

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

CHAPTER 4, VERSES 23-25

4:23 - And Jesus went about¹ all² Galilee³, teaching in their synagogues⁴, and preaching⁵ the gospel of the kingdom⁶, and healing⁷ all manner of sickness⁸ and all manner of disease⁹ among the people¹⁰.

4:24 - And his fame¹¹ went throughout all Syria¹²; and they brought unto him¹³ all sick people¹⁴ that were taken with¹⁵ divers diseases¹⁶ and torments¹⁷, and those which were possessed with devils¹⁸, and those which were lunatic¹⁹, and those that had the palsy²⁰; and he healed them²¹.

4:25 - And there followed him²² great multitudes²³ of people from Galilee²⁴, and from Decapolis²⁵, and from Jerusalem²⁶, and from Judæa²⁷, and from beyond Jordan²⁸.

CHAPTER 1, VERSES 35-39

1:35 - And in the morning²⁹, rising up³⁰ a great while before day³¹, he went out³², and departed into a solitary place³³, and there prayed³⁴.

1:36 - And Simon³⁵ and they that were with him³⁶ followed after him³⁷.

1:37 - And when they had found him³⁸, they said unto him, All² men seek for thee³⁹.

1:38 - And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns⁴⁰, that I may preach there also⁴¹: for therefore came I forth⁴².

1:39 - And he preached⁴³ in their synagogues⁴ throughout all² Galilee³, and cast out devils⁴⁴.

CHAPTER 4, VERSES 42-44

4:42 - And when it was day⁴⁵, he departed⁴⁶ and went into a desert place⁴⁷; and the people sought him⁴⁸, and came unto him⁴⁹, and stayed him⁵⁰, that he should not depart from them⁵¹.

4:43 - And he said unto them, I must preach⁵² the kingdom of God⁵³ to other cities also⁵⁴: for therefore am I sent⁵⁵.

4:44 - And he preached⁴³ in the synagogues⁴ of Galilee³.

NOTHING RECORDED

CHRONOLOGY: The beginning of the chapter is on a Sunday morning (the morning after the Sabbath) in **December 27CE or Early January 28CE** (Croscup places that date in Winter-Spring of 28CE). The dating for the end of this chapter is different from the beginning. The end concludes Jesus' second Galilean tour, lasting 2 or 3 months, and concludes in **March 28CE or Early April 28CE**. We believe that the Sermon on the Mount occurred in Late March or Early April of 28CE, and the second Galilean tour would have concluded just prior to the famed sermon.

LOCATION: The beginning of this Chapter is set in **Capernaum, more specifically the solitary, secluded area just outside of Capernaum**. The end of this chapter includes all the **market-cities of Galilee**.

COMMENTARY: The Savior has concluded His Sabbath worship and spent the night in the fishing village of Capernaum, probably in the home of Peter. Hours before the sun would rise, around 3am, Jesus departed from the house and probably the city itself. He sought out a solitary place where He could take counsel from His Heavenly Father. We are not told what that conversation entailed, but surely He sought direction and support. Before daylight, the disciples discovered that Jesus was gone. They searched diligently for Him, apparently awaking the village. A crowd of people had assembled by the time they discovered where Jesus was. The sun rose, and the crowd found that Jesus was leaving to preach to all the market villages of Galilee, a tour that would last 2 or 3 months. Many of His followers tried to stop Jesus from leaving. They had experienced His mighty miracles and profound teachings and wanted to keep Him in their midst. Jesus taught them that His mission, the reason He came to earth, was to preach to all mankind and therefore He was leaving immediately to fulfill the terms of His mission. We have no details from these months in Galilee.

FOOTNOTES:

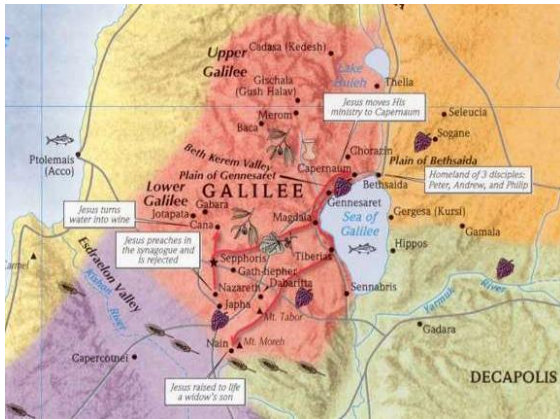
1- **went about** – The word “about” is translated from the Greek word “περιάγω” or “periagō”. The Greek word means to lead around, to go about, or walk about.

Jesus had many followers and interested individuals who literally came to Him; however, this verse reinforces the fact that Jesus' ministry was an active ministry. Jesus brought His message to the people. He went from village to village, and city to city. He met people in their synagogues, their markets, their streets, and even their homes. He sought out the lost, who might not have otherwise found Him. Like a good shepherd, He sought out those who were spiritually lost.

2- **all** – The word “all” is translated from the Greek word “ὅλος” or “holos”. The Greek word means all, whole or completely. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces “all Galilee” with “the whole of Galilee”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 23, page 14).

3- **Galilee** – The word “Galilee” is translated from the Greek word “Γαλιλαία” or “Galilaia”. The Greek word, literally translated, means “Circuit”. It is the name of a region of northern Palestine, bounded on the north by Syria, on the west by Sidon, Tyre, Ptolemais and their territories and the mountain of Carmel, on the south by Samaria and on the east by the Jordan. It was divided into Upper Galilee and Lower Galilee.



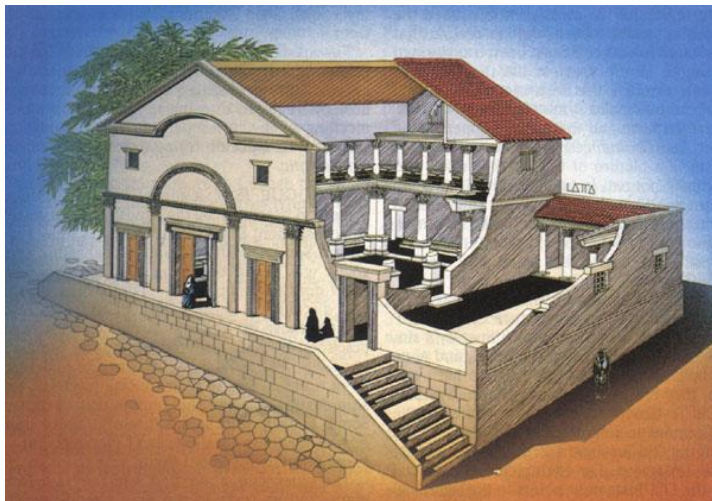
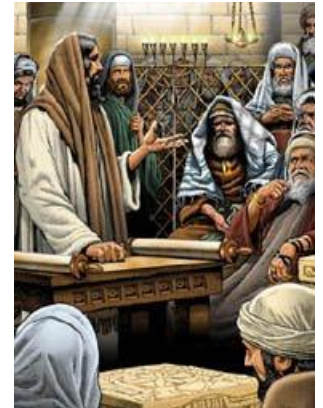


The region of Galilee, at the time of Jesus, was rocky terrain, like the region of Judea; however, it received 35 to 47 inches of rain annually. Consequently, Galilee is generally green and covered with distinctive flora and fauna. It was a bountiful agricultural area. Galilee was full of humble people who worked hard to provide for their families. This was an ideal place for Jesus to preach the everlasting gospel. For the gospel message to find place in the heart of man, they must have enough humility for the spirit to have place in their souls. This attribute was more common in Galilee.

Scholars place the population of Galilee between 200,000 and 700,000 people at the time of Jesus. It was made up of primarily practicing Jews of the working class. The people were scattered in numerous cities and villages. The entire region is less than 40 miles from north to south and 30 miles from east to west. Therefore, the land was dotted with villages and cities. It is no wonder that Jesus travelled from city to city throughout Galilee. Ogden and Skinner wrote, “Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee, teaching in the synagogues. He must have had some credentials that opened the way for use of all the local synagogues as a locale for preaching. He didn’t just promulgate the old law, however. He taught ‘the gospel of the kingdom’, and he healed people who suffered from all kinds of sicknesses and diseases, at least those who ‘believed on his name.’” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 149).

- 4- **teaching in their synagogues** – The word “teaching” is translated from the Greek word “διδάσκω” or “didaskō”. The Greek word means to teach, to impart instruction, to hold discourse with others in order to instruct them, deliver didactic discourse, or to be a teacher.

At first read, it might seem odd that Jesus would preach in the various synagogues of Galilee; however, this actually makes perfect sense. Jesus waited until He was 30 years old to start His ministry. This was the legal age of male maturity, and the age required for one to be considered a Rabbi and preach in public. Jesus’ teachings qualified Him as a Rabbi, though He hadn’t received instruction from any of the great rabbinical schools. Even so, the people would have expected a visiting Rabbi to speak in their synagogue. In fact, He would have been invited to do so by the ruler of the synagogue. This would have been an ideal setting since it was customary to visit the synagogue on the Sabbath, even if you lived outside of the village or city.



Barclay wrote, “The synagogue was the most important institution in the life of any Jew. There was a difference between the synagogues and the Temple. There was only one Temple, the Temple in Jerusalem, but wherever there was the smallest colony of Jews there was a synagogue. The Temple existed solely for the offering of sacrifice; in it there was no preaching or teaching. The synagogue was essentially a teaching institution. The synagogues have been defined as “the popular religious universities of their day.” If a man had any religious teaching or religious ideas to disseminate, the synagogue was unquestionably the place to start. Further, the synagogue service was such that it gave the new teacher his chance. In the synagogue service there were three parts. The first part consisted of prayers. The second part consisted of readings from the Law and from the Prophets, readings in which members of the congregation took part. The third part was the address. The important fact is that there was no one person to give the address. There was no such thing as a professional ministry. The president of the synagogue presided over the arrangements for the service. Any distinguished stranger could be asked to give the address, and anyone with a message to give might volunteer to give it; and, if the ruler or president of the synagogue judged him

to be a fit person to speak, he was allowed to speak. Thus, at the beginning, the door of the synagogue and the pulpit of the synagogue were open to Jesus. He began in the synagogue because it was there he would find the most sincerely religious people of his day, and the way to speak to them was open to him. After the address there came a time for talk, and questions, and discussion. The synagogue was the ideal place in which to get a new teaching across to the people.” (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 74-75).

The origin of the synagogue is somewhat of a mystery. “The synagogue as a place of public worship and teaching is first clearly attested in Egypt in the latter part of the third century B.C., and in Palestine ca. 200 B.C. (ecclus ii 23). Its origins, however, are certainly far older even though we are unable to determine them with any precision. The centralization of worship in Jerusalem from 621 B.C. onwards, with many Jews thereby denied a share in temple worship, must inevitably have led to the establishment of non-sacrificial places of assembly. The Aramaic word for ‘synagogue’ is a Babylonian loanword which can scarcely be later than the sixth century B.C. Whatever the history of the institution, prophets had been in the habit of gathering bands of disciples around them, and during the Babylonian Exile (597-540 B.C.) exiles gathered for prayer and instruction wherever and whenever this was possible.” (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 42). That being said, there has been no archeological evidence that synagogues existed prior to the time of Jesus and/or outside of Palestine. Matthews wrote, “This is based on the fact that synagogues are prominently mentioned as functioning in the New Testament period. Although no physical evidence has been found for a synagogue prior to the 1st century AD, some time would have been necessary for the synagogue to develop as a part of the community’s religious life.” (Manners and Customs in the Bible, Victor H. Matthews, page 180).

- 5- **preaching** – The word “preaching” is translated from the Greek word “κηρύσσω” or “kēryssō”. The Greek word means to be a herald, to officiate as a herald, to publish, or proclaim openly.

Anciently, kings and nobleman employed heralds. A herald was actually an occupation. It was the modern day version of a public affairs director. A herald published good and bad news alike. They prepared the way of the king or nobleman. They usually went before the king and prepared his arrival. They made announcements that prepared the people for coming calamities or fortune. Prophets are heralds of the King of kings, or God. In the days of the restoration, God called new heralds. Joseph Smith was the first herald of the dispensation. Many others were called to herald the good news of heaven. The Doctrine and Covenants records, “Behold, thus saith the Lord unto you my servants Joseph Smith, Jun., and Sidney Rigdon, that the time has verily come that it is necessary and expedient in me that you should open your mouths in proclaiming my gospel, the things of the kingdom, expounding the mysteries thereof out of the scriptures, according to that portion of Spirit and power which shall be given unto you.” (Doctrine & Covenants 71:1).

In this verse, we find Jesus acting as a herald for His Father, even though He is central to His Father's plan. He is preaching the good news that He Himself brings.



- 6 - **the gospel of the kingdom** – The word “gospel” is translated from the Greek word “εὐαγγέλιον” or “euaggelion”. The Greek word means a reward for good tidings, good tidings in general, or the proclamation of the grace of God manifest in His Son Jesus Christ. The “Good News” in reference to the eternal nature and plan for man, is that Jesus Christ fulfilled the demands of justice and brought salvation to all mankind. As Paul would later teach, “**For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**” (1st Corinthians 15:22). This is the best news ever proclaimed. Death is inevitable. There is no known cure or remedied for death without Jesus.

Each church of the Anglican Communion has its own version of the Book of Common Prayer. Even so, there are commonalities to the prayer. In the current American version, this phrase appears on page 485 (Burial Rite 1) and on page 501 (Burial Rite 2) in a prayer that is said by the priest as earth is ceremonially cast on the coffin. It reads;

“... we commit this body to the ground; earth to earth; ashes to ashes, dust to dust. The Lord bless him and keep him, the Lord make his face to shine upon him and be gracious unto him and give him peace. Amen.”

Without the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our mortal bodies would be nothing more than dust and ashes after our deaths. Truly, Jesus saved us all from eternal hell; the separation of body and spirit. Jesus' atoning sacrifice grants the gift of resurrection to all mankind: good, bad or indifferent in thought and deed. Not one soul born into mortality will be lost due to physical death.

The gospel or good news includes the gift of resurrection. It also includes another gift, the good news of the kingdom. The word “kingdom” is translated from the Greek word “βασίλεια” or “basileia”. The Greek word means royal power, kingship, dominion, and rule. It also means a kingdom, or territory subject to the rule of a king. The kingdom is the organization of the covenant people. Those that enter into the required covenants with the God of Heaven, belong to the kingdom. In this way, they become subject to Him. The good news to those that belong to the kingdom, and honor the covenants that joined them to it, is that the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ will allow them to receive forgiveness from their sins and live again with the God of Heaven and live as He does. We call this exaltation. This gift is offered to all mankind; however, unlike the gift of resurrection, we must agree to the terms to receive the gift. The terms are such that all mankind can partake of the gift.

- 7 - **healing** – The word “healing” is translated from the Greek word “θεραπεύω” or “therapeuō”. The Greek word means to serve, do service. It also means to heal, cure, or restore to health. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “healing” with “curing”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 23, page14).

Healing was not a common occurrence in ancient Israel. Doctors, generally speaking, had little understanding of human anatomy and sicknesses. Some had understanding into herbs and plants that medicinal property, but they had very little by way of medical skill. They were considered manual laborers, and thought of as lower level workers. Jeremias wrote, “**We should never dream nowadays of placing a doctor in the category of manual workers, but there is evidence that they were considered as such during that period. The word for manual work is ‘ummanut, which can mean manual work, a profession, or a skill. An ‘umman (‘ummana) indicates a labourer, an artist, a leech, a surgeon, a bath attendant, a circumciser. Consequently, we must deal with the medical profession along with trades. According to the Talmud there were doctors in every city and in every large place.**” (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament period, Joachim Jeremias, page 17).

Ancient doctors often used mystical spells, potions, and enchantments to heal people. If the body recovered, it would be considered miraculous. “**Josephus received medical care after a fall from his horse at Capernaum. At one place on the Sea of Galilee, probably also Capernaum, a woman came to Jesus 'who had suffered many things from many doctors' (Mark 5:26; cf. Luke 8:43). A doctor called Tobias is mentioned by name at Jerusalem, and Herod had his own private physicians. An interesting point is that the Mishnah tells how the Jerusalem doctors had their way of treating the sick during a festival without incurring levitical uncleanness: Tor thus they used to do in Jerusalem, that were afflicted with boils: On the eve of Passover a man would go to the physician, and he would cut [the boil] and leave but a hair's breadth; he [the sick person] then stuck it on a thorn and drew himself [suddenly] away from it. Thus the man was able to bring his Passover offering, and the physician was able to bring his Passover offering’.**” (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament period, Joachim Jeremias, page 18). The success rates for ancient doctors are unknown, but they were undoubtedly very low. People who contracted diseases often died. It is no wonder that people were amazed at the success rate Jesus had as he exercised the power of the priesthood. He healed all that He ministered to.

This must have been insulting to the Jewish hierarchy. They claimed a right to the priesthood, and even had their own priestly doctors. “**Mention should also be made of the Temple doctor. He was called upon, not only when the priests hurt themselves in the course of their duties, but beyond that had an extensive practice since the priests had to go around barefoot on the flagstones of the Temple floor even in winter time, and so easily fell ill. Even more injurious to their health was their diet, which had a high meat content with only water to drink, as wine was forbidden them. Finally, there must have been barbers in the Temple. These would be necessary for the Nazarite vows, for initiation of Levites, and purification of those healed of leprosy.**” (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament period, Joachim Jeremias, page 26). Sickness, even in the Temple was common, “**Ben Ahijah was a Temple physician' (literally 'he was**

set over the bowel-sickness'). Because of the unusually rich meat diet of the priests, who were also forbidden wine during their days of duty, such sickness was by no means unusual, as rightly says." (Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament period, Joachim Jeremias, pages 170-171). Even with their high status among the people, the officials in the temple had no more power to heal than an ordinary doctor of the time.

Jesus, on the other hand, could heal all who exhibited enough faith to be healed. He could cure any disease or illness. He could heal blindness, deformities, and even sin. He is the Master Healer.



- 8 - **all manner of sickness** – The phrase “manner or sickness” is translated from a single Greek word; “νόσος” or “nosos”. The Greek word means disease or sickness. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the phrase “all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people” with “every malady among the people”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 23, page 14).

The unsanitary condition of ancient cities and villages at the time of Jesus promoted various sicknesses and diseases. Open sewers, stagnant water, and improper waste management promoted malaria, dysentery, leprosy, intestinal worms, and plague. Other prevalent illnesses were related to nervous system disorders, possibly stemming from the same living conditions; paralysis, epilepsy, mental health disorders and insanity. People of the time were faced with various skin diseases, blood disorders, blindness, lameness, and all manner of infirmity. Unfortunately, the ancient people lacked the ability to properly diagnose illnesses. Hence, what they might call leprosy could have been a number of similar diseases. Producing an accurate list of sicknesses and diseases at the time of Jesus is a best extremely difficult, and in my opinion impossible.

That being said, nothing is impossible for God. He knows every illness and disease. He knows their cause, and their cure. The healing of sickness is an easy thing for Him.

- 9 - **all manner of disease** – The phrase “manner of disease” is translated from a single Greek word; “μαλακία” or “malakia”. The Greek word means softness. In the New Testament, it is used to mean infirmity, debility, bodily weakness, and sickness.

Matthew distinguishes sicknesses and diseases into two separate categories. This is significant. Jesus didn't just heal the miraculous terminal diseases, He also cured every day sicknesses and ailments. He gave the same compassion to those that suffered to a lesser degree as he did to those that suffered greatly. Conversely, He didn't just heal those who the world would have categorized as “easily” healed, Jesus healed one and all with the same ease and effect. **“As Jesus moved through Galilee blessing the sick and teaching his doctrine, the number of healings must have grown into thousands.”** (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 194). One might imagine the thousands suffering from various sicknesses, and especially diseases, who had visited the doctors of the time with no cure. Many had struggled for years with their diseases, and now there was hope. News a Jesus brought hope that had been lost in their hearts. One can almost visualize the thousands of people flocking to Jesus with their ailing loved ones. Some would have been on stretchers, others on crutches, while some required that Jesus be brought to them.

- 10 - **among the people** – The word “among” is translated from the Greek word “ἐν” or “en”. The Greek word means in, by, with etc. The prophet Joseph Smith made a change to the translation of this verse. He wrote, “... **people which believed on his name.**” (Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 4:22). This is significant because not all people came to Jesus. It was the believers. Those that had faith to be healed demonstrated that faith by coming to Him. Albright wrote, regarding the term “**The people**’. **The expression is**

found fourteen times in Matthew, and only twice in Mark. In this gospel it has clear reference in almost every case to Israel, the people of the Old Covenant.” (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 43). What Albright is saying is that the term people is referencing those that had entered into covenants with God; they were in fact the believers in the one and only true God..

11 - his fame – The word “fame” is translated from the Greek word “ἄκοή” or “akoē”. The Greek word means the sense of hearing, hearsay, rumor or report. One can imagine women talking at the well in the morning as they fetched their family’s morning water. They would have shared their various trials, speaking of loved ones and the pain and suffering they endured. You can imagine as news of a great prophet who could heal all manner of diseases came before the people. Such news would have spread to the market places, to the fields, and the various homes throughout the country. Farrar wrote, speaking of the day of miracles in Capernaum, **“The fame of that marvelous day rang through all Galilee and Peræa, and even to the farthest parts of Syria; and we might well have imagined that the wearied Savior would have needed a long repose. But to Him the dearest and best repose was solitude and silence, where He might be alone and undisturbed with His Heavenly Father.”** (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 166). Jesus understood the principle of proper preparation. Even so, the people were impatient. Once they understood what He could do, they sought Him with great urgency. **“As his fame increased, people everywhere sought him. And he went to them. That is why he came to earth, to teach and influence as many as possible. That is also one of the reasons we came here.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 153). It is also the reason He came. He came to save you and I from all sorrow and sin. He is the source of salvation and happiness.

12 - throughout all Syria – The word “throughout” is translated from the Greek word “εἰς” or “eis”. The Greek word means into, unto, to, towards, for, or among. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces “And his fame went throughout all Syria” with “And his fame went abroad into the whole of Syria” (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 24, page14).

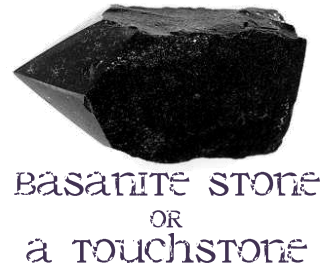
The word “Syria” is translated from the Greek word “Συρία” or “Syria”. The Greek word, translated literally, means “exalted”. It represents a region of Asia bounded on the north by Taurus and Amanus ranges, on the east by the Euphrates and Arabia, on the south by Palestine, and the west by Phoenicia and the Mediterranean. Jesus’ “...fame went throughout all Syria, meaning the regions north and northeast of the Holy Land.” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 149).

We must understand that the province of Syria had a very large Jewish population at the time of Jesus. One of the great rabbinical schools was in Damascus. It is logical that the Jews of Damascus, who regularly traded with the province of Galilee, would have heard of the new Jewish prophet and desired to be taught and healed at His feet. What they lacked was the understanding that He was their long promised Messiah. Many however would come to this conclusion. Barclay wrote, **“They came from Syria. Syria was the great province of which Palestine was only a part. It stretched away to the north and the north-east with the great city of Damascus as its center. It so happens that one of the loveliest legends passed down to us by Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History 1: 13) goes back to this time. The story goes that there was a king called Abgar, in Edessa, and he was ill. So, it is said, he wrote to Jesus: ‘Abgar, ruler of Edessa, to Jesus, the most excellent Saviour, who has appeared in the country of Jerusalem--greeting. I have heard of you and of your cures, performed without medicine and without herb; for, it is said, you make the blind to see and the lame to walk, you cleanse the lepers, you cast out evil spirits and demons, you heal those afflicted with lingering diseases, and you raise the dead. Now, as I have heard all this about you, I have concluded that one of two things must be true; either, you are God, and having descended from heaven, you do these things, or else, you are a son of God by what you do. I write to you, therefore, to ask you to come and cure the disease from which I am suffering. For I have heard that the Jews murmur against you, and devise evil things against you. Now, I have a very small but an excellent city which is large enough for both of us.’ Jesus was said to have written back: ‘Blessed are you for having believed in me without seeing me. For it is written concerning me that those who have seen me will not believe in me, while they who have not seen me will believe and be saved. But, as to your request that I should come to you, I must fulfil all things here for which I have been sent, and, after fulfilling them, be taken up again to him who sent me. Yet, after I am taken up, I will send you one of my disciples to cure your disease, and to give life to you and to yours.’ So, the legend goes on, Thaddeus went to Edessa and cured Abgar. It is only a legend, but it does show how men believed that even in distant Syria men had heard of Jesus and longed with all their hearts for the help and the healing which he alone could give.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 75-76).



- 13 - brought unto him** – The word “brought” is translated from the Greek word “προσφέρω” or “prospheō”. The Greek word means to bring to, or lead to.
- 14 - all sick people** – The word “sick” is translated from the Greek word “κακῶς” or “kakōs”. The Greek word means to be miserable, to be ill. It can also mean improperly, or wrongly. Another use of the word is to speak ill of, or revile. I imagine they were not just sick physically, but spiritually. Whether they came to be cured physically or not, the great miracle of Jesus would not be the healing of diseases, but rather the forgiving of sins. Over time, mankind would learn much about the healing of diseases. Though we have a long way to go to master Jesus’ ability, we have been able to cure many diseases and illnesses. The disease of sin however, we have no ability to cure. The cure for sin is solely in the hands of Jesus.
- 15 - that were taken with** – The phrase “that were taken with” is translated from a single Greek word; “συνέχω” or “synechō”. The Greek word means to hold together, to hold completely, or constrain. They were apparently infected or incapacitated by physical ailments. An interesting side note, physical ailments and trials are often the catalyst for spiritual change. It is physical infirmities that bring the people to the Savior. It is sad, but a common truth, that we often need the trials of mortality to bring us to the spiritual well. Paul wrote, **“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”** (2nd Corinthians 12:9).
- 16 - divers diseases** – The word “divers” is translated from the Greek word “ποικίλος” or “poikilos”. The Greek word means of various colors, variegated, or of various sorts. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “divers” with “various”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 24, page14). The people suffered with a wide variety of sicknesses and illnesses. It was not a time of epidemic, but a time of physical trial in many different areas. People were suffering all over the place. Not much has changed if you ask me. We may have found the cure for many of the ancient diseases, but they have been replaced with new more complex diseases. Not surprising, if physical ailments and diseases are a tool for the Lord to chasten and humble His children, we surely cannot find a cure for all of them. They are a necessary component of spiritual growth.

- 17 - **torments** – The word “torment” is translated from the Greek word “βάσανος” or “basanos”. The Greek word, translated literally, means a touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal. The word is used to mean torture, torment, or acute pain. It is associated with disease, or the pains of hell after death. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “torments” with “afflicted with torments”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 24, page14).



Touchstones were used to determine the value of gold. They were used to determine the purity of the precious metal. Drawing a line with gold on a touchstone will leave a visible trace. Different purities of gold have different colors. Once a mark is placed on the black touchstone, the unknown sample can be compared to samples of known purity. This method has been used since ancient times. In modern times, additional tests can be done. The trace will react in different ways to specific concentrations of “nitric acid” or “aqua regia”, thereby identifying the quality of the gold. Thus, 24 carat gold is not affected but 14 carat gold will show chemical activity.

The word for touchstone in Greek, is the same Greek word used for “torture” or “suffering”. This is interesting, since God uses pain and suffering in our lives to refine us and determine our purity before him.

- 18 - **those which were possessed with devils** – The phrase “those which were possessed with devils” is translated from a single Greek word; “δαίμονιζομαι” or “daimonizomai”. The Greek word means to be under the power of a demon. It would appear that there were a significant number of individuals possessed by evil spirits at the time of Jesus. This is a bold statement to make, but the Gospel records tell of many individuals who Jesus cast devils out of. It also records that He went throughout the land casting out devils. It leads one to ask if there are people possessed of evil spirits in our day. The answer is yes. Many have probably been classified as mentally ill, though I would never claim that individuals with mental health illnesses are all possessed of evil spirits. Yet, there are surely possessed individuals who have been classified as mentally ill due to our lack of understanding with regards to Satan and his followers.

In our pre-mortal existence, Satan and the spirits that followed him were denied bodies as a consequence of open rebellion against God. They were cast out of the presence of God and sent to the earth. They walk among us in spirit, only to be seen through spiritual eyes. They desire to possess the mortal bodies given to the valiant followers of God. God, our Father, has prohibited the rebellious spirits from possessing the physical bodies, unless mortal men allow it. We allow it through living a sinful lifestyle.

In the last days, God restored the power to the earth to cast out evil spirit by way of Priesthood. Once again the power that Jesus used was upon the earth. God told Joseph Smith, “**And whoso shall ask it in my name in faith, they shall cast out devils; they shall heal the sick; they shall cause the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk.**” (Doctrine and Covenants 35:9).

- 19 - **those which were lunatic** – The phrase “those which were lunatic” is translated from a single Greek word; “σεληνιαζομαι” or “selēniazomai”. The Greek word means to be moon-struck or lunatic. Many feel that it is a reference to epileptics: epilepsy being supposed to return and increase with the fullness of the moon. This meaning is doubtful as the Greeks knew nothing of epilepsy. Even so, Albright believed that the proper translation is “...epileptic. In Greek this is a rare word, and late, while ‘the paralyzed (one)’ is a New Testament word, being found in Matthew and Mark. Luke uses another more usual word”. (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 43). It is unclear exactly what the Greek word equates to in our time. We generally associate a lunatic to someone with a severe mental health disorder. That is an unlikely translation by most standards. It would seem that the Greek word refers to someone who is either paralyzed or lacks control of voluntary movement. Since Matthew follows by saying that Jesus also healed the “paralytikos”, or the paralyzed, it is likely that this word does not refer to them. It could be an epileptic, or someone with a neurological problem. It was apparently a condition or group of conditions that was greatly misunderstood.

- 20 - **those that had the palsy** – The phrase “those that had the palsy” is translated from a single Greek word “παραλυτικός” or “paralytikos”. The Greek word means paralytic. It means one who is disabled or weak of limb. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “palsy” with “paralytic”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 24, page14).

- 21 - **he healed them** – The word “healed” is translated from the Greek word “θεραπεύω” or “therapeuō”. The Greek word means to serve, do service. It also means to heal, cure, or restore to health. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “healed” with “cured”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 24, page14).

Prophets had prophesied, long before the birth of Jesus, that a Messiah would come and perform incredible miracles of healing among the children of men. King Benjamin taught, “**For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases. And he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men.**” (Mosiah 3:5-6). The Psalmist prophesied, “**Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses. He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!**” (Psalm 107:19-21).

The long awaited Messiah had arrived. He ministered to His people, and healed them in ever way imaginable. How He did this is beyond our current understanding. We know He used the Priesthood Power; the authority to act in His Father’s name. We know that with God all things are possible, but the mechanics of a healing presently eludes us. We understand it only as the power of heaven intervening in mortality. Elder Talmage taught, “**Miracles cannot be in contravention of natural law, but are wrought through the operation of laws not universally or commonly recognized. In the contemplation of the miracles wrought by Christ, we must of necessity recognize the operation of a power transcending our present human understanding. In this field, science has not yet advanced far enough to analyze and explain. To deny the actuality of miracles on the ground that, because we cannot comprehend the means, the reported results are fictitious, is to arrogate to the human mind the attribute of omniscience, by implying that what man cannot comprehend cannot be, and that therefore he is able to comprehend all that is. To comprehend the works of Christ, one must know Him as the Son of God; to the man who has not yet learned to know, to the honest soul who would inquire after the Lord, the invitation is ready; let him ‘Come and see.’**” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, pages 148–149).

Physical healing requires faith, priesthood, and an adherence to the will of the Father. These elements were present in all the healings Jesus performed while in mortality. Never did He perform a miracle that was contrary to His Father’s will. But physical healing was just a part of Jesus’ mission. He was sent to heal men spiritually. Spiritual healing follows a slightly different pattern than physical healing. Elder Nelson taught, “**The sequence of His pattern is significant. Faith, repentance, baptism, a testimony, and enduring conversion lead to the healing power of the Lord. Baptism is a covenant act—a sign of a commitment and a promise. Testimony develops when the Holy Ghost gives conviction to the earnest seeker of the truth. True testimony fosters faith; it promotes repentance and obedience to God’s commandments. Testimony engenders enthusiasm to serve God and fellow human beings. Conversion means ‘to turn with’. Conversion is a turning from the ways of the world to, and staying with, the ways of the Lord. Conversion includes repentance and obedience. Conversion brings a mighty change of heart. Thus, a true convert is ‘born again’, walking with a newness of life. As true converts, we are motivated to do what the Lord wants us to do and to be who He wants us to be. The remission of sins, which brings divine forgiveness, heals the spirit.**” (General Conference, “Jesus Christ – The Master Healer”, Russell M. Nelson, October 2005).

22 - followed him – The word “followed” is translated from the Greek word “ἀκολουθέω” or “akoloutheō”. The Greek word means to follow one who proceeds, to join as an attendant, to accompany, or become a disciple. It appears that the phrase “followed him” is much more than to pursue or to go behind. The Greek word implied that they joined Him through covenant. They followed as a covenant disciple.

Those that have the Priesthood of God have the power to heal. Even so, Elder Oaks explains: **“Although the Savior could heal all whom He would heal, this is not true of those who hold His priesthood authority. Mortal exercises of that authority are limited by the will of Him whose priesthood it is.”** (Ensign, “He Heals the Heavy Laden”, Dalin H. Oaks, October 2006). Following the Savior is typically accompanied with revelation, authority, power, and rich blessings. Healings and miracles accompany the followers of Jesus. They also necessarily find great opposition and tribulation. It is through the trials of our faith that the Savior molds His followers into “true” and “devout” disciples. Paul taught, **“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”** (2nd Corinthians 12:9).

23 - great multitudes – The word “great” is translated from the Greek word “πολύς” or “polys”. The Greek word means many, much, or large. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word “great” with “many”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 4, Verse 25, page15). The phrase “multitudes of people” is translated from the Greek word “ὄχλος” or “ochlos”. The Greek word means a crowd, a multitude of common people, or a gathering of people without order.

Mortal men often seek fame and renown among men. The lifestyles of the rich and famous are riddled with crowds and fans. Jesus definitely attracted the crowds; however, He did not desire any personal prestige via His work. Farrar wrote, **“Although the work which He was sent to do obliged Him often to spend His days amid thronging and excited multitudes, He did not love the tumult, and avoided even the admiration and gratitude of those who felt in His presence a spring of life. But He was not suffered thus to remain, even for a brief period, in rest and seclusion.”** (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 167).

24 - from Galilee – The word “from” is translated from the Greek word “ἀπό” or “apo”. The Greek word means separation, or of an origin.

25 - from Decapolis – The word “Decapolis” is translated from the Greek word “Δεκάπολις” or “Dekapolis”. The Greek word, translated literally, means “ten cities”. The original meaning of the name may have been political rather than geographical. Prior to Herod the Great, Rome was aggressively trying to stabilize Palestine and the surrounding area. During this period of time, a league of ten cities took shape in the eastern frontier. They were located in the area east of the Jordan and Galilee, with the exception of one city. They were located in the open and harsh desert. A military alliance was sound policy for a group of predominantly Greek cities, who desired to maintain autonomy and political independence regardless of Empires and Rulers. Once Rome established dominance in the region, Pompey recognized the spirit of the territory when he established Roman control in 64-63BCE. Such freedom meant that “Decapolis” elected their own councils, possessed the privileges of coinage and asylum, the right of property and administration in adjacent territory, and the right of association for defense and commerce. Even so, the area was under Roman control through the governor of the province of Syria. They were still required to pay imperial taxes, and bow to the power of Roman, but the day to day governing was theirs. It was a system typical of Rome’s multilateral concept of government and the empire’s readiness to adopt and adapt indigenous forms and patterns of rule and control. The Greek communities of Decapolis would undoubtedly have regarded Rome as protector and benefactor. The league, from Rome’s point of view, would strengthen the desert frontier where the great caravan routes and highways of trade bent around the inner curve of the Fertile Crescent. Security was a pressing need.

It is believed that the region was initially named after ten independent cities; hence “Decapolis”. The ancient historian Pliny records the original names of the cities. Josephus confirms the names of some of Pliny’s cities. Over time the region added cities but retained the name Decapolis. Ptolemy recorded the names of 18 cities in the region named “ten cities”. According to ancient historians the cities of Decapolis are;

PLINY	JOSEPHUS	PTOLEMY
Damascus		Damascus
Dion (Adun)	Dios	Dion
Philadelphia (Amman)	Philadelphia	Philadelphia
Raphana		Raphana
Scythopolis (Beisan)	Scythopolis	Scythopolis
Gadara (Umm Qeis)	Gadara	Gadara
Hippodion (Susiyeh)	Hippos	Hippos
Pella (Tabaqat Fah)	Pella	Pella
Gerasa (Jerash)		Gelasa
Canatha (Qanawat)		Canatha
		Capitolias
		Heliopolis
		Saana
		Ina
		Samoulis
		Adra
		Abila Lysanios
		Abila



Pliny's ten cities that make up the original "Decapolis", are summarized as follows:

"Gadara (also called Hammath Gader, Al Hamma, El Himmeh, Gader, Muqes, or Umm Qeis) Approximately 5-6 miles southeast of the south end of the Sea of Galilee is Gadara, the area of the Gadarenes...It joined the federation of Greek cities called the Decapolis. It was famous for its hot springs at nearby Hammath Gader (El Hammeth)." (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, page 349).

"Jerash (also called Gerasa, or Jarash) Of the cities east of the Jordan River that were a part of the Decapolis, Damascus was the largest and Jerash was second in size...Jerash is 30 miles north of Amman, and lies 2500 feet above sea level. It has two-and-a-half miles of walls, with towers at each turn, and eight gates – just as the old city of Jerusalem. Jerash has been called the 'Pompeii of the East' or 'City of a Thousand Pillars'." (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, page 346).



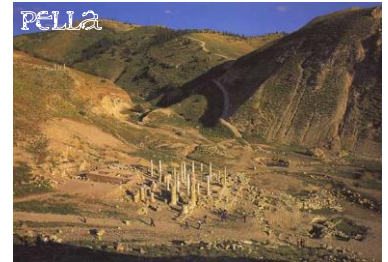
"Ammon



(also called Rabbah, Rabbath [meaning great], Philadelphia, or Amman) Amman, the capital city of Jordan, is 25 miles east of the Jordan River and 45 miles northeast of Jerusalem, at an altitude of 3,000 feet (500 feet higher than Jerusalem). About 1200 B.C. it was the capital of the Ammonites...During the Roman period Amman was a member of the Decapolis." (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, pages 340-341).

"Pella

because it is situated on a terra rosa plateau or terrace overlooking the valley. Pella was one of the cities of Decapolis. It is the place, according to Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History (III 5,3), to which Christians fled the imminent onslaught at Jerusalem in AD 70." (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, page 349).



"Scythopolis is mentioned by implication three times in the New Testament. It was the capital and the largest of the ten cities (Decapolis), which included also Damascus and Philadelphia. It is the only city of the Decapolis west of the Jordan, and it is the best preserved Roman and Byzantine city in the country. Beth-shean / Scythopolis is situated at an important crossroads, along Nahal Harod, at 350 feet below sea level. A third century A.D. rabbi said of the city's setting: 'If paradise is situated in the Land of Israel, its entrance is Bethshan.' A 14th century researcher noted the city's location 'amidst a plentiful supply of still waters, a blessed and beautiful land, bearing fruit like the Garden of Eden.'" (Discovering the World of the Bible, LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden, pages 119-120).



Hippos (the Greek word for Horse) was established as Antioch of Hippos by Seleucid settlers. The name Antioch is derived from the Seleucid monarchs, Antiochus. It's Aramaic name is Sussita, which the also the word for horse. It was built on a flat-topped foothill about 1.2 miles east of the Sea of Galilee. It sits 1,150 feet above sea level. Under Roman rule it was given a certain level of autonomy because it was one of ten free Greek cities known as Decapolis.

Dion (also known as Adun, Idoun, or Aydoun) was one of the ten free Greek cities known as Decapolis. The exact location is disputed. Though the location is a mystery, many agree that it is near the site Al Hisn close by the city of Irbid in Jordan.

Raphana



(also known as Abila) is just 9 miles north of Irbid and 1 mile east of Hartha. It is 16 miles east of the Sea of Galilee. The name "Abila" is Aramaic (a form of Hebrew) for 'meadow' and Arabic for 'green growth'. Interestingly, though Raphana lied in the desert it was an area of rich agriculture. Perhaps that is why it was called "green growth". There has been little archeological work done in Raphana, leaving much of its past buried in the earth.

Canatha



(also known as Qanawat) is considered one of the oldest cities in Middle East. It is located about 50 miles east of the Sea of Galilee. It is near a river and surrounded by trees. It is believed to be the Biblical city of Kenath mentioned in Number 32:42 and 1st Chronicles 2:23. Older yet, it is believed to be a city mentioned in ancient Egyptian texts dating from the 20th and 19th century BCE.



Damascus

was strategically built on a 2,230 foot plateau which is sheltered by the Anti Lebanon Mountains. It lied at the cross roads of the major trade routes. Both the Via Maris and the King's Highway led to Damascus. From Damascus one could trade with Persia and the East. Damascus was a walled city. Damascus sits nearly 105 miles north east of Capernaum. Unlike the other 9 cities of Decapolis, Damascus is not in near vicinity of the other 9 cities.

To give the reader an idea of the distances between the cities of Decapolis, the following chart shows how far it is to walk from one city to the next, starting at Capernaum, visiting each of the ten cities of Decapolis and returning to Capernaum.

A Capernaum to B Hippos	28.0 miles
B Hippos to C Gadara	50.7 miles
C Gadara to D Scythopolis	21.1 miles
D Scythopolis to E Pella	4.5 miles
E Pella to F Amman	53.5 miles
F Amman to G Jerash	28.7 miles
G Jerash to H Dion	26.7 miles
H Dion to I Raphana	6.7 miles
I Raphana to J Canatha	62.9 miles
J Canatha to K Damascus	60.0 miles
K Damascus to A Capernaum	104.8 miles
Total	447.6 miles

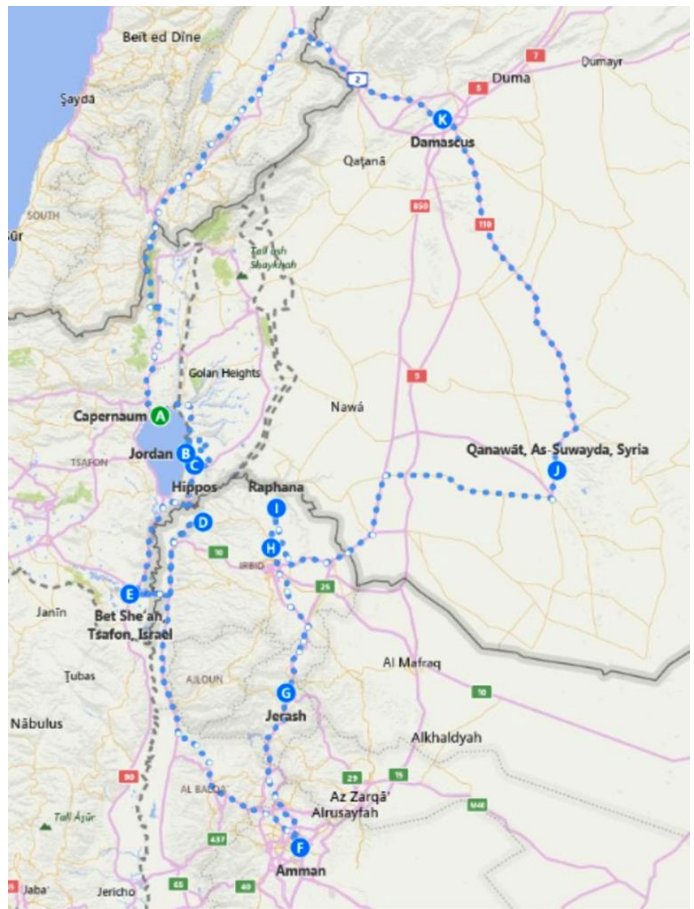
On foot, it would have taken the traveler 144 hours 10 minutes of continual walking. At 18 miles per day, it would have taken the traveler approximately 24.86 days to walk the circuit.

The region known as Decapolis or the "...league of ten cities, consist(ed) of Greeks who had come in the wake of Alexander's conquests, was established after the Romans occupied the area (65 B.C.)..." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor – Merrill C. Tenney, pages 210-211).



ANCIENT COIN FROM DECAPOLIS

Though it had very strong Greek origins, the Jewish population in Decapolis was significant. It had at one time been the land given to the tribe of Manasseh. Jews had occupied the land for centuries.

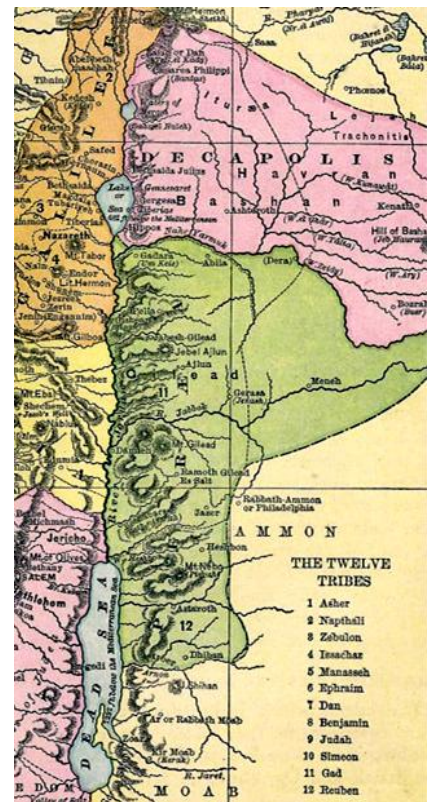


Unfortunately, the inhabitants had adopted "...a predominantly Greek or Hellenistic culture. Although his brief mission was reserved generally only for the Jews, Jesus did travel and perform miracles among the Greeks, some of whom became disciples." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 150). Perhaps this was in honor of the covenant Jewish blood that lived among the Greeks. Smith wrote, "We cannot believe that the two worlds, which this landscape embraced, did not break into each other. The many roads which crossed Galilee from the Decapolis to the coast, the many inscriptions upon them, the constant trade between the fishermen and the Greek exporters of their fish, and the very coins—thrust Greek upon the Jews of Galilee. The Aramaic dialect began now to be full of Greek words. It is impossible to believe that our Lord and His disciples did not know Greek. But at least in Gadara, that characteristic Greek city overhanging the Lake of Galilee, in the scholars it sent forth to Greece and Rome we have ample proof that the kingdom of God came forth in no obscure corner, but in the very face of the kingdoms of this world" (The Historical Geography of the Holy Land, 9th ed., G.A. Smith, 1902, page 608).

- 26 - from Jerusalem** – The word "Jerusalem" is translated from the Greek word "Ἱεροσόλυμα" or "Hierosolyma". The Greek word, translated literally, means "set ye double peace". It makes perfect sense that people sought out Jesus from the city of Jerusalem. Jesus had already ministered there and performed great miracles. No doubt word spread of His works in Galilee. Jews made regular trips to Jerusalem for trade and religious observance. It was also a political hub with the great governing council of the Jews.
- 27 - from Judæa** – The word "Judæa" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰουδαία" or "Ioudaia". The Greek word, translated literally, means "he shall be praised". In a broad sense, it refers to all of Palestine. In a narrower sense, it refers to the southern portion of Palestine lying on this side of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from Samaria, Galilee, Peræa, and Idumæa.
- 28 - from beyond Jordan** – The word "beyond" is translated from the Greek word "πέραν" or "peran". The Greek word means beyond or on the other side. "They came from the land across the Jordan, which was known as Peræa, and which stretched from Pella in the north to Arabia Petra in the south. They came from the Decapolis. The Decapolis was a federation of ten independent Greek cities, all of which, except Scythopolis, were on the far side of the Jordan." (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 76-77).

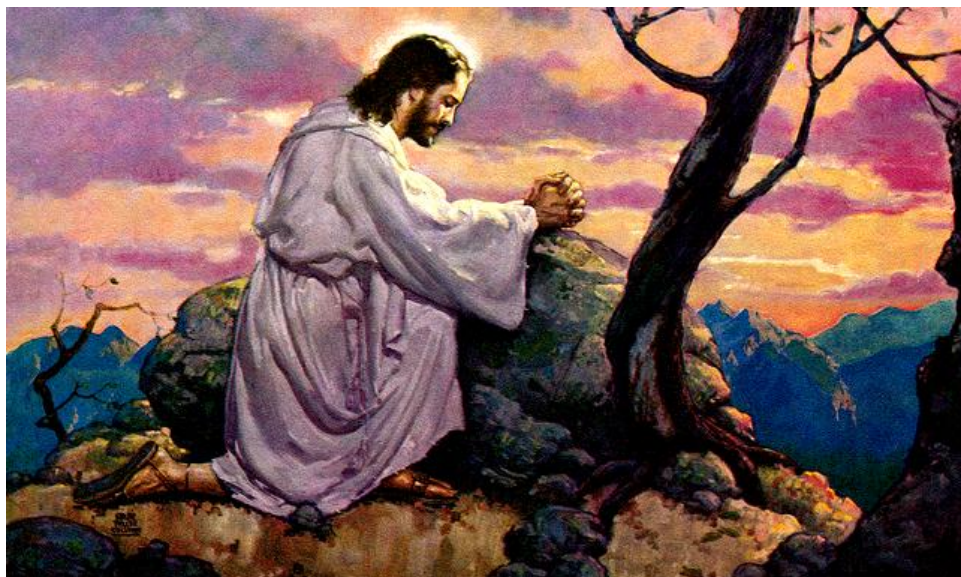
This area once belonged to the Israelite tribes of Gad and Reuben. Peræa had a close connection with Galilee in that "both Galilee and Perea were provinces ruled by Herod Antipas." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, pages 150-151). It was an area with a high Israelite population.

- 29 - in the morning** – The phrase "in the morning" is translated from a single Greek word; "πρωί" or "prōi". The Greek word means in the morning, early, in the 4th watch of the night, or the time between 3 o'clock in the morning and 6 o'clock in the morning. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the term "in the morning" with "And very early while yet night". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 35, page 66). "The use of the same expression in St. Mark xiii. 35 enables us to fix the time as that of the fourth night-watch, or between three and six o'clock of the morning." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred



Edersheim, page 490). Marcus agrees with Edersheim stating Jesus left “early in the morning, while it was still dark. Gk. *prōi ennycha lian*. Another of Mark’s double time expressions in which...the second part makes the first more precise: *prōi* indicates the period from 3:00 to 6:00 A.M., while *ennycha lian* specifies the portion of this period when it is still quite dark.” (Mark 1:8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 202).

This gives us a totally different perspective of the setting. The casual reader is led to believe that Jesus got up in the normal morning hours to offer prayer. Faithful Jews prayed in the morning, with their heads bowed towards the Temple in Jerusalem. This was the custom of the time. Jesus praying in the morning would have been in line with that culture. However, leaving the town in the dark, in what was really pre-morning hours, to pray in solitude, departs from a cultural ritual. Jesus appears to have had a personal need to talk with His Father in private. He left while everyone slept. He looked for a place that would be free from people.



It would be great to know what that prayer entailed. Undoubtedly, Jesus was seeking direction and support from His Father. He was on the verge of delivering the Sermon on the Mount, which was followed by several significant miracles. It could very well be that Jesus was preparing. Seeking God in the early morning hours “seems to be a habit developed by many of the noble and great ones. ‘Abraham rose up early in the morning’ (Genesis 22:3); ‘Moses rose up early in the morning’ (Exodus 34:4); and Job ‘rose up early in the morning’ (Job 1:5)...” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 151).

- 30 - **rising up** – The term “rising up” is translated from the Greek word “ἀνίστημι” or “anistēmi”. The Greek word means to raise from laying down, to rise from the dead, to raise up, to be born, to rise from sitting, to leave a place and go elsewhere, and to arise. “And so, thinking of the scene on the evening before, we can understand how, ‘very early, while it was still very dark’, Jesus rose up, and went into a solitary place to pray.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 490). It should be remembered that Jesus had cast out a demon during Sabbath services the day before, followed by the healing of Peter’s mother-in-law, and finally a multitude of healings as the masses converged on Peter’s home.

There seems to be a doctrinal truth in rising early to prepare spiritually for the day. Modern day revelation teaches, “...cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated.” (Doctrine & Covenants 88:124). The act of arising early, in and of itself, doesn’t necessitate spirituality. However, arising early after a good night sleep, and using a fresh mind to seek the Lord does. “Elder Boyd K. Packer wrote: ‘I have learned that the best time to wrestle with major problems is early in the morning. Our minds are then fresh and alert. The blackboards of our minds have been erased by a good night’s sleep. The accumulated distractions of the day are not in our way. Our bodies have been rested also. That is the time to think something through carefully and to receive personal revelation...I heard President Harold B. Lee begin many a statement about matters involving revelation with an expression something like this: ‘In the early hours of the morning, while I was pondering upon that subject...’ He made it a practice to work in the fresh, alert hours of the early morning on the problems that require revelation...I counsel our children to do their critical studying in the early hours of the morning when they’re fresh and alert...When I’m under pressure, you won’t find me burning the midnight oil. I’d much rather be in bed early and getting up in the wee hours of the morning, when I can be close to Him who guides this work.” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, pages 151-152). It is interesting to me that Jesus Himself set this example. There are multiple examples of Jesus arising early for prayer. He made the preparations for His ministry in the early morning hours.

- 31 - **a great while before day** – The term “a great while” is translated from the Greek word “λίαν” or “lian”. The Greek word means greatly, exceedingly, or beyond measure. The Codex Sinaiticus omits the phrase “a great while before day”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 35, page 66). The term “before day” is translated from the Greek word “ἐννυχος” or “ennychos”. The Greek word means nightly or nocturnal. It has already been established that Jesus arose between 3AM and 6AM. The phrase “a great while before day” would indicate that Jesus left closer to 3AM than 6AM. Farrar wrote, “The little plain of Gennesareth was still covered with the deep darkness which precedes the dawn, when, unobserved by all, Jesus rose and went away to a desert place, and there refreshed His spirit with quiet prayer.” (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 166-167)



- 32 - **he went out** – The term “went out” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξέρχομαι” or “exerchomai”. The Greek word means to go or come forth from. There is some debate as to how far Jesus actually went. Marcus wrote that Jesus “went outside. Gr. *Exēlthen*. It is not clear whether *exēlthen* here means ‘left capernaum’ or

'went outside' i.e. left the house that has been the scene of the action since 1:29." (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 202).

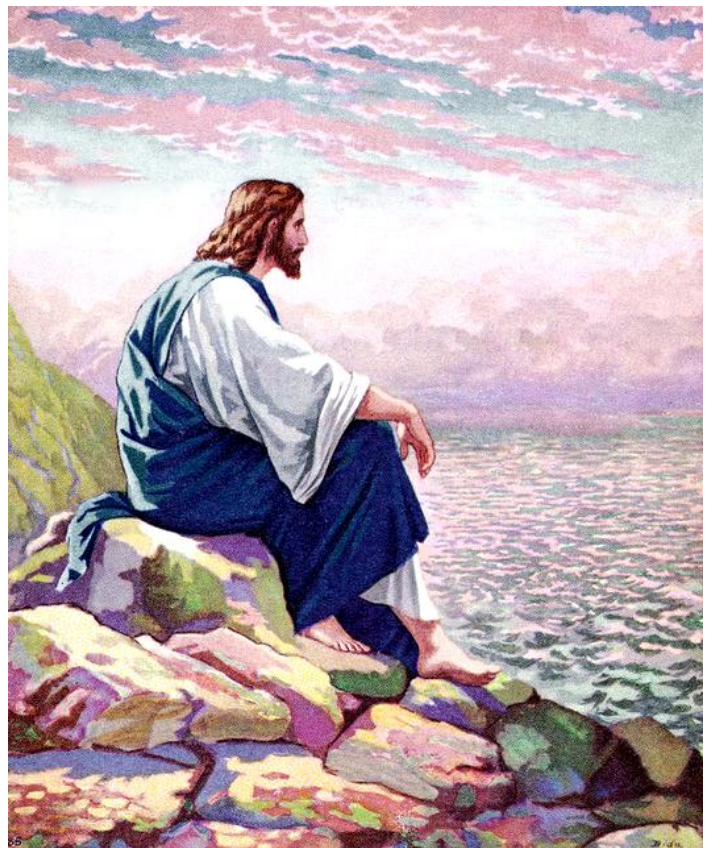
Since the Gospel records do not give the specific location of Jesus' retreat, we do not know how far Jesus ventured. We know that He started from Capernaum, quite possibly from Peter's house. We can safely say that He didn't go much more than a couple of miles, since travel was slow in the ancient world, especially at night. Since Jesus was only seeking solitude, it would make sense that Jesus only walked far enough outside the city to assure seclusion.

I have found that association with the spirit is easily offended by the impure and improper. Being a mortal man, I have often battled my natural man to make way for the spirit. When that battle is lost, the spirit withdraws. Though Jesus was tempted in every way, He never succumbed to the natural man. In and of Himself, the spirit was unrestrained. Even so, His surroundings were often full of worldliness and the spiritually depravity. For Jesus to fully communicate with His Father, He needed to distance Himself from the worldly distractions.

Jesus leaving the city and retiring to a secluded place in the dark of night shows His desire for unrestrained communication with His Father. It also shows how important His Father's direction was to His mortal mission. Elder Talmage wrote, "In a solitary place He gave Himself to prayer, thus demonstrating the fact that, Messiah though He was, He was profoundly conscious of His dependence upon the Father, whose work He had come to do." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 153). Jesus continually strived to do His Father's will, and He did so by first obtaining the word.

Many New Testament scholars have observed a repeated "hunting" or "battle" theme in the dialog of the Gospels. Jesus told His disciples that He would make them fishers of men. They were to go forth, a battle related word, and gather men. Marcus notes that the term "went out" is another battle themed phrase used by the Gospel writer. Marcus writes, "So it is doubly significant that one of the nuances of *exerchesthai* from classical times is 'to come forward for battle'...the verb's usage here and in 14:48 'suggests that Jesus and his opponents are indeed engaged in battle over disputed territory, are warriors coming out from their respective positions'." (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 204). Such verbiage is very fitting when you consider that Jesus is the Messianic King waging war against Lucifer for the souls of man. He went forth, or advanced, by consulting with His Father.

33 - departing into a solitary place – The word "departing" is translated from the Greek word "ἀπερχομαι" or "aperchomai". The Greek word means to go away or depart. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "solitary" with "desert". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 35, page 66). The term "a solitary place" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρημος" or "erēmos". The Greek word means solitary, lonely, desolate, or uninhabited. Interestingly enough, Jesus was wont to visit specific places of seclusion on a routine basis. Certain places became places of repeat visits. We know that the Garden of Gethsemane was a place He commonly visited to be alone in prayer. "During his three-year mission, Jesus repeatedly and deliberately set aside hours of solitude in which he prayed to Heavenly Father and rejuvenated his spirit." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 152).



The fact that the Greek word "Eremose" is used here might be significant since shortly hereafter Jesus would retreat to a mountain to deliver the Sermon on the Mount. Most feel that the Sermon on the Mount was delivered on Mount Eremos, the mount of the solitary place. Jesus chose a solitary place for the Sermon on the Mount because the sermon was designed for the disciples, rather than to the common population. It would make sense that Jesus delivered the Sermon on the same mount He used to pray to His Father in solitude. He desired the same spirit to be present at the Sermon on the Mount

The word "solitary" mean to be done or existing alone. It is related to the word "solitude" which is the state of being alone. President Spencer W. Kimball, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote, "Solitude is rich and profitable. When we pray alone with God, we shed all sham and pretense, all hypocrisy and arrogance. The Savior found his mountains and slipped away to pray. Paul, the great apostle, could not seem to get into the spirit of his new calling until he had found cleansing solitude down in Arabia. He went into solitude a worldly man and came out cleansed, prepared, regenerated... Enos found his solitary place in the forest. Moriancumer went to the mountain top to ask the Lord to touch the stones to light his people's way. And Nephi learned to build a ship through communication with his Lord on a mountain far from human ears. Joseph Smith found his solitude in the grove with only birds and trees and God to listen to his prayer. In solitude we, too, may pray with greater depth and fervor" (Faith Precedes the Miracle, Spencer W. Kimball, 1972, page 209).

It should be noted that the Lord has even commanded that our prayers should be ones of solitude and stillness. In Isaiah we read, "...Take heed, and be quiet..." (Isaiah 7:4). In another passage it states, "...in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength..." (Isaiah 30:15). The Psalmist records the words of God saying, "Be still, and know that I am God..." (Psalm 46:10). The questions is, why does God require solitude and quite to reveal himself? Though there are times when God speaks in a manner that is unmistakable regardless of the surrounding conditions, most often He speak in a way that can only be heard if we are carefully listening. The Book of Helaman teaches, "...they heard this voice, and beheld that it was not a voice of thunder, neither was it a voice of a great tumultuous noise, but behold, it was a still voice of perfect mildness, as if it had been a whisper, and it did pierce even to the very soul" (Helaman 5:30). Likewise, the Lord taught the prophet Joseph Smith, "...the still small voice, which whispereth through and pierceth all things, and often times it maketh my bones to quake while it maketh manifest..." (Doctrine and Covenants 85:6). The voice of Heaven is soft, but powerful. It is best heard when we remove the noise of the world and listen with spiritual ears. Undoubtedly, Jesus sought solitude so that He could clearly hear the voice of His Father.

There is much we can learn from this simple verse. In time of need, when the counsel of Heaven is being sought, we must depart to a solitary place. Modern day temples are solitary places. Perhaps that is one of the reasons people refrain from talking in the temple and when they do, they whisper. Other solitary places can be found in nature, or away from people. Jesus even suggested at one point that retiring to ones closet to pray would be good choice. "Although he was incessantly pressed upon by multitudes and many times forced to go without food and sleep, in key moments he would find solitude and commune with his Father in preparation for more spiritual labor." (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 152). There are many examples of Jesus using this pattern. A few are recorded as follows;

Matthew 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit **into the wilderness** to be tempted of the devil.

Matthew 14:13 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship **into a desert place apart**: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot...

Matthew 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up **into a mountain apart to pray**: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Matthew 17:1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them **up into an high mountain apart**,

Matthew 26:36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while **I go and pray yonder**.

Mark 1:12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him **into the wilderness**.

Mark 1:35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and **departed into a solitary place**, and there prayed.

Mark 6:46 And when he had sent them away, he **departed into a mountain to pray**.

Mark 9:2 ... Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them **up into an high mountain apart** by themselves: and he was transfigured before them.

Mark 14:26,32 ... they went **out into the mount of Olives**...which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

Luke 4:1 And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit **into the wilderness**,

Luke 4:42 ... he **departed and went into a desert place**: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

Luke 5:16 And he withdrew himself **into the wilderness**, and prayed.

Luke 6:12 And it came to pass in those days, that he **went out into a mountain to pray**, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Luke 9:18 And it came to pass, as **he was alone praying**, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

Luke 9:28 And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and **went up into a mountain to pray**.

Luke 22:39-40 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, **to the mount of Olives**; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them...

John 6:3 And Jesus went **up into a mountain**, and there he sat with his disciples.

John 8:1 Jesus went **unto the mount of Olives**.

John 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, **he went forth** with his disciples **over the brook Cedron**, where was a garden, into the which he entered...

34 - **prayed** – The word “prayed” is translated from the Greek word “προσεύχομαι” or “proseuchomai”. The Greek word means to offer prayers or to pray.

Prayer is the word that describes communication between mortal men and women with our Father in Heaven. When Adam and Eve transgressed in the Garden of Eden, they were expelled into the lone and dreary world, where they had once walked and talked with their Heavenly Father in a very real and literal sense. They were now cut off from His presence. In other words, they no longer saw Him or heard His voice with their mortal ears as they had before. Even though they were not able to stand in His presence any longer, God did not cut off all communication with His children. He blessed them with the gift of prayer. Prayer is direct communication with Heaven. The difference is, when Adam and Eve spoke with God in the garden they did so in a way that required no faith. They heard and saw with the physical senses. Prayer is just as direct and viable as a form of communication; however, it requires faith for it to be effective. This form of communication is often through spiritual senses that are invoked through true faith.

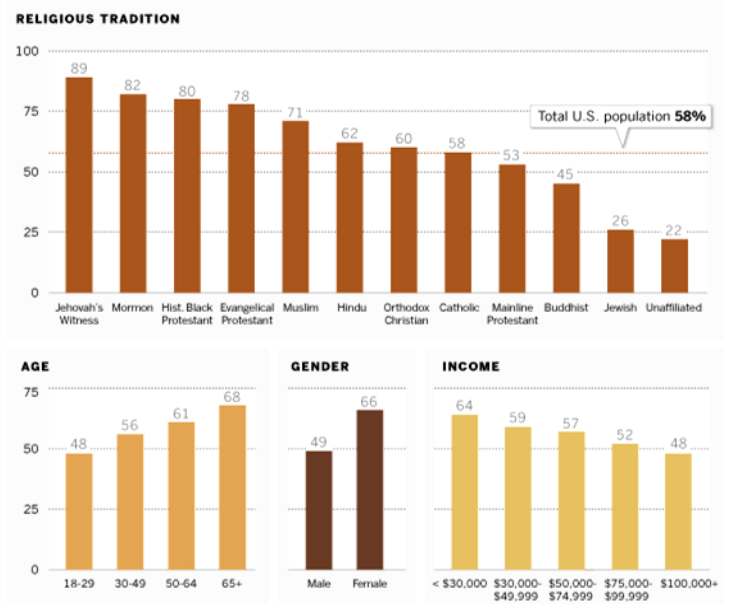
This spiritual method of communication must be learned. The simple fact that we have been born into a Telesstial world with bodies that naturally crave the desires and sensations of mortality, makes prayer a learned practice. It is spiritual in nature. When we put aside the flesh, and have the faith to seek God, we learn to pray. Bishop H. Burke Peterson, who was then a member of the Presiding Bishopric, said, “As you feel the need to confide in the Lord or to improve the quality of your visits with him—to pray, if you please—may I suggest a process to follow: go where you can be alone, go where you can think, go where you can kneel, go where you can speak out loud to him. The bedroom, the bathroom, or the closet will do. Now, picture him in your mind’s eye. Think to whom you are speaking, control your thoughts—don’t let them wander, address him as your Father and your friend. Now tell him things you really feel to tell him—not trite phrases that have little meaning, but have a sincere, heartfelt conversation with him. Confide in him, ask him for forgiveness, plead with him, enjoy him, thank him, express your love to him, and then listen for his answers. Listening is an essential part of praying. Answers from the Lord come quietly—ever so quietly. In fact, few hear his answers audibly with their ears. We must be listening so carefully or we will never recognize them. Most answers from the Lord are felt in our heart as a warm comfortable expression, or they may come as thoughts to our mind. They come to those who are prepared and who are patient” (General Conference, H. Burke Peterson, October 1973).

Prayer requires faith, but in the end it also requires submission and humility. What good is any communication if it is only one way. We are invited to approach the Lord in prayer. As we seek Him, we are promised that we will find. That means that God will answer our prayers. He will communicate back, and when He does we must be ready to hear or the communication will have been only one way. Given that Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints are privileged to have the knowledge of the restored Gospel, you would think that we would lead the word in the art of prayer. Unfortunately, many of us are still learning how prayer really works. In 2007, a study of religions in the United States showed that only 80% of Mormons pray at least once a day. Mormons were second to Jehovah’s Witnesses which the study showed that 89% of its members prayed at least once a day.

Regardless of our status, or lack of status, we need to pray. Jesus was the Messiah, and yet He saw the need for prayer. Being successful or powerful doesn’t lessen the need for prayer. Barclay wrote, “Early in the morning Jesus went out to be alone. He was able to meet the insistent needs of men only because he first companied with God. Once, in the 1914-18 war, a staff conference was due to begin. All were present except Marshal Foch, the commander-in-chief. An officer who knew him well said, ‘I think I know where we may find him.’ He led them round to a ruined chapel close beside General Headquarters and there, before the shattered altar, the great soldier was kneeling in prayer. Before he met men he must first meet God.” (The Gospel of Luke, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 53).

So Jesus went often to pray to His Father, but we have no record of the conversation. What did He say, and what was the reply? “If it were not a basic tenet of true religion that private prayers are personal; that they are between the earthly suppliant and the Divine father; that they should be known only by him who speaks and Him who hears – if it were not for these things, we would covet a knowledge of what the Son of the Father said to the Father of the Son on this and numerous other occasions. We can suppose that the voice of prayer poured out words of thanksgiving for the grace and guidance of that Capernaum Sabbath, which is scarcely over, and sought wisdom and direction for the continuing labors that lay ahead.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 24).

Prayer in the U.S.
% who pray at least once a day, by...



Data from the Pew Forum U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, conducted May 8 to Aug. 13, 2007, among more than 35,000 Americans age 18 and older; released in 2008.
Question wording: People practice their religion in different ways. Outside of attending religious services, do you pray several times a day, once a day, a few times a week, once a week, a few times a month, seldom, or never?
Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life • U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, June 2008

35 - **Simon** – The word “Simon” is translated from the Greek word “Σίμων” or “Simōn”. The Greek name “Simon” is the transliteration of the Hebrew name “שִׁמְעוֹן” or “Shim’own”. The Hebrew name, translated literally, means “heard”. Simon is the Hebrew name for the man we have come to know as Peter. It should be remembered that the Hellenistic culture had swept the world. The Roman Empire was Hellenized, and consequently spoke Greek. Matters of politics and trade were most often conducted in Greek. People who lived in conquered lands were exposed to the Hellenized culture whether they wanted it or not. Even so, they often retained as much of their own culture as possible. At the time of Jesus, the Israelites were generally given Hebrew or Aramaic names at birth. Aramaic was a form of Hebrew. It is considered a dialect by many scholars. When Israelites found that their occupations or dealing required interaction with the Hellenized world, they often took upon themselves Greek names. This is why we find that many of the apostles are known by two names. Simon was given the Greek name “Petros”, which has been Latinized as “Peter”. Levi was given the Greek name “Mattheos”, which has been Latinized as “Matthew”.

36 - **they that were with him** – The phrase “they that were with” is translated from a single Greek word; “μετά” or “meta”. The Greek word means with, after, or behind. We assume that those that followed Simon, or Peter, were followers of Jesus. They would have been the disciples that accompanied Jesus to the synagogue and Peter’s house the previous day, and the believers that brought their sick and afflicted to Jesus to be healed the previous evening. They arose the next morning to find that Jesus was gone. He had left in the dark of night while they slept.

37 - **followed after him** – The phrase “followed after” is translated from the Greek word “καταδιώκω” or “katadiōkō”. The Greek word means to follow after, or follow-up.



Again, the Gospel writer record words that have a “hunting” or “battle” theme. The Greek word translated as “followed after” is typically translated as “hunted...down. Gk. *katedioxen*. This is a rather strange verb to use, since it is a compound form or *dioko* (‘to pursue or persecute’) and is almost always used in a hostile sense, for hunting down one’s enemies. It does, ironically, fit in with the military atmosphere of 1:16-20; 21-28: Jesus has called the disciples to become fishers (a kind of hunter) of human beings, but instead they immediately hunt him down.” (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 202). It might convey the urgency and fear that was associated with their following after Him. They thought they had salvation in their midst, and now He was seemingly gone. There is perceived panic. Marcus wrote, “His disciples, however, are alarmed upon discovering his absence; there is something touching about the desperation of their pursuit of him.” (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 203).

Jesus must have perceived that the crowd of followers would not have permitted Him to be gone long. Judging by their reaction, Jesus, by necessity, left hours before sunrise to assure solitude with His Father. Edersheim writes, “It was not till some time afterwards, that even those, who had so lately been called to His closest fellowship, rose, and, missing Him, followed.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 490). Jesus had managed to capture hours of communication with His Father. With this direction, He was preparing to call apostles, train disciples, and spread the Gospel word. Perhaps this is what Amos wrote when He said, “And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.” (Amos 7:15),

38 - **they had found him** – The phrase “when they had found” is translated from a single Greek word; “εὕρισκω” 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, practice or experience. Again, the Gospel record uses words that can be easily equated with “hunting” or “battle”. The underlying message is that the followers of Jesus are all engaged in the battle against evil. The true followers seek out Jesus, to lead the charge. Here we learn that the followers successfully locate the Master in His solitary place, ending His time alone with the Father.

39 - **men seek for thee** – The term “men seek” is translated from the Greek word “ζητέω” or “zēteō”. The Greek word means to seek in order to find, to demand, to crave, or to require. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the phrase “men seek for thee” with “all seek for thee”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 37, page 66).

There is an implied misunderstanding between Jesus and His followers. They apparently want Jesus to stay in Capernaum and continue to bless them. They state, “‘All men seek for Thee’, and therefore they would have Him return to Capernaum.” (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 490). They would keep Jesus for themselves. Therein lays the misunderstanding. Jesus was not sent for one man, or one city, or even to one people. He was sent to the whole world. The disciples had not grasped this concept yet, but Jesus clearly understood why He was there.

40 - **Let us go into the next towns** – The word “towns” is translated from the Greek word “κωμόπολις” or “kōmopolis”. The Greek word means a village approximating in size and number of inhabitants to a city, a village city, or town. The Codex Sinaiticus translates “Let us go into the next town” as “Let us go elsewhere to the next town”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 38, page 66). Marcus states, “A kōmopolis (‘town’) is a municipality that is too big to be simply a village (kōmē), but not important enough to be a true city (polis).” (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 202).

Jesus had preached in Capernaum. His message was to be broadcast elsewhere. The people sought more miracles, and though there were surely many more miraculous things He could have done, Jesus was not sent to perform miracles. Miracles are nothing more than reinforcement to the believer of the doctrine that has already been taught and accepted. The daily miracles performed by Jesus were not the Gospel, but rather a byproduct of the Gospel. The disciples were asking for Jesus to stay so that the people could enjoy more of His miracles. “But He quietly resisted their importunity. It was not His object to become the center of an admiring populace, or to spend His whole time in working miracles, which, though they were deeds of mercy, were mainly intended to open their hearts to His divine teaching. His blessings were not to be confined to

Capernaum. Dalmanutha, Magdala, Bethsaida, Chorazin, were all near at hand.” (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 167).

41 - **I may preach there also** – The word “preach” is translated from the Greek word “κηρύσσω” or “kēryssō”. The Greek word means to be a herald, to officiate as a herald, to publish, or proclaim openly. **“Many manuscripts read *ἐν κήρυσσόν*, ‘he was preaching’, instead of *ἐλθὲν κήρυσσόν* ‘came preaching’, but *ἐλθὲν κήρυσσόν* could easily have become *ἐν κήρυσσόν* either deliberately (the combination is awkward; I have had to move the participle to a later point in the sentence in the translation) or accidentally, through haplography.”** (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 202).

If this passage is read quickly, the reader may assume that Jesus went from the raising of Peter’s Mother-in-law to the Sermon on the Mount with merely a night between them. The fact is, Jesus was declaring that a mission tour of Galilee needed to begin immediately. And that is exactly what they did. They departed as soon as the sun came up. **“Jesus set out on a preaching tour of the synagogues of Galilee. In Mark this tour is dismissed in one verse, but it must have taken weeks and even months to do it.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 41).

We are to assume that Jesus toured Galilee for about two to three months. The dating for the beginning of this chapter is between December 27CE and January 28CE. Jesus toured until he delivered the Sermon on the Mount in late March 28CE and early April 28CE, when the lilies were in bloom. If Jesus traveled for a conservative 5 miles per day, for 75 days (limiting travel on the Sabbath), He would have traveled at least 375 miles during this period.

42 - **therefore came I forth** – The phrase “came I forth” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξέρχομαι” or “exerchomai”. The Greek word means to go or come forth of. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “therefore came I forth” as “to this end came I forth”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 1, Verse 38, page 66). **“It is possible that *ἐξῆλθεν*, which literally means, ‘came out’, implies Jesus’ preexistence with God.”** (Mark 1-8: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 204).

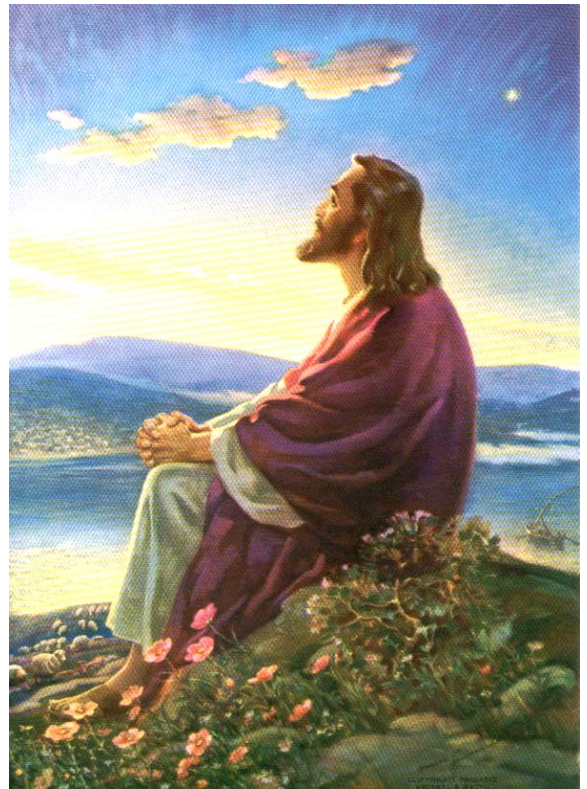
Before the creation of the earth, the God of Heaven gathered His spiritual children together for the purpose of presenting them with His plan for their progression. This plan centered upon the need for redemption. Progression would be riddled with stumbles and falls. In order to successfully progression, God’s children would need to be saved from their errors. A Savior and Redeemer was crucial to the plan. **“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). Jesus Christ was chosen to be the Savior and Redeemer of mankind. A Redeemer not only pays the price for redemption, but by definition, also defines the terms of redemption. To this end He came into the world. He came to teach mankind the behaviors required of a redeemed soul, and then to pay the price for their redemption. Hence, He says to His disciples, **“therefore came I forth”**.

43 - **preached** – The word “preached” is translated from the Greek word “κηρύσσω” or “kēryssō”. The Greek word means to be a herald, to officiate as a herald, to publish, or proclaim openly. Jesus went forth to teach the terms of salvation. **“What is the difference between teaching and preaching? Preaching is the uncompromising proclamation of certainties; teaching is the explanation of the meaning and the significance of them. Therefore, Jesus came to defeat men’s misunderstandings. There are times when men know the truth and misinterpret it. They know the truth and draw the wrong conclusions from it. Jesus came to tell men the meaning of true religion.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 77). Jesus was preaching the absolute truths of eternity.

44 - **cast out devils** – The term “cast out” is translated from the Greek word “ἐκβάλλω” or “ekballō”. It means to cast out or drive out, with the notion of violence. The word “devils” is translated from the Greek word “δαίμόνιον” or “daimonion”. The Greek word means the divine power, deity, divinity. It can also be used of a spirit being inferior to God, or evil spirits or messengers of the devil.

Devils are the title given to the followers of Lucifer who rebelled against God prior to mortality and were cast out of heaven without receiving mortal bodies. They are vehemently opposed to God’s plan for our progression, and work against our efforts to partake of redemption. These devils possess the mortal bodies of men who allow, by choice, evil to control them. As scary as this sounds, we must remember that devils cannot possess our bodies unless we allow it. We must also remember that they are powerless under the power of Jesus’ priesthood. Jesus apparently freed countless people from the control of devils. Edersheim wrote, **“And by this, also would they learn, that He was not merely a worker of miracles, but that He, Whose Word demons obeyed, lived a life, not of outward but of inward power, in fellowship with His Father, and baptize his work with prayer.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 490).

45 - **when it was day** – The word “day” is translated from the Greek word “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. **“Once at daybreak. Literally (while) it (was)**



becoming morning.’ Luke has again simplified the time reference; Mark has ‘early, (when it was) still quite dark’ (prōi ennycha lian), for which Luke substitutes a more elegant genitive absolute.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 556).

- 46 - **he departed** – The word “departed” is translated from the Greek word “ἐξέρχομαι” or “exerchomai”. The Greek word means to go or come forth of. **“Move on to. literally ‘proceeded toward.’ The verb is again the Lucan poreuesthai, used twice in this verse.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 556).

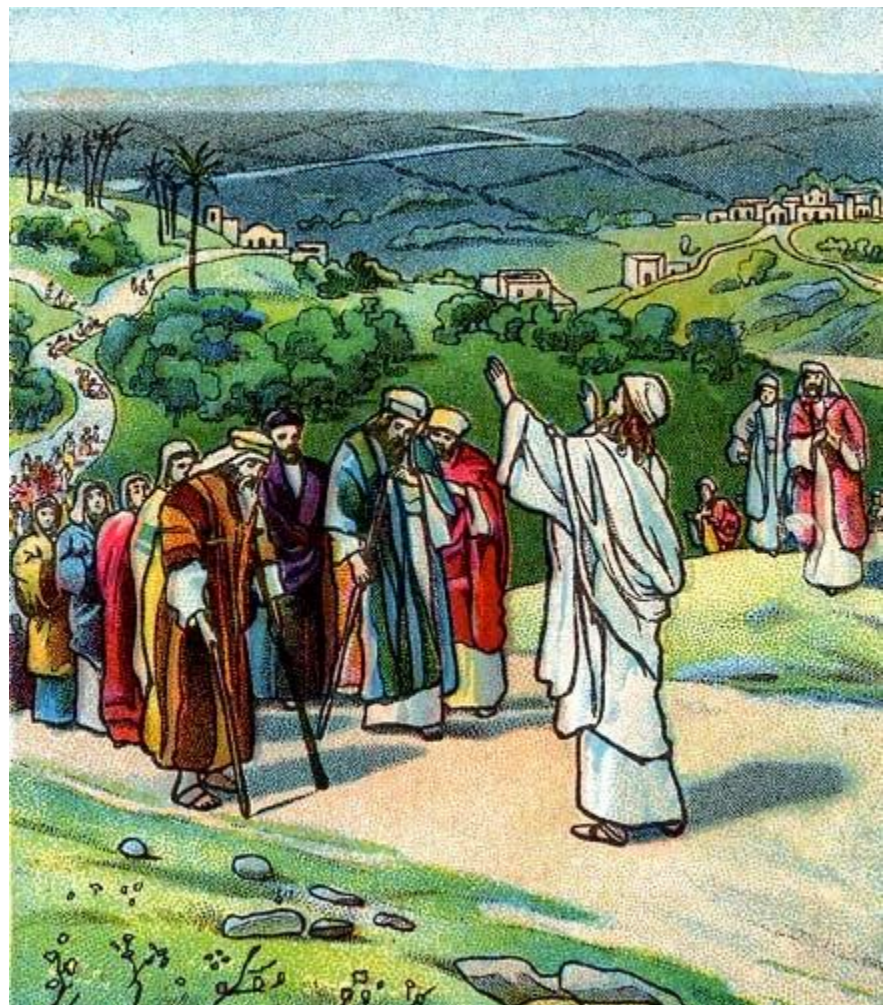
We presume that Jesus spent the night at Peter’s house in Capernaum, though it is possible that He stayed with His mother, who probably relocated to Capernaum after the marriage at Cana. Peter’s house is a more favorable theory since Peter and the other disciples woke to find that Jesus had departed. He departed hours before sunrise to be alone to pray to His Father. Interestingly enough, He had no plan to return. He departed to conduct His second preaching tour of Galilee. Edersheim wrote, **“As the three Synoptists accordingly state, Jesus now entered on His second Galilean journey. There can be little doubt, that the chronological succession of events is here accurately indicated by the more circumstantial narratives in St. Mark’s Gospel. The arrangement of St. Luke appears that of historical grouping, while that of St. Matthew is determined by the Hebraic plan of the Gospel, which seems constructed on the model of the Pentateuch.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1, Alfred Edersheim, page 490).

- 47 - **into a desert place** – The word “desert” is translated from the Greek word “ἐρήμος” or “erēmos”. The Greek word means solitary, lonely, desolate, or uninhabited. It can be used to describe a desert or wilderness. **“In Jewish tradition, the wilderness has been both a positive and negative symbol. On the one hand, it has represented freedom from Egyptian slavery, the revelation at Sinai, the covenant with God...On the other hand, the desert represents danger and vulnerability. It is a place ruled by thirst, beasts, and outlaws.”** (Encyclopedia of Traditional Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 192). The word “place” is translated from the Greek word “τόπος” or “topos”. The Greek word means a place, any portion or space marked off, as it were from surrounding space. Joseph Smith replaced the word desert with **“... solitary ...”** (Joseph Smith Translation of Luke 4:42).

The desert symbolizes **“desolation; abandonment; but also a place of contemplation quiet and divine revelation.”** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 50). It might be descriptive of the circumstances rather than the terrain. Fitzmyer wrote, **“This is not to be interpreted as a part of the wilderness of Judea. Jesus is depicted seeking solitude from the people.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 556). Jesus was looking for a place to commune with His Father. To properly do so, He needed remove Himself from the worldly surroundings so that the Spirit could be unrestrained.

- 48 - **the people sought him** – The word “sought” is translated from the Greek word “ζητέω” or “zēteō”. The Greek word means to seek in order to find. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “the people sought him” as “the multitudes sought for him”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 42, page 111). Fitzmyer says, **“Crowds of people. Literally ‘the crowds’.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 556).

It would appear that the disciples searched for Jesus among the inhabitants of Capernaum. People were awakened, and joined the search. The people had enjoyed the previous evening at His healing hand. Doubtless, Jesus had touched every family in the city through the healings of self, family, friend, neighbor, or acquaintance. The people believed that the master healer was living among them, and they did not want Him to go. Elder McConkie wrote, **“His fame knows no limit, and men flock to him from every political jurisdiction.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 25).



- 49 - **came unto him** – The word “came” is translated from the Greek word “ἐρχομαι” or “erchomai”. The Greek word means to come. Once Jesus was located, the crowds of people came to Him. They physically left the city in the dark and walked to be with Jesus.
- 50 - **stayed him** – The word “stayed” is translated from the Greek word “κατέχω” or “katechō”. The Greek word means to hold back, detain, or retain. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “stayed him” as “endeavored to detain him”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 42, page 111). The crowds of people from Capernaum **“would not permit him to move on from them. Literally ‘they tried to prevent him from going on his way from them’.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557).

- 51 - **that he should not depart** – The term “that he should not” is translated from the Greek word “μή” or “mē”. The Greek word means no, or not lest. The people did not want Jesus to leave them, and neither should we. However, we must learn that Jesus doesn’t stay with us, but rather we are invited to come and follow Him.
- 52 - **I must preach** – The word “must” is translated from the Greek word “δεῖ” or “dei”. The Greek word means it is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, or is right and proper. **“I must proclaim. Or ‘I must preach’.** Luke here uses *euangelizesthai* with a concrete direct object. **Much more important is the impersonal verb *dei*, ‘it is necessary’** He

begins His mission from which he will not be diverted.” (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557).

53 - the kingdom of God – The word “kingdom” is translated from the Greek word “βασιλεία” or “basileia”. The Greek word means royal power, kingship, dominion, or rule. The word “God” is translated from the Greek word “θεός” or “theos”. The Greek word means is a general term from deity. **“This is the first reference to the kingdom in the Gospel proper. In most cases Luke refers to it on this way. Sometimes however, he speaks of it merely as ‘the kingdom’. But he never uses the ‘kingdom of heaven’, which Matthew often employs.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557). The kingdom of God is reference to the organization of God on earth. It is the organization formed under the power of Heaven by God’s authorized representatives. It is used consistently by all the Gospel writers; however, it is favored by Matthew and Luke. Fitzmyer writes, **“The ‘kingdom’ is the prime kerygmatic announcement in the Synoptic tradition, especially in Matthew, where it appears fifty-five times, whereas it occurs in Luke only thirty-eight times, and in Mark fourteen times. John uses it five times.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557).

54 - to other cities also – The word “other” is translated from the Greek word “ἕτερος” or “heteros”. The Greek word means the other, another, or other. The word “cities” is translated from the Greek word “πόλις” or “polis”. The Greek word means a city. It is often used to refer to one’s native city. **“In other towns as well. Luke substitutes *kai tais heterais polesin*, literally ‘even the other towns’, for the Marcan *eis tas echomenas kōmopolis*, ‘to the neighboring market-towns.’ The difference between the Marcan *kōmopolis* and Lucan *polis* has been explained...as different translations of Aramaic *māhōzā*, which he claims could mean ‘market-town,’ ‘city,’ or ‘country’. Perhaps. It seems more likely that Luke has simply substituted the more usual Greek word for the rare Marcan one. *Kōmopolis* is actually a compound of *kōmē*, ‘village’ and *polis*, ‘town, city.’”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557). It would appear that Jesus was intending on visiting the market villages. These were hub cities where all the small villages and lone houses would come to trade. By visiting these cities, especially on the various days that synagogue service was conducted, Jesus could subject himself to the population at large. This would be a perfect plan for reaching the greatest number of people.

And what of the people of Capernaum, who had already heard His word and witnessed His divine power? They were now tasked with following Him in word. Elder McConkie wrote, **“They, however, had heard the word. His voice had testified in their synagogue; the witness of his divine Sonship had been borne in their presence; he had preached the gospel, opened the door to further investigation, and demonstrated his power by the healing and the miracles. The responsibility was now theirs to obtain baptism, to join the sheepfold of the Good Shepherd, and to live as becometh saints, Jesus must go elsewhere and give others a like opportunity.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 24-25).

55 - therefore am I sent – The phrase “am I 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. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “therefore am I sent” as “because for this was I sent”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Luke, Chapter 4, Verse 43, page 111). **“The Lucan formulation shifts the emphasis to the Father’s plan of salvation-history and relates his kingdom-preaching to a mission to execute that plan.”** (The Gospel according to Luke I-IX: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 557).

This phrase in Luke is closely related to the Marcan statement covered in footnote #42 of this chapter, **“therefore came I forth”**.