

Question from a Bible student re Matthew 10:6:

“I’ve asked so many people this question I can’t remember if I’ve asked you. I guess I can’t remember because maybe I have not gotten an answer....or at least an answer that makes sense to me. It’s a simple question....Matthew 10:6 is a commandment (to me a commandment from Jesus Christ is a big thing) to the 12 to only go the the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Was that commandment ever rescinded?”

Dear Brother:

You know I am somewhat of a “Bible teacher”; as such, I am concerned with terms and both immediate and far reaching issues in answering Bible questions. At times, my rambling becomes tedious to the reader and I hope this is not the case here.

The commandment was never “rescinded” (*I assume you mean repealed or cancelled*) but there were additional future orders and details given surrounding the issues of to whom and where and how. This is not unusual or unique for we believe all commandments by the Lord from Genesis to Revelation are extremely important. This is what is known as “progressive revelation” among Bible students. *Progressive revelation simply means what commands or directions God gave to Noah were not necessarily the same as those commands given to Adam in the Garden, but they did in most cases, build upon prior directions, or advance previous doctrines, or even add new directions.* Adam was to eat of the fruit of all trees except one. Notice Adam was also directed that he was to eat “every herb bearing seed” and only those trees that hold “fruit of a tree yielding seed.”

Gen 1:29 And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

Gen 1:30 And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

But due to the failure of Adam to obey God’s commandment regarding eating in the Garden, he was kicked out of the Garden and directions to Noah for eating were changed by God:

Gen 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Gen 9:2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth *upon* the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Gen 9:3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

The above is a simple illustration of how God’s commandments to men change. However, God’s Character, or Essence does not change. God never changes or conflicts in His Omniscience, Omnipotence, Holiness, Justness, or else, He could not be The Supreme Deity.

In other words, we may illustrate it by comparing statements and actions by the LORD:
(1 Samuel 12:13-14) Now therefore behold the king whom ye have chosen, *and* whom ye have desired! and, behold, the LORD hath set a king over you.

14 If ye will fear the LORD, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the LORD your God:

The IF conditions, were they met, would have allowed Saul to continue as king, but the disobedience changed the course of events.

(Keep in mind that the basic meaning of “repent” is to change course of action. It does not necessarily admit of an error or sin) We then read of a future change of orders by the Lord (David replaces Saul):

(1 Samuel 15:11) It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

The Bible is replete with such actions and statements. The same Lord Jesus Christ gave all these commandments and orders throughout the Bible. We must agree that God never changes in His attributes, character, or essence, but He does change His dealings with men and orders to them.

(Matthew 10:5-6) These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Notice there were conditions upon the twelve: no offerings to be taken, neither money carried, nor suitcases (scrip), nor two coats, nor two pair of shoes, nor protection (staves).

Notice conditions upon the message: “kingdom of heaven”.

Notice conditions upon those who heard the message: IF (v. 13-14-15). “shake off the dust” “more tolerable” for the reprobate GENTILE cities (Sodom and Gomorrha) than for the “lost sheep of the house of Israel,”

(Matthew 10:7-15) And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.

What did the leaders of the nation Israel do with the twelve? What did they do with the Lord Jesus Christ? Israel (as a nation) did not repent. They screamed “Crucify him, we have no

king but Caesar!” The following verses confirm Israel’s rejection of Christ’s messengers and Himself. A few common people believed on Him but most of the lost sheep, along with the lost leaders, (Pharisees and Sadducees) did not believe.

(Matthew 11:16-24) But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

The rejection of Christ by most of the lost sheep of the house of Israel and their leaders, brought about a change in God’s dealings with Israel and the Gentiles as well. *(I must emphasize that this whole chain of events was of no surprise to God. Omniscience is an attribute of Deity.)*

Due to Israel’s rejection of Christ, God’s orders to man changed. Without going into further details, the change of messenger, message, and hearers occurred.

The command of Christ in Matthew 10 to “GO” was not rescinded—the limited audience of a *distinctive* Israel was included in the broader “all nations” as well as all other nations.

(Matthew 28:18-20) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

---Dave Reese, 2020