

*The Gospel According to*

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

| NOTHING RECORDED | NOTHING RECORDED | CHAPTER 4, VERSES 16-30  | NOTHING RECORDED |
|------------------|------------------|--|------------------|
|                  |                  | <p><b>4:16</b> - And he came to Nazareth<sup>1</sup>, where he had been brought up<sup>2</sup>: and, as his custom<sup>3</sup> was, he went into the synagogue<sup>4</sup> on the sabbath day<sup>5</sup>, and stood up<sup>6</sup> for to read<sup>7</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:17</b> - And there was delivered<sup>8</sup> unto him the book<sup>9</sup> of the prophet<sup>10</sup> Esaias<sup>11</sup>. And when he had opened<sup>12</sup> the book<sup>9</sup>, he found the place<sup>13</sup> where it was written<sup>14</sup>,</p> <p><b>4:18</b> - The Spirit of the Lord<sup>15</sup> is upon me<sup>16</sup>, because he hath anointed<sup>17</sup> me to preach<sup>18</sup> the gospel<sup>19</sup> to the poor<sup>20</sup>; he hath sent me<sup>21</sup> to heal<sup>22</sup> the brokenhearted<sup>23</sup>, to preach<sup>18</sup> deliverance<sup>24</sup> to the captives<sup>25</sup>, and recovering<sup>26</sup> of sight<sup>27</sup> to the blind<sup>28</sup>, to set at liberty<sup>29</sup> them that are bruised<sup>30</sup>,</p> <p><b>4:19</b> - To preach<sup>18</sup> the acceptable<sup>31</sup> year of the Lord<sup>32</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:20</b> - And he closed<sup>33</sup> the book<sup>9</sup>, and he gave it again<sup>34</sup> to the minister<sup>35</sup>, and sat down<sup>36</sup>. And the eyes<sup>37</sup> of all them<sup>38</sup> that were in the synagogue<sup>4</sup> were fastened on him<sup>39</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:21</b> - And he began<sup>40</sup> to say unto them, This day<sup>41</sup> is this scripture<sup>42</sup> fulfilled<sup>43</sup> in your ears<sup>44</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:22</b> - And all bare<sup>45</sup> him witness<sup>46</sup>, and wondered<sup>47</sup> at the gracious words<sup>48</sup> which proceeded out<sup>49</sup> of his mouth<sup>50</sup>. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son<sup>51</sup>?</p> <p><b>4:23</b> - And he said unto them, Ye will surely say<sup>52</sup> unto me this proverb<sup>53</sup>, Physician<sup>54</sup>, heal thyself<sup>55</sup>: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum<sup>56</sup>, do also here in thy country<sup>57</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:24</b> - And he said, Verily<sup>58</sup> I say unto you<sup>59</sup>, No<sup>60</sup> prophet<sup>10</sup> is accepted<sup>61</sup> in his own country<sup>57</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:25</b> - But I tell you of a truth<sup>62</sup>, many widows<sup>63</sup> were in Israel<sup>64</sup> in the days<sup>65</sup> of Elias<sup>66</sup>, when the heaven<sup>67</sup> was shut up<sup>68</sup> three years and six months<sup>69</sup>, when great famine<sup>70</sup> was throughout all the land<sup>71</sup>;</p> <p><b>4:26</b> - But unto none<sup>72</sup> of them was Elias<sup>66</sup> sent<sup>73</sup>, save unto Sarepta<sup>74</sup>, a city of Sidon<sup>75</sup>, unto a woman<sup>76</sup> that was a widow<sup>63</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:27</b> - And many lepers<sup>77</sup> were in Israel<sup>64</sup> in the time of Eliseus<sup>78</sup> the prophet<sup>10</sup>; and none of them was cleansed<sup>79</sup>, saving<sup>80</sup> Naaman<sup>81</sup> the Syrian<sup>82</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:28</b> - And all they<sup>83</sup> in the synagogue<sup>4</sup>, when they heard these things<sup>84</sup>, were filled with wrath<sup>85</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:29</b> - And rose up<sup>86</sup>, and thrust him out<sup>87</sup> of the city<sup>88</sup>, and led him<sup>89</sup> unto the brow of the hill<sup>90</sup> whereon their city was built<sup>91</sup>, that they might cast him<sup>92</sup> down<sup>93</sup> headlong<sup>94</sup>.</p> <p><b>4:30</b> - But he passing<sup>95</sup> through the midst<sup>96</sup> of them went his way<sup>97</sup>,</p> |                  |

## CHRONOLOGY: Late December 27CE or Early January 28CE

## LOCATION: Nazareth of Galilee

**COMMENTARY:** Jesus was raised in the Galilæan city of Nazareth. It was a larger town, and one of the honored priestly cities assigned to one of the 24 concourses of Priests. It had a Synagogue, and lied just north of the major trade route between Egypt and Damascus; the "Via Maris" or "Way of the Sea". Some speculate the population to be as much as 20,000 people, though this might be liberal. By today's standard, Nazareth was still a small town. Jesus left Nazareth under 30 years of age, meaning he was not considered an adult religiously. He would not have been allowed to offer sermons or serve as a Rabbi. He now returns to his hometown, a man of 30 years of age. He also returns having ministered in Jerusalem, Judæa, Samaria, and in other parts of Galilee. In those places He has performed miracles, and wondrous works. He preached in a manner that has captivated the masses. He returns as a Rabbi of reputation. As such, the Ruler of the Synagogue would have been expected to invite Him to offer a sermon at the Sabbath synagogue services. Jesus was apparently asked, because He attends Synagogue and takes the pulpit for the reading of the scroll of the prophets, which He would have been expected to offer a sermon on after the reading. The attendant would have handed Him the scroll. He read from Isaiah, Chapter 61; a chapter that the Jews would have clearly understood to be a prophetic chapter about the promised Messiah. We do not know how long His sermon was following the reading, but we do know that He declared that the prophecy was fulfilled in him. The Jews, though at first impressed, questioned His pedigree, and wanted to see the miracles He was reported to be capable of. To this He gave examples from Israel's history when prophets could not perform miracles among the covenant people because of their wickedness. The Jews were outraged and cast Him out of their Synagogue. They led Him to the brow of a hill intent on throwing Him from the top and killing Him. His time; however, had not come. He disappeared from the midst of them and left Nazareth.

## FOOTNOTES:

- 1- **Nazareth** – The word "Nazareth" is translated from the Greek word "Ναζαρέθ" or "Nazara". The Greek word is translated literally as "the guarded one". **"The best Greek mss. read Nazareth in the infancy narrative (1:26; 2:4, 39, 51); but here the preferred reading is Nazara, a form also found in Matt. 4:13. This may reflect a more ancient Semitic form of the name."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 530).

The city of Nazareth is considered, by most scholars, to be a small, insignificant village in Galilee. They base this assumption on the fact that there is no external reference to Nazareth outside of the New Testament, including the various translations of the Old Testament. There are no references by Flavius Josephus or Philo in their great histories. Therefore, scholars suppose it to be a place of little renown and probably unknown to most Jews of the time. I find this somewhat difficult to accept. It is clear that references to Nazareth are non-existent; however, Nazareth was just off the Via Maris. The Via Maris, or "Way of the Sea", is the ancient trade route connecting Egypt and Syria. It was considered a major highway. It passed very near Nazareth to the south. It was the road that Jesus most probably traveled between Nazareth and Capernaum. Nazareth was located in the hill tops, while the Via Maris lied on the valley below, but one could have easily sat and watched the travelers on the highway from Nazareth, and vice versa. I find it hard to believe that travelers did not trade



## RECONSTRUCTION OF 1ST CENTURY nazareth



wares or secure goods with the villagers of Nazareth as they passed by. Surely the villagers would have capitalized on the trade potential of this great highway. This would have put Nazareth on the map, if for no other reason. Speaking of the Via Maris, Edersheim wrote, **"From Damascus it led across the Jordan to Capernaum, Tiberias, and Nain (where it fell in with a direct road from Samaria), to Nazareth, and thence to Ptolemais. Thus, from its position, Nazareth was on the world's great highway. What was spoken there might equally re-echo throughout Palestine, and be carried to the remotest lands of the East and of the West."** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 27).

Larger cities were typically well known. We know that Nazareth was a sizable village, relative to the time. The very fact that it had a Synagogue, supports the idea. A Synagogue could not be built without at least ten separate families who could produce a male adult Jew of good report and standing to serve in the Synagogue. Not every village was big enough to accomplish



this requirement. Nazareth was populated enough to accomplish this feat. "One of Jesus' very early visits was to Nazareth, his home town. Nazareth was not a village. It is called a polis which means a town or city; and it may well have had as many as 20,000 inhabitants. It stood in a little hollow in the hills on the lower slopes of Galilee near the Plain of Jezreel. But a boy had only to climb to the hilltop above the town and he could see an amazing panorama for miles around." (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 47).

Nazareth was not an obscure village only based on its proximity to the Via Maris, but also for the fact that it was a priestly village. Not every village had this honor. "All the priests were divided into twenty four courses, one of which was always on ministry in the Temple. Now, the priests of the course which was to be on duty always gathered in certain towns, whence they went up in company to the Temple; those who were unable to go spending the week in fasting and prayer for their brethren. Nazareth was one of these priestly centres; so that there, with symbolic significance, alike those passed who carried on the traffic of the world, and those who ministered in the Temple." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 23). This alone would have put Nazareth on the map to the Jews in every corner of Palestine.



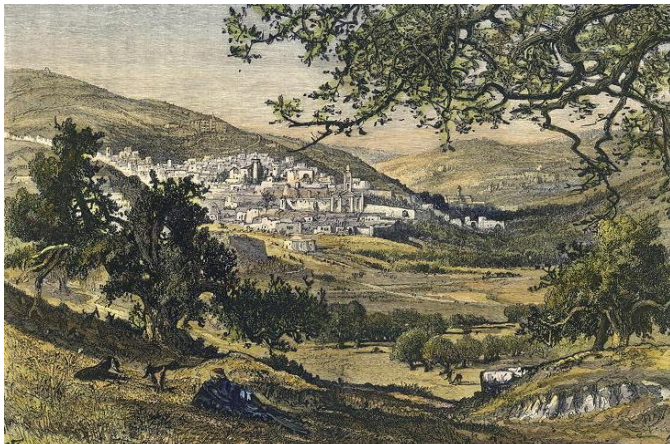
Nazareth was surely known due to its trade location, and its size; but it also had a reputation, and not a good one. Zondervan writes, "Unfortunately, however, the people of Nazareth had established a rather poor reputation in morals and religion." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 574). We don't know how this reputation started, or even the vague story line. We know that Nathanael, a disciple and future Apostle, asked rhetorically if anything good could come out of Nazareth. Someone, or a group of people, had obviously done something that gave Nazareth a bad rap.

The village of Nazareth had at least one synagogue, and probably several. It also had a school, traditionally associated with the synagogue. The Chazzan, or minister, would have served as the school teacher. It is possible that the chazzan of Nazareth had taught a younger Jesus. Jesus would have known many of the people of the village if not most of them. Speaking of Nazareth, Elder McConkie wrote, "The city where he is known, where he learned the carpenter's trade, where he went to school and sat in the synagogue on the Sabbath." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 11).

It is well accepted that Jesus left Sychar, and the Samaritan woman at the well, for the area of Nazareth. What is in debate is if Jesus went directly to Nazareth or visited other cities first. Farrar wrote, "It appears that Jesus did not go direct from Sychar to Nazareth. On His way (unless we take Luke iv. 15 for a general unchronological reference) He taught continuously, and with general admiration and acceptance, in the synagogues of Galilee. In this way He arrived at Nazareth, and according to His usual custom, for He had doubtless been a silent worshiper in that humble place Sabbath after Sabbath from boyhood upwards, He entered into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 157). It is believed by most that He visited Cana before He came to Nazareth, though some would argue that Cana came after Nazareth. "The stay in Cana, though we have no means of determining its length, was probably of only short duration." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 430).

Jesus' entry into the hills of Nazareth must have brought back fond memories of His childhood, His mortal parents, and probably area He had played and even communed with His Heavenly Father. Nazareth was a beautiful setting for the rearing of the young Messiah. From Nazareth the mortal Jehovah could see His own history with His children. "Sir George Adam Smith described the scene from the hilltop. The history of Israel stretched out before the watcher's eye. There was the plain of Esdraelon where Deborah and Barak had fought; where Gideon had won his victories; where Saul had crashed to disaster and Josiah had been killed in battle; there was Naboth's vineyard and the place where Jehu slaughtered Jezebel; there was Shunem where Elisha had lived; there was Carmel where Elijah had fought his epic battle with the prophets of Baal; and, blue in the distance, there was the Mediterranean and the isles of the sea." (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 47).

One final point should be made before we go one. The Gospel writer Matthew records a story of Jesus coming to Nazareth and preaching in the synagogue. Though some speculate that Matthew's and Luke's account are the same. Upon close review, the two accounts are clearly separate visits. Zondervan writes, "The rejection of Jesus Christ in the synagogue of Nazareth has been the cause of debate whether indeed there were two rejections or merely one. Though the matter will never be entirely settled, it seems as if there were two such experiences in the life of Christ. The first occurrence at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4:14). The second transpired on the occasion of Christ's final visit to Nazareth (Matt. 13:54). The very exegetical structures of the stories appear to make their own demands for two incidents, as in the first (Lukan) account there arose such great hostility that the congregation actually attempted to take His life. In the second instance, a spirit of faithless apathy was the only noticeable reaction to His words." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 573).



nazareth, FROM THE SOUTH

Now called En Nāsirah

In addition to the similar story in Matthew, there is also a similar story in Mark. Again, I believe that though the stories have similarities, they are in fact different stories. Fitzmyer wrote, "...a number of commentators think that the entire Lucan episode has come to the evangelist from a non-Marcian source and that it simply has coincidental parallels with Mark 6:1-6a." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 527). Even so, Fitzmyer waffles on the subject. He goes on to say that the stories have to many similarities to consider them different stories. He writes, "Though there is a little similarity in the details or in the wording of the Lucan and Marcian form of the account of this visit, the substance of the two stories is the same: a visit to a



synagogue in Jesus' hometown; a popular reaction to his teaching (positive, and then negative); the recognition of his parentage; the proverb about a prophet without honor or welcome in his own town; and the absence of any 'sign' given in Nazareth. However, the Lucan form of the story is over twice as long as that of Mark, and this raises several questions about the source and function of the former. Efforts in the past to save the historicity of the two accounts often postulated two visits of Jesus to Nazareth; but this sort of interpretation fails to cope with the substantial similarity of the two existing accounts of the same incident." (The Gospel according to Luke 1-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 526). The bottom line is, we don't know how these stories fit together. Some day we will be given the proper revelations to figure this out.

Below is a satellite picture of present day Galilee, with labels identifying the ancient locations of the Bible. Nain is 11.8 miles from Nazareth by foot, and staying on the ancient roads. Mount Precipice is 2.1 miles south of Nazareth. The famed Mount Tabor is only 9.2 miles east of by foot. The Jezreel Valley runs to its south. The Jezreel Valley will one day be the site of Armageddon, the great battle of the last days. The city of Megiddo lies 14.7 miles from Nazareth on the south side of the Jezreel Valley. Capernaum lies 26.9 miles from Nazareth.



2- **brought up** – The phrase "brought up" is translated from the Greek word "τρέφω" or "trephō". The Greek word means to nourish, support, feed, to give suck, to fatten, to bring up or to nurture.

It is probable the Jesus returned from Egypt, with His parents, between 3BCE and 1BCE. It is this authors opinion that Jesus was born on April 6th, 4BCE. He would have returned to Nazareth, from Egypt, between the age of 1 and 3 years of age. Some scholars believe that Jesus was as old as 5 years of age upon his return, though the older age has some problems reconciling with the apocryphal works of His childhood. It is believed that He remained in Nazareth until just prior to the start of His mortal ministry. Based on the fact that Jesus attended the marriage at Cana, where His mother took on the role of "mother of the groom", it could be strongly argued that Jesus and His family were residing in Cana at that time. Marriages were traditionally held in the home of the grooms parents. One could speculate that Mary moved to Cana after the death of Joseph, who we know died prior to even Jesus' baptism by John the Baptism, though we do not have a year, much less a date, for Joseph's death. Given all this, I would estimate that Jesus spent at the very least His childhood and adolescence in Nazareth. That would be a minimum of 15 years. Quite probably, Jesus remained in Nazareth for as much as 25 years, leaving near the start of His mortal ministry.

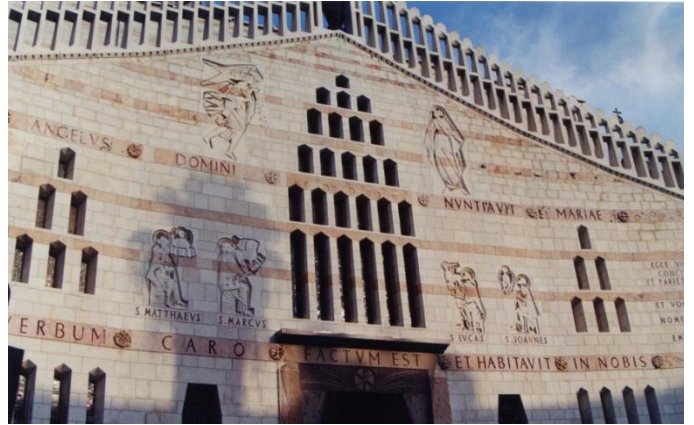
During Jesus' residency in Nazareth, He would have attended school at the local synagogue. Perhaps the same synagogue spoken of in this chapter. The school teacher would have been the synagogue Chazzan, or minister. The curriculum in ancient Jewish schools such as this one would have been the Torah. Through the study of the Torah, Jesus would have been taught numbers, letters, math, grammar, and history; all with the intent of learning and understanding the laws of God. It is possible that the Chazzan referenced in this chapter was Jesus' school teacher in His youth, though it is probable that His teacher would have been replaced with a younger Chazzan by this time.

So why was Jesus not recognized as the Messiah during all those years that He attended synagogue, school, and other public interactions? Surely many would have recognized Him. A town of 20,000 is not so large that the village carpenter would have gone unknown. Even His family would have been known by many. The answer lies in Jewish law. A man was not allowed to orate in the synagogue or public before he is 30 years of age. Until such age, any form of ministry would be considered inappropriate. We would assume that Jesus respected and followed the law. He probably attended synagogue and public gatherings without raising His voice, or adding commentary. To this point, He would have been a quiet attendee. During this time, however, He was learning and preparing for the ministry that would change everything.

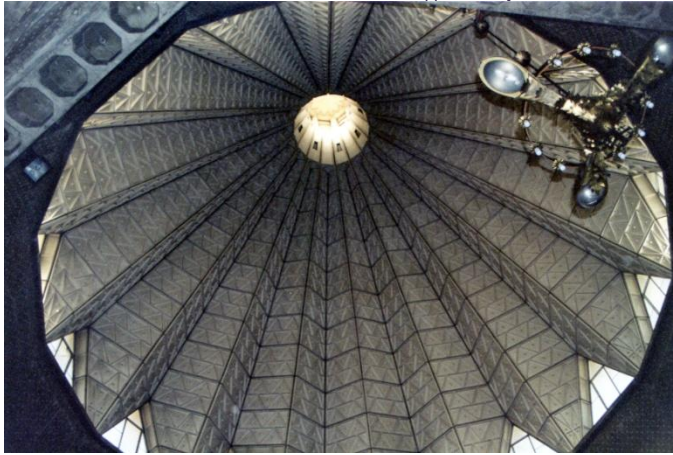




Church of the Annunciation - Nazareth - build over supposed boyhood home of Jesus



Church of the Annunciation - Nazareth - Modern Cathedral build over Crusader Church



Church of the Annunciation - Nazareth - Cathedral Doom from Inside



Painting of Jesus with Parent's Mary and Joseph



Behind the Catholic facades lies the cave alleged to be Jesus boyhood home



Another entrance to the Boyhood Home of Jesus



In the Background lies the cave alleged to be Jesus boyhood home



Jesus with His parents



Path to Joseph's workshop



- 3- **as his custom** – The word "custom" is translated from the Greek word "ἔθω" or "ethō". The Greek word means to be accustomed, used, wont, usage or custom. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "as his custom" as "according to his custom". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 16, page 109). **"Luke alone among the Synoptic evangelists stresses Jesus' habitual frequenting of the synagogue; he thus presents him conforming to the general Jewish custom described by Josephus (Ant. 16.2.4 § 43) of giving 'every seventh day over to the study of our customs and law'." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 530).**



I am not sure why, but many of us have a hard time picturing Jesus as a faithful practicing Jew. Perhaps because we know how apostate the Jews were during the time Jesus walked the roads of Palestine. We have a hard time picturing Him wearing phylacteries, attending regular synagogue services, and participating in Jewish rituals and rites. We would rather picture Him sitting on a rock with a multitude gathered to hear Him restore the lost truths of eternity. Well, He did the latter often, but He did not do it at the expense of honoring the law. He was perfect, and therefore would not have ignored the laws that governed the society. **"It was Jesus' habit to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. There must have been many things with which he radically disagreed and which grated on him--yet he went. The worship of the synagogue might be far from perfect; yet Jesus never omitted to join himself to God's worshipping people on God's day."** (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 49).

Jesus would have prepared for the Sabbath, like every other faithful Jew. A day of rest required that every needful thing for the sacred day be prepared in advance. Food, water, and supplies would need to be procured prior to sundown on Friday evening. All work must be completed in advance. On Saturday morning, the minister would sound the horn, announcing that synagogue services were to begin. The Jews would make their way to the synagogue. As they entered, they would approach the ark, a container holding the scrolls of the Law and the Prophets. **"If, as in the circumstances seems likely, Jesus commenced the first part of the service, and then pronounced before the 'Ark' those Eulogies which were regarded as, in the strictest sense, the prayer (Tephillah), we can imagine - though we can scarcely realize - the reverent solemnity, which would seem to give a new meaning to each well-remembered sentence. And in His mouth it all had a new meaning. We cannot know what, if any, petitions He inserted, though we can imagine what their spirit would have been. And now, one by one, Priest, Levite, and, in succession, five Israelites, had read from the Law. There is no reason to disturb the almost traditional idea, that Jesus Himself read the concluding portion from the Prophets, or the so-called Haphtarah. The whole narrative seems to imply this."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452). The details of Synagogue worship are discussed in greater detail in the next footnote.

Though there are significant differences between Jewish synagogue worship and our modern church services, there are also amazing similarities. This makes sense since Christian church services originate in the ancient Jewish synagogue. Elder McConkie wrote, **"With Jesus we go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. Such is his custom, such is ours, and such is the custom of all the faithful in Israel. Synagogue worship is as mandatory as anything can be in the lives of the chosen people in this meridian day. Synagogues are sacred places where Jewish Israel resorts to pay their devotions to the Most High and to praise his name in sermon and prayer. In them we do not joke or laugh or eat or do aught that is irreverent or that detracts from the true spirit of worship. And it is worthy of note that what prevailed in synagogues anciently is what should prevail in our houses of worship today, for the Christian practice of frequent worship - of sermon and song and prayer and scriptural reading, in buildings set apart for such purposes - grew out of the Jewish dispensation that preceded ours. The apostles built upon the foundations of the past as they devised the procedures for their new day."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 11).

- 4- **Synagogue** – The word "synagogue" is translated from the Greek word "συναγωγή" or "synagōgē". The Greek word means a bringing together, or a gathering of fruits. **"Although not as holy as the Temple, the synagogue has acquired a considerable measure of sanctity as its symbolic replacement. Ritual objects and space itself increases in holiness the closer they are to the ark and the Torah scrolls."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 167). The synagogue is used to symbolize **"center, continuity, holiness, the Jewish people, prayer, study, and worship"**. (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 167).



ancient synagogue in nazareth

As stated previously, not every village had its own synagogue, even if they wanted one. The Jewish law had requirements that must be met before a synagogue could be erected. A village, or city, must first demonstrate that it had enough leadership to operate a synagogue. Ten reputable men, of good moral character and reputation, having both the time and desire to serve, were the basic requirement to build a synagogue. Edersheim wrote, **"...common worship implied a congregation, which, according to Jewish Law, must consist of at least ten men."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 434). He further clarifies that these men were mature adults, married and with experience. This also provided that there would be enough money, through religious taxation or tithe, to operate the daily functions of the synagogue. **"This would seem to dispose of the question whether, as is generally assumed, a Jewish community in a place, if numbering ten heads of families, was obliged to build a Synagogue, and could enforce local taxation for the purpose."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 433).

"Generally, or course, a community would build its own Synagogue, or else depend on the charitable assistance or neighbors, and on private munificence. If this failed, they might meet for worship in a private dwelling, a sort of 'Synagogue in the house'." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 433). The synagogue was a special structure, and required the highest quality building materials available to the village. It was typically made of stone, and if possible, marble. The synagogue was required to have windows. According to traditions, twelve windows were required, symbolizing the twelve tribes of Israel and the light giving covenants associated therewith. Edersheim wrote, "The Synagogue is furnished with sufficient windows to admit light. The roof is flat, the columns being sometimes connected by blocks of stone, on which massive rafters rest." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452). The synagogues were most often erected facing the Temple in Jerusalem. Even so, the placement of the entrance was later made when the ark was required to face Jerusalem. Edersheim believed that the Synagogues were positioned to face East during the time of Jesus. He wrote, "The prevailing direction in Palestine was towards the west, as in the Temple. Thus, we read that the entrance into the Synagogue was by the east, as the entrance through the Beautiful Gate into the Sanctuary." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 434).



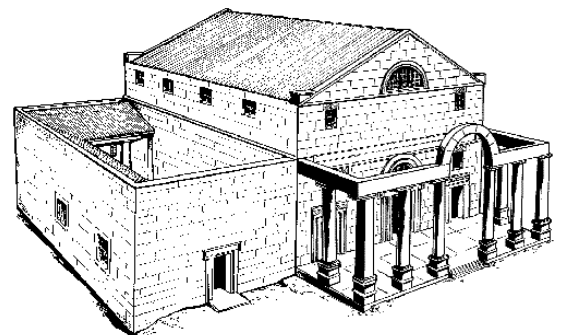
The Synagogue was rich in symbolism. Often villages carved images into the stones that made up the synagogue. Such carvings were reminiscent of the Temple. "As we enter the stone synagogue, we admire the ornamentation over the lintel; perhaps it is 'a seven-branched candlestick, an open flower between two Paschal lambs, or vine-leaves with bunches of grapes, or, as at Capernaum, a pot of manna between representations of Aaron's rod.' We observe the holy chest - a moveable ark, as it were - in which the sacred rolls of the Law and the Prophets are kept. The holy lamp is burning, 'in imitation of the undying light in the temple.' Before the ark are the seats of honor where the rulers of the synagogue sit, facing the people. There is a place for the one who is to lead the devotions and a desk from which the Law is read, it is all familiar and well suited to the needs and circumstances of the day." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 11-12). Edersheim agrees with Elder McConkie, writing, "The Synagogue is built of the stone of the country. On the lintles over the doors there are various ornamentations - a seven-branched candlestick, an open flower between two Paschal lambs, or vine-leaves with bunches of grapes, or, as at Capernaum, a pot of manna between representations of Aaron's rod." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 435). These are all symbols of the covenant.

Farrar, who believes that Nazareth had but one Synagogue, gives a beautiful description of it based on archeological evidence of similarly sized synagogues of the time. He wrote, "There was but one synagogue in the little town, and probably it resembled in all respects, except in its humbler aspect and materials, the synagogues of which we see the ruins of Tell Hüm and Irbid. It was simply a rectangular hall, with a pillared portico of Grecian architecture, of which the further extremity (where the 'sanctuary' was placed) usually pointed towards Jerusalem, which, since the time of Solomon, had always been the kibleh - i.e., the consecrated direction - of a Jew's worship, as Mecca is of a Mohammedan's. In wealthier places it was built of white marble, and sculptured on the outside in alto-relievo, with ornaments of vine-leaves and grapes, or the budding rod and the pot of manna. On entering there were seats on one side for the men; on the other, behind a lattice, were seated the women, shrouded in their long veils. At one end was the tebhah or ark of painted wood, which contained the sacred scriptures; and at one side was the bima, or elevated seat for the reader or preacher. Clergy, properly speaking, there were none, but in the chief seats were the ten or more batlanim, 'men of leisure', or leading elders; and pre-eminent among these the chief of the synagogue, or rosh hakkeneseth. Inferior in rank to these were the chazzan or clerk, whose duty it was to keep the sacred books; the sheliach, corresponding to our sacristan or verger; and the parnasim, or shepherds, who in some respects acted as deacons" (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 157).



After Jesus had prepared for the Sabbath, He, like most Jews, waited for it to officially begin. The Chazzan or synagogue minister performed that honor. Edersheim records, "As the lengthening shadows of Friday's sun closed around the quiet valley, He would hear the well-remembered double blast of the trumpet from the roof of the Synagogue-minister's himself, proclaiming the advent of the holy day. Once more it sounded... to tell all, that work must be laid aside. Yet a third time it was heard, ere the 'minister' put it aside close by where he stood, not to profane the Sabbath by carrying it; for now the Sabbath had really commenced, and the festive Sabbath-lamp was lit." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452). Friday night would be a restful night of study, prayer, and reflection. There was no synagogue worship, or required rite, just personal observance of the Sabbath. "The Sabbath lamp was lighted; the festive garment put on; the table provided with the best which the family could afford; and the Qiddush, or benediction, spoken over the cup of wine, which, was always, was mixed with water." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 437). The light of the Synagogue lamp was significant to all the Jews. It was a symbol for the knowledge and influence of God. "But the Holy Lamp is never wanting, in imitation of the undying light in the Temple." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 436).

Saturday morning was a different story. Jesus would have dressed in cloths prepared before the Sabbath. He would have prepared Himself for worship in the Synagogue. "And as Sabbath morning broke, they hastened with quick steps to the Synagogue; for such was the Rabbinic rule in going, while it was prescribed to return with slow and lingering steps." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 437). Edersheim further explains, "Sabbath morn dawned, and early He repaired to that Synagogue where, as a child, a Youth, a Man, He had so often worshipped in the humble retirement of His rank, sitting, not up there among the elders and the honored, but far back. The old well-known faces were around Him, the old well-remembered words and services fell on His ear. How different they had always been to Him than to them, with whom He had thus mingled in common worship! And now He was again among them, truly a stranger among His own countrymen; this time, to be looked at, listened to, tested, tried, used or cast aside, as the case might be. It was the first time, so far as we know, that He taught in a Synagogue, and this Synagogue that of His own Nazareth." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, pages 430-431).





Jesus would have arrived at the Nazareth synagogue seeing the sacred images carved into the lintels over the main entrance, which looked towards Jerusalem. (Note that the at some point the direction of the Synagogue was made irrelevant, as the Ark was to be positioned towards Jerusalem). Jesus would have entered the large rectangular room used for services, and directed His focus to the "Aron" or "Ark". The ark was most probably kept behind a veil on the southern wall of the Synagogue, if the Synagogue itself faced Jerusalem, otherwise, it would be on the wall facing Jerusalem. Edersheim writes, "**The so-called 'Ark' would be at the south end; the seats for the elders and honorable in the front of it, facing the people, and with their back to the Ark.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 434). Jesus would approach the ark but would not have parted the veil, but rather have stopped to recite a very specific memorized prayer taken from the law. Edersheim explains, "**At the south end, facing north, is a movable 'Ark', containing the sacred rolls of the Law and the Prophets. It is called the Holy Chest or Ark, Aron haqqodesh (to call it simply 'ark' was sinful), but chiefly the Tebhah, Ark. It was made movable, so that it might be carried out, as on public feasts. Steps generally led up to it (the Darga or Saphsel). In front hangs (this probably from an early period) the Vilon or curtain.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 436). The synagogue arks were symbolic of the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant had traditionally been stored behind the veil in the Holy of Holies in the Temple in Jerusalem. This very symbol of the Ark of the Covenant, which held the Law of Moses, represents the presence of God and the perfection associated with Him.

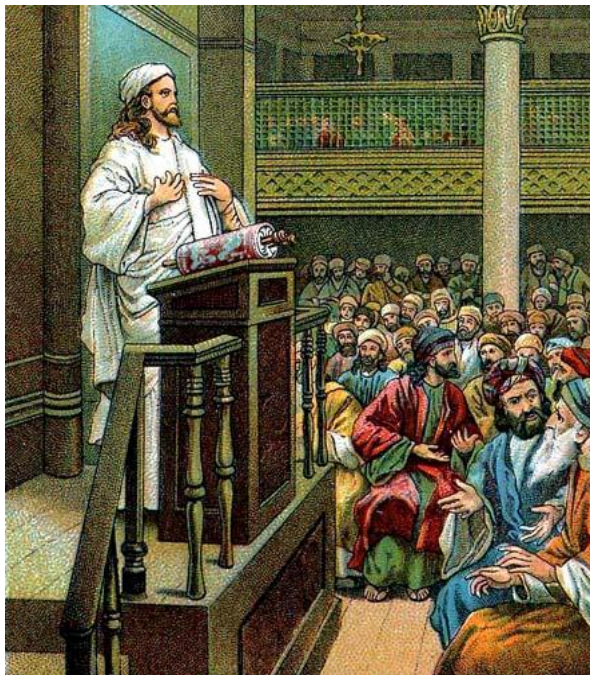


Jesus would have been accompanied by the Nazareth villagers. If they numbered 20,000, as stated by Barclay, surely they would have had more than one synagogue. Regardless, the synagogue was probably full. I say this because neglecting synagogue worship was a sin. Even if there were only 100 villagers, they would have been compelled to be in synagogue on the Sabbath. Again we turn to Edersheim, who taught, "**To neglect attendance on its (synagogue) services would not only involve personal guilt, but bring punishment upon the whole district.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, pages 436 - 437).

Jesus would have left the ark, to find His place among the men. The ruler and elders of the synagogue would have taken their place on the stand or as they would have said, the bimah. They took their "**position in front of the women's gallery.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 436). Of course, Jesus may have been invited by the ruler of the synagogue as a dignified guest. As such, Jesus would have joined them on the Bimah. Elder McConkie wrote, "**As we seat ourselves, it is with full anticipation that the ruler of the synagogue will call on Jesus to deliver a discourse. Whenever 'some great Rabbi, or famed preacher, or else a distinguished stranger, is known to be in the town,' it is the custom to invite him to preach to the people. The 'institution of preaching' is a way of life among the Jews, and popular preachers are sought for, and are given complete freedom to expound and teach, using 'parables, stories, allegories, witticisms, strange and foreign words, absurd legends, in short, anything that might startle an audience.'**" (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 12). In fact, a famed Rabbi would have been asked to read and orate in the synagogue as a matter of social protocol. Surely the Ruler would not have been remiss in inviting Jesus to the stand. Edersheim taught, "**Some great Rabbi, or famed preacher, or else a distinguished stranger, is known to be in town. He would, or course, be asked by the ruler of the Synagogue to deliver a discourse.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 446).

Silence and reverence would have abounded in the synagogue. This was a place of worship. People came to worship God, and the Jews would have remembered the words, "**Be still, and know that I am God.**" (Psalm 46:10). They understood the sanctity of the structure. Furthermore, they understood that "**the Synagogue must not be made a thoroughfare. We must not behave lightly in it. We may not joke, laugh, eat, talk, dress, nor resort there for shelter from sun or rain. Only Rabbis and their disciples, to whom so many things are lawful, and who, indeed, must look upon the Synagogue as if it were their own dwelling, may eat, drink, perhaps even sleep there. But, in general, the Synagogue must be regarded as consecrated to God.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 437).

It should be noted that Jesus most likely sat amongst the most predominate men in Nazareth. The highest of whom was the "Ruler of the Synagogue" or the "Archisynagogos" or "Rosh ha-Keneseth". He was appointed by the people of Nazareth. Though I am sure that a certain level of popularity went into the selection, it is most probable that the Ruler was selected based on his moral character and knowledge. Most probably he was the scholar of Nazareth; wise and experienced. "**All the rulers of the synagogue were duly examined as to their knowledge, and ordained to the office. They formed the local Sanhedrin or tribunal. But their election depended on the choice of the congregation; and absence of pride, as also gentleness and humility, are mentioned as special qualifications. Sometimes the office was held by regular teachers.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 438).



In addition to the "Ruler of the Synagogue", "**then there are the elders (Zeqenim), or rulers (ἀρχοντες)... These are the rulers (Parnasim) or shepherds (ποιμένες).**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 438). The elders were the ten predominate men who justified the very existence of the Synagogue. If find it interesting and noteworthy that they were referred to as the shepherds of the people. It says something as to their purpose.

Finally, we have the minister. "**The lowest of these is the Chazzan, or minister, who often acts also as schoolmaster. For this reason and because the conduct of the services may frequently devolve upon him, great care is taken in his selection. He must be not only irreproachable, but, if possible, his family also. Humility, modesty, knowledge of the Scriptures, distinctness and correctness in pronunciation, simplicity and neatness in dress, and an absence of self-assertion, are qualities sought for.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 438). The minister served as the synagogue janitor, groundskeeper, handyman, school teacher, and steward.

As the synagogue services began, Jesus most likely took His seat on the Bimah with the Ruler, the Elders, and the Chazzan. "**In the middle of the Synagogue (so generally) is the Bima, or elevation, on which there is the luach, or desk, from which the Law is read. This is also called the Kurseya, chair, or throne, or Kisse, and Pergulah. Those who are to read the Law will stand, while he who is to preach or deliver an address will sit. Beside them will be the**

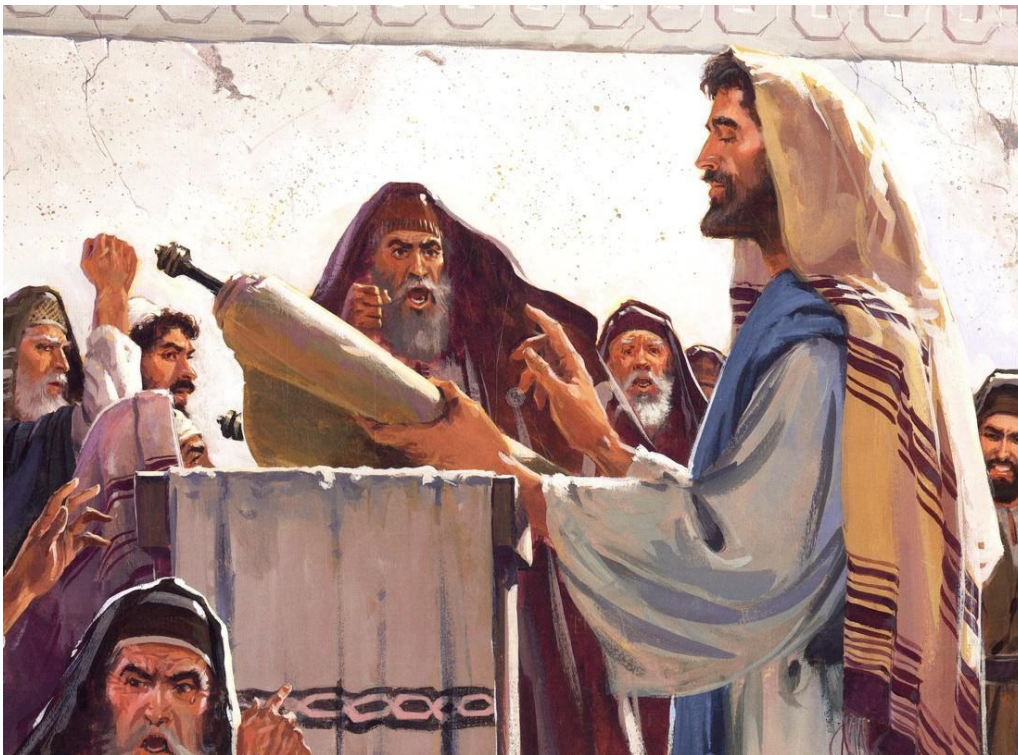


**Methurgeman, either to interpret, or to repeat aloud, what is said.**" (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 436).

After the prayer, the recitation of the Shema, and we assume the singing of hymns, it was time for the reading of the scriptures. This was done under the direction of the minister. **"The Chazzan, or minister, approached the Ark, and brought out a roll of the Law. It was taken from its case (teq, teqah), and unwound from those cloths (mitpachoth) which held it. The time had not come for the reading of portions from the Law and the Prophets. On the Sabbath, at least seven persons were called upon successively to read portions from the Law, none of them consisting of less than three verses. On the 'days of congregation' (Monday and Thursday), three persons were called up; on New Moon's Day, and on the intermediate days of a festive week, four; on feast days, five; and on the Day of Atonement, six."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 443).

The reading of the Law always preceded the reading from the Prophets. Additionally, there was no commentary or oration associated with the Law. It stood alone. The feeling is, once God gave the Law there is nothing that man could add to it. It was assumed perfect. The reading of the Prophets, on the other hand, was followed by an oration so long as there was someone qualified to do so. Farrar said, **"The service of the synagogue was not unlike our own. After the prayers two lessons were always read, one from the Law called parashah, and one from the Prophets called haphtarah; and as there were no ordained ministers to conduct the services - for the office of priests and Levites at Jerusalem was wholly different - these lessons might not only be read by any competent person who received permission from the rosh hak-keneseth, but he was even at liberty to add his own midrash, or comment."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., pages 157-158).

Going back to the reading of the Law, **"the minister takes out a roll of the Law, and seven persons are called upon to read successive portions. 'A descendant of Aaron was always called up first to the reading; then followed a Levite, and afterwards five ordinary Israelites ... The reading of the Law was both preceded and followed by brief Benedictions'."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 12). The Jewish hierarchy had organized the reading of the Law such that the entire Law was read over a prescribed time period. **"Accordingly, we find that the Massorah divides the Pentateuch into 154 sections. In regard to the lectionary, however, to be borne in mind, that preparatory to, and on certain festive days, the ordinary reading was interrupted, and portions substituted which bore on the subject of the feast. Possibly, at different periods different cycles may have obtained - those for three and a half years, three years, and even for one year."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 444).



So now we arrive at the point in the Synagogue services when Jesus took the center roll. **"Upon the Law followed a section from the Prophets, the so-called haphtarah. The origin of this practice is not known, although it is one that must evidently have met a requirement of the part of the worshippers."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 444). The minister would have returned the Scroll of the Law to the Ark, and subsequently retrieved the Scroll of the Prophets. He would have delivered the scroll then to the designated reader. **"For according to the Mishnah, the person who read in the Synagogue the portion from the Prophets, was also expected to conduct the devotions, at least in greater part. If this rule was enforced at that time, then Jesus would ascend the Bima, and standing at the lectern, began the service by two prayers."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 439). It is not exactly clear who selected the passage Jesus read. It may have been scheduled, much like the Jews followed a schedule for the Law. It might have been that the minister selected the verses. And finally, it might have been that Jesus selected the verses himself. Whatever the case, the hand of God acted

in the selection of the passage. The passage Jesus read is discussed further in subsequent footnotes in this chapter.

Once Jesus read the passage from the Prophets, the congregation waited for a response. **"The reading of the section from the Prophets (the Haphtarah) was in olden times immediately followed by an address, discourse, or sermon (Derashah), that is, where a Rabbi capable of giving such instruction, or a distinguished stranger, was present. Neither the leader of the devotions ('the delegate of the congregation' in this matter, or Sheliach Tsiibur), nor the Methurgeman, nor yet the preacher, required ordination. That was reserved for the rule of the congregation, or administration, doctrine or discipline."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 445). The commentary from a famed Rabbi would have been exciting. Surely He would expound great meaning and clarity to the passage. They must have sat with great anticipation.

In many cases, though we see no evidence or need with Jesus, a reader of the Prophets might employ an interpreter or translator. **"When a great Rabbi employed a Methurgeman to explain to the people his sermon, he would, of course, select him for the purpose. Such an interpreter was also amora or speaker. Perhaps the Rabbi would whisper to him his remarks, while he would repeat them aloud; or else he would only condescend to give hints, which the Amora would amplify; or he would speak in Hebrew, and the Amora translate it into Aramaean, Greek, Latin, or whatever the language of the people might be, for the sermon must reach the people in the vulgar tongue. The Amora would also, at the close of the sermon, answer questions or meet objections. If the preacher was a very great man, he would, perhaps, not condescend to communicate with the Amora directly, but employ one of his students as a middleman."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 445). **"So long as the substance of the text was given correctly, the Methurgeman might paraphrase for better popular understanding."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, pages 443 - 444).

We assume that Jesus spoke fluent Hebrew and Aramaic. He would have read the scroll from its original Hebrew, and then translated it Himself to the congregation into Aramaic.







Once the reader of the words of the Prophets finished his orations, he took his seat among the leadership of the synagogue. The service closed with a Benediction, prayers, and hymns. We believe that prayers were offered facing Jerusalem. **"Prayer towards the east was condemned, on the ground of the false worship towards the east mentioned in Ezek. viii 16."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 434).

Aside from Sabbath service, the synagogue had other functions. It was most often the local school. **"A Synagogue may be converted into an Academy, because the latter is regarded as more sacred, but not vice versa."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 437). It was also a gathering place during the week for spiritual study and worship. The Jews believed that the study of the Law brought them closer to their God. Consequently, they did not limit their studies to the Sabbath. **"The services on Mondays and Thursdays were special, these being the ordinary market days, when the country-people came into the towns, and would avail themselves of the opportunity for bringing any case that might require legal decision before the local Sanhedrin, which met in the Synagogue, and consisted of its authorities. Naturally, these two days would be utilized to afford the country-people, who lived far from the Synagogues, opportunity to worship; and the services on those days were of a somewhat more elaborate character. Accordingly, Monday and Thursday were called 'the days of congregation' or 'Synagogue' (yom ha-Kenisah)."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 432).

Synagogues were built as fast and as often as necessary. They quickly dotted the land. **"Jewish legend as to their extraordinary number in certain cities, such as 480, or 460, in Jerusalem. In the capital, and probably in some other large cities, there were not only several Synagogues, but these arranged according to nationalities, and even crafts."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 432). It is for this reason that I believe Nazareth had more than one Synagogue.

Nazareth was a city or village within the province of Galilee. The Galilæans were faithful people. Generally speaking, they were conservative in their approach to life. They embraced the old ways, and rejected the influences of Hellenism. They were considered, by those who live in progressive Judæa, to be the country folk of Palestine. **"It is a curious statement, that priests from certain cities in Galilee were not allowed to speak the words of blessing, because their pronunciation of the gutturals was misleading. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, moral blemishes or even sin, did not disqualify a priest from pronouncing the benediction, since it was really God, not man, Who gave the blessing."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 443). The faithful Galilæans might have lacked in sophistication, but their hearts were generally more open to the ways of God. Even so, it appears that Nazareth didn't take the Galilæan approach to Jesus. The rejected Him much like to prideful Judæans.

The synagogues arose out of tribulation. In 587 BCE, the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem and destroyed the Temple. The Jews were taken captive into Babylon. Previously, all Jewish worship centered on the Temple. They now found themselves in a pagan land without a Temple to worship in. It is here that the synagogue was born. Edersheim wrote, **"That Synagogues originated during, or in consequence of the Babylonish captivity, is admitted by all."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 431). After the Temple was restored, the Jews found the synagogue an important part of their worship. It allowed Jews to worship on a regular basis, even when the Temple was distant. The system of worship in the synagogue eventually became the pattern for Christian churches. **"For the Synagogue became the cradle of the church."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 431).

Edersheim summarized the Synagogue system of worship nicely. He did so as follows;

**"The separation of the sexes, which was observed even in the Temple at the time of Christ, was strictly carried out in the synagogues, such division being made effectual by a partition, boarded off and provided with gratings, to which there was separate access. The practice seems simply in accordance with Eastern manners and modes of thinking. But the Rabbis, who seek Scripture authority for every arrangement, however trivial, find in this case their warrant in Zechariah 12:11-14, where 'the wives' are no less than five times spoken of as 'apart,' while engaged in their prayerful mourning. The synagogue was so placed that, on entering it, the worshippers would face towards Jerusalem—mere 'orientation,' as it is now called, having no meaning in Jewish worship. Beyond the middle of the synagogue rose the platform or 'bima,' as it was anciently, or 'almmeor,' as it is presently named. Those who were called up to it for reading ascended by the side nearest, and descended by that most remote from their seats in the synagogue. On this 'bima' stood the pulpit, or rather lectern, the 'migdal ez,' 'wooden tower' of Nehemiah 8:4, whence the prescribed portions of the law and of the prophets were read, and addresses delivered. The reader stood; the preacher sat. Thus we find (Luke 4:20) that, after reading a portion from the prophet Isaiah, our Lord 'closed the book, and He gave it again to the minister, and sat down,' before delivering His discourse in the synagogue of Nazareth. Prayer also was offered standing, although in the Temple the worshippers prostrated themselves, a practice still continued in certain of the most solemn litanies. The pulpit or lectern—'migdal' (tower), 'chisse' and 'churseja' (chair or throne), or 'pergulah' (the Latin 'pergula,' probably elevation)—stood in the middle of the 'bima,' and in front of 'the ark.' The latter, which occupied the innermost place in the synagogue, as already noticed, corresponded to the Most Holy Place in the Temple, and formed the most important part. It was called the 'aron' (ark), the 'tevah,' or 'tevutha' (chest, like that in which Noah and Moses were saved), or the "hechal" (little temple). In reality, it consisted of a press or chest, in which the rolls of the law were deposited. This "ark" was made movable (Taan. ii. 1,2), so as to lift out on occasions of public fasting and prayer, in order to have it placed in the street or market-place where the people gathered. Sometimes there was also a second press for the rolls of the prophets, in which the disused or damaged rolls**





of the law were likewise deposited. In front of the ark hung the "vilon" ("velum," veil), in imitation of that before the Holy Place. Above it was suspended the "nerolam," or ever-burning lamp, and near to it stood the eight-branched candlestick, lit during the eight days of the feast of the dedication of the Temple (John 10:22), or Candlemas. The practice of lighting candles and lamps, not merely for use, but in honour of the day or feast, is not unknown in the synagogues. Of course, in regard to this, as to other practices, it is impossible to determine what was the exact custom at the time of our Lord, although the reader may be able to infer how much and what special practices may have been gradually introduced. It would lead beyond our present scope to describe the various directions to be observed in copying out the synagogue-rolls, which embodied the five books of Moses, or to detail what would render them unfit for use. No less than twenty such causes are mentioned by the Rabbis. At present the vellum, on which the Pentateuch is written, is affixed to two rollers, and as each portion of the law is read it is unrolled from the right, and rolled on to the left roller. The roll itself was fastened together by linen wrappers or cloths ("mitpachoth"), and then placed in a "case" ("tik," the Greek "theke"). All these articles are already mentioned in the Mishnah. Later practices need not here occupy our attention. Lastly, it should be noted, that at first the people probably stood in the synagogues or sat on the ground. But as the services became more protracted, sitting accommodation had to be provided. The congregation sat facing the ark. On the other hand, "the rulers of the synagogue," Rabbis, distinguished Pharisees, and others, who sought honour of men, claimed "the chief seats," which were placed with their backs to the ark, and facing the worshippers. These seats, which bear the same name as in the New Testament, were made objects of special ambition (Matt 23:6), and rank, dignity, or seniority entitled a Rabbi or other influential man to priority. Our Lord expressly refers to this (Matt 23:6) as one of the characteristic manifestations of Pharisaical pride. That both the same spirit and practice had crept into some of the early churches, appears from the warning of St. James (James 2:2, 3) against an un-Christ-like "respect of persons," which would assign a place high up in 'synagogues'." (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 146-147).

- 5- **sabbath day** – The word "sabbath" is translated from the Greek word "σάββατον" or "sabbaton". The Greek word means the seventh day of each week which was a sacred festival on which the Israelites were required to abstain from all work. The Greek word is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "שַׁבָּת" or "shabbath". The Hebrew word means to cease. The Sabbath or Shabbat is used to symbolize "completion, consecration, covenant, creation, eternity, the family, redemption, renewal, and holiness". (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platin Teutsch, page 153).

The Sabbath was given to man for their sanctification. The seventh day, or the Sabbath, was made holy by God Himself in the very beginning. Genesis records, "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made." (Genesis 2:3). Ever since, the obedient covenant people of the Lord have honored the Sabbath. The Sabbath was created to bless the lives of man. "The sanctity of the sabbath is shown by the offering upon it of two lambs, while only one was sanctified on the other days of the week (Num. 28:9:19). The 12 loaves of shewbread were also presented on that day. A willful sabbath-breaker was put to death (Num.15:32-36). The Israelite could not even light a fire in his home on the sabbath. Psalm 92, expressing delight in the worship and works of Jehovah, was composed for the sabbath day. In the Persian period Nehemiah rebuked and took strong measures against those who disregarded the law of the sabbath by doing business on it (Neh. 10:31; 13:15-22). With the development of the synagogue during the exile, the sabbath became a day for worship and the study of the Law, as well as a day of rest. There are not many references to the sabbath in the apocryphal books...At the beginning of the Maccabean war, Jewish soldiers allowed themselves to be massacred rather than profane the sabbath by fighting, even in self-defense. After 1,000 Jews were slaughtered in this way, they decided that in the future it would be permissible to defend themselves if attacked on the sacred day, but not to engage in offensive operations (1 Macc. 2:31-41)." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 735).



As the Jews apostatized from the truths given to them from God, they began to add to the law, and significantly take away from their desired intent. The Sabbath was changed significantly as the Jews fell further away from God. "During the period between Ezra and the Christian era the scribes formulated innumerable legal restrictions for the conduct of life under the law. Two whole treatises in the Talmud are devoted to the details of sabbath observance. One of these, the Shabbath, enumerates the following 39 principal classes of prohibited actions: sowing, planting, reaping, gathering into sheaves, threshing, winnowing, cleansing, grinding, sifting, kneading, baking, shearing wool, washing it, beating it, dyeing it, spinning it, making a warp of it, making two cords, weaving two threads, separating two threads, making a knot, untying a knot, sewing two stitches, tearing to sew two stitches, catching a deer, killing, skinning, salting it, preparing its hide, scraping off its hair, cutting it up, writing two letters, blotting out for the purpose of writing two letters, building, pulling down, extinguishing, lighting a fire, beating with a hammer, and carrying from one property to another. Each of these chief enactments was further discussed and elaborated, so that actually there were several hundred things a conscientious law-abiding Jew could not do on the sabbath. For example, the prohibition about tying a knot was much too general, and so it became necessary to state what kind of knots were prohibited and what kind not. It was accordingly laid down

that allowable knots were those that could be untied with one hand. A woman could tie up her undergarment, and the strings of her cap, those of her girdle, the straps of her shoes and sandals, of skins or wine and oil, of a pot of meat. She could tie a pail over the well with a girdle, but not with a rope. The prohibition regarding writing on the sabbath was further defined as follows: 'He who writes two letters with his right or left hand, whether of one kind or of two kinds, as also if they are written with different ink or are of different languages, is guilty. He even who should from forgetfulness write two letters is guilty, whether he has written them with ink or with paint, red chalk, India-rubber, vitriol, or anything which makes permanent marks. Also he who writes on two walls which form an angle, or on the two tablets of his account-book, so that they can be read together, is guilty. He who writes upon his body is guilty. If any one writes with dark fluid, with fruit juice, or in the dust of the road, in sand, or in anything in which writing does not remain, he is free. If any one writes with the wrong hand, with the foot, with the mouth, with the elbow; also if any one writes upon a letter of another piece of writing, or covers other writing.'" (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 736). Somehow the ancient Jews accepted these interpretations as logical and proper. They became adjuncts to the law. Many refer to such interpretations as hedges built around the law. Unfortunately, these hedges became a hindrance to the law rather than a protection.

We must clear away the hedges around the Sabbath law, and discover Sabbath observance as it was intended. "How do we hallow the Sabbath day? In my much younger years, I studied the work of others who had compiled lists of things to do and things not to do on the Sabbath. It wasn't until later that I learned from the scriptures that my conduct and my attitude on the Sabbath constituted a sign between me and my Heavenly Father. With that understanding, I no longer needed lists of dos and don'ts. When I had to make a decision whether or not an activity was appropriate for the Sabbath, I simply asked myself, "What sign do I want to give to God?" That question made my choices about the Sabbath day crystal clear." (General Conference, "The Sabbath is a Delight", April 2015, Russell M. Nelson).



6 - **stood up** – The phrase "stood up" is translated from the Greek word "ἀνίστημι" or "anistēmi". The Greek word means to cause to rise up, raise up, or stand up.

**"Our Lord's fame spread through all the region round about. During a period not definitely stated, He taught in the synagogues of the towns and was received with favor, being glorified of all. He then returned to Nazareth, His former home, and as was his custom, attended the synagogue on the Sabbath day. Many times as boy and man He had sat in that house of worship, listening to the reading of the law and the prophets and to the commentaries or Targums relating thereto, as delivered by appointed readers; but now, as a recognized teacher of legal age."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 146).

Jesus was following the standard practice for synagogue worship. Jesus had been invited by the Synagogue Ruler to read from the scroll of the Prophets. He was now considered a Rabbi, with a reputation. **"He is no longer just one of a motley crowd; he has stepped forth as the Leader of men; he has disciples who followed in his footsteps and testified of his divinity; and he has begun to assume prerogatives that not even the great High Priest would dare to assume."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 11).

As the Synagogue services progressed, it came to the time of the reading from the scroll of the Prophets. **"When the law and the prophets were read in the Synagogue those who read were expected to stand. Not only priests and Levites but common Israelites were allowed to read the scriptures publically."** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 410). The minister would have retrieved the scroll from the ark. Jesus would have stood at the stand or "migdal". The minister would have delivered the scroll to Jesus for reading. Standing at the "migdal" commanded the attention and reverence of the congregation.

7 - **to read** – The phrase "for to read" is translated from the Greek word "ἀναγινώσκω" or "anaginōskō". The Greek word means to distinguish between, to recognize, to know accurately, and to acknowledge. It can also mean to read. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "for to read" as "to read", omitting the word "for". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 16, page 109).

No one could assume the assignment of reading. Even if one were qualified, the Ruler of the Synagogue issued the invitation. Jesus would have had to be at least 30 years of age, a male, a Jew by covenant, and one possessing the moral and ethical character to expound scripture. If there was no one qualified, the Ruler would either perform the task himself or ask that an unqualified person read, but they would not have been allowed to expound. **"Luke may be implying that Jesus was invited by the president of the synagogue assembly (archisynagōgos) to read and expound the Scripture text, as happened to Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia (Acts 13:15). In first-century Palestine**



**the Sabbath synagogue service apparently consisted of the singing of a psalm, the recitation of the Šēma' (Deut 6:4-9; 11:13-21; Num 15:37-41) and the Tēpillāh - and the reading of a sēder or pārāšāh from the Totah (Law) and a section from the Prophets (hapārāh - see Acts 13:15). This was followed by a sermon expounding the Scriptures read, and the service was concluded by a blessing uttered by the president and the priestly blessing of Num 6:24-26."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531).

Jesus was selected to read. The scrolls were written in Hebrew. Most of the people of the day spoke Aramaic. It was the readers task to read the original script in Hebrew, as contained in the scroll. He would then translate the text into the language of the audience. He was allowed liberty in his translation, which might explain the subtle differences between the words of Jesus and our Old Testament record. The reader could also use a translator if necessary. Jesus appears to speak both languages, and spoke without a translator. **"The reading of the parashah, or lesson from the Pentateuch, was apparently over when Jesus ascended the steps of the bima. Recognizing His claim to perform the honorable function of a "maphtir" or reader, the chazzan drew aside the silk curtain of the painted ark which contained the sacred manuscripts, and handed Him the "megillah" or roll of the Prophet Isaiah, which contained the "haphtarah" of the day. Our Lord unrolled the volume, and found the well-known passage of Isaiah Ixi."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 158).

It should also be noted that the reader would not have merely read the scripture, but he would have introduced his reading with a prayer type recitation. Elder McConkie taught, **"If Jesus, as was the custom, and as other readers of the Prophets and preachers of the sermon would have done - if Jesus participated in full, he would have read such expressions as: 'Thou art Jehovah, our God, and the God of our fathers, our King, and the King of our fathers, our Saviour, and the Savior of our fathers, our Creator, the Rock of our Salvation, our Help and our Deliverer. They name is from everlasting, and there is no God beside Thee.' 'Blessed art Thou Jehovah, Who quickenest the dead!' 'Thou art Holy, and Thy name is Holy. Selah. Blessed art Thou Jehovah God, the Holy One.' Such a participation on his part would in fact have fitted perfectly into the Messianic pronouncement he was about to make, for Jehovah was the Messiah, and the salvation promised Israel and all men by the One was the salvation that would be brought to pass by the Other."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 12).

8 - **was delivered** – The phrase "there was delivered" is translated from the Greek word "ἐπιδοῦμι" or "epididōmi". The Greek word means to hand, or to give by hand. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "was delivered unto him" as "was given to him". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 17, page 109).

Tradition says that the minister retrieved the scroll of the prophets from the ark. The minister would have gently removed the cloth covering from the scroll and taken the scroll to the reader. It is not clear if the minister located an assigned section for reading prior to the delivery of the scroll to the reader.



- 9 - **the book** – The word "book" is translated from the Greek word "βιβλίον" or "biblion". The Greek word means a small book, a scroll, or a written document. **"For centuries Jews have been known as 'the people of the Book'. Throughout their history, Jews have revered the written word."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 24). **"The Talmud says: 'True wealth is books, and it is charity to loan them out.'"** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 24). **"The open book depicts the book of life, learning and the spirit of wisdom, revelation and the wisdom of thscriptures. The book is connected with the tree symbolism and the tree and book can represent the whole cosmos."** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 24).

The term "book" is probably not the best translation, since it gives the reader a picture of a modern day bound book. We know the such books were not formed until just after Jesus' life. Prior to such, people used other media for making written records. One of the most popular and common were scrolls. **"Parchment books were rolled around a stick or cylinder, and, if very long, around two cylinders, from the two extremities. There is in the public library at Cambridge, England, and ancient manuscript roll of the Pentateuch. It is made of goats' skins dyed red, and measures forty-eight feet in length by about twenty-two inches in breadth. As the book of Leviticus and a part of Deuteronomy are wanting, it is calculated that the original length could not have been far from ninety feet. It consisted of thirty-seven different skins, and contains one hundred and seventeen different columns of writing. These columns correspond to the pages of our books, are each about four inches wide, and contain from forty to fifty line apiece."** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 266-267).

It would be easy to assume that there was one scroll that contained what we would call the Old Testament. Unfortunately, that would make the scrolls very large and difficult to handle. The Pentateuch, or the Law, was contained in a separate scroll from those of the Prophets. Edersheim wrote, **"We know that the 'rolls' on which the Law was written were distinct from those of the Prophets, at least the Greater, were also written on separate scrolls. In this instance we are expressly told, that the minister 'delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias', we doubt not, for the Haphtarah, and that, 'when He had unrolled the book,' He 'found' the place from which the Evangelist make quotation."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452). Many believe that many of the records from the Prophets were also separated into individual scrolls. This makes sense, since that is the way that scrolls were discovered at Qumran. The Isaiah scroll was distinct and separate. Freeman wrote, **"Each of the prophetic books is supposed to have been in a separate volume, with the exception of the prophesies of the twelve minor prophets which were perhaps bound together."** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 410).



- 10 - **the prophet** – The word "prophet" is translated from the Greek word "προφήτης" or "prophētēs". The Greek word means an interpreter of oracles or of other hidden things. It is one who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence His organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially concerning future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation.

The reading from the scrolls of the Prophets was called the "Haphtarah". It was in the reading of the Prophets that Jesus participated in the synagogue service. **"Luke's account here makes no mention of the reading from the Torah, but it must be presupposed. He is more interested in the fulfillment of Second Isaiah's prophetic words and a Christological use of the Old Testament. It is not unlikely that there was a fixed or assigned reading of the Pentateuch in the Palestinian synagogue services of this time - perhaps even a triennial cycle, which is certainly attested later. For the first century, some sources suggest a regular reading of the Torah on Sabbaths."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531).

Prophets, according to Jewish belief, were the mouthpiece of Jehovah. They were on God's errand, and their words were as if God spoke them Himself. Isaiah was considered, by the Jews, to be a Major Prophet, and one that they highly revered. Much of his writings were considered Messianic in nature, and spoke of a day when Israel would be freed from captivity. Isaiah's words were inspiring to a people that lived under perceived captivity with Roman rulers. The Jews would have been highly offended if they perceived insult or blasphemy against the words of Isaiah. Such words would have invoked a serious response.

- 11 - **Esaias** – The name "Esaias" is translated from the Greek word "Ἠσαΐας" or "Ēsaías". The Greek word means, translated literally, "Jehovah's help". The Greek word is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "יְשַׁעְיָהוּ" or "Yēsha'yah". The Hebrew word, translated literally, means "Jehovah has saved". The Latin for, of both names is "Isaiah". The Codex Sinaiticus translated the name "Esaias" as "Isaiah". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 17, page 109).



Isaiah was born sometime between 770BCE and 760BCE. It is believed that Isaiah started to prophesy in the year that King Uzziah of Judah died. If this is true, then Isaiah started his ministry in 740BCE. He prophesied through the reign of King Jothan from 740BCE to 734BCE. After Jothan, Isaiah ministered through the reign of King Ahaz from 734BCE through 728BCE, and King Hezekiah from 728BCE through 697BCE. Finally, he ministered during the reign of King Manasseh, which started in 697BCE. It is estimated that he died around 676BCE. Isaiah prophesied for at least 64 years, until he was finally martyred by evil King Manasseh who had a log hallowed out, placed Isaiah in it, and then ordered that the log be "sawn asunder".

Isaiah preached and prophesied well into his old age. He was supported by his wife who he refers to as the "prophetess", and children who appear to have been given prophetic names. He saw the fall of the Northern Kingdom (the Kingdom of Israel), and the captivity of the ten tribes. Isaiah lived during perilous times. The Assyrian empire was expanding, and they did so through brute force. Their conquests typically resulted in death, torture, and suffering for those being conquered. Isaiah preached salvation through turning to God. He prophesied of salvation through a promised Messiah.

Regardless of who selected the passage that Jesus would read from Isaiah, I believe that the hand of providence was at work. **"The fact that Jesus 'was handed' the scroll of Isaiah has been taken to mean that a passage from Isaiah was assigned for reading, i.e. that there was a cycle of readings for the Prophets as well as for the Torah. But the evidence for a cycle of prophetic readings in the first-century Palestine is debatable, despite the claims that have been made for it."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531). Jesus read exactly what heaven wanted Him to, regardless of earthly consequences. The words of Isaiah needed to be read by the Man for which they proclaimed.

- 12 - **opened** – The word "opened" is translated from the Greek word "ἀναπτύσσω" or "anaptyssō". The Greek word means to unroll. The books of the Hebrews were rolls fastened to [one or] two smooth rods and furnished with handles, so that they could be rolled up and unrolled. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "And when he had opened the Book" as "And having unrolled the book". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 17, page 109). **"The ptc. anoixas, 'having opened', is the reading preferred by Nestle and Merk, but anaptyxas, 'having unrolled', has the strong support"** of many other scholars. (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, pages 531-532).

Since the format of modern books was not used at the time of Christ, we must assume that Jesus read from a scroll, as was customary. **"When the manuscript was used the reader unrolled it until he found the place, and when he had finished reading he rolled it up again. This is what is meant by opening and closing the book."** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 267).

Some would suggest that the Minister opened the scroll to Isaiah for the assigned reading, but that Jesus selected the verses which He read. This is plausible, since the opening of the scroll would have revealed much more of Isaiah than what Jesus read. Edersheim writes, **"When unrolling, and holding the scroll, much more than the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah must have been within range of His eyes. On the other hand, it is quite certain that the verses quoted by the Evangelist could not have formed the whole Haphtarah. According to traditional rule, the Haphtarah ordinarily consisted not less than twenty-one verses, though, if the passage was to be 'targumed' or a sermon to follow, that number might be shortened to seven, five, or even three verses."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 453).

- 13 - **found the place** – The word "found" is translated from the Greek word "εὐρίσκω" or "heuriskō". The Greek word means to come upon, hit upon, or to meet with. It can also be used to mean to find by enquiry, thought, examination, scrutiny, observation, or to find out by practice and experience. The word "place" is translated from the Greek word "τόπος" or "topos". It means a place (passage) in a book.

This phrase gives us the impression that Jesus was looking for a specific verse, either because it was the assigned passage or because it was there that He intended to read. Farrar writes, **"The passage which he read, whether part of the ordinary lesson for the day or chosen by himself, was a very remarkable one, and it must have derived additional grandeur and solemnity from the lips of Him in whom it was fulfilled."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 158).

Fitzmyer does not believe that the passage Jesus read was an assigned passage, but rather something Jesus intentionally looked for and read, hence the wording "found the place." **"If there is no reason to think of an assigned passage... there is no reason either to take the phrase to mean chance happening upon chapter 61. It sounds as if Jesus deliberately sought out the passage."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 532).

- 14 - **it was written** – The word "written" is translated from the Greek word "γράφω" or "graphō". The Greek word means to write, with reference to the form of the letters. Scripturally, this phrase is introduced to indicate that what comes next is in revelation or fact. The term does just mean that the information is merely written, but rather it is recorded scripture.

Here is where it gets a little tricky. The scroll was read in Hebrew, "as it was written"; however, what we have, in our Gospel record, is most likely the "targumed" or "translated" version. Jewish custom required that the Hebrew text be read exactly, but the translated portion could be paraphrased and even shortened. **"No doubt Jesus read alike the Haphtarah and the text of His discourse in Hebrew, and then 'targumed' or translated it; while St. Luke, as might be expected, quotes (with but two trifling alterations) from the rendering of the LXX. But, on investigation, it appears that one clause is omitted from Is. lxi. 1, and that between the close of Is. lxi 1 and the clause of verse 2, which is added, a clause is inserted from the LXX. of Is. lviii. 6. This could scarcely have been done in reading the Haphtarah."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 453). Even so, it could accurately be the record of the "targum".



Edersheim proposes something quite different, but with the same result. He proposes that the "Targum" or, as he puts it, the introductory text came before the Hebrew reading of the scroll. The only difference in the theories is which came first. Edersheim wrote, **"But if, as we suppose, the passages quoted formed the introductory text of Christ's discourse, such quotation and combination were not only in accordance with Jewish custom, but formed the introductory text of Christ's discourse, such quotation and combination were not only in accordance with Jewish custom, but formed part of the favourite mode of teaching - the Charaz - or stringing, like pearls, passage to passage, illustrative of each other. In the present instance, the portion of the scroll which Jesus unrolled may have exhibited in close proximity the two passages which formed the introductory text (the so-called Pethichah)."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 453).

Whether the Targum was before or after the Hebrew text, the fact that there was a Targum explains why the texts in Luke and Isaiah do not match exactly, and why Jesus' apparently read only 2 verses when the reading from the scroll required that three verses be read. The reading of the Law required 7 readers to read three verses each. Edersheim writes, **"This symbolically: 7 x 3, since each of the seven readers in the Law had to read at least three verses."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 453). It is believed that the reader of the scroll of the Prophets was required to read a minimum of three verses. Surely, Jesus read three full verses in Hebrew from the scroll, and then, as the custom was, He gave a targum that was much shorter. McConkie wrote, **"Isaiah's words were known by the Jews to be a**



Messianic utterance, and Jesus' application of them to himself, if untrue, would have been blasphemous. As here quoted by Jesus the words are not literal but an interpreting translation of the original found in Isaiah 61:1-2." (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 160).

**15 - Spirit of the Lord** – The word "Spirit" is translated from the Greek word "πνεῦμα" or "pneuma". The Greek word refers to the third member of the Godhead; the Holy Ghost. It can be used to emphasize the essence of something; i.e. the Spirit of truth or the Spirit of contention. The word "Lord" is translated from the Greek word "κύριος" or "kyrios". The word refers to he to whom a person or thing belongs. It refers to someone who has the power of deciding; the master or lord. It is a title of respect and honor. It is a title given to God and the Messiah.

Oddly enough, the Old Testament, as understood by the ancient Jews, contained few references to the Holy Ghost's role in redemption and its association with the Messiah. "The ancient Synagogue regarded Is. 1xi. 1,2, as one of the three passages, in which mention of the Holy Ghost was connected with the promise of redemption." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 456). The passage read by Jesus was Isaiah 61:1-3, though the targum portion was Isaiah 16, verse 1 and half of verse 2. We understand the scripture to mean that Jesus maintained the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost. Through His obedience and faithfulness, the spirit was unrestrained to Him. He received constant and consistent direction from Heaven, and He followed it.

Since this is the first part of the Isaiah passage, it is a good place to stop and consider the verbiage of the ancient scroll. We tend to assume that the record we have is exactly what Jesus read. The fact is, the Isaiah text from the time of Jesus was probably closer to the Isaiah found as part of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Fitzmyer wrote, "the Isaiah Scroll "A" from Qumran Cave 1, which is complete and dated paleographically ca. 100 B.C., would be a good example of the sort of scroll that might have been used in a synagogue." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531). Below is a comparison between the Dead Sea Scroll, the Septuagint, and our King James version with reference to Isaiah 1:1-4;

| Dead Sea Scrolls<br>Isaiah Scroll column XLIX:26-29   | Greek Septuagint Bible<br>Esaias 61:1-4  | King James Translation of the Bible<br>Isaiah 61:1-4   |
|---|--|--|
| 26 I will hurry it.<br><i>The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because YHWH has anointed me {&amp; he has sent me&amp;} to preach good tidings to the weak; to bind up the brokenhearted, to call to the captives</i> | 1<br><i>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me; he has sent me to preach glad tidings to the poor, to heal the broken in heart, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind;</i>                          | 1<br><i>The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;</i>    |
| 27 liberty, and to the imprisoned the opening of prison.<br><i>To announce the favorable year of YHWH, and the day of vengeance for our God; to comfort all who mourn; To appoint</i>                                   | 2<br><i>to declare the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of recompence; to comfort all that mourn;</i>  | 2<br><i>To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;</i>   |
| 28 to the mourners in Zion, to give to them beauty instead of dust, the oil of joy instead of mourning, the garment of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness; and they shall call                                   | 3 that there should be given to them that mourn in Sion glory instead of ashes, the oil of joy to the mourners, the garment of glory for the spirit of heaviness: and they shall be called generations of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for glory. | 3 To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified. |
| 29 to them oaks of righteousness, the planting of YHWH, for glory. And they shall build the ancient ruins, the desolations of the beginning shall they raise, and they shall renew                                      | 4 And they shall build the old waste places, they shall raise up those that were before made desolate, and shall renew the desert cities, even those that had been desolate for many generations.  | 4 And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities, the desolations of many generations.  |

**16 - is upon me** – The word "upon" is translated from the Greek word "ἐπί" or "epi". The Greek word means upon, on, at, by or before.

The Holy Ghost is given to all who come unto Christ, and act upon His words. Those who do so, and enter into the covenant of baptism, are thereafter blessed to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost to be a constant companion. Prior to such time, individual can experience the Holy Ghost as they seek for truth, or act in righteous ways; however, such experiences are momentary and fleeting. Constant companionship comes through covenant and proper priesthood authority. Thereafter, it is contingent upon faithfulness to the covenant that was made. The greater degree of faithfulness results in a greater influence of the Holy Ghost. Conversely, disobedience offends the Holy Ghost and diminishes His influence.

That being said, Jesus was perfect. He was absolutely obedient to the covenants He made with His Father. The result would be that the Holy Ghost was ALWAYS "upon him. Elder McConkie wrote, "Being pure and without sin, Jesus always and ever possessed that Spirit which will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle, but which, conversely, always abides with those whose houses of clay make a fit abode for such a celestial presence. Further, the Holy Ghost descended upon him, like a dove, when he was baptized by John, which John was the one who also testified, as we have seen, that 'God giveth not his spirit by measure unto him.' It is no wonder, then, as we have also seen, that when he came into Galilee it was 'in the power of the spirit.'" (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 13).

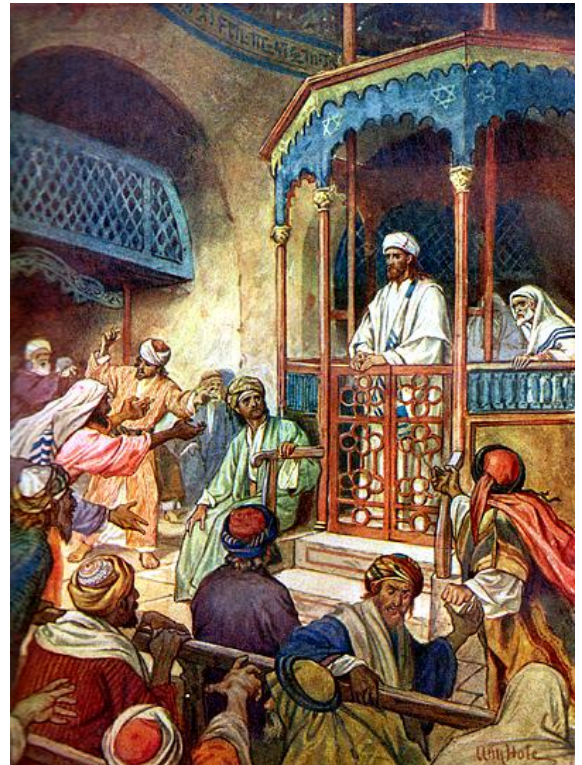


The Holy Ghost is given to bless the individual, as well as those He associates with. There is no doubt that the Holy Ghost was given to Jesus in great abundance to strengthen and sustain Him in the fulfillment of His mission. It was also given so that He could bless our



lives. "He is endowed with the Spirit...He has a tongue taught of God, to help the exhausted with words; He spares and rescues those who are almost despairing and destroyed, the bruised reed and expiring wick." (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 579).

Elder McConkie points out that the Holy Ghost is most often what is being referred to when the scriptures speak of the "Spirit of the Lord"; however, there are other applications. All of which are rolled up into one eternal round. All the workings of the spirit were "upon Him" because of the choices He had made. Elder McConkie said, "Jesus had the spirit of his calling, the spirit of his anointed Messiahship; he had the spirit of his own exalted ministry, the spirit prepared for the Holy One who should come in all the glory of his Father's kingdom - and this was so because the Holy Ghost, who is the Spirit of the Lord, was his constant companion, giving him revelation and direction in all that he did." (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 160-161).



**17 - anointed** – The word "anointed" is translated from the Greek word "χρίω" or "chrīō". The Greek word means to anoint. Anointing symbolizes "consecration; that which is made sacred or set apart; prosperity; joy; an infusion of divine grace." (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 13). "Here it is understood to be a prophetic anointing." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 532).

To understand Jesus' anointing, we must go back before the foundations of this earth were set in place. In the pre-mortal realm, God, the Father, gather together His spirit children. "And there stood one among them that was like unto God" (Abraham 3:24). This was Jesus, the first born of all of Father's spirit children. This great gathering is known as the Grand Council in Heaven. At this counsel, our Father presented to us, His spirit children, a plan for our progression and advancement. The Father asked the first born of His spirit children, Jesus, who was known in Heaven as Jehovah, to present the His plan. Jesus presented the plan. "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; And they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever." (Abraham 3:25-26). It was a glorious plan, but was contingent upon our proper use of agency. We would have to make many choices, and most of them repeatedly. Failure to make correct choices would result in the loss of our estate, or progression. The plan would therefore center around a Redeemer; one who could make it possible for us to correct those failures, and put us back on the path to progression. "And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first." (Abraham 3:27). At that point, the point where God the Father selected Jehovah, or Jesus, to serve as the redeemer, the Messiah of mankind, Jesus was consecrated or set apart for the job. He was in a very real sense anointed as the Messiah.



It is for this very reason that Elder McConkie writes, "The Messiah comes in power; he is anointed, commissioned from on high; he comes in his Father's name, to do his Father's will, because his Father sent him; he speaks, not of himself, but of his Father. And his glorious message - it is the everlasting gospel, the plan of salvation; it is the glad tidings of great joy that salvation is in Christ, that man shall gain the victory over the grave, that he has power to gain eternal life. And to whom does the message go? To the meek, to the God-fearing, to those who seek righteousness; and they, in general, are the poor among men." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 13).

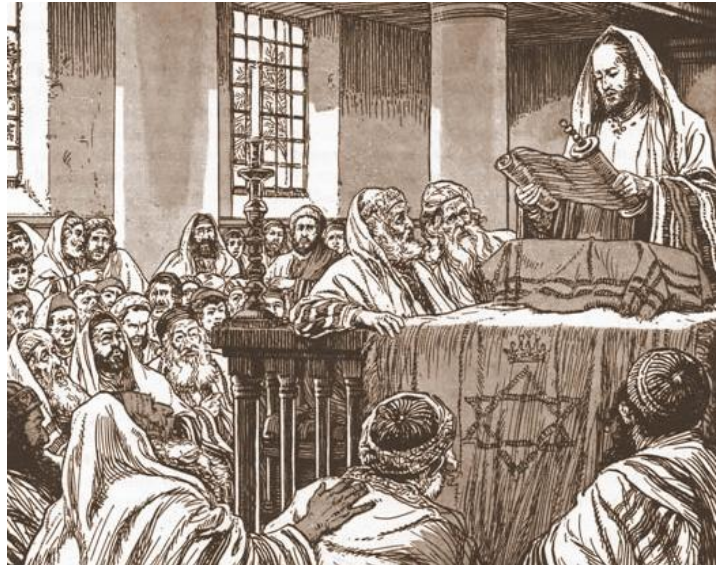
Anciently, prophets and kings received an anointing with oil, which qualified them to serve in their positions. They could not just assume the role. Zondervan clarifies, "Anoint, to apply oil to a person or thing, a practice common in the East. Anointing was of three kinds; ordinary, sacred, and medical. Ordinary anointing with scented oils was a common toilet operation. It was discontinued during a time of mourning. Guests were anointed as a mark of respect. The dead were prepared for burial by anointing. The leather of shields was rubbed with oil to keep it from cracking. Sacred anointing had as its purpose the dedicating of things or persons to God...Medical anointing, not necessarily with oil, was customary for the sick and wounded." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, pages 46-47). The anointing being referred to in scripture is generally a sacred anointing, which consecrates and sets apart someone for a specific purpose sanctioned under Heaven.

As Jesus read Isaiah 6:1-2 to the congregation in Nazareth, it spoke of not an anointing of a prophet or a king, but rather a Messiah. It was a sacred anointing to the highest level. It was an anointing, not by a prophet, but rather by the hand of God the Father Himself. Keil and Delitzsch wrote, "...therefore not the prophet himself, but He who had been appointed to be the Mediator of the new covenant, the light of the Gentiles, the salvation of Jehovah for the whole world, and who would reach this glorious height, to which He had been called, through self-abasement even to death." (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 579). This is the message of Isaiah 61, and the scripture that Jesus would further clarify as He delivered a sermon on the matter.



There are a group of scholars that get hung up in the fact Isaiah's "anointed one" is, by definition, a servant of the Lord and therefore it becomes confusing to think of this verse in Isaiah as a Messianic passage. This confusion most likely lies in an incorrect understanding of the Godhead. Once God the Father and Jehovah are identified as separate beings, and one understands that Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, is in reality Jesus Christ acting under the direction of the Father, then the role of the Messiah as the servant of the Father make perfect sense. It should be understood that the Father and the Son are one in purpose and therefore their names and roles are often used interchangeably in scriptural record. Keil and Delitzsch, who are not members of the restored church, wrote, "**Notwithstanding the fact that m<sup>ā</sup>shach", Messiah (meaning anointed one), "is used here in the sense of prophetic and not regal anointing (1st kings 19:16), we may find in the choice of this particular word a hint at the fact, that the servant of Jehovah and the Messiah are one and the same person."** (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 580).

Jesus will later proclaim, after His targum, that the scripture contained in Isaiah 61 is fulfilled in Him. What He was clearly saying to the Jews is that God the Almighty Father has "**given me the endowment, the holy unction, the appointment, the mission, the power from on high."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 161). In other words, ***I AM the promised Messiah or anointed one.***



- 18 - to preach** – The word "preach" is translated from the Greek word "κηρύσσω" or "kēryssō". The Greek word means to be a herald or to officiate as a herald. It means to publish or proclaim openly. **"My translation has followed the sense of the original Hebrew, 'to announce good news to the poor he sent me'."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 532).

For the most part, the Jews had thoroughly confused the first coming of the Messiah with the second coming of the Messiah. They had somehow rolled the two events all into one. Therefore, they expected a warrior king; a Messiah that would physically conquer their enemies, in might and force. They did not expect a teacher or a prophet. The surely didn't expect that deliverance from their enemy was actually redemption from their own sins. Even so, the Messiah came to herald or announce the great news. News that man could overcome sin. Similar messages had been proclaimed by previous prophets, but this time it came from the Savior Himself. Fitzmyer wrote, "...the 'herald' (mēbaššēr) of good news in Isa 52:7 appears in 11QMelch 18 precisely as one 'anointed with the Spirit'. Unfortunately, the Melchizedek text from Qumran Cave 11 is fragmentary; but its use of Isa 61:1; 52:7 and L<sup>Ev</sup> 25:9-13 provides an interesting Palestinian background to this distinctively Lucan story. Whether the 'anointing' of Jesus is to be understood of the 'prophetic' sort of the 'heraldic' sort, it gives a nuance to his anointing which is not that of the political, kingly sort. This, too, makes it intelligible why Jesus is compared to Elijah and Elisha in the verses toward the end of the episode. Elisha in particular is introduced as 'the prophet'; implicitly, Jesus is suggested to be such, too." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 530).

- 19 - the gospel** – The word "gospel" is translated from the Greek word "εὐαγγελίζω" or "euaggelizō". The Greek word means to bring good news, or to announce glad tidings. What is the best news the world has ever heard? Mortal men might come up with an interesting list. It might include the discovery of antibiotics, or electricity. It might be peace after war or the words "it went well" after surgery. Regardless of what the world determines, the greatest news ever is that Jesus atoned for us. Jesus conquered sin and death, giving us immortality and the opportunity for exaltation. That is the best news ever. It means that no matter how bad mortality is, no matter what kind of struggles and trial I have in mortality; there is more than just this frail existence. It means it doesn't all end here. It means that even though I fail in so many things in life, there is eternal hope for me. The good news of Jesus goes beyond our mortal existence. It saves our loved ones. It reaches out to our ancestors. It takes hold of our children and our posterity. **"Thus came the voice of the Lord unto me, saying: All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God;"** (Doctrine & Covenants 137:7). It is news that supersedes any news ever heralded by man or angel upon this earth. No wonder it is simply referred to as the "gospel" or "good news".

- 20 - poor** – The word "poor" is translated from the Greek word "πτωχός" or "ptōchos". The Greek word means to be reduced to beggary, begging, and asking alms. It can be used of someone destitute of wealth, influence, position or honor.

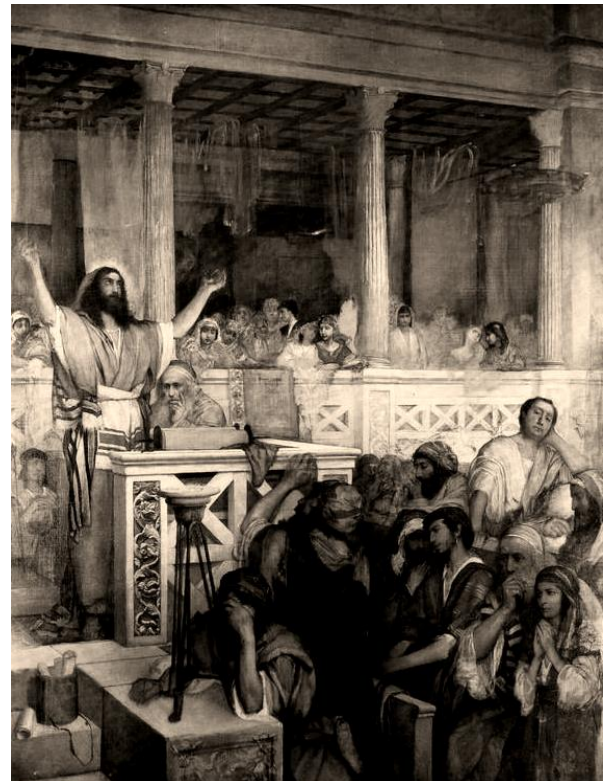
Though the Savior often helped the physically poor; the widow, the blind man, the leper or the crippled; the scripture in Isaiah is more appropriately directed to the poor in spirit. It is directed to those that lack the spirit of the Lord due to poor decisions, and sinful habits. It is spiritual poverty that can only be solved through Him.

- 21 - sent me** – The word "sent" is translated from the Greek word "ἀποστέλλω" or "apostellō". The Greek word means to order one to go to a place appointed, to send away or dismiss.

We do not see the connection in English, but the Greek word "Apostle" originates from the same Greek word "to be sent" or "sent me". An Apostle is someone that is sent forth. In a way, Jesus came as a Apostle. I know that sounds odd, but He was literally sent forth from His Father. He was an Apostle of the Almighty.

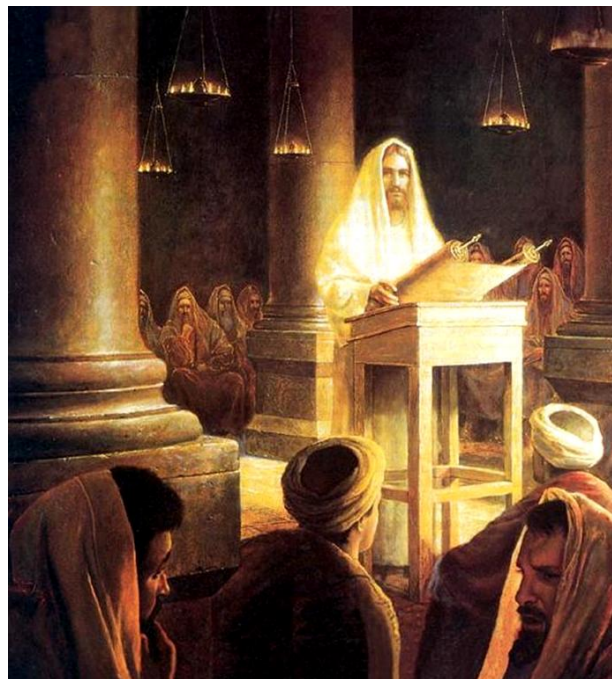
- 22 - heal** – The word "heal" is translated from the Greek word "ἰάομαι" or "iaomai". The Greek word means to cure, heal or to make whole. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the phrase "to heal the brokenhearted" from its translation. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 18, page 109).

We often view the word "heal" in very physical, mortal terms. A healing is to cause a sick or injured person to be restored to health. It is often used in relation to a disease, infirmity, broken bone or wound. Here again, Isaiah is not using the term in a physical sense, but is speaking of spiritual healing. Jesus came to heal the brokenhearted, or those spiritually afflicted.





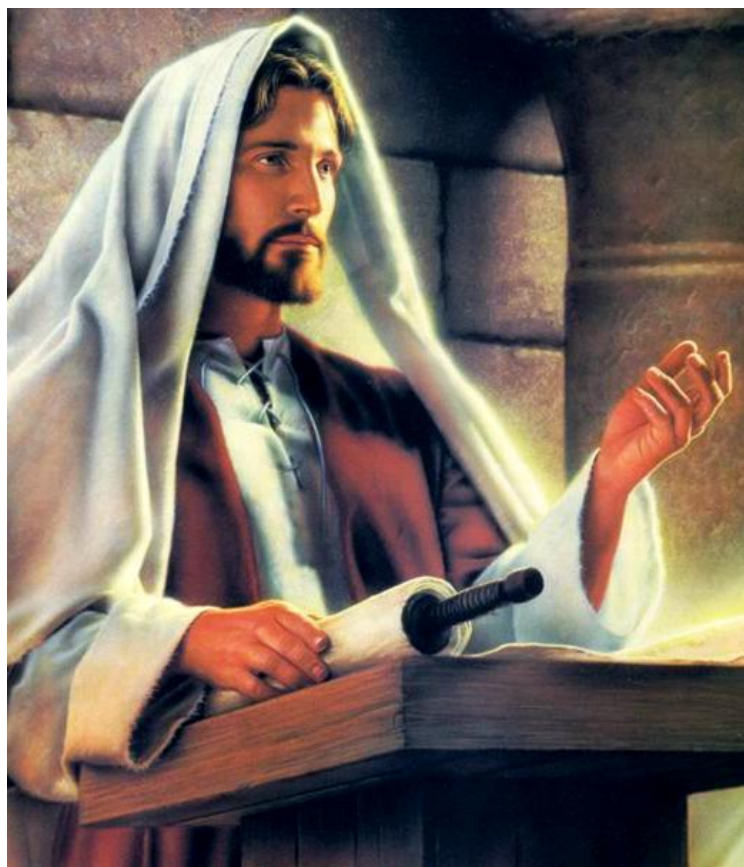
**23 - brokenhearted** – The word "brokenhearted" is translated from the Greek word "συντριβῶ" or "syntribō". The Greek word means to break, to break in pieces, shiver, or tread down. The heart symbolizes **"center, innerness, inner life, intellect, and spirit."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platin Teutsch, page 75). It is often used to symbolize one's desires. **"The heart is the Temple of God."** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 82). If all things are spiritual before God, and the heart is the temple of God, it then stands to reason that the heart is the symbol for our spirit. To be broken hearted is to be spiritually injured or fallen. We fall spiritually when we sin and come short of the glory that God has to offer us. A broken-heart is also used to describe someone who humbly acknowledges their fallen and hopeless condition. Hence, one of the requirements for forgiveness is a broke-heart. Elder McConkie explained the Savior's role as follows; **"I am come to heal and to save. Let those whose spirits are depressed come unto me, and I will give them peace. Are there those who are crushed with the weight of their sins, who carry burdens of despair - let them come unto me. I will bear their burdens if they will repent. Though my own heart is broken, yet shall all those who believe in me be healed. I shall heal men spiritually even as you have seen me heal the physically."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 13).



**24 - deliverance** – The word "deliverance" is translated from the Greek word "ἀφεσις" or "aphesis". The Greek word means to release from bondage or imprisonment. It also means to forgive or pardon from sin. The definition depends on the way the word is used, and the users intent. **"Although the word aphasis is used in these two verses in the sense of 'release', it should be recalled that Luke also uses it in the sense of 'forgiveness' (especially from sins)."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531). The Jews often confused the definition of the word with relation to the Messiah and assumed that the Messiah would come and literally free them from oppressive countries, i.e. Rome. Jesus came to free men, both living and dead from the bondage of sin. **"Reference is made here, not to the freeing of mortal men from any imprisonment, but to the ministry or freedom and pardon which was prepared for the departed dead. Jesus' mission was not alone to those then living; he was also to carry the gospel, the glad tidings of salvation, to the spirits in prison."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 161).

**25 - captives** – The word "captives" is translated from the Greek word "αἰχμάλωτος" or "aichmalōtos". The Greek word means a captive. It stands to reason that captives have captors. The Jews believed that their current captors were the Romans. They failed to see that the only thing that truly held them captive was their own sins. Additionally, countless souls depart this mortal world in a state of sin, and spiritual void. They entered the world of the spirits in a state of bondage. Such bondage or captivity, whether in this life or the life to come, is oppressing and hindering. Once in this state we cannot, of our own doing, cast off the burden of sin and gain our own freedom. We become captives to sin. Only a Redeemer can free us from such captivity. The Apostle Peter taught, **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;"** (1st Peter 3:18-19).

Jehovah tried to teach the Israelites the concept of being captive, and then gaining freedom by someone other than themselves when He instituted the Law of the Jubilee. The Pentateuch teaches that covenant people were to honor every 7th day as the Sabbath, and keep that day holy. It was a day to rest from your works, and to set your thoughts to God. It was a day of prayer, fasting, and study. Every seventh year was to be set aside as a Sabbath year. Like the Sabbath day, the Sabbath year was to be free from earthly labors. No fields were to be plowed, harvested, or otherwise worked on during the Sabbath year. Any number squared, according to ancient Hebrew culture was a sign of absolute perfection. The number 7, by itself, was a symbol of completeness and perfection. Squaring the number seven took on even higher meaning. It became a symbol of heavenly perfection, eternal in nature. Therefore, every 49 years (7 x 7) the covenant people celebrate a Jubilee year. The 50th year became a mandatory Sabbath year resulting in two Sabbath years in a row, the 49th and 50th year. The Jubilee year was unique. During a Jubilee Sabbath year, all slaves were released, all captives were freed, all debts were forgiven, all grudges and liabilities had to be forgotten.



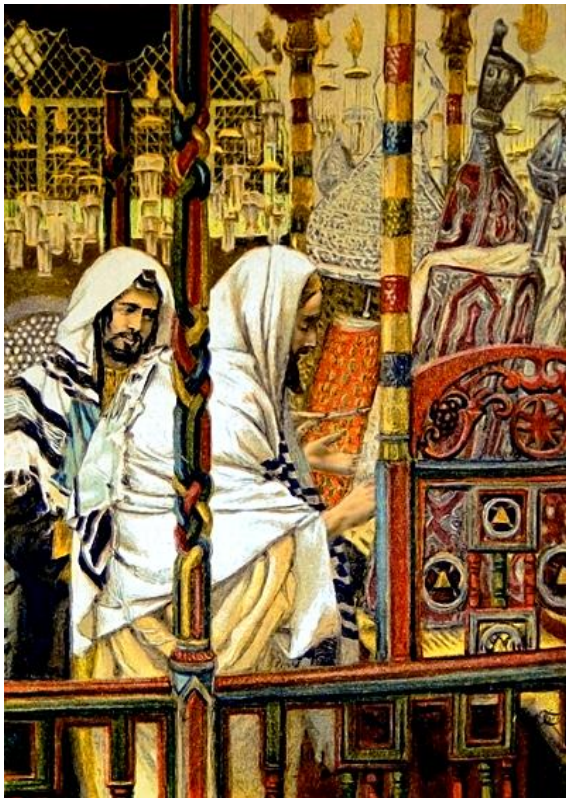
The number 50, the Jubilee number, became associated with the Messiah. In fact, the ancient tabernacle had 50 gold rings sown into the covering that divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. The Holy of Holies represented the Celestial abode or the place where God lives. One had to pass through the veil, and the 50 rings to come into God's presents. Paul's letter to the Hebrews teaches, **"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"** (Hebrews 10:19-20). The veil represents the flesh of Jesus Christ, or His atonement. The 50 rings represent the need not only to forgive, but to be forgiven in order to come into the presence of the Father. Fitzmyer wrote, **"In the ministry of Jesus this might refer to imprisoned debtors, the second group. In the Melchizedek text from Qumran Cave 11, Isa 61:1 is used in connection with Lev 25:10-13 and Deut 15:2 of the 'release' of the jubilee year (intended for debtors)."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 532). I would say that both are in reality referring to the same thing; the atonement of Jesus Christ. **"Messiah is a preacher; his words deliver men from the captivity of sin and the bondage of iniquity. He proclaims liberty to the sin-shackled soul, by his word - the every lasting gospel that he preaches - men in mortality and those in the spirit prison are made free."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 13).



- 26 - **recovering** – The phrase "recovering of sight" is translated from a single Greek word "ἀνάβλεψις" or "anablepsis". The Greek word means recovery of sight. The word, as used in Isaiah 61, is closely related to the word "heal" in footnote #22 in this chapter. It gives the idea of a fallen state, a state absent of spirit due to sin, which needs to be correct or recovered to a state of perfection. Elder Renlund said, "**Whether we suffer because of troubled relationships, economic challenges, or illnesses or as a consequence of someone else's sins, the Savior's infinite Atonement can heal even—and perhaps especially—those who have innocently suffered. He understands perfectly what it is like to suffer innocently as a consequence of another's transgression. As prophesied, the Savior will 'bind up the brokenhearted, ... give ... beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, [and] the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.'** No matter what, with His help, God expects Latter-day Saints to keep on trying." (General Conference, "Latter-day Saints Keep on Trying", Dale G. Renlund, April 2015).
- 27 - **sight** – The word sight is not translated from a Greek word, but inferred in the word "anablepsis" meaning to recover sight. Sight is an interesting word. Physical sight allows us to see the things of mortality. Spiritual sight allows us to see thing of a spiritual nature. Spiritual sight is not necessarily done with our physical eyes, though there have been incidents where mortal men have had their eyes open to the things of the spiritual world, most often it refers to our ability to recognize and understand spiritual things. Hence, a prophet is often referred to as a seer. Not because he has good eyesight, but rather because he can see and understand spiritual things. Elder McConkie wrote, "**There is no parallel passage in Isaiah, although the thought fits into the over-all sense and meaning acclaimed by ancient Israel's Messianic seer in the utterance he made. That is to say: Jesus, as he 'targumed' Isaiah's meaning from Hebrew to Aramaic, did what only inspired interpreters can do; he expanded the words and interpreted the meaning of the original utterance. 'I am sent by the Father - not only to proclaim how deliverance from sin may be found, but to preach the recovering of spiritual sight to those who are blind spiritually. Through me they shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.' If a parallel passage for these added words is needed, it may be found in Isaiah's prophecy about the latter-day coming forth of the Book of Mormon, for the promise is that through 'the words of the book...the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.'**" (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 13-14).
- 28 - **blind** – The word "blind" is translated from the Greek word "τυφλός" or "typhlos". The Greek word means blind or mentally blind. Blindness symbolizes "**ignorance, sin, dereliction of duty, failure to see the light and the right path, the undiscerning and the irrational.**" (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 22). It is the opposite of sight, as discussed in footnote #27 of this chapter.
- 29 - **set at liberty** – The word "liberty" is translated from the Greek word "ἀφεσις" or "aphesis". The Greek word means to release from bondage or imprisonment. It is often used in association with forgiveness or pardon from sin. It is the same word used to translate the word deliverance in footnote #24 of this chapter. Zondervan defines liberty as follows; "**Liberty, freedom, the opposite of servitude or bondage, whether physical, moral, or spiritual. The term is used of slaves or captives being set free from physical servitude or imprisonment, or the granting of certain privileges while in prison. In Ezekiel 46:17 reference is made to 'the year of liberty', the year of jubilee... Spiritual liberty is the result of the Spirit's regenerating work, for His presence and work within produces liberty.**" (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 486).

Again, we find a connection between the Jubilee year and liberty, as discussed in footnote #25 of this chapter. This is probably a good place to look at the Jubilee Year in greater detail. Josephus speaks of the Jubilee Year as follows;

"And truly Moses gave them all these precepts, being such as were observed during his own lifetime; but though he lived now in the wilderness, yet did he make provision how they might observe the same laws when they should have taken the land of Canaan. He gave them rest to the land from ploughing and planting every seventh year, as he had prescribed to them to rest from working every seventh day; and ordered, that then what grew of its own accord out of the earth should in common belong to all that pleased to use it, making no distinction in that respect between their own countrymen and foreigners: and he ordained, that they should do the same after seven times seven years, which in all are fifty years; and that fiftieth year is called by the Hebrews The Jubilee, wherein debtors are freed from their debts, and slaves are set at liberty; which slaves became such, though they were of the same stock, by transgressing some of those laws the punishment of which was not capital, but they were punished by this method of slavery. This year also restores the land to its former possessors in the manner following: - When the Jubilee is come, which name denotes liberty, he that sold the land, and he that bought it, meet together, and make an estimate, on one hand, of the fruits gathered; and, on the other hand, of the expenses laid out upon it. If the fruits gathered come to more than the expenses laid out, he that sold it takes the land again; but if the expenses prove more than the fruits, the present possessor receives of the former owner the difference that was wanting, and leaves the land to him; and if the fruits received, and the expenses laid out, prove equal to one another, the present possessor relinquishes it to the former owners. Moses would have the same law obtain as to these houses also which were sold in villages; but he made a different law for such as were sold in a city; for if he that sold it tendered the purchaser his money again within a year, he was forced to restore it; but in case a whole year had intervened, the purchaser was to enjoy what he had bought. This was the constitution of the laws which Moses learned of God when the camp lay under Mount Sinai, and this he delivered in writing to the Hebrews." (Antiquities of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, Book III, Chapter 12, verse 3, page 427).



what he had bought. This was the constitution of the laws which Moses learned of God when the camp lay under Mount Sinai, and this he delivered in writing to the Hebrews." (Antiquities of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, Book III, Chapter 12, verse 3, page 427).

The Jubilee Year speaks of liberty to those in captivity, without any apparent effort on the part of the captive. On the other hand, some things are made right only after a reconciliation. Land for instance is returned to the rightful owners, after the two parties make the appropriate restitutions. The liberty that Jesus provides should appropriately be divided into two parts as well. Jesus' atonement has two distinct parts.





anthems of eternal praise to the King Immanuel, who hath ordained, before the world was, that which would enable us to redeem them out of their prison; for the prisoners shall go free." (Doctrine and Covenants 128:22).

Second, Jesus overcame the captivity we call sin, and gave us liberty. Another consequence of the fall of Adam and Eve was spiritual death. All mortal men were cut off from the presence of God. We know longer dwelt in His presence. Mortality is full of sin. We have all fallen, and are far short from the glory of God. No one is capable of restoring themselves from sin. Try as we may, our state is fallen and hopeless when left to our own devices. The demands of justice maintain that no unclean thing can dwell in the presence of God, and therefore we are permanently cast off. Jesus met the demands of our sins; each and every sin, for each and every person who has lived or will live on this earth, and beyond. His atonement was infinite and eternal. Blessed be His name. He offers all this gift; however, it is not free like the atonement for death. This gift requires something on our part. We will not, nor are we capable of paying the actual price, but we can offer a repentant heart and a renewed desire to progress. We partake of this gift through covenant, to remember Him in all that we do, to keep His commandments, and to strive to be like Him. The Lord taught, **"And the chosen messengers went forth to declare the acceptable day of the Lord and proclaim liberty to the captives who were bound, even unto all who would repent of their sins and receive the gospel."** (Doctrine & Covenants 138:31).

LIBERTY?...yes, to all mankind. There is not one man, woman, or child that will not be blessed by the atonement of the Messiah. **"The prisoners shall go free! Messiah shall make it possible. Those who are bruised and bound and beaten and shackled in the dungeons of hell shall come forth. The word has gone forth; the prison doors shall open - be it for the prisoners of sin in this life, or, as another prophet has called them, the 'prisoners of hope' in the life to come (Zech. 9:12)."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

**30 - that are bruised** – The word "bruised" is translated from the Greek word "θραύω" or "thrauō". The Greek word means to break, break into pieces, shatter, or smite through. Like a blow to the body leaves a bruise, sin leaves spiritual bruising upon our soul. Like a physician treats a body that is bruised and broke, the Savior is capable of treating our very soul. Bruises are symbolic of painful consequences.

**31 - acceptable** – The word "acceptable" is translated from the Greek word "δεκτός" or "dektos". The Greek word means accepted or acceptable. **"Lit. 'the Lord's acceptable year' (keryxai eniauton kyriou dektion), Isa. 61:2a according to the LXX, save for the infin. The Isaian description of a period of favor and deliverance for Zion is now used to proclaim the Period of Jesus, and the new mode of salvation that is to come in him."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 533).

This is a difficult term to wrap your head around in this application. To me, it just seems odd. "the acceptable year". Elder McConkie said the word "acceptable" might be translated as **"the proper, designated, approved, appointed, or accepted time, the divine order of things, for a particular work to be done."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 161). Given this, I can make a little better sense out of the meaning. The "acceptable year" most likely means "the appointed time" or "designated period". The time that was planned before the foundation of the world had arrived. Prophets had looked forward to this time since the days of Adam and Eve. The appointed time of the Messiah had arrived.

Fitzmyer supports Elder McConkie's statement. He comes to this conclusion by comparing an ancient manuscript called the "Oxyrhynchus". The Oxyrhynchus Papyri are a group of manuscripts discovered during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by archaeologists including Bernard Pyne Grenfell and Arthur SurrIDGE Hunt at an ancient rubbish dump near Oxyrhynchus in Egypt. The manuscripts date from the 1st to the 6th century CE. He writes, **"...the Marcan form uses atimos, 'without honor' (6:4), and is followed by Matt 13:57, whereas Luke has dektos, 'accepted' (v. 24). Luke has almost certainly changed atimos to dektos in view of the Isaian quotation in v. 19. Since the Oxyrhynchus saying uses dektos and contains the double proverb, which is found in the canonical tradition only in Luke, it is certain that the Oxyrhynchus form of the saying is dependent on Luke. Moreover, the Oxyrhynchus saying has none of the negative saying about the prophet's relatives or household, again revealing its dependence on Luke, who has laundered the Marcan form of the saying, because he depicts Jesus' mother and relatives among the believers."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 528).

The overall message is fairly straight forward; the time of the Messiah had arrived. When uttered by Isaiah it was a prophecy of future events. When uttered by Jesus the prophecy was fulfilled. It **"...cannot be interpreted more simply in any other way, than on the supposition that Jesus here declares Himself to be the predicted and divinely anointed Servant of Jehovah, who brings the gospel of redemption to His people. Moreover, though this is not decisive in favour of our explanation, yet this**



explanation is favoured by the fact that the speaker not only appears as the herald of the new and great gifts of God, but also as the dispenser of them." (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 580). Jesus is the Christ!

**32 - year of the Lord** – The word "year" is translated from the Greek word "ἐνιαυτός" or "eniautos". The Greek word means a year, in a wider sense, for some fixed definite period of time. The translation of the Greek word as "year" causes confusion. Jesus' ministry was longer than a year. A better translation would have been "the appointed time of the Lord".



(The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 454). Surely, the host of heaven shouted with joy as Jesus entered the world, the time had finally arrived for redemption to those in the flesh. "The acceptable year of the Lord! It is the year and the time when Messiah comes; when salvation is made available; when men have opportunity to learn what they must do to be saved in his everlasting kingdom. I now proclaim to you: This is the year; this is the set time; salvation is near; I am he; my word is truth; come and walk in the light of the Lord. Now is the time of the day of your salvation; this is the acceptable year." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

The term is not unique to Isaiah. In relation to the Second Coming, the Lord refers to it also as "the acceptable year of the Lord". It too means an appointed time for the Messiah to come to earth. The Doctrine and Covenants reads, "Now, I say unto you, my friends, let my servant Sidney Rigdon go on his journey, and make haste, and also proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the gospel of salvation, as I shall give him utterance; and by your prayer of faith with one consent I will uphold him." (Doctrine & Covenants 93:51).

The term "year of the Lord" might be used in favor of "time of the Lord" because of its symbolic relationship to the Jubilee year. The year of the Lord was a clearly defined and appointed time. Each Jubilee Year, the ministers of the various synagogues and the Levites at the temple heralded in the Jubilee, a year of liberation, by sounding the shofar horn. You might imagine the feelings of joy to those who were slaves, debtors, or otherwise oppressed. The arrival of the promised Messiah should have brought even greater joy to the hearts of the wayward Jews. Edersheim wrote, "And this - in the Gospel which He bears to the poor, the release which He announces to the captives, the healing which He offers to those whom sin had blinded, and the freedom He brings to them who were bruised; and all as the trumpet-blast of God's Jubilee into His world of misery, sin, and want! A year thus begun would be glorious indeed in the blessings it gave."

Keil and Delitzsch wrote a commentary of the Old Testament which covers Isaiah 61. In their commentary, they review verses 1 and 2. They cover many of the topics we have already covered; however, they also added an interesting perspective. They assert that there is a flip side to the "acceptable year of the Lord". While salvation comes with the Messiah, so does condemnation and vengeance to those that fight against Him and His people. Keil and Delitzsch record, "He comes to put a bandage on the hearts' wounds of those who are broken-hearted: is the phrase used in the law for the proclamation of the freedom brought by the year of jubilee, which occurred every fiftieth year after seven sabbatical periods, and was called shenath haddoror; doror from darar, a verbal stem, denoting the straight, swift flight of the swallow (Psalm 84:4), and free motion in general, such as that of a flash of lightning, a liberal self-diffusion, like that of a superabundant fulness. Pqach-qdach is written like two words. The Targum translates it as if pqach were as imperative: 'Come to the Light,' probably meaning undo the bands. But qdach is not a Hebrew word; for the qichoth of the Mishna (the loops through which the strings of a purse are drawn, for the purpose of lacing it up) cannot be adduced as a comparison...But as pqach is never used like pathach to signify the opening of a room, but is always applied to the opening of the ears, we adhere to the strict usage of the language, if we understand by pqachqdach the opening up of the eyes (as contrasted with the dense darkness of the prison); and this is how it has been taken by the LXX, who have rendered it kai typhlois anablasphin, as if the reading had been וליעורים (Psalms 146:8). Again, he is sent to promise with a loud proclamation a year of good pleasure and a day of vengeance, which Jehovah has appointed; a promise which assigns the length of a day for the work of vengeance. The vengeance applies to those who hold the people of God in fetters, and oppress them; the grace to all those whom the infliction of punishment has inwardly humbled, though they have been strongly agitated by its long continuance." (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 580).



**33 - closed** – The word "closed" is translated from the Greek word "πίψσω" or "ptyssō". The Greek word means to fold together, or roll up. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "And he closed the book" as "And having rolled up the book". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 20, page 109).

Assuming that Jesus read from a scroll, He would have closed it by rolling it up. We have spoken much of a targum, or translation, which would have followed the reading. Elder McConkie wrote, "But this we do know. Standing before the people, Jesus read from Isaiah one of the greatest of the sayings of that Messianic prophet. Probably he read



in Hebrew - such was the practice - and then translated of 'targumed' the passage into Aramaic. The targums were the oral translations or paraphrases of the written Hebrew. This would also account for the differences between Isaiah's record in the Old Testament, and the statements as given by Jesus and recorded by Luke." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 12).

Though I believe that Jesus did targum the passage in Isaiah, there is no scriptural proof that He followed the custom, just an assumption. Fitzmyer wrote, "No mention is made here of a targum, 'Aramaic translation', of such a passage. It is usually claimed that such a translation would have been necessary in Palestine at this time, since, save for small pockets or areas where Hebrew was still cultivated, Palestinian Jews used Aramaic as the common Semitic language and did not readily comprehend Hebrew." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 531).

- 34 - **gave it again** – The phrase "he gave it again" is translated from the Greek word "ἀποδίδωμι" or "apodidōmi". The Greek word means to deliver, to give away for one's own profit what is one's own, or to sell. It can also mean to give back or restore. The custom of the synagogue was that the minister retrieved the sacred scrolls from the ark and delivered them to the reader. When the reader finished reading, the minister retrieved them again and placed them back into their protective covering and into the ark. It appears that custom is being followed here.
- 35 - **the minister** – The word "minister" is translated from the Greek word "ὑπηρέτης" or "hypēretēs". The Greek word means servant, anyone who serves with hands, an attendant to the king, the attendant in a synagogue, or anyone ministering or rendering service. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the word "minister" as "attendant". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 20, page 109). "Minister, originally a servant, though distinguished from a slave who may work against his will, and a hireling, who works for wages. Another word, hypēretēs, which originally meant 'an under-rower' is also used for minister." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 543).

The minister of a synagogue was not a servant in the traditional sense, but in a religious sense. The minister was called to serve the people. At the same time, he was one of the officers of the synagogue. The officers of the synagogue are sometimes referred to as rulers. Fitzmyer, referring the minister as an attendant, writes, "In addition to the 'president' of the synagogue (archisynagōgos), its officers included 'elders' (presbyterio, Luke 7:3), and 'attendants' (e.g. the hazzān or hypēretēs, Acts 13:5, who was a sort of sacristan or sexton)." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 533).

The Hebrew word for minister is "chazzan" or "Hazzan". His duties were broad. Upon further review, one starts to form the opinion that the minister was the glue that held the synagogue together. Barclay describes the position as follows; "The official in question was the Chazzan. He had many duties. He had to take out and put back the sacred rolls of scripture; he had to keep the synagogue clean; he had to announce the coming of the Sabbath with three blasts of the silver trumpet from the synagogue roof; and he was also the teacher in the village school. Luke 4:20 says that Jesus sat down. That gives us the impression that he was finished. In point of fact it means that he was about to start, because the speaker gave the address seated and Rabbis taught sitting down." (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 48). Freeman gives a similar description. I am including it because of its subtle differences. He writes, "The position of the 'minister' in the synagogue bore resemblance to that of the minister in the Christian Church. He was called chazan, and, in the time of Christ and for several centuries afterward, was the lowest servant in the synagogue, his duties resembling those of the sexton in one of our churches. He had charge of the furniture, and kept the building in good order, preparing it for service, and summoning the people at the appointed hour. It was also his duty to call out the names of those whom the ruler of the synagogue selected to read the lesson of the day, and to hand them the sacred scroll, receiving it from them when the reading was finished. It was the chazen who 'delivered' Isaiah's prophecy to Jesus, as recorded in verse seventeen, and to him Jesus gave the book when he had done reading." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, pages 410-411).

- 36 - **sat down** – The phrase "sat down" is translated from the Greek word "καθίζω" or "kathizō". The Greek word means to make to sit down.

Jesus was not done speaking. He had only finished reading, and most probably giving a targum. But at the close of the reading, he sat down. This seems odd in our culture. If we read from the pulpit and sat down, the entire congregation would assume that we were finished speaking. During synagogue services, the Jewish culture differentiated the reading of scripture as scripture was delivered from the pulpit, while the sermon was delivered sitting down. Three authors support this view as follows;

"After the reading came the sermon. If, however, he followed the practice of the day, his participation involved more than reading from the Prophets and discoursing as he chose. 'The person who read in the synagogue the portion from the Prophets, was also expected to conduct the devotions, at least in greater part,' meaning, 'part of the Shema, and the whole of the Eulogies'." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 12).

"The reading of Scripture was done standing (v. 16), but the exposition (logos paraklēseōs, 'word of exhortation', Acts 13:15) was given seated." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 533).

"Sitting was the customary posture of a teacher when instructing his disciples. Hence, when Jesus rolled up the manuscript and returned to it the hands of the chazan, he sat down on the platform instead of going back to his seat, because he wished to address the people." (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 411).

- 37 - **eyes** – The word "eyes" is translated from the Greek word "ὀφθαλμός" or "ophthalmos". The Greek word means the eye. It is often used metaphorically for the eyes of the mind, or the faculty of knowing. "The Human eye has always been considered a passageway between interior and exterior, the window to the soul, a conduit of worldly knowledge. And because the eye sees light, and light originates from the sun, the natural source of all life on earth, the eye has also been equated with illumination and spiritual insight." (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platin Teutsch, pages 51-52).

- 38 - **of all them** – The phrase "of all them" is translated from the Greek word "πᾶς" or "pas". Individually, the Greek word means each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, and everything. Collectively, the Greek word means some of all types.

- 39 - **fastened on him** – The word "fastened" is translated from the Greek word "ἀτενίζω" or "atenizō". The Greek word means to fix the eyes on, or to gaze upon. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "fastened" as "fixed".





One might suppose that the congregation was eager to hear the sermon of a great Rabbi. This might have been the case, at least for some of the people gathered there. Farrar however, believed that the congregation was really wanting him to make good on the reputation He had gained. He arrived with a reputation of something more than just a great Rabbi. He had performed miracles and great works throughout Judaea, in Samaria, and in many of the neighboring cities of Galilee. They fastened their eyes on Him hoping to see if the stories were true. Farrar wrote, **"He was aware of another feeling in their minds; a demand upon Him for some stupendous vindication of His claims; a jealousy that He should have performed miracles..."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 159).

**40 - he began** – The phrase "he began" is translated from the Greek word "ἀρχομαι" or "archomai". The Greek word means to be the first to do anything, to begin, or to make a beginning.

**41 - this day** – The word "day" is translated from the Greek word "σήμερον" or "sēmeron". The Greek word means this very day, or what has happened today.

Jesus was not referring to any specific day, other than the day for which He was speaking. Even so, there are scholars who believe that the schedule of reading for the scrolls of the prophets would require that the Book of Isaiah be read on the Day of Atonement. Edersheim wrote, **"I infer this from the fact, that the Book of the Prophet Isaiah was given to Him by the Minister of Synagogue. Since the time of Bengel it has been a kind of traditional idea that, if this was the Haphtarah for the day, the sermon of Christ in Nazareth must have taken place on the Day of Atonement, for which in the modern Jewish lectionary Is. lviii. 6 forms part of the Haphtarah."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452). The Day of Atonement is a sacred holiday celebrated in Ancient Israel on 10 Tishrei, which is the equivalent Monday, September 27, 27CE during the year this occurred. The problem I have with this theory is it is out of synch with all the other dates and time frames given in the gospel books. The reading Jesus performed in the Nazareth would have had to of taken place in December of 27CE or January of 28CE.

**42 - scripture** – The word "scripture" is translated from the Greek word "γραφή" or "graphē". The Greek word means a writing, or a thing written. It is often used to reference Holy Scripture. The Jews defined scripture as the Pentateuch, and the books of the prophets. These books were considered to be the word of God. They gave greater preference to the Pentateuch or the Law. Even so, the words of the Prophets were not to be defamed or blasphemed.

**43 - fulfilled** – The word "fulfilled" is translated from the Greek word "πληρῶω" or "plērōō". The Greek word means to make full, to fill up, to complete, to render perfect, or realize a saying, promise or prophecy. It means to fulfill. **"Lit. 'this scripture has been fulfilled in your ears.' The last phrase is an Old Testament expression, bē'oznēkem (Deut 5:1; 2 Sam 3:19), 'in your hearing.'** In Mark 1:15, as Jesus proclaims the kingdom, he announces that 'the time is fulfilled' (i.e. has come), whereas in Luke it is Scripture that sees it fulfillment. This is part of the way he reads the Old testament; making much out of it - sometimes even passages that are not even prophetic (in the Old Testament sense) - predictions, which are now being realized. **What was promised by Second Isaiah as consolation for Zion is now being granted in a new sense and a new way. The Consolation of Zion takes place anew."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 534).

We are speaking of a prophecy, uttered by Isaiah regarding the Messiah. The Messiah is now standing before the congregation, reading a prophesy that He Himself issued some 700 year prior. He now plainly and frankly proclaims, the prophecy is now fulfilled. The implication is: I AM the Messiah. **"That is to say: 'I have read from Isaiah; I have set forth the meaning of his words; I have taught the doctrine. Now I testify that these words - and therefore all Messianic prophecies - are fulfilled in me; they apply to me; I am the one of whom the prophets spoke; I am he ; I am the Messiah.'"** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

**44 - ears** – The word "ears" is translated from the Greek word "οὖς" or "ous". The Greek word means the ear. It can be used metaphorically as the faculty of perceiving with the mind, to faculty of understanding and knowing.

**45 - all bare** – The word "bare" is translated from the Greek word "μαρτυρέω" or "martyreō". The Greek word means to be a witness, or to bear witness. It also means to utter honorable testimony, or give a good report. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "And all bare him witness" as "And all applauded him". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 22, page 109).

**46 - witness**– The word "witness" is translated from the Greek word "μαρτυρέω" or "martyreō". It is the same word used to translated the word bare in footnote #45. The Greek word means to be a witness, or to bear witness. It also means to utter honorable testimony, or give a good report. **"Where such a witness is born, there are only two possible responses. One is complete acceptance, the other complete rejection. No one can argue with a testimony; it is not a debatable issue. It is there to be accepted or to be rejected. No one can argue with a testimony; it is not a debatable issue. It is there to be accepted or to be rejected. Jesus taught and testified, and as the full meaning of his gracious words sank into their hearts, his Nazarene friends made their choice. This Jesus they knew and had known from his infancy and youth. How can he be the Son of God? How can he be the Messiah?"** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

**47 - wondered** – The word "wondered" is translated from the Greek word "θαυμάζω" or "thaumazō". The Greek word means to wonder, marvel, or to be had in admiration. **"The verb thaumazein can express astonishment (coupled with criticism, doubt, or censure) or else admiration (coupled with unexpected pleasure). The nuance intended can only be gained from the context; the common interpretation rightly understands it as admiration."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 534).

**48 - gracious words** – The word "gracious" is translated from the Greek word "χάρις" or "charis". The Greek word means grace. It is the merciful kindness exhibited by Jesus Christ. **"Lit. 'words of grace (or possibly of charm)'. The phrase could express**





the captivating eloquence of Jesus or (in a content-sense) words conveying God's favor." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 534).

Grace is an interesting word scripturally. It is derived from the Greek word "χάρις" or "charis". It is the same word with which our word charity is derived. The Greek word means good will, loving-kindness, favor, joy, pleasure, or delight. We know through scripture that the word charity means "the pure love of Christ" (Moroni 7:47). Might I suggest that the term "gracious words" implies that the words Jesus uttered were accompanied by the testifying spirit of the Holy Ghost. Such a spirit would have placed feelings of joy, happiness, and love within their hearts. They would have felt the testimony of truth. The Psalmist spoke of the Messiah, and prophesied that He would speak this way. It is written, "Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." (Psalms 45:2).

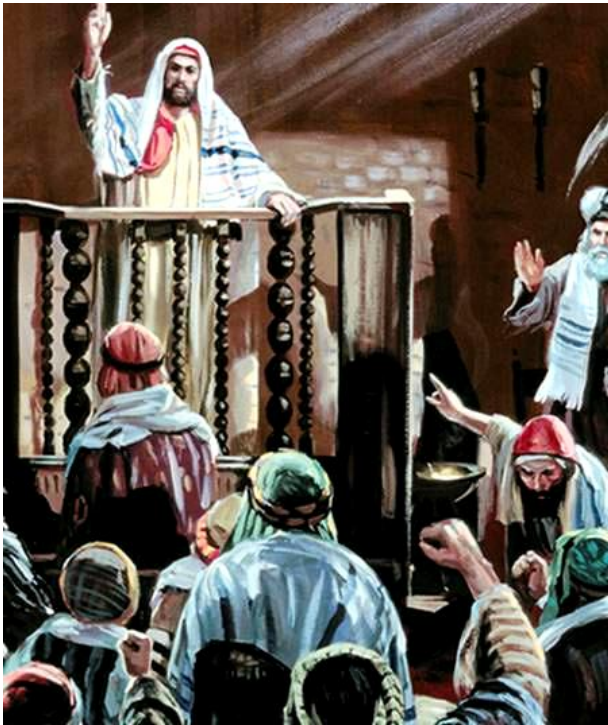
There is no doubt that the spirit testified to the truthfulness of Jesus' words. They all felt it. Edersheim records, "The discourse had been spoken, and the breathless silence with which, even according to Jewish custom, it had been listened to, gave place to the usual after-sermon hum of an Eastern Synagogue. On one point all were agreed: that they were marvellous words of grace, which had proceeded out of His mouth." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 455). Then came agency; the freedom of choice and self will. Those that were present could accept the testifying witness they had just received or reject it from their hearts. Such is the choice every living soul has during their mortal probation.

49 - **proceeded out** – The word "proceeded" is translated from the Greek word "ἐκπορεύομαι" or "ekporeuomai". The Greek word means to go forth, go out, or depart. Metaphorically it is used to express words being spoken.

The record of Luke only records that Jesus said, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." They do not appear to be gracious words; however, with a testifying spirit I would argue that they could have been the sweetest words uttered to the human soul. Even so, many scholars feel that Jesus stated much more than we have record. Elder McConkie wrote, "Thereafter, many 'gracious words...proceeded out of his mouth,' to which all present bore witness. What these words were we do not know, but in the very nature of things we can rest assured that they were a sermon on the text he had read. Providentially, we do know what Isaiah's words mean and how they apply to the One who read them that day in Nazareth, in the synagogue where he had worshipped as a youth, and among the people whom he knew and whose faces were familiar to him." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 13). Someday, it would be fantastic to hear and additional words Jesus uttered by way of sermon that Sabbath day in Nazareth.

50 - **mouth** – The word "mouth" is translated from the Greek word "στόμα" or "stoma". The Greek word means the mouth. The mouth is seen figuratively as the mode by which the soul finds verbal utterance. "Lit. '(words) proceeding from his mouth'. This phrase seems to tip the sense of the foregoing phrase in terms of eloquence. It is, indeed, hard to understand why the 'words of grace' would be coming from his lips, if they were to mean 'words about (God's) mercy,' as Jeremias suggests, omitted by Jesus. Jeremias blithely passes over this phrase." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 535).

51 - **Is not this Joseph's son** – The name "Joseph" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰωσήφ" or "Iōsēph". The Greek word, translated literally, means "let him add". The word "son" is translated from the Greek word "υἱός" or "huios". It means a son, and is rarely used on animals. It generally refers to the male offspring of human beings.



So, now we arrive at the logic of man. We are so quick to judge, find fault, rationalize, and contort things to fit our way of thinking. The Nazarene congregation, who apparently felt the spirit of Jesus' words, now begins to question what they heard and felt. They obviously had their own ideas of what the Messiah should be, and a carpenter's son from Nazareth did not fit that picture. Jesus, apparently knew their thoughts. According to Luke, the Nazarene congregation began to say "Is not this the carpenter? Is He not the brother of workmen like Himself - James and Joses and Simon and Judas - and of sisters who live among us? do not even His own family disbelieve in Him? Such were the whispers which began to be buzzed about among the audience. This was no young and learned Rabbi from the schools of Gamaliel or Shammai, and yet he spoke with an authority which not even the great scribes assumed! Even a Hillel, when his doctrines failed to persuade, could only secure conviction by appealing to the previous authority of a shemaia or an Abtalion. But this Teacher appealed to no one - this Teacher who had but been their village carpenter! What business had He to teach? Whence could He know letters, having never learned?" (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 158).

The initial feelings of the congregation towards Jesus quickly turned. From a feeling of grace and wonderment to a verbalized rejection. "Their voice - to their eternal sorrow - was one of rejection, which they summarized in these words: 'Is not this Joseph's son?' How then can he be the Messiah? We know him; he is one of us." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14). As the congregation changed in their feelings, Jesus responded in like manner. "As the spirit of rejection contained in their words - 'Is not this Joseph's son?' - became the consensus of the synagogue throng, Jesus, feeling their reaction, turned from his proclamation of joy and deliverance to a proclamation of sorrow and damnation." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

It would be easy to justify the feelings of the Nazarene congregation. "These people had grown up with Jesus. They had seen him in moments of distress, fatigue, and no doubt some minor illness...They had seen him undergo many of the same travails and temptations they had gone through themselves." (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 182). This line of thinking; however, must be approached with great caution. They received a confirmation of the spirit and rejected it. The fact that Jesus was seen as a Carpenter's son is just rationalization for a desire to reject a message that they were unwilling to hear. This was not an ignorant rejection, but one that occurred after spiritual confirmation.

I suppose the real question is why they were so quick to reject Jesus? "The enemies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are so prejudiced against this people, that they cannot hear the truth, neither can they open their minds to receive it. It is with them that speak evil of the religion we profess, as they said anciently, "There can no good thing come out of Nazareth." They did not believe it possible that the Saviour could come out of such a place as Nazareth, and now the world do not believe that any good can be produced by this people; but we know that all the truth there is on the earth belongs to this kingdom and people, and that which has been revealed in the last days is comprehended by many of the Saints of God in these mountains." (Journal of Discourses, Volume 8, "The Gospel Commission", Heber C. Kimball, Salt Lake City Bowery, September 2, 1860, page 210). They rejected Jesus for the same reason they have rejected truth in every dispensation. They want to dictate what



truth is. Men want to define things to accommodate their own lifestyles and circumstance. Accepting truth as defined by God would endanger their wealth, prestige, and belief system.

**"As it was with the Jews in the days of the Savior, so it is now with the Christian world. Light if offered them, and they reject it, and this will be their condemnation. It was said anciently that no good thing could come out of Nazareth, and to-day the Christians say that no good thing can come from the "Mormons" or from Joseph Smith. By and by they will find that a great many good things can come from just such a source."** (Journal of Discourses, Volume 12, "Full of Charity", Daniel H. Wells, Salt Lake City Bowery, June 30, 1867, page 76). Rejection of such sorts is based on a desire to control outcomes and personal desires. It is a selfish pattern. By accepting Jesus, the people of Nazareth would have had to change in their beliefs, actions, and way of life. It would have placed God's will above their own, and this was beyond what they are willing to give. **"The organization of this Church does not coincide with men's minds, it is contrary to their feelings, it comes in contact with their traditions and their prejudices. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" It is the same idea. Can any good thing come from Joseph Smith, an uneducated man? Can any good thing come out of the "Mormon" people. And the whole world seemingly is in a turmoil. Every conceivable falsehood is told about this people. Well, this will continue to be the case; I have no doubt of it in my mind. We have got this warfare to fight, and every people who have stood in our position had it before us. Every reformation which was ever effected among men had to be effected in the face of opposition, and frequently the foundation stones have been laid in the blood of the men who were the instruments in the hands of God in laying the foundation. Opposition in this respect is not a new thing. It is as old as Adam that there should be opposition to contend against. Jesus predicted it, because he knew it was the history of the past, and he knew it would be repeated. Thus those who embrace "Mormonism," or the Gospel of Christ, may make their calculations upon it."** (Journal of Discourses, Volume 22, "Prophets and Servants of God rejected in nearly all ages", George Q. Cannon, Salt Lake City Tabernacle, June 12, 1881, pages 179-180).

**"He was a Galilean, and therefore, because of his lowly birth and surroundings, they deemed themselves perfectly justified in rejecting Him."** (Journal of Discourses, Volume 22, "Prophets and Servants of God rejected in nearly all ages", George Q. Cannon, Salt Lake City Tabernacle, June 12, 1881, page 179).

**52 - surely say** – The word "surely" is translated from the Greek word "πάντως" or "pantōs". The Greek word means altogether, in any and every way, and by all means. The word "say" is translated from the Greek word "εἶπον" or "eipon". The Greek word means to utter, speak, or say. The Codex Sinaiticus translated the phrase "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb" as "Ye will surely speak this parable to be". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 23, page 109). Jesus is apparently reading their thoughts. He could see, hear and feel the rejection of His word. **"The word fell on stony ground and found no soil in which to grow, and the seeds died without sprouting. It was a sad, dark day for Nazareth."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 14).

**53 - proverb** – The word "proverb" is translated from the Greek word "παροιμία" or "parabolē". The Greek word means a saying by which doctrine or precept is illustrated. It can also given in story form. **"Proverb, a pithy saying, comparison or question; in Old Testament usually Heb mashal, from a root meaning 'represent, be like'."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 691).

**54 - Physician** – The word "physician" is translated from the Greek word "ἰατρός" or "iatros". The Greek word means physician. Zondervan helps us understand what an actual physician was during the time of Jesus. It records, **"Physician, one who understands and practices medicine in the art of healing. The priests and prophets were expected to have some knowledge of medicine. In the days of Moses there were mid-wives and regular physicians who attended the Israelites. They brought some knowledge of medicine with them from Egypt, whose physicians were celebrated in all antiquity. In the early stages of medical practice, attention was more frequently confined to surgical aid and external applications. Even down to a comparatively late period, outward maladies appear to have been the chief subjects of medical treatment among the Hebrews, although they were not entirely without remedies for internal and even mental disorders. The medicines prescribed were salves, particular balms, plaster and poultices, oil-baths, mineral baths etc. In Egypt the physicians aided in carrying out the elaborate preparations connected with embalming the body."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 597). The physicians of Jesus day were a far cry from doctor's of today, but they were not witch doctors either. They evidently possessed a rudimentary understanding of the healing arts. Additionally, Rabbi's were often schooled in the healing arts and in some areas acted as the local physician. It was therefore common practice to think of, or call, a Rabbi as a Physician.



Jesus knew what the people were thinking, and tells them that He knew that they would use the Rabbinical proverb against him. **"The proverb is found in different ancient literatures with varying nuances. In Greek literature, one finds, 'A physician for others, but himself teeming with sores'; in later rabbinical literature, 'Physician, heal your own lameness'."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 535). It was a common saying of the time, and apparently was uttered in different versions and renditions. **"This saying of Jesus is also attested extra-canonically, being found in a variant form of OxyP1: Jesus says, 'A prophet is not acceptable in his own homeland; and a physician does not work cures on those who know him'. The Coptic form of it is found in Gos. Thom. § 31: 'Jesus said 'No prophet (prophētēs) is accepted in his own town; a physician does not heal (therapeue) those who know him'."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 527).

Given this, it is difficult to say what the exact and original words to the proverb were. Edersheim wrote, **"The proverb really is: 'Physician. heal thine own lameness' (Ber.R. 23 ed. Warsh. p.45 b.)"** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 455).

There is an underlying message in the proverb, in relation the circumstances in the Synagogue in Nazareth that day. The people of Nazareth had heard about the fame of Jesus. Word had gotten back to them of His great miracles and marvelous works. He was gaining a reputation throughout Palestine. He has now returned to His home town, and yet they have seen nothing of the sorts. He has healed no one. No miracle has been performed before their eyes. **"The hometown people seem to be saying, Master Healer, start here on home terrain, and heal yourself, and then let us see some of those miraculous healings we've heard about from Capernaum."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 141). They wanted proof. They wanted to see things with their own eyes, and a witness of the spirit was not good enough for them. **"A common rabbinical proverb, which as used here seems to mean: 'You have performed miracles in Cana and Capernaum, but none here, and yet you are a native of Nazareth. Why can't we see a sign, some great exhibition of you purported power? Don't you know that charity begins at home, that unless the physician heals himself of his own disease we cannot believe he has power to heal others?'"** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 162).



**55 - heal thyself** – The word "heal" is translated from the Greek word "θεραπεύω" or "therapeuō". The Greek word means to serve, do service, to heal, cure, or restore to health. The phrase alludes to the readiness and ability of physicians to heal sickness in others while sometimes not being able or willing to heal themselves. This suggests something of 'the cobbler always wears the worst shoes', that is, cobblers are too poor and busy to attend to their own footwear. It also suggests that physicians, while often being able to help the sick, cannot always do so, especially when the physician is sicker than the patient. It should be noted that the Rabbis were often the local physicians, making this statement very personal.

This theme, the idea that the Physician should heal himself, is one that follows the Savior until His death. Those that opposed the truth constantly looked for fault, and expected proof. They needed Jesus to prove His claims under their terms, but this is not, nor has it ever been the way of Heaven. We learn the things of the spirit through the spirit, not through worldly manifestations. The proof is not in the miracle, but the faith and obedience that accompanies it. **"The analogy seems to extend even further - and if a misrepresentation of what Jesus had said when purifying the Temple formed the ground of the final false charge against Him, the taunt of the Nazarenes: Physician, heal thyself! found an echo in the mocking cry, as He hung on the cross: 'He saved others, Himself he cannot save.'"** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 452).

Jesus doesn't give them the miracle or proof that they want. Instead, He uses the scriptures to illustrate how miracles and healing are brought to pass. Skousen writes, **"At that point Jesus began to cite some scriptures demonstrating that God decides who will be healed. Some he heals, some he doesn't. Healing is God's business. Therefore, it is not a matter of simply providing a healing every time someone demands it. The important point is whether or not it is the desire of God to heal a particular person at that time."** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 183).

**56 - Capernaum** – The name "Capernaum" is translated from the Greek word "Καφαρναούμ" or "Kapharnaoum". The Greek word, translated literally, means "village of comfort". We suppose that Jesus moved to Capernaum with His mother and siblings almost immediately after the marriage in Cana some 10 or 11 months prior. Capernaum was His home now. It sits on the northern shore of the sea of Galilee. It is a fishing town of relatively good size. It had at least one large Synagogue, and was home to at least 5 of the 12 future Apostles. There were many in Capernaum who displayed enough faith for Jesus to perform miracles among them. Capernaum was approximately 24 miles, or a two day journey away from Nazareth.

**57 - country** – The word "country" is translated from the Greek word "πατρίς" or "patris". The Greek word means one's native country, one's fatherland, or a fixed abode.

There is no doubt that Jesus' homeland was Nazareth. He spent many years there as a child, adolescent, and young adult. This was His country. Unfortunately, the Jews had a negative impression of Galilee as a whole, and an even lower opinion of Nazareth. The Galilæans were considered country folk. They were less educated and sophisticated. The great Rabbi's came from Judæa. They felt that no legitimate prophet could come from Galilee. **"But so long as Jerusalem and Judæa were the centre of Jewish learning, no terms of contempt were too strong to express the supercilious hauteur, with which a regular Rabbinit regarded his northern co-religionists. The slighting speech of Nathanael (John 1:46), "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" reads quite like a common saying of the period; and the rebuke of the Pharisees to Nicodemus (John 7:52), "Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet," was pointed by the mocking question, "Art thou also of Galilee?" It was not merely self-conscious superiority, such as the "towns-people," as the inhabitants of Jerusalem used to be called throughout Palestine, were said to have commonly displayed towards their "country cousins" and every one else, but offensive contempt, outspoken sometimes with almost incredible rudeness, want of delicacy and charity, but always with much pious self-assertion."** (Sketches of Jewish Social Life, Alfred Edersheim, pages 20).

**58 - Verily** – The word "verily" is translated from the Greek word "ἀμῆν" or "amēn". The Greek word means firm, verily, amen, so it is, or so be it. **"Lit. 'Amen, I tell you'. This is the first occurrence of this asseverative phrase, containing the only Semitic word that has been retained in the Lucan Gospel from the earlier tradition."** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 536).

**59 - I say unto you** – The phrase "unto you" is translated from the Greek word "ὕμῖν" or "hymin". The Greek word means you. **"With bitter irony Jesus responds to the thoughts in their minds. 'No prophet is accepted in his own country,' he says. And as illustrations of blessings being withheld from the chosen people (the Nazarenes, as it were) and given to foreigners (those of other cities in Palestine, in this case), he referred to two accounts from Israel's history: that of Elijah, who blessed the Phoenician widow of Zarephath, and that of Elisha, who cleansed a Gentile of Syria."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 15).

**60 - no** – The word "no" is translated from the Greek word "οὐδεὶς" or "oudeis". The Greek word means no one, or nothing.

It is evident that the Nazarene congregation was unwilling to accept any prophet that did not size up to their expectations. Unfortunately, that is a common train of thought even today. We are prone to size up our church leaders, teachers, and instructors. We set personal expectation for them, and if they don't meet up to them, well, they we are horribly judgmental. This goes against everything that the gospel stands for. The good news of the gospel is that we are all wanting and Jesus has atoned to make up the difference. Why then do we judge someone else for their inability or failing. **"It is our Job to lift others up, not to size them up."** (General Conference, "The Net Gathers of Every Kind", Neal A. Maxwell, October 1980). In Jesus case, He was perfect, but since He was not what they expected, they judged Him falsely and rejected Him.

**61 - accepted** – The word "accepted" is translated from the Greek word "δεκτός" or "dektos". The Greek word means accepted or acceptable.

Jesus told the Nazarene audience, **"No prophet is accepted in his own country. After he angered the people by saying that other prophets in the northern regions of the land, namely Elijah and Elisha, had also been unable to invoke miraculous blessings on their own unbelieving people..."** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 140). Such is the sad state of man. **"What prophet or great man ever found full acceptance in the eyes of petty neighbors, in the eyes of people whose penchant is always to magnify the supposed failings and foibles of their fellow mortals?"** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 162).

**62 - truth** – The word "truth" is translated from the Greek word "ἀλήθεια" or "alētheia". The Greek word means what is true in any matter under consideration. This seems like an odd introduction to Jesus' response, but what He is saying is being said by way of testimony. He is prefacing the fact that what will follow is being said under the direction of the spirit. The Doctrine and Covenants clarifies, **"For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ."** (Doctrine and Covenants 84:45).

**63 - widow** – The word "widow" is translated from the Greek word "χήρα" or "chēra". The Greek word means a widow.

The northern kingdom of Israel, at the time of Elijah, had undergone many wars and battles. Consequently, the nation developed a large population of widows. One of the signs of a spiritually healthy population is the way in which they care for the widows and the less fortunate. During this time, Israel was apostate and wayward. As evidenced by the situation of the widow in Sarepta, the people were not caring for the widows in their midst. Even so, the people were so apostate that the Prophet Elijah found no place to perform His mighty works within the covenant people. He sought out a widow woman in Phoenicia.

**64 - Israel** – The name "Israel" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰσραήλ" or "Israēl". The Greek word, translated literally, means "he shall be a prince of God". **"Tradition has ascribed countless names and qualities to the People of Israel (Am Yisrael), the chosen people, God's Portion, the House of Israel, Kingdom of Priests, Holy Nation, and God's Beloved."** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 79). In reference to this footnote, Israel refers to the Northern



kingdom of Israel, containing the ten tribes of Israel. It should be remembered that in 975BCE, the Kingdom of Israel divided into two separate countries; the Northern Kingdom who retained the name Israel, and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. I suppose there could be a dual meaning asserted in the text, being both a geographical kingdom and a people of the covenant.

**65 - in the days** – The word "day" is translated from a different Greek word than footnote #41. This word "day" is translated from "ἡμέρα" or "hēmera". The Greek word means the day, used of the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night.

The days of Elijah are somewhat difficult to pin down. We are unsure of the date of his birth. We know that he started to prophesy during the reign of evil king Ahab and his equally evil wife Jezebel. King Ahab started to rule in 875BCE. Elijah had serious contentions with Ahab and his wife, to the point that they placed a price on Elijah's head. Ahab was killed and the throne passed to King Ahaziah in 853BCE. Elijah contended with King Ahaziah, who only reigns for two years. Finally during the reign of King Jehoram, who reigned from 851BCE to 843BCE, Elijah was translated. So, the days of Elijah are roughly between 875BCE and 843BCE, a span of no more than 32 years.

**66 - Elias** – The name "Elias" is translated from the Greek word "Ἠλίας" or "Eliás". The Greek word, translated literally, means "my God is Jehovah". The Greek word is a transliteration of the Hebrew name "אֱלִיָּהוּ" or "Eliyahu". The Latin form of the name is Elijah. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the name "Elias" as "Elijah". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 25, page 109).

Elijah was considered one of the greatest prophets, by the ancient Jews, to have ever live. Surely not in greater esteem than Moses, but none the less very high on the list. In my estimation, Moses, Elijah and Isaiah were considered the pinnacle of Jewish Prophets. Abraham being considered the Father of the covenant, and progenitor of the faith.

The Jews understood that Elijah had been translated, and taken into Heaven by God. They looked forward to his return. They go as far as to set a symbolic place for him at the table during the Passover meal.

The Jews understood the life of Elijah, and would have readily known that Elijah was rejected of all the covenant people. The people of Israel refused to repent or listen to his words. As a consequence, Elijah used his priesthood authority and closed the heavens from rain. This was a harsh consequence to an agricultural society. The people were angry, and wanted Elijah killed, rather than listening and repenting. After this, Ahab and Jezebel issued decrees for his death. Elijah found himself friendless and alone. He had been rejected by his own people for speaking the word of God. He left the northern kingdom and retreated to the desert where he sat under a tree and planned to die. We find that no matter how alone Elijah may have been, the Lord was there. He directed ravens to feed and care for Elijah, and then the Lord taught and instructed him. In the end, Elijah was ready to go back to work. The Lord directed him to a widow outside of the kingdom of Israel for food and support. The covenant people had rejected him, and so he found somewhere else to bring God's great blessings. The widow woman was miraculously blessed, in great abundance, by Elijah's visit.

There is obvious and apparent similarities between the Savior's lack of miracles in Nazareth, and Elijah passing over Israel to perform a miracle in Phoenicia. Elder McConkie wrote, "Elijah the prophet, who was taken up into heaven without tasting death, and Elisha, who poured water upon the hands of Elijah and upon whom his master's mantle fell - these mighty prophets, whose works were known to every Jew in Jesus' day - their miracles were performed selectively, for special individuals, not for the suffering hosts of their day. Where there is faith, there is the miracle; where there is no faith, no miracle is wrought. And if the prophets of old went outside the fold of Israel to find those worthy of their ministry, so Jesus would go outside Nazareth to find receptive souls who would believe in him and receive the blessings that he came to bestow." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 15).

**67 - heaven** – The word "heaven" is translated from the Greek word "οὐρανός" or "ouranos". The Greek word means the vaulted expanse of the sky with all things visible in it. It is used for the universe, the world, the starry heavens, or the home of God. In the application of this footnote, the heaven represents the sky. Elijah stopped the sky from raining. There would be no rain clouds, no fog, no dew, and no moisture.

**68 - shut up** – The phrase "shut up" is translated from the Greek word "κλείω" or "kleiō". The Greek word means to shut or shut up. "After Elijah sealed the heavens that there was neither dew nor rain, but according to his word; after the brook Cherith, whereof he drank, failed for want of water; and after the ravens no longer brought him bread and flesh to eat, the Lord sent him to Zarephath in Sidon, to a widow woman, who was commanded to sustain him." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 15).

**69 - three years and six months** – The word "year" is translated from the Greek word "ἔτος" or "etos". The Greek word means year. The word "months" is translated from the Greek word "μήν" or "mēn". The Greek word means a month; more specifically, the time of the new moon, new moon (the first day of each month, when the new moon appeared was a festival among the Hebrews). "The statement that the famine in the time of Elijah lasted three and a half years is in accordance with universal Jewish tradition." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 456). The famine was a result of no rain, which the people relied on to water their crops. Even if rain was inconsistent, the people relied on rain to fill their cisterns, which were then used to manually water the crops. Israel was denied the blessing of rain for 3½ years.

**70 - great famine** – The word "great" is translated from the Greek word "μέγας" or "megas". The Greek word means great. It can be used in many ways; size, weight, height, age, stature, abundant, rank, splendor, power, etc. The word "famine" is translated from the Greek word "λίμος" or "limos". The Greek word means scarcity of harvest, or famine. It is a lack of food; specifically related to the inability to produce.

Elijah shut up the heaven so that no rain came for 3½ years. Without water, the crops died. As crops died, food became scarce. This resulted in a famine. People must have died from hunger. What is interesting is that they preferred this than to listen to the words of the prophet.

**71 - throughout all the land** – The word "land" is translated from the Greek word "γῆ" or "gē". The Greek word means arable land. It refers to the earth beneath our feet. or the earth as a whole.

In reference to this footnote, the famine was throughout the Kingdom Israel. How far beyond Palestine the famine extended is unclear. It is apparent that Phoenicia experienced the ramification of Israel's sins.

**72 - unto none** – The word "none" is translated from the Greek word "οὐδεὶς" or "oudeis". The Greek word means no one or nothing. The implication is, Elijah was not sent to help anyone in Israel who was suffering from the famine. None had the faith to summon the help of the prophet. Only a widow in Phoenicia was worthy of his care. She had but



enough flour and oil for one last meal for her son and herself, but when the prophet arrived she served him. Elijah not only blessed her home with flour and oil without end, but he raised her child from the dead.

**73 - sent** – The word "sent" is translated from the Greek word "πέμπω" or "pempō". The Greek word means to send. It means to bid a thing to be carried to someone.

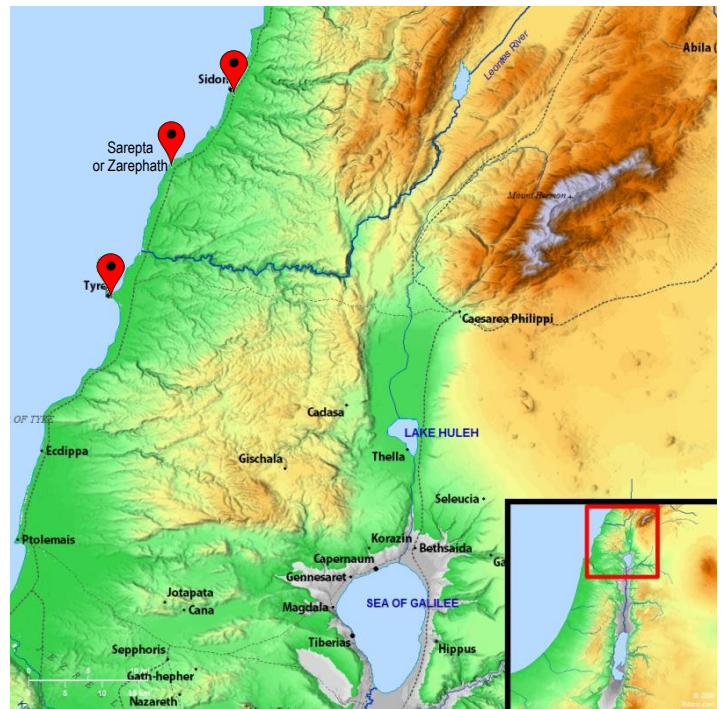
**74 - Sarepta** – The name "Sarepta" is translated from the Greek word "Σάρεπτα" or "Sarepta". The Greek word, translated literally, means "smelting". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "סַרְפָּת" or "Tsaréphath". Translated literally, the Hebrew word means "refinery".

Sarepta was a Phoenician city on the coast between Tyre and Sidon. The Old Testament often refers to it as Zarephath. It became known as a place of metal work, forging, and smelting; hence the name. The town has very little Biblical significance, other than it was not an Israelite city under the Northern Kingdom.

**75 - city of Sidon** – The phrase "city of Sidon" is translated from the Greek word "Σιδῶν" or "Sidōn". The Greek word, translated literally, means "hunting". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "סִידוֹן" or "Tsiydown".

Sidon is an ancient town on the coast of Phoenicia. It received its name from the 'first-born' of Canaan, the grandson of Noah. It blossomed under the Phoenicians. It became one of their great cities, and was known for ship building, ocean commerce, and manufacturing. It was a place of artisans and engineers during the Phoenician era. Elijah sojourned in Sidon and performed miracles there.

**76 - woman** – The word "woman" is translated from the Greek word "γυνή" or "gynē". The Greek word means a woman of any age, whether virgin, married or widow.



Previously, the record of Luke referred to a widow in Sarepta. Now he refers to her as a woman. As we read the translation of the word "woman", we find that it could be translated as "widow" as well. **"Traveling thence, Elijah found the woman gathering two sticks for a fire, that she might take her last meal and her last drops of oil and make them into a cake for herself and her son. Then she and her offspring faced certain death by starvation."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 15). This was a good woman, with a caring heart. She may not have been of Israelite blood, but she quickly showed a disposition for faith. With that, Elijah was able to perform miracles.

Below is the full Biblical account of Elijah and the widow of Sarepta;

"(1) And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. (2) And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, (3) Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. (4) And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. (5) So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. (6) And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. (7) And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land. (8) And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, (9) Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. (10) So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. (11) And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. (12) And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. (13) And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. (14) For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. (15) And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. (16) And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah. (17) And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him. (18) And she said unto Elijah, What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son? (19) And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. (20) And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? (21) And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee, let this child's soul come into him again. (22) And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. (23) And Elijah took the child, and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth. (24) And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." (1st Kings 17:1-24)

**"How aptly Jesus chose his illustrations! Both of these ancient prophets, dishonored by their own, conferred great blessings upon foreigners. So it was with the Nazarenes; others, not they, had seen his great works."** (The Doctrine New Testament Commentary - The Gospels, Volume 1, Bruce R. McConkie, page 162).

So, what is the application for you and I? The message is that God is desirous to bless His children; however, He will never force upon us His works. We must come to Him with a spirit of willingness to obey His words, and accept His teachings. Only then can He perform His works in our lives. Additionally, His blessings do not come on our terms. They come in the manner and conditions in which He deems best. Such blessings often come through channels that seem odd to us. We often look for blessings and miracles to display themselves according to our expectations. This is seldom the case. God's blessings require faith, and therefore they often manifest themselves in ways which can only occur by us using our faith in Him.



77 - **lepers** – The word "lepers" is translated from the Greek word "λεπρός" or "lepros". The Greek word means scaly, rough, leprous, or affected with leprosy. Lepers symbolize **"the unclean; the outcast; the spiritually and morally fallen."** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 96).

"Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, as defined today, is the name for disease processes caused by the microorganism *Mycobacterium leprae*." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, page 218). Initially, infections are without symptoms and typically remain this way from 5 to as long as 20 years. Symptoms that develop include granulomas of the nerves, respiratory tract, skin, and eyes. This may result in a lack of ability to feel pain and thus loss of parts of extremities due to repeated injuries or infection due to unnoticed wounds. Weakness and poor eyesight may also be present.

Leprosy is spread between people. This is believed to occur through a cough or contact with fluid from the nose of an infected person. Leprosy occurs more commonly among those living in poverty and is believed to be transmitted by respiratory droplets. Contrary to popular belief, it is not very contagious.



At highest risk are those living in areas with polluted water and poor diet or people suffering from diseases that compromise immune function.

78 - **Eliseus** – The word "Eliseus" is translated from the Greek word "Ἐλισσαῖος" or "Elisaïos". The Greek word, translated literally, means "God is salvation". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "אֵלִישָׁא" or "Eliysha". The Latin form of the name is Elisha. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the name "Eliseus" as "Elisha". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 27, page 109).

Elisha prophesied during the reign of King Jehoram of the Kingdom of Israel. Jehoram began his rule in 851BCE and ruled until 843BCE. Elisha most probably finished his ministry under the reign of King Jehu around 800BCE. He was an underling to Elijah, and he accepted the mantle of prophet at the time of Elijah's translation into Heaven. Elisha prophesied to the Israelites who were wicked and prideful. He had little success among them. He preached in Syria, to people who the Israelites might refer to as Gentiles.

79 - **cleansed** – The word "cleansed" is translated from the Greek word "καθαρίζω" or "katharizō". The Greek word means to make clean, or cleanse. In a moral sense, it means to be free from defilement or sin and from faults. Leprosy was generally seen as a defilement, and a consequence to sin. The judgment was often made that if someone contracted leprosy, it was consequence of sin. In fact, they equated leprosy to the sin of slander. The cleansing of a Leper was typically ceremonial and came after the disease had been cured. Elisha insinuated that the Syrian commander wash and cleans himself in the River Jordan as a means of removing the disease. In fact, Naaman was commanded to wash himself seven times in the Jordan. This act of faith brought about the miracle.

Jesus is again referencing the lack of faith in Nazareth. Even the gentile Naaman had enough faith for a miracle.

80 - **saving** – The word "saving" is translated from the Greek word "εἰ μή" or "ei mē". The Greek word means if not, except, or but. No one in Israel had enough faith to be healed by Elisha, and they had many lepers. Only Naaman, an unlikely candidate, had the necessary faith. He was not of Israelite blood. He was not of the covenant. He was a Gentile.

81 - **Naaman** – The name "Naaman" is translated from the Greek word "Ναιμάν" or "Naiman". The Greek word, translated literally, means "pleasantness". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew name "נַמָּן" or "Na'aman". It has the same literal meaning as the Greek name.

"Naaman, a mighty man and captain of all the armies of Syria, was a leper. His wife had a servant, an Israelite maid who had been taken captive from her homeland. She said: 'Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.' Naaman in due course went down to Israel and was told by a messenger sent by Elisha: 'Go and was in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.' Doing so, he became clean - a miracle wrought at a distance, as it were, somewhat like the healing of the nobleman's son by Jesus." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 15).

Here is the full account of the Biblical record of Elisha healing Naaman;

"(1) Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper. (2) And the Syrians had gone out by companies, and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on Naaman's wife. (3) And she said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy. (4) And one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of Israel. (5) And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment. (6) And





he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. (7) And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me. (8) And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. (9) So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. (10) And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. (11) But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. (12) Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. (13) And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? (14) Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." (2nd Kings 5:1-14)



**82 - Syrian** – The word "Syrian" is translated from the Greek word "Σύρος" or "Syros". The Greek word means an inhabitant of Syria. Anciently, Syria was known as Aram and dates back to Genesis 10. Aram was the son of Shem, and the land was named after him. The Assyrians later conquered Syria, and many believe that the name of the country is actually corrupted form of the name Assyria, which actually stuck. Syria has been an area of war throughout the ages. Biblically, the Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Hittites, Phoenicians, and Armeans all waged bloody battles there. Consequently, Syria became a melting pot for a wide range of cultures. This resulted in a populace with a wide range of heathen practices. They were considered gentiles.

The fact that Naaman was a Syrian said volumes. Surely, an Israelite leper would be favored for a miraculous healing from a prophet of God over a Syrian. To favor a Syrian over the covenant people would be offensive.



**83 - all they** – The phrase "they all" is translated from the Greek word "πᾶς" or "pas". Individually, the Greek word means each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, and everything. Collectively, it means some of all types.

**84 - heard these things** – The phrase "when they heard" is translated from the Greek word "ἀκούω" or "akouō". The Greek word means to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, not deaf.



After hearing Jesus use the example of a Phoenician widow, and a Syrian commander receiving precedence over the wicked Israelites for the miracles of God, and then being compared to them, the people were angry. **"What then? were they in His estimation (and He but the 'carpenter!') no better than Gentiles and lepers? This was the climax of all that was intolerable to them, as coming from a fellow-townsmen whom they wished to rank among themselves; and at these words their long-suppressed fury burst into a flame. The speaker was no longer interrupted by a murmur of disapprobation, but by a roar of wrath."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 159). They heard and they heard correctly.

Unfortunately, we face the same struggles. Oh, are we now to be compared to the wicked men of Nazareth? Well, do we find fault in our leaders? Do we set expectations for them based on our selfish desires, or are faithful regardless of their direction? **"Members of the Church ... those of enduring faith ... willingly accept the supremacy of God and rely upon the scriptures and counsel of His servants, the leaders of the Church. These leaders of the Church are men with human frailties, and are imperfect in their wisdom and judgment. Perfection in men is not found on the earth. But almost without exception these leaders sincerely, humbly, and prayerfully render great and dedicated Christian service to the best of their ability. More important, they hold a divine warrant and commission through which great and eternal blessings come to those who sustain and follow them. They are God's servants"** (General Conference, "The Abundant Life", James E. Faust, October 1985).

**85 - filled with wrath** – The word "filled" is translated from the Greek word "πίμπλημι" or "pimplēmi". The Greek word means to fill, to be fulfilled, or to be filled. The word "wrath" is translated from the Greek word "θυμός" or "thymos". It means passion, angry, heat, or anger forthwith boiling up and soon subsiding again. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "wrath" as "anger". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 28, page 109).

Anger is not an emotion of the spirit. Anger is the emotion that Satan displayed when his plan was rejected in the Grand Council. It is a sign that something is off spiritually. Elder McConkie wrote, **"Anger welled up in the hearts of his fellow Nazarenes. Lucifer, not Jehovah, was their lord, as Jesus would one day tell the Jews in Jerusalem. Though they had given lip service - that very day, in that very synagogue - to the worship of Jehovah, yet they now, 'filled with anger' as Luke says, cast that very Jehovah out of their midst."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 16).

One who knows ancient Jews worship knows that the sermon was often followed by discussion. It was a time when teacher and student could interact and share. Those discussion often became intense. **"It was customary with the Jews in the worship of their synagogue to give full vent to their feelings, and it was not long before Jesus became sensible of indignant and rebellious murmurs. He saw that those eager glittering eyes, which had been fixed upon Him in the first excitement of attention, were beginning to glow with the malignant light of jealousy and hatred."** (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 158). This discussion exceeded even the emotion filled discussions of the most heated topics.

**86 - rose up** – The phrase "rose up" is translated from the Greek word "ἀνίστημι" or "anistēmi". The Greek word means to cause to rise up, to raise up from sitting or laying down, or to leave a place to go elsewhere. The term rising up is often used to convey idea of violence. To rise up against one's brother is to intend physical harm. The men of Nazareth intended nothing less against Jesus that day.

**87 - thrust him out** – The word "thrust" is translated from the Greek word "ἐκβάλλω" or "ekballō". The Greek word means to cast out, drive out, or to send out.

We have no details as to how this occurred. We do not know if they physically laid their hands upon Him and literally threw Him out of the synagogue, or whether it was verbal removal. Did they cast him out by ordering Him from their midst? Either way, the outcome was the same. And it did not end there! **"Out they thrust Him from the Synagogue; forth they pressed Him out of the city; on they followed, and around they beset Him along the road by the brow of the hill on which the city is built - perhaps to that western angle, at present pointed out as the site. This, with the unspoken intention of crowding Him over the cliff, which there rises abruptly about forty feet out of the valley beneath. If we are correct in indicating the locality, the road bifurcates, and we can conceive how Jesus, Who had hitherto, in the silence of sadness allowed Himself almost mechanically to be pressed onwards by the surrounding crowd, now turned, and by that look of commanding majesty, the forthbreaking of His Divine Being, which ever and again wrought on those around miracles of subjection, constrained them to halt and give way before Him, while unharmed He passed through their midst."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 456).



**88 - of the city** – The word "city" is translated from the Greek word "πόλις" or "polis". The Greek word means a city. This phrase "out of the city" gives us the idea that Jesus was taken outside of the city, away from the populace and the house so that they could end His life.

**89 - led him** – The word "led" is translated from the Greek word "ἄγω" or "agō". The Greek word means to lead, or take with one. It can also mean to lead by laying hold of, to lead away.

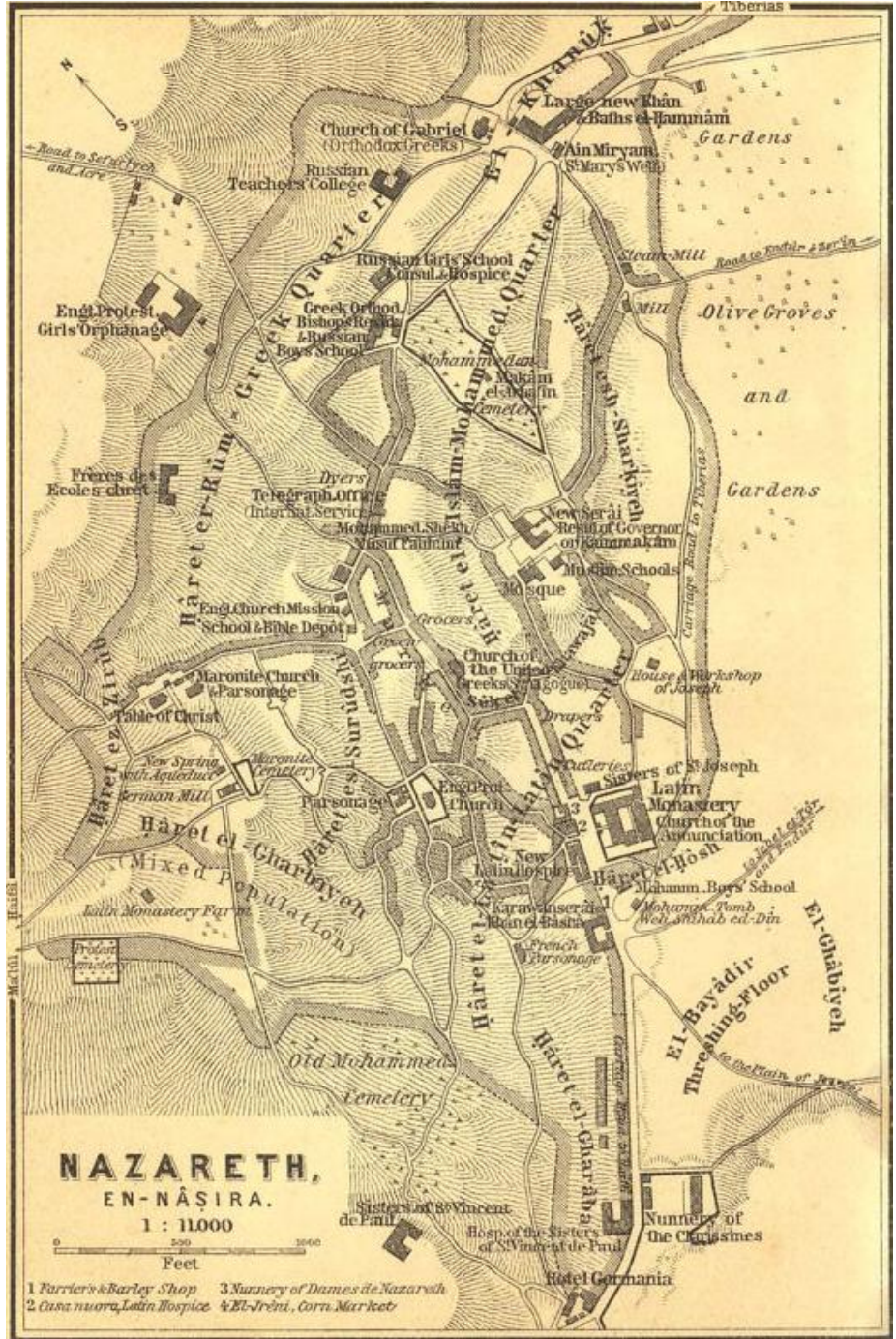
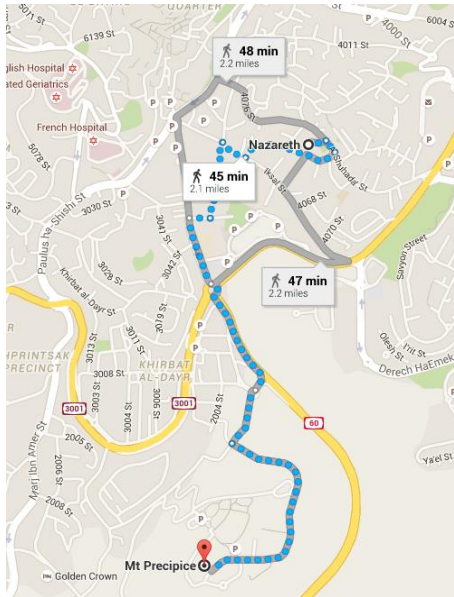
Edersheim theorizes that Jesus was taken in hand. He believes that the crowd merely pressed Him along the way, directing Him where they wanted him to go. He wrote, **"The circumstances that the Nazarenes did not avow the purpose of casting Him over the cliff, but intended accidentally to crowd Him over, explains how, when He turned sharply round to the right, and passed through the crowd, they did not follow."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 456). This coincides with Bädeker's research on the ancient roads of Nazareth. Apparently, there is a road that leads up to the top the precipice that most scholars believe to be the hill that



Jesus was intended to be cast off. Along that path is a fork in the road. Should one take the fork in the road, the diverted path joins up with the road to Capernaum at the bottom of the hill. Edersheim explains, "...the plan of Nazareth in Bädeker's Palästina, p. 255. The road to the left goes westward, that through the northern part of the town, towards Capernaum. Our localisation gains in probability, if the ancient Synagogue stood where tradition places it. At present it is in the hands of the Maronites." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 456).

**90 - brow of the hill** – The word "brow" is translated from the Greek word "ὄφρυς" or "ophrys". The Greek word means the eyebrow, or any prominence or projection. The word "hill" is translated from the Greek word "ὄρος" or "oros"; which means mountain. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word "hill" as "mount". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 29, page 109).

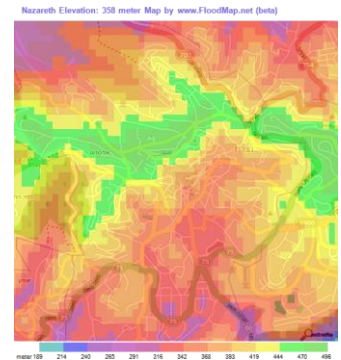
"The little town of Nazareth nestles in the southern hollows of that hill; many a mass of precipitous rock lies imbedded on its slopes, and it is probable that the hillside may have been far more steep and precipitous two thousand years ago. To one of these rocky escarpments they dragged Him, in order to fling Him headlong down." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 160). Known today as Kedumim, the hill that the Jews of Nazareth intended to cast Jesus from, has been referred to by Biblical scholars as "Mount Precipice" or "the Mountain of the Leap". The elevation of Mount Precipice is 1,296 feet above sea level. Nazareth sits at 1,050 feet above sea level. The top of Mount Precipice sits 246 feet above Nazareth. Since we do not know the exact spot that the Jews intended to cast Jesus off the mount, it is difficult to determine the length of His intended fall. It would not have been greater than 246 feet, and surely substantially lower. At any rate, it was surely high enough to terminate a man's life.



**91 - built** – The word "built" is translated from the Greek word "οἰκοδομῆω" or "oikodomeō". The Greek word means to build a house or erect a building. It can be used metaphorically to mean found, establish or promote something.

Nazareth was built in a mountain valley. It was surrounded by hills and small peaks. Even so, the elevation was not high enough to bring about cooler climates. Nazareth's average high temperature for December is 63.5 degrees Fahrenheit, with January at 59.4 degrees Fahrenheit. Most scholars agree on the general location of Nazareth, and many support Bädeker's location of the ancient city. Fitzmyer is more cautious. He writes, "Modern Nazareth is a small village built on a slope and ringed about by hills, but it is impossible to point to any such spot as that envisaged in this sentence. Since the ninth century a tradition has associated the Lucan verse with a place about three kms. SE of Nazareth (Jebel el-Kafze), but this is also contested." (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 538). It would appear the Nazareth was about 2.1 miles from Mount Precipice. It was about 45 minutes away on foot.

Using modern topography, the Nazareth Valley has been mapped (to the right). The green represents the lower elevations.





92 - **cast him** – The phrase "they might cast him down headlong" is translated from a single Greek word "κατακρημνίζω" or "katakrēmizō". The Greek word means to cast down a precipice, or to through down headlong.

The feeling is that the Nazarene congregation intended on throwing Jesus head first from the top of the cliff. If this is to be taken literally, and I am not sure that it should be, they would have had to physically lay their hand upon him and throw him head first. Below are pictures of the mount that most scholars believe to be the "brow of the hill" which Jesus was to be cast from.

One interesting side note is, this was done on the Sabbath. It was a 2.1 mile walk, each way, to get Jesus to the "hill". That would be a 4.2 mile round trip. That would require 8,870 steps. The Jews were only allowed to walk 2000 cubits on the Sabbath, which is at the most 1,200 steps. For a people that were so set on following the letter of the Law, they ignored some of their most important Laws to get rid of Jesus.



Mount Precipice



The Valley as seen from the top of Mount Precipice



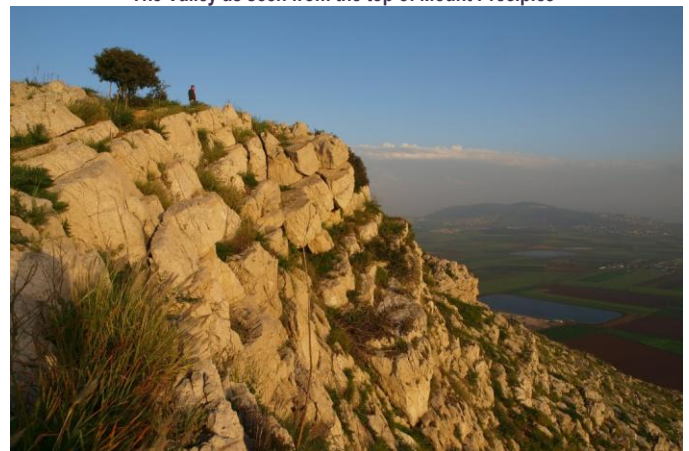
The Valley as seen from the top of Mount Precipice



The Valley as seen from the top of Mount Precipice



The Valley as seen from the top of Mount Precipice



The Valley as seen from the top of Mount Precipice

93 - **down** – The word down is part of the translation in footnote #93.





94 - **headlong** – The word implies that Jesus was to be thrown head first, and implies a desire to kill him rather than to just injure or maim.

95 - **passing** – The word "passing" is translated from the Greek word "διέρχουμαι" or "dierchomai". The Greek word means to go through, pass through, to go, journey, or go to a different place.

Jesus passed through or out from the crowd. How this occurred is not known to us. We do know that "his hour was not yet come, and they were saved from the consummation of a crime which would have branded them with everlasting infamy. 'He passed through the midst of them, and went on His way'. There is no need to suppose an actual miracle; still less to imagine a secret and sudden escape into the narrow and tortuous lanes of the town. Perhaps His silence, perhaps the calm nobleness of His bearing, perhaps the dauntless innocence of His gaze overawed them. Apart from anything supernatural, there seems to have been in the presence of Jesus a spell of mystery and majesty which even His most ruthless and hardened enemies acknowledged, and before which they involuntarily bowed." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 160).

96 - **through the midst** – The word "midst" is translated from the Greek word "μέσος" or "mesos". The Greek word means middle, the midst, in the midst of, and amongst.

"How he escaped the wrath and murderous designs of the Nazarene mob is not recorded." (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 16). We have already presented the theory that Jesus used a small fork in the road leading to the summit of the hill, and disappeared from their midst. Given the fact that scholars have identified the ancient fork, there is some substance to the theory. There is another group that believes that Jesus left by performing a miracle. That His disappearance was beyond reasonable explanation and called upon Heavenly powers. Skousen wrote, "And all of this was because he wouldn't show them a miracle. What his would-be murderers didn't know was the fact that they were about to witness a miracle after all - a rather amazing miracle - so amazing that they wouldn't even know when it happened. As we have previously seen, this miracle is called the veiling of the eyes. Jesus now did the same thing he had done at the temple during Passover. So there he was, poised on the edge of the cliff ready to be pushed off, when suddenly the scripture says: 'He passed through the midst of them went his way'." (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 184). The truth is, we do not know how Jesus managed to get away.

97 - **went his way** – The phrase "went his way" is translated from the Greek word "προρεύω" or "poreuō". The Greek word means to lead over, carry over, transfer, or to continue on one's journey.

We suppose that Jesus left and followed the road to Capernaum where our chronology continues. Many feel that He left Nazareth that day never to return. Farrar wrote, "And so He left them, never apparently to return again; never, if we are right in the view here taken, to preach again in their little synagogue." (The Story of a Beautiful Life: Farrar's Life of Christ, The New 20th Century Edition, 1900, Canon Farrar, D.D., F.R.S., page 160). This statement by Farrar may be incorrect. Most scholars believe that the similar accounts of Jesus preaching in Nazareth by the other Gospel writers are indeed return





visits. In fact, this work has considered them so, and will study those visits at further points in the chronology. Unfortunately, Edersheim seems to agree with Farrar based on the fact that the people seemed so angry that a return visit just doesn't seem welcomed. Edersheim wrote, **"If it be objected, that Jesus could scarcely have returned to Nazareth after the attempt on His life, we must bear in mind that this purpose had not been avowed, and that His growing fame during the intervening period may have rendered such a return not only possible, but even advisable."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 457). Perhaps subsequent visits were to other synagogues in Nazareth.

Assuming that Jesus escaped the hands of the Nazarenes by the forked path that lead to the summit of Mount Precipice, He would have been on the way to Capernaum already. The question I have is where were the disciples. Many suppose that the disciples were with Him in Samaria, and followed Him to Cana and Nazareth and throughout the southern part of Galilee. We have no mention of them in this story. Additionally, if they were with Him, how and where did they meet back up? These details appear to be missing from our story.

What we do assume to be correct is that, **"Cast out of His own city, Jesus pursued His solitary way towards Capernaum. There, at least, devoted friends and believing disciples would welcome Him. There, also, a large draught of souls would fill the Gospel-net."** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 457).

