

For the Love of an Imperative Verb Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

The Second Sunday after Pentecost, Year A, RCL

⁹As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “**Follow** [ἀκολουθεῖ, **akolouthēi**] me.” And he got up and followed him.

¹⁰And as he sat at dinner in the house, [ἰδοὺ, **idou**] many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. ¹¹When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” ¹²But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ¹³Go and **learn** [μάθετε, **máthete**] what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

¹⁸While he was saying these things to them, **suddenly** [ἰδοὺ, **idou**] a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and **lay** [ἐπίθεσ, **epíthes**] your hand on her, and she will live.” ¹⁹And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. ²⁰Then **suddenly** [ἰδοὺ, **idou**] a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, ²¹for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” ²²Jesus turned, and seeing her said, “**Take heart** [θάρσει, **thárisei**], daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. ²³Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, ²⁴he said, “**Go away** [ἀναχωρεῖτε, **anachōreíte**], for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. ²⁵But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. ²⁶And the report of this spread throughout that district. [NRSV89]

9:9

ἀκολουθεῖ, **akolouthēi**; *vb*: *pres act imperative 2nd pers sg* from ἀκολουθέω:
translations: **follow** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **sigue** [IAdNT]
Albright & Mann: “[The idiom] ‘arose and followed’ . . . is common in the Hebrew of the OT. [p. 105.]

9:10

ἰδοὺ, **idou**; *vb*: *2nd aor mid imperative 2nd pers sg* from ὁράω, **horáō**:
translations: **behold** [ESV, NGEINT; Filson], also **now** [NJB, NKJV], **he aquí** [IAdNT],
not translated in NRSV89, NAB, NIV11, NRSVue, or Albright & Mann

Crossett: Also vss. 18 and 20.

9:13 cf. 7:7

μάθετε, **máthete**; *vb*: 2nd aor act **imperative** 2nd pers pl from μανθάνω

translations: **learn** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NKJV, NJB, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **aprendan** [IAdNT]

Crossett: Might you have thought the “go” preceding “learn” would be an imperative verb?

Filson: “‘Go and learn’ implies that the Pharisees do not really understand the Scriptures. Hosea 6:6 literally excludes all sacrifice, but this may merely mean emphatically that mercy is vastly more important than ceremonial correctness. There is here, however, the germ of a break with the Law, which gives sacrifice and ritual an essential place.” [p. 119.]

Levine & Brettler: “. . . Mercy takes precedence over sacrifice, not that sacrifice is eliminated.” [JANT, p. 28.]

9:18

ἰδοὺ, **idou**; *vb*: 2nd aor mid **imperative** 2nd pers sg from ὁράω:

translations: **suddenly** [NRSV89, NJB, NRSVue], also **behold** [ESV, NGEINT, NKJV; Filson], **he aquí** [IAdNT], not translated in NAB, NIV11, or Albright & Mann

Crossett: Also vss. 10 and 20.

ἐπίθεες, **epíthes**; *vb*: 2nd aor act **imperative** 2nd pers sg from επιτίθημι:

translations: **lay** . . . [on] [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue; Albright & Mann, Filson], also **put** [NIV11], **pon** [IAdNT]

9:20

ἰδοὺ, **idou**; *vb*: 2nd aor mid **imperative** 2nd pers sg from ὁράω

translations: **suddenly** [NRSV89, NJB, NKJV, NRSVue], also **behold** [ESV, NGEINT; Filson], **just then** [NIV11], **he aquí** [IAdNT], not translated in NAB or Albright & Mann

Crossett: Also vss. 10 and 18.

9:22

θάρασει, **thárasei**; *vb*: pres act **imperative** 2nd pers sg from θαρσέω

translations: **take heart** [NRSV89, ESV, NIV11, NRSVue], also **cheer up** [NGEINT], **be of good cheer** [NKJV], **courage** [NAB, NJB; Filson], **take courage** [Albright & Mann], **ten ánimo** [IAdNT]

Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26, continued

9:24

ἀναχωρεῖτε, **anachōreîte**; vb: pres act **imperative** 2nd pers pl from ἀναχωρέω

translations: **go away** [NRSV89, ESV, NAB, NGEINT, NIV11, NRSVue; Albright & Mann],

also **depart** [Filson], **get out** [NJB], **make room** [NKJV], **retiraos** [IAdNT]

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