciples to enter. The world, represented by the crowds, had come to YAHSHUA needing salvation. YAHSHUA'S response to the disciples "You give them [food] to eat," had a spiritual dimension not understood by the disciples. He was saying, Go unto all the world and preach the Gospel. Symbolic of the Bread of life being broken for all, YAHSHUA took the five loaves and the two fish. He looked up to heaven and gave thanks and asked Him to bless them. **Then He broke them and gave them to the disciples to place before the multitude** (Luke 9: 16). The message was clear. Not long after this experience His body would be broken, as it was prophesized in Psalm 22:14-15,16: I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint, My heart is like wax; it is softened and melted down within me; my strength is dried up like a fragment of clay pottery; my tongue cleaves to my jaws...I can count all my bones. And in Isaiah 52:14: [For many the Servant of God became an object of horror; many were astonished at Him] His face and His whole appearance were marred more than any man's, and His form beyond of the sons of men... but He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement [needed to obtain] peace and well-being for us was upon Him, and with the stripes [that wounded] Him we are healed and made whole (Isaiah 53:5). That was the hidden meaning found in that multiplication of bread and two fish. Having fed the crowds, once again He withdrew with his disciples, as it was His custom. This was a special time, however, for He wanted to reveal Himself to them and make it official Who He was and why He had come to earth. As He was praying, He asked a very important question: who do men say that I am?... But who do you say that I am? Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Peter answered Him, You are the Christ of God! That answer echoed from the beginning of time through eternity. Rejected by the Jewish religious authorities, who blasphemed the Holy Spirit when they said that He performed miracles under the power of demons, YAHSHUA instructed His disciples not to tell anyone Who He was. He then let them know the cost of following Him. He said, "If any person wills to come after Me, let him **deny** himself, **take up his cross** daily and **follow Me.**" When He gave up all for the sake to carry our cross, and offer us His ultimately sacrifice He then set forth the example for us to follow.

Paul, in the letters to the Philippians wrote: although being essentially one with God and in the form of God, (YAHSHUA) did not think this equality with God was a thing to eagerly grasped or retained, but stripped Himself, so as to assume the guise of a servant in that he became like men and was born a human being. And after He had appeared in human form, He abased and humbled Himself and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:6-8). And that cross, my friend was ours to carry. His death belonged to us, which symbolized eternal death. We have an obligation to Him- that of self-denial to surrender our life to Him. He told His disciples, Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all the days to the close and consummation of the age (Matt. 28:19-20). This message should be echoing today in the hearts of all those who love Him and have experienced the new birth in Him. Let's go empowered by this command to share God's love to a lost world submerging in sin and hopelessness!