

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

CHAPTER 12, VERSES 15-21	CHAPTER 3, VERSES 7-12	NOTHING RECORDED	NOTHING RECORDED
<p>12:15 - But when¹ Jesus knew² it, he withdrew³ himself from thence⁴; and great multitudes⁵ followed him, and he healed⁶ them all⁷;</p> <p>12:16 - And charged⁸ them that they should not make him known⁹.</p> <p>12:17 - That it might be fulfilled¹⁰ which was spoken by Esaias¹¹ the prophet¹², saying,</p> <p>12:18 - Behold my servant¹³, whom I have chosen¹⁴; my beloved¹⁵, in whom my soul¹⁶ is well pleased¹⁷: I will put my spirit¹⁸ upon him, and he shall shew judgment¹⁹ to the Gentiles²⁰.</p> <p>12:19 - He shall not strive²¹, nor cry²²; neither shall any man hear²³ his voice²⁴ in the streets²⁵.</p> <p>12:20 - A bruised²⁶ reed²⁷ shall he not break²⁸, and smoking²⁹ flax³⁰ shall he not quench³¹, till he send forth judgment¹⁹ unto victory³².</p> <p>12:21 - And in his name³³ shall the Gentiles²⁰ trust³⁴.</p>	<p>3:7 - But Jesus withdrew³ himself with his disciples³⁵ to the sea³⁶; and a great multitude⁵ from Galilee³⁷ followed him, and from Judæa³⁸,</p> <p>3:8 - And from Jerusalem³⁹, and from Idumæa⁴⁰, and from beyond Jordan⁴¹; and they about Tyre⁴² and Sidon⁴³, a great multitude⁵, when they had heard⁴⁴ what great things he did, came unto him.</p> <p>3:9 - And he spake to his disciples³⁵, that a small ship⁴⁵ should wait⁴⁶ on him because of the multitude⁵, lest they should throng⁴⁷ him.</p> <p>3:10 - For he had healed⁶ many⁴⁸; insomuch that they pressed⁴⁹ upon him for to touch⁵⁰ him, as many as had plagues⁵¹.</p> <p>3:11 - And unclean spirits⁵², when they saw him, fell down⁵³ before him, and cried⁵⁴, saying, Thou art the Son of God⁵⁵.</p> <p>3:12 - And he straitly⁵⁶ charged⁸ them that they should not make him known⁹.</p>		

CHRONOLOGY: Between April 08th and April 28th, 28^{CE}

LOCATION: Starting in Galilee, at the Sea of Galilee, most probably near the city of Capernaum and ending in somewhere in Decapolis.

COMMENTARY: Jesus had a very productive Sabbath Day (though all His days were undoubtedly productive). It is likely that His confrontation with the Pharisees in the Cornfield (Chapter 3 of this work) and the healing of the man with a withered hand in the synagogue (Chapter 4 of this work) occurred on the same day. This created quite a stir among the Jewish hierarchy, to the point that they took counsel together plotting how they might bring about Jesus' death. Jesus, having the power of discernment, knew their intentions. He also knew that it was not His time. Much needed to be done before Jesus was to offer up His life as a redemptive sacrifice for mankind. The apostleship needed to be established, and the structure of His church here on earth needed to be established. In this Chapter, Jesus leaves the view of the Pharisees and Scribes, retiring Himself to the Sea of Galilee. It is supposed that He traveled to the eastern Sea Shore of the Sea of Galilee to the area known as Decapolis. This would make sense since the Herodians were art of the plot to kill Jesus, and Decapolis is free from their control. Jesus retired there to commune with His Father in Heaven. This was done preparatory to Jesus' calling of the twelve apostles. Despite His desire to be alone, a large multitude (probably greater than 2,000 people) of people followed Him in hopes of partaking of His healing powers. Their faith did not go unanswered as Jesus healed them all. It is believed that this Chapter is recorded fulfillment of a prophecy issued centuries earlier by the prophet Isaiah. He wrote, "**Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.**" (Isaiah 42:1-4).

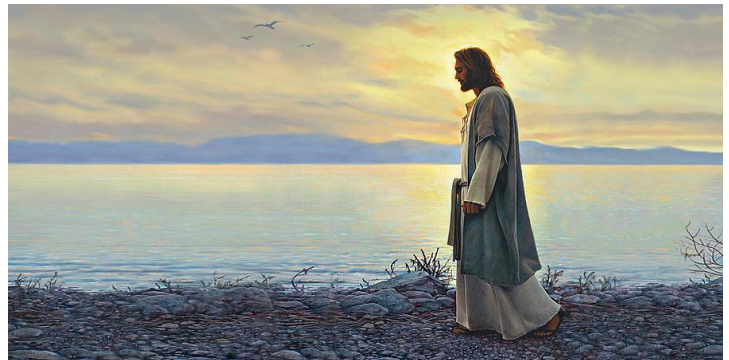
FOOTNOTES:

- 1 - **When Jesus**— The word "when" is implied in the Greek translation, but not directly translated from a Greek word. Joseph Smith clarifies the verse with his inspired translation. He translated the passage as follows, "...Jesus knew when they took counsel, and he withdrew..." (Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 12:13). The "when" of this chapter poses some interesting speculation. The scriptural passage could easily imply that Jesus left the synagogue after the confrontation with the Pharisees and the healing of the man with a withered hand. This would place the "when" of this chapter on the same day; either April 08th, April 15th or April 22nd, 28^{CE}.

The argument against this theory is that travel was prohibited on the Sabbath, and the number of healings that Jesus would provide this day would have required more daylight than would have remained.

In either case, the "when" of this chapter is likely between April 08th and April 28th, 28^{CE}.

- 2 - **knew it** – The word "knew" is translated from the Greek word "γινώσκω" or "ginōskō". It means to learn to know, understand, perceive, or to know. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "knew it" as "perceived it". (Codex Sinaiticus: The

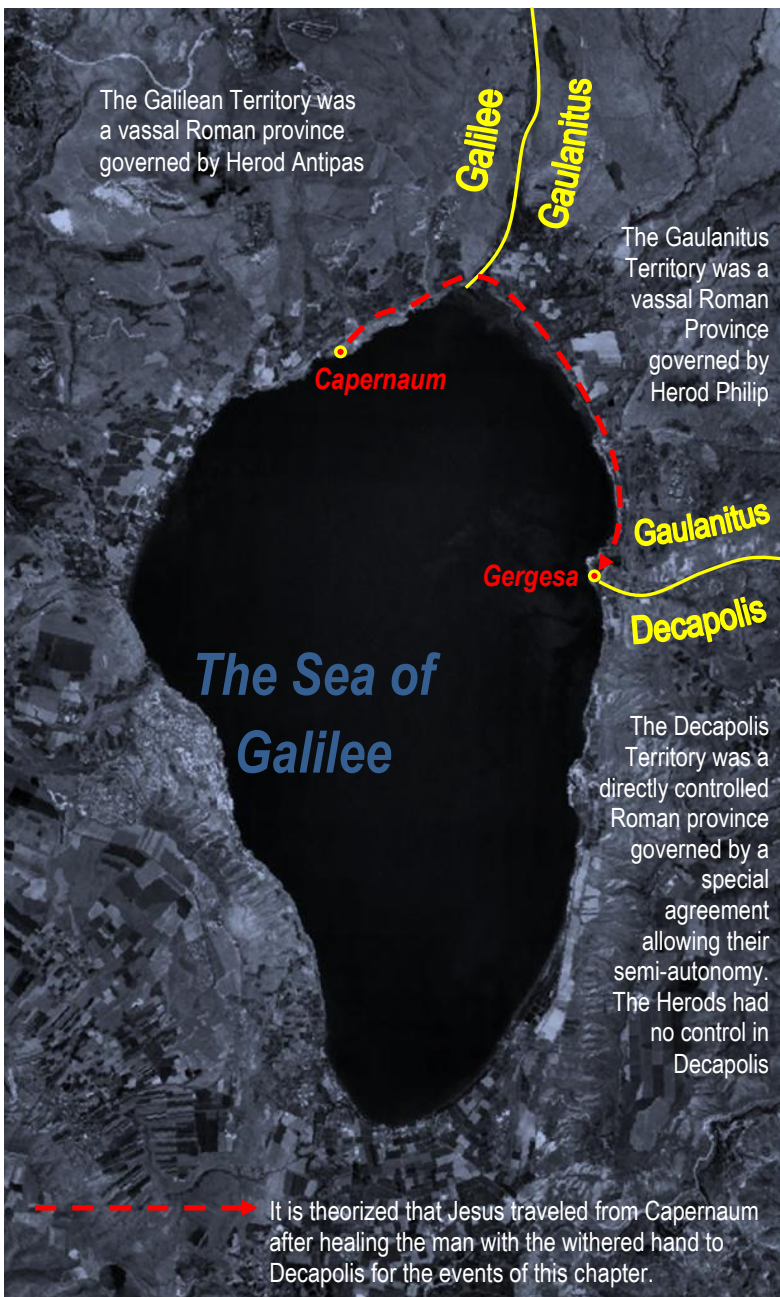


One of the great blessings and gifts of the spirit is discernment. It is the gift of the spirit that allows us to see things as they really are. It gives us divine insight. Our obedience to the laws of God amplify this gift. In Jesus' case, He was absolutely obedient, and absolutely consistent. It then stands to reason that His gift and ability to discern was beyond anything that you and I can relate to. Jesus knew the designs of the Pharisees, Scribes and Herodians. He knew that they desired to kill him and therefore was prompted by the spirit to take His leave.

- 3- **he withdrew himself** – The phrase “he withdrew himself” is translated from the Greek word “ἀναχωρέω” or “anachōreō”. It means to go back, return or to withdraw.

Jesus was neither afraid nor was He a coward. He confronted the Pharisees in the grain field and again in the synagogue. He never backed away from truth or right. Even so, **“Jesus never confounded recklessness with courage. First, for the time being, he withdrew. The time for the head-on clash had not yet come. He had work to do before the Cross took him to its arms.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 36). Jesus left to fulfill His mission, and fully conquer all evil.

- 4- **from thence** – The word “thence” is translated from the Greek word “ἐκεῖθεν” or “ekeithen”. It means thence or from that place.



The setting for this chapter is established by Mark, who clearly states that Jesus withdrew Himself to the Sea. The Sea could only refer to one of three Seas; The Red Sea, The Mediterranean Sea, or the Sea of Galilee. The former two are highly unlikely. It is most probable that Mark is referring to the Sea of Galilee. One can then easily deduce that Jesus departed from Capernaum, since that was Jesus' Galilean headquarters, after confronting the Jews in the synagogue.

Capernaum sits along the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Withdrawing to the immediate shore would not have provided Jesus much reprieve from the designing Pharisees that were plotting to have Him killed. In fact, at the close of the last chapter, the Pharisees met with a very unlikely ally; the Herodians. It seems unlikely that these two opposing groups would work together until you understand the politics of this time.

The Herodians were the vassal rulers of the area. Under Caesar's authority, they governed the provinces of Galilee, Gaulanitis, and Judaea. Once the area was under Roman rule, the authority to issue the death penalty was removed from all organization and sects. Only an authorized agent of the Roman Empire could order someone's death, at least legally. Since the Herods were legal agents of Rome, the Pharisees needed them to kill Jesus. The Herods were willing to work with the Pharisees because they had long since desired the support of the people.

It is apparent that Jesus knew their thoughts. This much was revealed in the last chapter. He knew that the Herods had the authority to kill Him and that the Pharisees were trying to make the case to justify the act. Jesus withdrew because His time had not yet come; however, a simple withdrawing to the shore would have been far from adequate. What He needed was to withdraw to a territory that was not governed by the Herods. Herod Antipas governed the province of Galilee. Herod Philip governed Gaulanitis. The one Galilean province that was not governed by the Herods was Decapolis. It was comprised primarily of Gentiles, though there were sizable pockets of Jews. Decapolis had a long lasting agreement of self governance, though they were still a Roman province. Decapolis would be a natural safe place for someone who was being sought by the Pharisees and the Herods.

Elder McConkie agrees with the thought that Jesus withdrew to sea shore in Decapolis. He wrote, **“While the Herodians and Pharisees sit in council devising ways and means to destroy him, Jesus departs, apparently into the Decapolis area, to continue his preaching and healing ministry among a more receptive people. And those to whom he goes are in large measure Gentiles.”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 60). This theory is also supported by Edersheim. He wrote, **“And the Lord withdrew once more, as it seems to us, into Gentile territory, probably that of the Decapolis.”** (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 2, Alfred Edersheim, page 62).

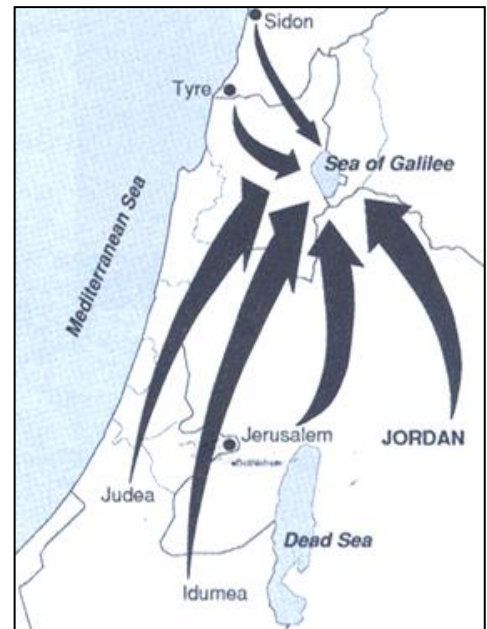
The walk from Capernaum to the shore of Decapolis is approximately 8 miles and could have been walked in approximately 2 ½ hours. **“Unless Jesus wished to be involved in a head-on collision with the authorities**

he had to leave the synagogues. It was not that he withdrew through fear; it was not the retreat of a man who feared to face the consequences. But his hour was not yet come. There was much that he had still to do and say before the time of final conflict.” (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 70).

- 5- **multitudes** – The word “multitude” is translated from the Greek word “ὄχλος” or “ochlos”. It means a crowd, a throng, a multitude, or a gathering of common people. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “multitude” as “folk”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 15, page 29).

“So he left the synagogues and went out to the lakeside and the open sky. Even there the crowds flocked to him from far afield. From all over Galilee they came; many made the hundred-mile journey from Jerusalem in Judaea to see him and to listen to him. Idumaea was the ancient realm of Edom, away in the deep south, between the southern borders of Palestine and Arabia. From the east side of Jordan they came; and even from foreign territory, for people came from the Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, which lie on the Mediterranean coast, northwest of Galilee.” (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 70). News of Jesus’ incredible healings and miracles were spreading throughout the land. One could only imagine people hearing of a man who could heal their children or loved ones. Jesus gave hope where many had none. Consequently, people came from long distances and in large numbers; each hoping for the hand of providence. **“So great were the throngs pressing upon Jesus, desiring to be taught and healed, that for his own safety he had to teach from a small ship.”** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 207).

Jewish culture, at the time of Jesus, would equate the term multitude to at least 2,000 people. The gathering may have been more.



- 6 - **healed** – The word “healed” is translated from the Greek word “θεραπεύω” or “therapeuō”. It means to serve or to do service. It also means to heal, cure, or restore to health. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “healed” as “cured”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 15, page 29). **“At the time of our Lord’s earthly ministry, the curing of the blind, deaf, or dumb was regarded as among the greatest possible achievements of medical science or spiritual treatment; and the subjection or casting out of demons was ranked among the attainments impossible to rabbinical exorcism. Demonstrations of the Lord’s power to heal and restore, even in cases universally considered as incurable, had the effect of intensifying the hostility of the sacerdotal classes; and they, represented by the Pharisaic party, evolved the wholly inconsistent and ridiculous suggestion that miracles were wrought by Jesus”** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 192).

- 7 - **them all** – The word “all” is translated from the Greek word “πᾶς” or “pas”. Collectively, it means some of all types. Individually, it means each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, and everything. We may chose to take this phrase as a figurative statement, conveying the idea that many were healed. I chose to believe that the statement is literal. The people gathering to Jesus in order to be healed was an act of faith. Jesus’ character would have responded with compassion and service. He would have healed every one of them.

- 8 - **charged** – The word “charged” is translated from the Greek word “ἐπιτιμάω” or “epitimaō”. It means to show honor to, raise the price of, award, rebuke, reprove, to admonish or charge sharply.

For the same reason that Jesus withdrew from the conspiring men in Capernaum, Jesus now admonished those that He has healed not to share their new fortune. This somewhat supports the theory that Jesus is healing on the same day as the occurrences of last chapter. Healings on other days would not be considered a violation of Law. If word got back to the Pharisees that Jesus left the synagogue after healing the man with the withered hand, only to heal a large number of people by the Sea shore it would have magnified their anger and hatred. **“Once again Jesus cautioned those who saw his miracles and heard his teachings not to broadcast them so as not to stir up his opponents to unrestrained vehemence and violence.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 272).

- 9 - **known** – The word “known” is translated from the Greek word “φανερός” or “phaneros”. It means apparent, manifest, evident, known, or to be plainly recognized.

One of the sinister plays used by the adversary at the time of Jesus was the introduction of many false Messiahs. The scriptures promised that the Messiah would come to save them. They anxiously awaited Him to come and look for Him to free them from Roman rule. The Messiah was expected to save them from their enemy. Unfortunately, this prophecy was misinterpreted. Their enemy was in reality sin, not Rome. Satan provided false Messiahs which resulted in devastating circumstances to the Jews. Here are just a couple of the false Messiahs prior to Jesus;

1. Simon of Peræa was a Jew born to a man named Joseph. He was a freed slave, once under the ownership of Herod the Great, (about 4BCE), a former slave of Herod the Great who rebelled. Herod was hated by the Jews. Josephus records, **“There was also Simon, who had been a slave of king Herod, but in other respects a comely person, of a tall and robust body; he was one that was much superior to others of his order, and had had great things committed to his care. This man was elevated at the disorderly state of things, and was so bold as to put a diadem on his head, while a certain number of the people stood by him, and by them he was declared to be a king, and he thought himself more worthy of that dignity than any one else.”** (The Wars of the Jews or The History of the Destruction of Jerusalem, Book 1, Flavius Josephus, Chapter 2, Pages 57-59). The Jews anxious to find the Messiah followed Simon. He led Jewish forces in a revolt against Herod and consequently Rome. **“He burnt down the royal palace at Jericho, and plundered what was left in it. He also set fire to many other of the king’s houses in several places of the country, utterly destroyed them, and permitted those that were with him to take what was left in them for a prey. He would have done greater things, but care was taken to repress him immediately. [The commander of Herod’s infantry] Gratus joined himself to some Roman soldiers, took the forces he had with him, and met Simon. And after a great and a long fight, no small part of those that had come from Peræa (a disordered body of men, fighting rather in a bold than in a skillful manner) were destroyed. Although Simon had saved himself by flying away through a certain valley, Gratus overtook him, and cut off his head.”** (Antiquities of the Jews, Book 1, Flavius Josephus, Chapter 17, Page 273-277). This took place between 4BCE and 15CE.
2. Athronges was a Jewish man who was considered by many to be the promised Messiah. He was a common man, whose occupation was that of a shepherd. This appealed to the Jews who equated the occupation of shepherd with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The Messiah was to come through their blood line. He and his four brothers led the Jews in a revolt against Herod Archelaus somewhere around 3BCE. By leading the charge, many were deceived to believe that Athronges was sent to redeem or free the Jews. Consequently, they, in large part, backed their believed Messiah. The rebellion resulted in war, and the war did not go well for the Jews. It lasted nearly two years. In the end, Athronges and his brothers were executed and the Jews were not only defeated but suffered great consequences. Many lost their lives with no desired outcome, and the Roman yoke was made heavier. They regretted following Athronges.
3. Judas of Galilee or Judas of Gamala was a Jewish leader who formed a resistance against Rome. The Jews saw the Romans as evil oppressors. They were heathens and idol worshippers. He led the Jews to violate a Roman cardinal rule for its provinces; pay

your taxes and be peaceful. He led the Jews to resist the census imposed for Roman tax purposes Quirinius in the Judæan province around 6CE. Those who followed him and refused to register for taxation face terrible retaliation. The Romans came in force, burning down their houses and confiscating their livestock. Judas' supporters were left homeless and starving. In the process, he formed an additional Jewish sect: Zealots. This sect is known for guerilla type warfare. They carried concealed daggers and assassinated their opposition, often in public. His sect eventually led to the total destruction of the Jewish State and the City of Jerusalem in 70CE.

The ruling class Jews were fearful of additional false Messiahs. Each revolt and support for a Messiah resulted in extreme consequences to the Jews and threatened the authority of the Pharisees, Sadducees and the Herodians. Jesus was aware of their fears and knew that they would consider Him another false Messiah endangering their way of life. He knew they would move to eliminate Him. Though this would eventually be the outcome, Jesus needed it to be at a time and place of His choosing. The mission His father gave Him needed to be fulfilled. Consequently, **"He forbade men to surround him with publicity. He knew only too well how many false Messiahs had arisen; he knew only too well how inflammable the people were. If the idea got around that someone with marvellous powers had emerged, then certainly a political rebellion would have arisen and lives would have been needlessly lost. He had to teach men that Messiahship meant not crushing power but sacrificial service, not a throne but a cross, before they could spread his story abroad."** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 36).

One can only image how difficult it would have been to have a miraculous miracle performed on you; like having sight restored if you were blind, or having a spinal injury healed and being able to walk, and then being asked not to share it with others. Most especially, not being able to share how it happened. Jesus **"urged the people to refrain from spreading His fame; and this He may have done for the reason that at that stage of His work an open rupture with the Jewish hierarchy would have been a serious hindrance; or possibly He desired to leave the rulers, who were plotting against Him, time and opportunity to brew their bitter enmity and fill to the brim the flagons of their determined iniquity."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 192).

- 10 - **it might be fulfilled** – The phrase "it might be fulfilled" is translated from a single Greek word; "πληρώω" or "plēroō". It means to make full or to fill up. It can also mean to fulfill, i.e. to cause God's will to receive fulfillment. Albright translated the phrase "it might be fulfilled" as "so was fulfilled". (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 153).



Throughout the Gospels, the writers make a special point to identify Old Testament scriptures that prophesy of the Messiah, and then show that they have been fulfilled in Jesus. **"Matthew sees in the Lord's injunctions against publicity a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy that the chosen Messiah would not strive nor cry out on the street to attract attention, nor would He use His mighty power to crush even a bruised reed, or to quench even the smoking flax; He would not fail nor be discouraged, but would victoriously establish just judgment upon the earth for the Gentiles, as well as, by implication, for Israel."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 192).

The prophet Isaiah wrote a lot about the coming of the Messiah. He obviously saw visions that allowed him to see Jesus during His mortal ministry, and he recorded them as prophetic scripture to help people recognize the Messiah when He came to earth. One such passage is taken from the 42nd chapter of Isaiah. There is some debate as to the differences between Matthew's rendition, the Old Testament version, and that found in the Septuagint. Albright wrote, **"The quotation is from Isa xlii 1-4, but it has little in common with the LXX version. It is clear that what we have here is either a translation of a recension not otherwise attested, but going back to Hellenistic times, or a translation done quite independently for the purpose in hand."** (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 153).

To make matters even more confusing, there is a circle of scholars that believe that the passage in Isaiah is not Messianic at all. Many believe that Isaiah was prophesying about Cyrus, the king of Persia, rather than Jesus. Barclay, a competent scriptorian, seems to favor this line of thought. Even so, he could not deny that the scripture is clearly Messianic. He wrote, **"The question which Matthew uses to sum up the work of Jesus is from Isaiah 42:1-4. In a sense it is a curious quotation, because in the first instance it referred to Cyrus, the Persian king (compare Isaiah 45:1). The original point of the quotation was this. Cyrus was sweeping onwards in his conquests; and the prophet saw those conquests as within the deliberate and definite plan of God. Although he did not know it, Cyrus, the Persian, was the instrument of God. Further, the prophet saw Cyrus as the gentile conqueror, as indeed he was. But although the original words referred to Cyrus, the complete fulfilment of the prophecy undoubtedly came in Jesus Christ. In his day the Persian king mastered the eastern world, but the true Master of all the world is Jesus Christ."** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 36-37).

Messianic Prophecy

Authorized LDS King James Version of the Holy Bible Isaiah 42:1-4	Septuagint Esaia 42:1-4	Authorized LDS King James Version of the Holy Bible St. Matthew 12:18-21
1. Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.	1. Jacob is my servant, I will help him: Israel is my chosen, my soul has accepted him; I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.	18. Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.
2. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.	2. He shall not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor shall his voice be heard without.	19. He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.
3. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.	3. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench; but he shall bring forth judgment to truth.	20. A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.
4. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the aisles shall wait for his law.	4. He shall shine out, and shall not be discouraged, until he have set judgment on the earth: and in his name shall the Gentiles trust.	21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

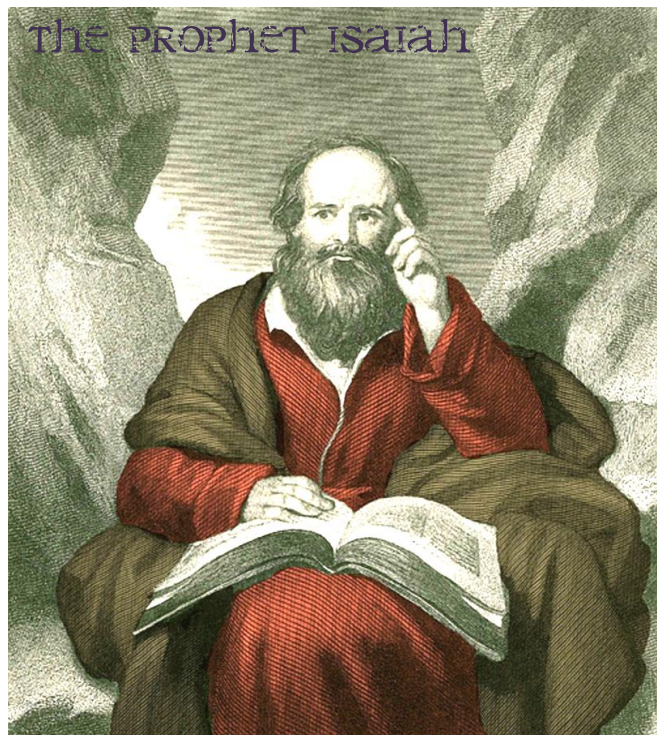
The differences between the three versions of Isaiah's prophecy are not as different as many scholars allude. Most of the differences seem to be translation preferences, while there are some lines that are unique to the different passages.

11 - Esaia – The name “Esaia” is translated from the Greek word “Ἠσαΐας” or “Ēsaia”. It is a transliteration of the Hebrew name “יְשַׁעְיָה” or “Yēsha`yah”. It is the English equivalent of the name Isaiah or Jesaiah or Jeshaiiah. Translated literally, the Hebrew and Greek name means “Jehovah has saved”. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the name “Esaia” as “Isaiah”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 17, page 29).

12 - prophet – The word “prophet” is translated from the Greek word “προφήτης” or “prophētēs”. It means one who, moved by the Spirit of God and hence his organ or spokesman, solemnly declares to men what he has received by inspiration, especially concerning future events, and in particular such as relate to the cause and kingdom of God and to human salvation.

13 - servant – The word “servant” is translated from the Greek word “παῖς” or “pais”. It means a servant of slave. It can be used specifically of a king's attendant or minister. The LDS footnote for this word translates the Greek word “pais” as son.

In some circles, the servant is thought to be Cyrus. The Septuagint states that it is Jacob, an implication to the Lord's covenant people. Albright sees a connection between Jacob and the Messiah. He wrote, “**The Messiah is the embodiment of Israel's vocation as servant of the Lord.**” (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 153). Though most scholars believe that the scripture is strictly Messianic. Elder McConkie wrote that the servant is “**The Messiah**” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 208). Keil and Delitzsch write that the ancient Jews understood the passage as Messianic as well. They wrote, “**The servant of Jehovah who is presented to us here is distinct from Israel, and has so strong an individuality and such marked personal features, that the expression cannot possibly be merely a personification collective. Nor can the prophet himself be intended; for what is here affirmed of this servant of Jehovah goes infinitely beyond anything to which a prophet was ever called, or of which a man was ever capable. It must therefore be the future Christ; and this is the view taken in the targum, where the translation of our prophecy commences thus: ‘Ha abdi Meshicha’.**” (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 414).



14 - I have chosen – The phrase “I have chosen” is translated from the Greek word “αἱρεῖζω” or “hairetizō”. It means to choose, or to belong to a sect. Keil and Delitzsch translated the clause “I have chosen” as “by whom I hold”. The go further to say, “**We must not render the first clause ‘by whom I hold’ means to lay firm hold of and keep upright is an attributive clause. The amplified subject extends as far as naphshi; then follows the predicate: I have endowed.**” (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 414). The King James version of Isaiah translates the phrase “I have chosen” as “whom I uphold” and the Septuagint translates the same phrase as “I will help”.

Albright's translation has some unique applications. He wrote, “**The verb hairetizein is late, and in 1 Chron xxviii 6 and Mal iii 17 of the LXX is used the sense of ‘adopt’.**” (Matthew: A New translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 153). Adoption is an important principle in God's plan for our progression. When we are baptized, and enter into covenants with the Lord, we are adopted into the house of Israel. The idea that Jesus is adopted reveals His covenant relationship with His Father. From the beginning, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness. He entered into and kept all the covenants required by Heaven. In this way, we are all chosen.

15 - my beloved – The word “my” is translated from the Greek word “μου” or “mou”. It means I, me, my or of me. The word “beloved” is translated from the Greek word “ἀγαπητός” or “agapētos”. It means beloved, esteemed, dear, favorite, or worthy of love.

This is a commonly used phrase used by the Father to describe His Son Jesus Christ. When God showed Moses the pre-mortal Messiah He said, “Behold, **my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever.**” (Moses 4:2). As Jesus began His mortal ministry, He went to John the Baptist to receive the gateway ordinance of baptism. Upon making His baptismal covenant, the heavens opened and “**he heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.**” (Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 3:46). When the resurrected Lord appeared to the Nephites, He was introduced by the Father with the words, “Behold **my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.**” (3rd Nephi 11:7). Finally, when the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith to usher in the restoration, similar introductions were made. Joseph Smith recorded, “It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is **My Beloved Son. Hear Him!**” (Joseph Smith History 1:17). Clearly, the title “my beloved” is one the Father reserves for His Son, Jesus Christ.

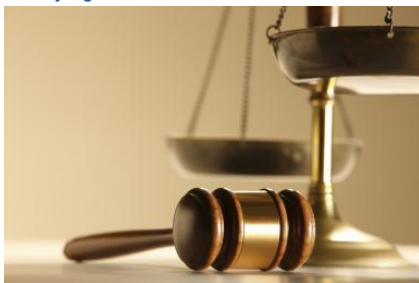


16 - my soul – The word “soul” is translated from the Greek word “ψυχή” or “psychē”. It means the breath of life. It is also used to refer to the human soul. This is an interesting statement. The speaker is presumably the Father of all creation, speaking of His Son; the great Redeemer of mankind. He refers to Himself as a soul, a human soul. Joseph Smith said, “**God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens . . . I say, if you were to see him to-day, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves, in all the person, image, and very form as a man . . . it is necessary that we should understand the character and being of God, and how he came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity, I will refute that idea, and will take away and do away the veil, so that you may see . . . and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did.**” (Journal of Discourses, Volume 6, page 3).

17 - well pleased – The phrase “well please” is translated from the Greek word “εὐδοκέω” or “eudokeō”. It means it seems good to one, to prefer, take pleasure with or inclined to. There are few recorded passages in scripture when God the Father reveals Himself. It is generally in connect with His Son, and He typically bears testimony of the Son and then allows the Son to carry forward the Father’s plan. He refers to His Son as “my Beloved” and is wont to declare that He is pleased with Him. On the Mount of Transfiguration, the Father tells the Father, “**While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.**” (Matthew 17:5).

18 - put my spirit – The word “spirit” is translated from the Greek word “πνεῦμα” or “pneuma”. It means the third member of the Godhead, or the Holy Ghost. The three members of the Godhead, though separate and distinct individuals, are one in work, desire and glory. Where the Son goes, so does the Father. The Father repeatedly attested of His Son’s divinity and supported His Son during His mortal mission. Similarly, the Holy Ghost accompanied Him. When Jesus was baptized John the Baptist said, “**I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.**” (John 1:32).

19 - shew judgment – The word “shew” is translated from the Greek word “ἀπαγγέλλω” or “apaggellō”. It means to bring tidings, to bring word, report or proclaim. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “shew” as “declare”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 18, page 29). The word “judgment” is translated from the Greek word “κρίσις” or “krisis”. It means to separate, select or judge.



Barclay has an interesting perspective on this portion of the scripture. He wrote, “**He will tell the nations what justice is. Jesus came to bring men justice. The Greeks defined justice as giving to God and to men that which is their due. Jesus showed men how to live in such a way that both God and men receive their proper place in our lives. He showed us how to behave both towards God and towards men.**” (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 37). Though I believe that Barclay has some correct insight relative to the verse, I believe that He missed the mark. Jesus came to earth not to bring justice, but to satisfy justice. All mankind has sinned, and therefore condemned by the laws and demands of justice. Jesus met those demands, and therefore declares that justice has been met. Any judgment passed by the Mighty One is laced with loving mercy. Truly, “**the days**

come that I will send forth judgment unto victory.” (Doctrine and Covenants 52:11).

20 - Gentiles – The word “Gentiles” is translated from the Greek word “ἔθνος” or “ethnos”. It means people of foreign nations not worshipping the true God. It is used to reference pagans and gentiles. The LDS footnote for the Greek word “ethnos” records that the word “gentiles” is better translated as “nations”. Scripturally, the term “gentiles” is used to refer to the nations and peoples of the world who have not entered into covenants with the Lord earning them the right to be called His people. Generally speaking, they are people who worship false gods, follow corrupt religions, and live contrary to the laws of the living God. To the Jews, anyone that was not Jewish or of Jewish descent was considered a “Gentile”.

The area of Decapolis had Jewish communities; however, it was primarily a province of Gentiles. Jesus may have been preaching to as many gentiles as there were Jews gathering to hear Him and hopeful that He would heal their infirmities. Elder McConkie said, “**It is clearly evident that there were many Gentiles among those healed by his miraculous powers. Gentile converts then made would have been the beginning of the great harvest yet to be reaped among those non-Israelitish peoples.**” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 208). The Gentiles were like the wind, driven to and fro with no clearly defined direction or destination. Inherently, they sought for happiness and security. Not knowing where to find the joy of the living God, they found fleeting happiness in religions and beliefs of their own making. Jesus brought something new. He brought something everlasting. “**In him the Gentiles will hope. With Jesus there came into the world the invitation, not to a nation but to all men, to share in and to accept the love of God. In him God was reaching out to every one with the offer of his love.**” (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 38). This love would bring them salvation and redemption from the dark and dreary world they lived in.

21 - not strive – The word “strive” is translated from the Greek word “ἐρίζω” or “erizō”. It means to wrangle, or engage in strife. It is used to describe the calm temper of Jesus in contrast with the vehemence of the Jewish doctors wrangling together about tenets and practices. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “strive” as “contend”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 19, page 29). The word strife is defined as angry or bitter disagreement over fundamental issues. It means to contend with someone in an irate fashion.

Jesus opposed evil. In fact, He was not afraid to confront evil or evil men. Even so, He did not allow himself to engage in contention and hateful behavior. When His opponents took it to a place of hate, Jesus was accustomed to leaving or ceasing to engage His opponents. Barclay wrote, “He will not strive, nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets. The word that is used for to cry aloud is the word that is used for the barking of a dog, the croaking of a raven, the bawling of a drunken man, the uproar of a discontented audience in a theatre. It means that Jesus would not brawl with men. We know all about the quarrels of conflicting parties, in which each tries to shout the other down. The hatred of theologians, the *odium theologicum* is one of the tragedies of the Christian Church. We know all about the oppositions of politicians and of ideologies. In Jesus there is the quiet, strong serenity of one who seeks to conquer by love, and not by strife of words.” (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 37).

22 - nor cry – The word “cry” is translated from the Greek word “κρουαγῶ” or “kraugazō”. It means to cry out, cry aloud, to shout, or to cry out to one. The LDS footnote for this word clarifies it as meaning a cry for help. Jesus was not one to raise His voice, or preach His doctrines with overbearing force. “Although he is certain of His divine call, and brings to the nations the highest and best, His manner of appearing is never the less quiet, gentle, and humble; the very opposite of those lying teachers, who endeavored to exalt themselves by noisy demonstrations. He does not seek His own, and therefore denies Himself; He brings what commends itself, and therefore requires no forced trumpeting.” (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 414).

23 - hear – The word “hear” is translated from the Greek word “ἀκούω” or “akouō”. It means to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, to hear or to perceive by the ear.

24 - voice – The word “voice” is translated from the Greek word “φωνή” or “phōnē”. It means a sound or a tone. It also means the sound of uttered words or speech. The symbolism here implies that Jesus’ words will not be spread among the people like the popular rhetoric of the day. His was not a populous message that would attract the desires of carnal men. Jesus’ was concerned about fulfilling His Father’s wishes. Elder McConkie said, “He shall not court popularity.” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 208).

25 - streets – The word “streets” is translated from the Greek word “πλατεῖα plateia”. It means a broad way or a street. This has symbolic reference to the designs and paths created by men. Jesus’ words have never conformed to the ways of men.

26 - bruised – The word “bruised” is translated from the Greek word “συντριβῶ” or “syntribō”. It means to break, tread down or crush. It represents “what is cracked, and therefore



half-broken already” (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 415).

Since the reed represents man, it could not be a proper representation unless it was bruised or broken. All mankind are broken or bruised in the sense that we have all sinned and broken the commandments of God. Talmage said, “The figure of the bruised reed and the smoking flax is strikingly expressive of the tender care with which



Christ treated even the weakest manifestation of faith and genuine desire to learn the truth, whether exhibited by Jew or Gentile.” (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 192).

27 - reed – The word “reed” is translated from the Greek word “κάλαμος” or “kalamos”. It means a reed, a staff or a rod.

Generally speaking, “Reeds or rushes symbolize recorded time.” The Christians use the reed to symbolize, “Christ’s passion and death on the cross; humiliation; the faithful living by the waters of grace.” (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 138). In this case, it refers to the sons and daughters in their pure

and innocent state; hence the faithful by the waters of grace. The bruised or broken reed represent the fallen and corrupted man. Elder McConkie describes them as, “...the bruised reeds who were the weak in faith.” (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector’s Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 60-61). Ogden and Skinner are much more plain in their symbolic definition of the reed. They explain, “The reed is a type or symbol of humanity; and the Messiah, who finds many reeds bruised by the storms of life, is inclined to bind up and heal rather than to break and destroy.” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 272).



REED



REED

The events of this chapter appears to have direct correlation to the Isaiah prophesy found in Isaiah 42:1-4. The faithful who are afflicted with all manner of diseases and physical challenges come unto Christ for help. Staying true to character, Jesus does not reject them or condemn their pitiful state of existence. Absolutely paralleling this chapter, Elder McConkie states, “Figurative expressions meaning persons weak and afflicted in body, whom Jesus healed, and those of little faith, who were strengthened in faith and testimony by his teachings. The indication is that Jesus is tender and compassionate toward the weaknesses of his fellow

mortals. ‘Whereas one rough touch will break the bruised reed, and quench the flickering, smoking flax, His it should be, with matchless tenderness, love, and skill, to lift up the meek, to strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, to comfort all that mourn, to say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not.’ ” (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1: The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 208-209).

The bruised reeds could also represent the spiritual illnesses that the Jews possessed. As a whole, they were in a state of apostasy. Individually, the common Jew was lost and confused, living in spiritual darkness. “Tertullian understands by the ‘bruised reed’ the faith of Israel,” (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 415) though that faith was seriously wanting.

28 - not break – The word “break” is translated from the Greek word “κατάγνυμι” or “katagnymi”. It means to break. Symbolically, the term “break” or “broken” represents something that been altered from its original state to the point that its usefulness is diminished or gone. When a person is broken, their ability to function is reduced. Spiritually, we are all broken, not capable of living up to our divine potential without outside help. Left unto our own devices, we are doomed to a life of our own consequences.

Jesus came to earth to save us from the consequences of our own sins. His justice is merciful. He did not come to administer the judgment of damnation and death; but rather to offer a way to escape these fates. We may be as a bruised or broken reed, but He intends to mend rather than destroy. Barclay recorded, **“He will not break the crushed reed nor quench the smoking wick. The reed may be bruised and hardly able to stand erect; the wick may be weak and the light may be but a flicker. A man's witness may be shaky and weak; the light of his life may be but a flicker and not a flame; but Jesus did not come to discourage, but to encourage. He did not come to treat the weak with contempt, but with understanding; he did not come to extinguish the weak flame, but to nurse it back to a clearer and a stronger light. The most precious thing about Jesus is the fact that he is not the great discourager, but the great encourager.”** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 2, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 37-38).

29 - smoking – The word “smoking” is translated from the Greek word “τύφω” or “typhō”. It means to cause to emit smoke, raise a smoke or to smoke. **“It represents prayer ascending, an invitation to the deity to be present. It can also signify the soul ascending, purified by fire. In Christianity smoke is taken as suggesting the shortness of life and the vanity of fame, anger or wrath.”** (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 154).

The term smoking “flax” is an interesting term. It has reference to an ancient oil lamp. Ogden and Skinner explained, **“The ‘smoking flax’ is a reference to the wick of an oil lamp.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 273). Flax was used to weave together a wick that absorbed the oil in the lamp and allowed itself to be lit and slowly burned. A lamp was used symbolically to represent mortal man. The lamp was filled with oil representing the spirit placed in it. The wick represents our works, whether good or evil. A wick that is filled with the spirit of God burns bright, giving light to all around them. Conversely, a wick that is low on oil will smoke and dim until the flame is extinguished. Keil and Delitzsch explained the smoking flax as **“that which is burning feebly, and very nearly extinguished.”** (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 415).

The question is, whose oil lamp is smoking? Some suggest that the Isaiah reference is speaking of the Gentiles. Keil and Delitzsch wrote that the smoking flax is **“the ‘glimmering wick’ ” or “the momentary zeal of the Gentiles.”** (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 415). I would tend to believe that it is all mankind. The covenant people surely have their own share of bruised reeds and smoking flax.

The last question is, what does Jesus do with men whose works are such that their flames of righteousness are nearing the point of going out? Does He extinguish the flame and discard the lamp and useless? This might be the logical conclusion for mortal men, but it is not the direction of a loving God. **“The gentleness of the Messiah would figuratively disallow his even putting out the smoking linen wick used in a lamp.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 273).

30 - flax – The word “flax” is translated from the Greek word “λίνον” or “linon”. It means linen clothing made from flax.



“Canaan.” (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 272). The strings of flax fibers resemble strands of hair. They were strong and durable lending themselves to many uses. They were woven to make fabric, string, ropes, and various linen products including wicks for lamps.

The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “flax” as “wick”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 20, page 29). There seems to be some conflict on the translation of the Greek word. A wick and linen cloth are seemingly two different things. The answer might be in the raw ingredient of both items. **“The Greek word for flax was linen, which is one of the products prepared from the fibrous plant. Flax was grown in various parts of the ancient Near East, especially in Egypt. It was cultivated in the tropical climate of Jericho at the time of the Israelites’ incursion in the land of**



The wick of the lamp represents man's actions. The oil symbolizes the spirit and therefore the wick's ability to provide light, or figuratively good works, was dependent upon the spirit. **Even so, there are Biblical scholars who see a figurative connection between the smoking flax and our physical bodies. A well burning flax would represent a healthy and functioning body, while a smoking flax represents those “...who were afflicted in body...”** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 61). This would easily represent the countless people who came to Jesus to be healed of physical ailments. He turned none away, but healed them all.

31 - not quench – The word “quench” is translated from the Greek word “σβέννυμι” or “sbennymi”. It means to extinguish, or quench, especially in the sense of fire. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the word “quench” as “extinguish”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Matthew, Chapter 12, Verse 20, page 29). Figuratively, the word implies the loss of physical or spiritual life. **“But the words hardly admit of this distinction; the reference is rather a general one, to those whose inner and outer life is only hanging by a slender thread. In the statement that in such a case as this He does not completely break or extinguish, there is more implied than is really expressed. Not only will He not destroy the life that is dying out, but He will actually save it; His course is not to destroy, but to save.”** (Commentary on the Old Testament, Volume 7: Isaiah, C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, page 415).

32 - unto victory – The word “victory” is translated from the Greek word “νίκος” or “nikos”. It means victory or utterly vanquish. Jesus' mission is to save the souls of His brothers and sisters; us. He is not intending on discarding the broken or the extinguishing the spiritually weak. He intends on victoriously redeeming us, as many as will come unto Him and accept His glorious gift. His shall be, and is, a total victory over death, both physical and spiritual death. Jesus is victorious over all things that stand between us and our Father in Heaven. His is not a victory brought to pass by death and carnage, but rather one where the victory is brought by love and sacrifice.



33 - his name – The word “name” is translated from the Greek word “ὄνομα” or “onoma”. It is used universally for proper names. It means the name by which a person is reckoned. Here the reference is being made to the name of the Messiah, even Jesus of Nazareth. His is the only name whereby we might be saved. King Benjamin taught, **“And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.”** (Mosiah 3:17).

34 - trust – The word “trust” is translated from the Greek word “ἐλπίζω” or “elpizō”. It means to hope. In a religious sense, it means to wait for salvation with joy and full confidence. Even the Gentiles, the sinners, the poor in spirit and works, wait with hope for the salvation that Jesus offers. He is, after all, the world’s only hope. Nephi taught, **“And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.”** (2nd Nephi 4:19). Even the righteous have need to hope and trust in Jesus’ power to save. He later exclaims, **“O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee forever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man or maketh flesh his arm.”** (2nd Nephi 4:34).

35 - disciples – The word “disciples” is translated from the Greek word “μαθητής” or “mathētēs”. It means a learner, pupil or disciple. In the Jewish culture, at the time of Jesus, disciples were common among the religious elite. Great Rabbi’s accepted students, generally after careful screening. The greatest Rabbi’s were very selective with those they chose because their student became a reflection on them. They also limited the number selected so as to maintain their elite status. These students were more than just learners. Once accepted by the Rabbi, they adhered themselves to him in every way. They literally followed him, and patterned their lives after the Rabbi. They served him, and dedicated their lives to his teachings. It was a great privilege to be accepted by a Rabbi as his follower. Since the word “student” seems lacking, the translation of the Greek word has been deemed “disciple”. It is a student who follows in word and action with strict obedience and loyalty.



PETER



ANDREW



JAMES THE
GREATER



JOHN



PHILIP



BARTHOLOMEW



THOMAS



MATTHEW



JAMES THE
LESSER



THADDAEUS



SIMON



JUDAS ISCARIOT

Jesus was considered a great Rabbi during His mortal ministry. Though this was a great title, in His case, it was a gross understatement. He was the Son of God in the flesh. And yet, when people came to request discipleship He granted all the privilege without inference. Unlike the great Rabbi’s, Jesus was not exclusionary in His selection of disciples. He also took the most unlikely of candidates. He took ordinary men without priestly pedigree or royal lineage. He took simple men without years of biblical study. He selected humble teachable men. All who came to Him humbly were granted the status of disciple.

We do not know the number of disciples that followed Jesus this day, nor do we know how many of them constituted the future quorum of the twelve apostles. Since that quorum is expected to be formed in the next chapter, it is likely that they were all with Him.

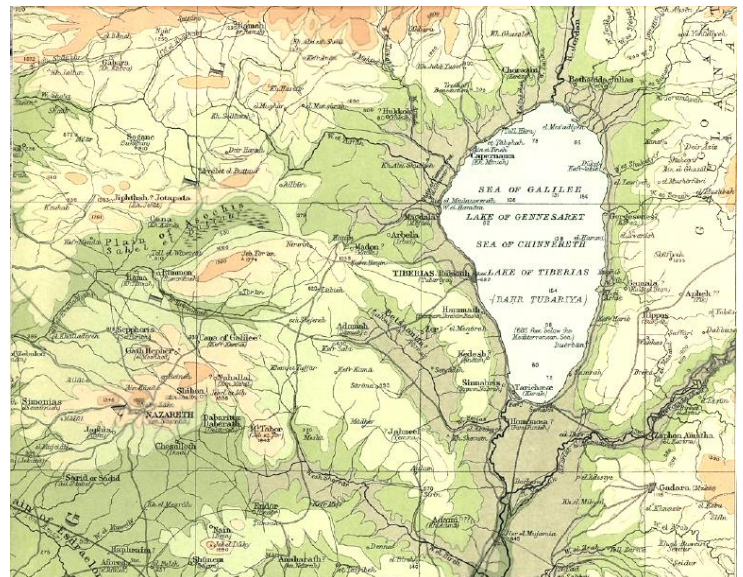
A true disciple of Jesus Christ differs in many ways from the disciples of the Great Rabbi’s. The Rabbi’s disciples served their master. Jesus’ disciples were instructed that the best way to serve Him was to serve others. Jesus’ disciples were instructed that mercy was greater than justice, and that God expected love and compassion over sacrifices. This was not the view of the Rabbi’s who served the Law rather than the people.

36 - sea – The word “sea” is translated from the Greek word “θάλασσα” or “thalassa”. It means the sea. It is used of the sea in general, but used specifically of the Mediterranean Sea and the Red Sea. It is unlikely that Jesus excused Himself to either of these Seas. It is most probable that He retired to the Sea of Galilee, which was His custom. The Sea of Galilee doesn’t fit the dictionary definition of a Sea, it is more of a Lake. Even so, it was most likely that Jesus left the synagogue in Capernaum and retired to the Sea of Galilee. The Sea of Galilee goes by many names. They are; Sea of Kinneret, Lake of Gennesaret, Sea of Ginosar, Sea of Tiberias, Lake Tiberias, Sea of Minya, and the Sea of Galilee. The name of the Sea changed according to time, culture and local. Regardless of the name, the Sea represented the life and sustainability of the entire region.

The Sea of Galilee is about 8.1 miles wide and 13 miles long. The average depth of the Sea is 84 feet, with the maximum depth being 141 feet. It is estimated that the Sea holds nearly a million cubic feet of water. The circumference of the Sea, or the length of the sea shore, is 33 miles. It occupies 64 square miles and sits at about 695.8 feet above sea level.

The holy land is, generally speaking, a dry and arid land. Consequently, the fish from the Sea of Galilee became a staple of life throughout the land. It was also a great source of water and other animal life. The shores of the Sea are full of life. It supports flora and fauna of various types, including various reed producing plants that were vital to many uses. The locals used the reeds to make everything from clothing, to ropes and wicks for lamps.

One might picture the setting for this chapter next to the sea, or in a boat just off the shore, with reeds in the foreground. Barclay recorded, **“So he left the synagogues and went out to the lakeside and the open sky.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 70). Some of those reeds may have been broken or bruised. Perhaps the witness to the scene, later contributing to Matthews account, correlated the reeds to Isaiah’s prophecy.

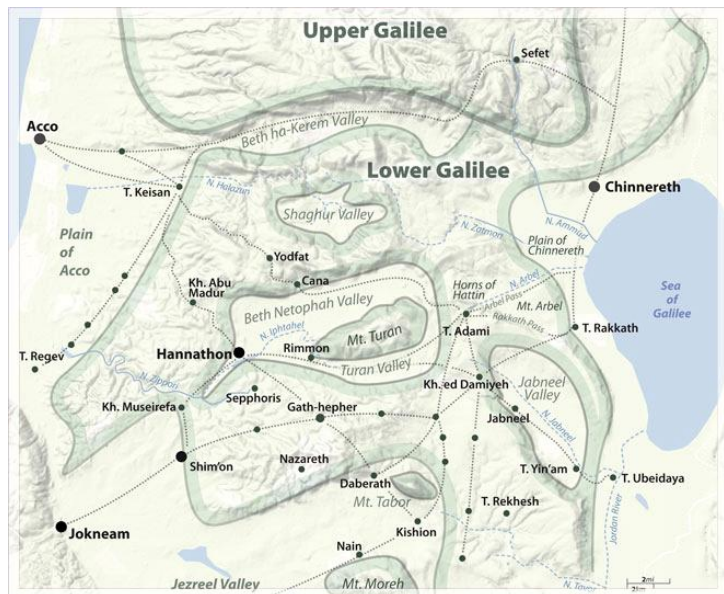


37 - Galilee – The word “Galilee” is translated from the Greek word “Γαλιλαία” or “Galilaia”. Translated literally it means “Circuit”. It is used in reference to the name of a region of northern Palestine, bounded on the north by Syria, on the west by Sidon, Tyre, Ptolemais and their territories and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

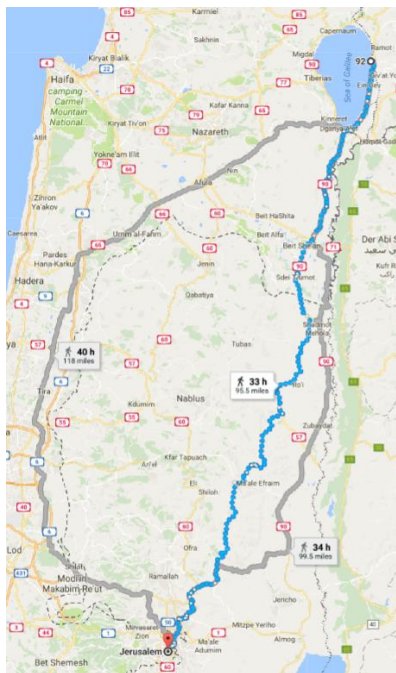
Lower Galilee contained many of the cities recognized in our New Testament stories. Jesus was raised in the lower Galilean city of Nazareth. He would later return to preach in His home town and leave under great persecution. The miracle in Cana took place in lower Galilee. Other stories took place in the towns of Nain, Sepphoris, Capernaum, Magdalena, and Tiberias. Jesus spent much of His ministry in lower Galilee.

Upper Galilee, is less heard of Biblically; however Jesus did frequent the area. He visited the head waters of Dan in Caesarea Philippi and we suspect He visited Mount Hermon.

The biggest association to Galilee, with reference to the Jesus' life, was surely the Sea. The Sea of Galilee was the sight of many great wonders and miracles. Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount overlooking the Sea of Galilee. He walked upon the Sea's water and calmed it during a great tempest. He taught His disciples on its shores and healed many on various occasions and at various places on the sea's shoreline.



- 38 - Judæa** – The word “Judæa” is translated from the Greek word “Ἰουδαία” or “Ioudaia”. Translated literally it means “he shall be praised”. It is used in reference to the southern portion of Palestine lying on this side of the Jordan and the Dead Sea, to distinguish it from Samaria, Galilee, Peraea, and Idumaea. In a broader sense it can be used to refer to all of Palestine.



Judæa was the seat of the Jewish state. I imagine some of the Jews in ancient times may have argued this point, but surely they would have agreed that it had claim to that title in the sense that it contained the Temple of the most High God. Even so, the city experienced its fair share of turmoil. It came under Roman rule in the year 63 BCE. The Maccabees aligned themselves with the Roman empire in the third Mithridatic war. Their alliance was hoped to free the Jews from Greek rule, when in reality it just opened the door to a change to Roman rule. When the war was over, the Romans remained in Jerusalem to secure the country as a Roman province. To repay a war favor, the Roman's placed Herod on the Judæan throne as a vassal king under Caesar. It remained under the rule of the Herods until Herod the Great's son, Herod Archelaus, failed in his role of protecting Roman interest in Judæa. The Romans placed a Roman proconsul over the province of Judæa in 6 CE. The Jewish hierarchy worked to understand the Roman political structure in order to protect their own positions and wealth. In many ways, they wanted to appease the Romans. This appeasement did not include a Messiah. Even so, the common Jews of the day were oppressed on several fronts. They faced the greed of their own leaders and the greed of their foreign rulers. They suffered with all manner of affliction, poverty, disease, and misfortune. It is not surprising that commoners from Judæa would seek out Jesus for relief; even a miracle.

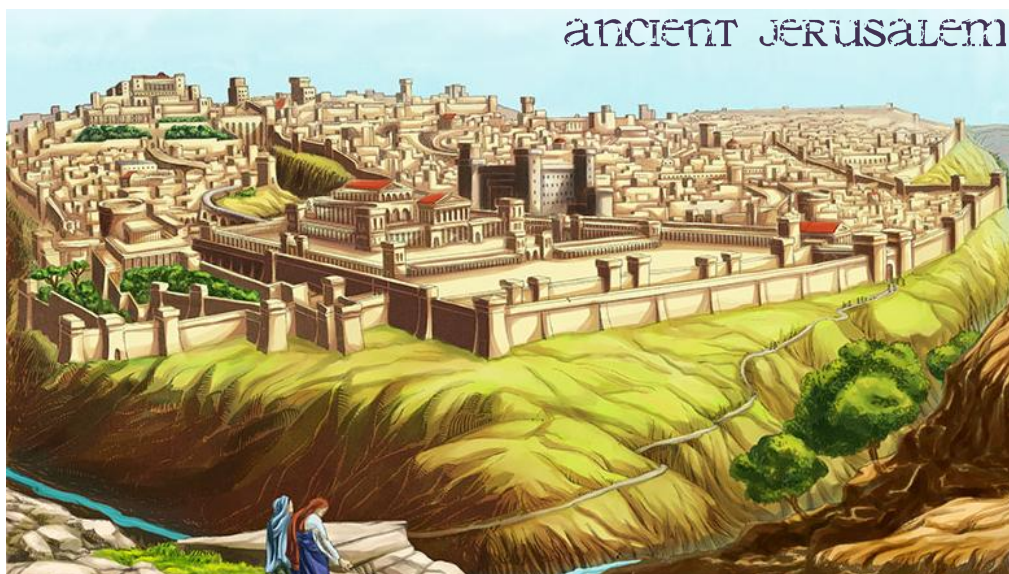
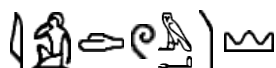
The distance from Judæa to the area in Decapolis, where Jesus is suspected to be preaching in this chapter, is about 95.5 miles. It would have taken 33 hours of continuous walking to make such a journey or about 8 days on foot to reach Jesus, and much longer if you were transporting a disabled loved one. The fact that people came from Judæa to see Jesus is evidence of their faith in His ability to heal. They came at great lengths and sacrifice. They also came against the desires of their own leaders.

- 39 - Jerusalem** – The word “Jerusalem” is translated from the Greek word “Ἱεροσόλυμα” or “Hierosolyma”. Translated literally it means “set ye double peace”.

Jerusalem was mentioned in the list of provinces, though it is the only city in the list. It is an honorable mention. Significant in the fact that it is the seat of Jewish government. The Great Sanhedrin met in Jerusalem. The Roman garrison was station in the Antonia Fortress within the walls of Jerusalem. Having individuals traveling from Jerusalem to see Jesus is significant. It shows that there was no place where there were not souls in need of saving.

- 40 - Idumæ** – The name “Idumæ” is translated from the Greek word “Ἰδουμαία” or “Idoumaia”. It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word “עֲדוֹם” or “edom”. The Hebrew word, translated literally, means red. It is a word closely associated with the name “esau” which literally means “hairy” or “rough”. Esau was said to be “edom” at birth, because he was red all over. Additionally, he sold his birth right for “red” or “edom” pottage.

The descendants of Esau settled in the area called Idumæ. Idumaea is the name of a region between southern Palestine and the Arabian Petraea. The area also had connections with ancient Egypt. Its name is found in Egyptian hieroglyphs as;



Needless to say, the area of Idumae was home to Abrahamic blood and a multitude of gentile blood. **“Those present at the Sea of Galilee from Idumaea had journeyed at least one hundred fifty miles to listen to this new teacher who spoke as one having authority.”** (The Four Gospels - Verse by verse, D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner, page 273).

41 - beyond Jordan – The word “Jordan” is translated from the Greek word “Ιορδάνης” or “Iordanēs”. Translated literally the word means “the descender”. It refers to the one major river in Palestine. Its course is a little more than 200 miles (300 km), from the roots of Anti-Lebanon to the head of the Dead Sea.

The term “beyond” the Jordan make reference to the land east of the Jordan River. This can be somewhat confusing since there are two distinct provinces on the East side of the Jordan River. The province of independent cities, still controlled by Rome, called Decapolis is located on the North East of the Jordan River. And the province of Perea, controlled by the Roman vassal King Herod Antipas, was located on the South East side of the Jordan River. Consequently, we assume that the Gospel writer is referring to people from both districts. Both areas were heavily populated with Gentiles, but had significant pockets of Jews as well. Decapolis was especially populated with gentile communities that had a long history of idol worship and heathen practices. Even these people had heard of Jesus and came to partake of His mighty works.

42 - Tyre – The word “Tyre” is translated from the Greek word “Τύρος” or “Tyros”. Translated literally, the word means “a rock”. It refers to a Phoenician city on the Mediterranean, very ancient, large, splendid, flourishing in commerce, and powerful by land and sea.

Tyre is an ancient Phoenician city. It was a rich city because of its port capabilities. It was said that the commerce of the ancient world was warehoused in Tyre. The Phoenicians were incredibly talented ship builders, far ahead of the rest of the world. Their ships were especially sea worthy and capable of transporting cargo. This brought great riches to the city on many fronts.

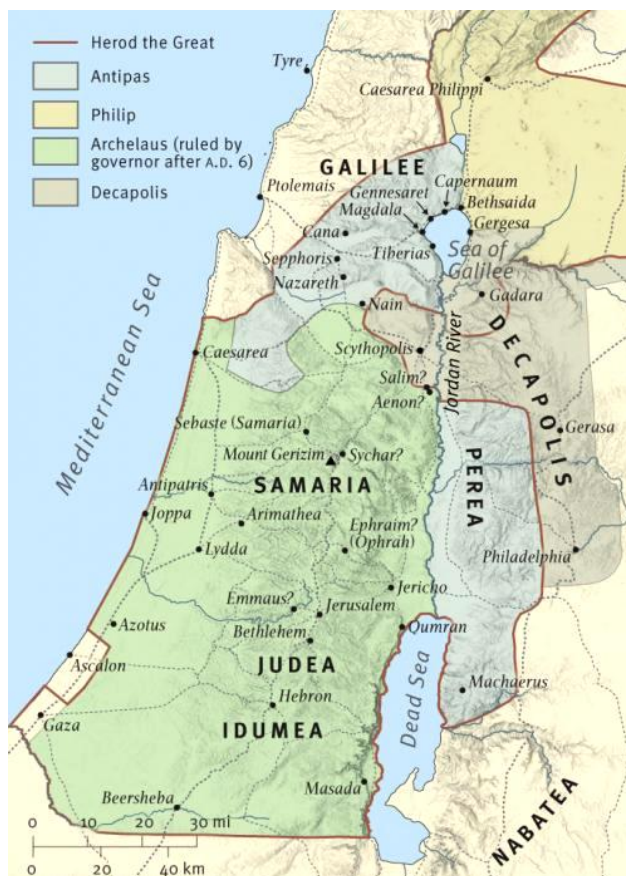
The city of Tyre was particularly known for the production of a rare and extraordinarily expensive sort of purple dye, produced from the murex shellfish, known as Tyrian purple. The color was, in ancient cultures, reserved for the use of royalty or at least the nobility.

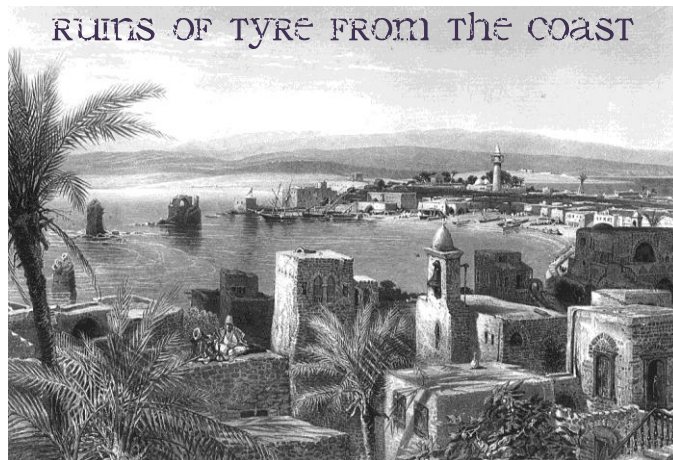
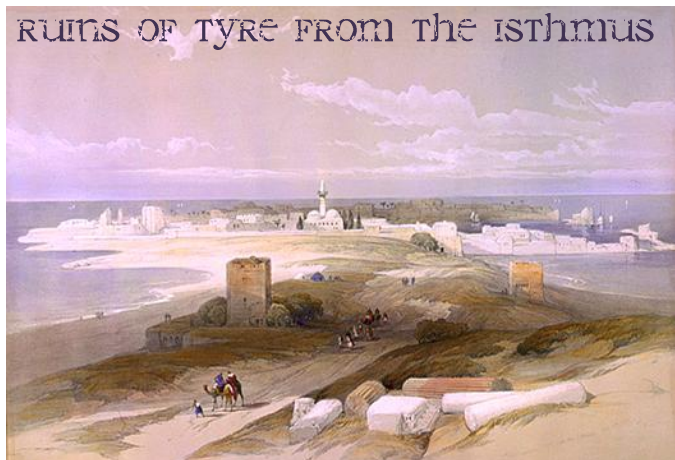
They are probably best known for a city extension that the city built into the Mediterranean. It had a long skinny cause way that restricted access, followed by a draw bridge and a walled island. The Phoenician people were incredible skilled in architecture, building, ship design, ship building, math, trade, and diplomacy.

The city had two harbors. One on the north side of the island stronghold, and the other on the south side of the coastal city.

The Phoenicians were also gentiles in nearly all ways. They had from time to time been enemies of the Jews and fought against them. They worshipped idols, and lived immoral lives following immoral standards. The Romans thrived here, building temples to false idols and finding a natural acceptance by the inhabitants.

Though there were Jews that had found their way to make Tyre their home, the people that traveled from Tyre to find Jesus in this chapter were most likely at least partially Gentiles. They too had heard of Jesus' mighty works and sought Him to receive His blessings and healings. The trip was about 53 miles and would have taken about 5 days to make the journey.



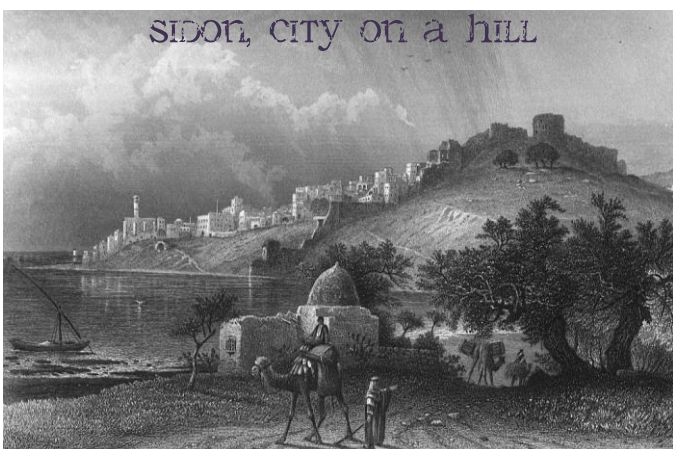


43 - Sidon – The word “Sidon” is translated from the Greek word “Σιδών” or “Sidōn”. Translated literally it means “hunting” or “fishery”. It refers to an ancient and wealthy city of Phoenicia, on the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea, some 25 miles north of Tyre. Sidon and Tyre were sister cities, both Phoenician and culturally similar.

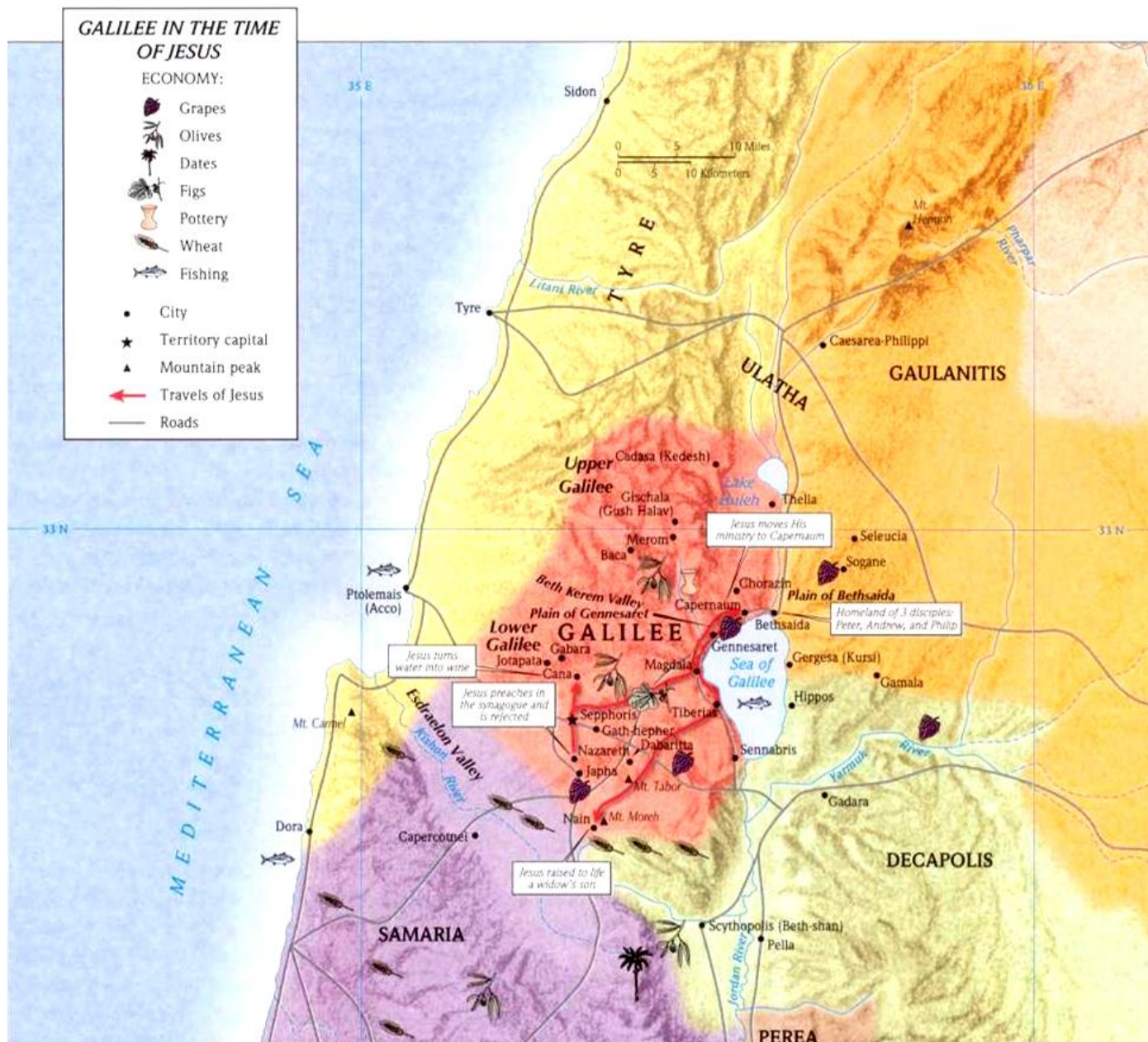
The name Sidon is suspected to have stemmed from the great-grandson of Noah through his son Canaan. Canaan was cursed as a result of his father’s sin. Ham had uncovered his father’s nakedness and was consequently cursed so that his lineage would not hold the Priesthood. There is no clear link between the city of Sidon and the lineage of Ham, other than a shared name.

The city dates back farther than Tyre, with archeological findings from the Neolithic period. It may be the oldest Phoenician city, and many believe that Tyre was colonized from Sidon. The city of Sidon was known for glass making, purple dyes, and skillful embroideries. Through time, Sidon had many conquerors and occupiers. They saw Assyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks and then finally Romans. Each of these gentile nations introduced additional false idols and immoral traditions. Sidon was a multicultural city, even being home to Jews.

When the Romans came to Sidon, they built a theater and other large structures, many of which were dedicated to false gods. A Roman colony was actually established in Sidon which was different than most of the Roman provinces. Amazingly, inhabitants of this city came all the way to Decapolis to see Jesus in this chapter. The trip was about 68 miles and would have taken about 6 days to make the journey.



44 - heard – The word “heard” is translated from the Greek word “ἀκούω” or “akouō”. It means to be endowed with the faculty of hearing, to hear or to perceive by the ear.

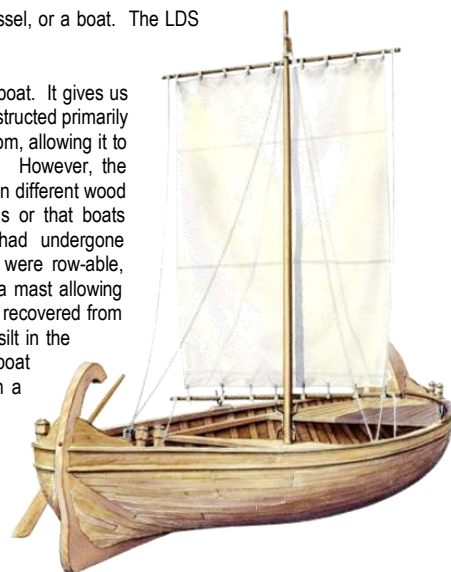


45 - **small ship** – The term “small ship” is translated from the Greek word “πλοῖάριον” or “ploiarion”. It means a small vessel, or a boat. The LDS footnote for the word “ship” clarifies the translation as “boat”.

In recent years, a boat was found in the Sea of Galilee from the time of Jesus. Lovingly, it has been called the Jesus boat. It gives us insight into what the boats of the time may have looked like. We have surmised that boats at the time of Jesus were constructed primarily of cedar planks joined together by pegged mortise and tenon joints and nails. They are shallow drafted with a flat bottom, allowing it to get very close to the shore while fishing. However, the boats are often composed of as many as ten different wood types, suggesting either a wood shortages or that boats were often made of scrap wood and had undergone extensive and repeated fixes. The boats were row-able, with four staggered rowers, and also had a mast allowing the fisherman to sail their boats. The boat recovered from the time of Jesus was recovered from the silt in the Sea of Galilee. It was a typical fishing boat measuring 27 feet long, 7.5 feet wide with a haul measuring 4.3 feet high.



This single boat discovery has not convinced all biblical scholars that we now know what the boats of the time look like. The discovered boat may have been unique or exceptional for the time.



Freeman wrote long before its discovery, **“We have no special description of the ships which were used on the Sea of Galilee. The most of them were probably small boats used for fishing purposes, and propelled by oars, while some had masts and sails. There were doubtless others which were used for pleasure or for passage ; and Josephus tells us of some in his day that were vessels of war. Frequent mention is made by the evangelists of the ships on the Sea of Galilee.”** (Manners and Customs of the Bible, James M. Freeman, page 349).

46 - should wait on – The word “wait” is translated from the Greek word “προσκαρτερέω” or “proskartereo”. It means to continue all the time in a place. It would appear that several faithful disciples went ahead of Jesus, secure a boat, prepared it for Him to teach from it, and waited for Him to arrive.

47 - throng – The word “throng” is translated from the Greek word “θλιβω” or “thlibō”. It means to press (as grapes), to compress a way, or distress. **“So large were the crowds that it became dangerous and a boat had to be kept ready, just off the shore, in case he might be overwhelmed with the crushing of the mob. His cures brought him into even greater danger; for the sick people did not even wait for him to touch them; they rushed to touch him.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 71).

48 - many – The word “many” is translated from the Greek word “πολύς” or “polys”. It means many, much or large.

Based on guidelines for the use of the word “multitude” in the Hebrew culture at the time, we assume that there were at least 2,000 people pressing upon Jesus. Many hoped to hear His words. Others hoped to touch Him, believing that merely touching the Savior would heal them. Other came with hopes that they could speak with Him and petition Him for a blessing or healing.

49 - pressed – The word “pressed” is translated from the Greek word “ἐπιπίπτω” or “epipiptō”. It means to fall upon, to rush or to press. The LDS footnote for the phrase “pressed upon him” translated the Greek phrase as “impetuously rushed at Him”. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase “they presses upon him” as “they fell upon him”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 3, Verse 10, page 70).

50 - touch – The word “touch” is translated from the Greek word “ἅπτομαι” or “haptomai”. It means to fasten one’s self to, adhere to, or cling to.

51 - plagues – The word “plagues” is translated from the Greek word “μάστιξ” or “mastix”. It means a whip, or a scourge. It is used metaphorically for a plague. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the term “plagues” as “scourges”. (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 3, Verse 10, page 70).

52 - unclean spirits – The term “unclean” is translated from the Greek word “ἀκάθαρτος” or “akathartos”. It means not cleansed or unclean.

Since the Savior of mankind was physically upon the Earth, and we understand that there must needs opposition in all things, we must conclude that the opposition was intense. The greater the good, the more the opposition. Consequently, we would expect the adversary of all that is good to open a full frontal attack on the children of men. It is not surprising that men were possessed of evil spirits and influenced by all manner of evil. Aside from this, the people of the time were very superstitious and blamed lots of things on the possession of evil spirits. Mental health disorders and unexplained illnesses were often attributed to evil spirits. Barclay wrote, **“At this time he was faced with one special problem, the problem of those who were possessed by demons. Let us remember that, whatever our belief about demons may be, these people were convinced they were possessed by an alien and an evil power external to themselves.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 71).

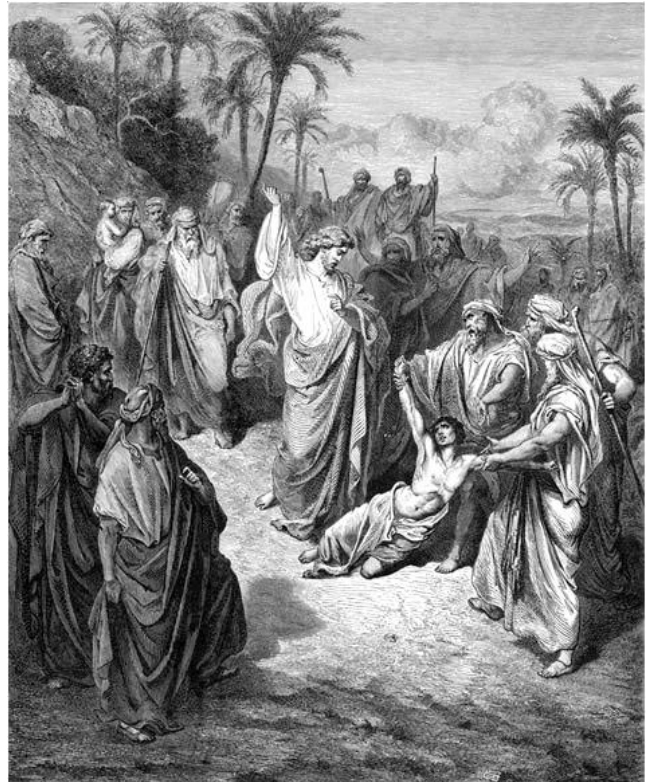
In this instance, those possessed of evil spirits were literally possessed. This might bother the reader thinking “How can the followers of Satan possess mortal men at will?” The answer is no. Only individuals who have willfully submitted themselves to sinful behavior to such a point that they have surrendered their agency become susceptible to this state. Though we all sin, few have sinned to the point of surrendering their agency.

53 - fell down – The term “fell down” is translated from the Greek word “προσπίπτω” or “prospiptō”. It means to fall forwards, fall down, prostrate one’s self before, in homage or supplication: at one’s feet. As rebellious and sinful as the evil spirits were, they recognized the presence of divine power and fell in submission to it.

54 - cried – The word “cried” is translated from the Greek word “κράζω” or “krazō”. It means to croak, or the cry of a raven. It also means to cry out loud. They vocally exclaimed through the body of him or her that they possessed.

55 - Thou art the Son of God – The word “art” is translated from the Greek word “εἶ” or “ei”. It means you are or thou art.

It is my belief that the spirits that possessed the men that day knew who Jesus was. They knew Him from the pre-mortal realms and came to earth without the hindrance of a veil of forgetfulness. They absolutely knew who He was. As members of the church of Jesus Christ, we have a knowledge of God’s plan for our salvation. We understand that we existed prior to earth life and we have an understanding of what happened in that existence. It is therefore no surprise that they called Him by His divine title. Biblical scholars who do not have the knowledge of the restoration struggle with this concept. Barclay, a very knowledgeable scriptorian, taught, **“They called Jesus the Son of God. What did they mean by that? They certainly did not use the term in what we might call a philosophical or a theological sense. In the ancient world Son of God was by no means an uncommon title. The kings of Egypt were said to be the sons of Ra, their god. From Augustus onwards many of the Roman Emperors were described on inscriptions as Sons of God.”** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 71). Though it is true that the adversary confused the hearts of men by using divine titles among rulers and kings, it was nothing of an uncommon title. Only the extremely prideful and self absorbed adopted this title. It was actually a title reserved for He who is might to save. Counterfeits may have laid claim to the title, but they lacked the attributes of the title. There is no other than the Only Begotten Son of the Father that could legitimately hold this title.



Barclay gives examples of the use of the title "Son of God" in scripture. While it is true that the title can be used refer to all of God's children, that we are all spirit sons and daughters of the most High, we are typically referred to using a lower case "s" in the term "son of God". There is a significant difference in the reference and its meaning. The upper case "S" refers to a mortal son, of which God has but one. Speaking of the former, Barclay wrote, **"The Old Testament has four ways in which it uses this term."**

- (i) **The angels are the sons of God. The old story in Genesis 6:2, says that the sons of God saw the daughters of men and were fatally attracted to them. Job 1:6, tells of the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord. It was a regular title for the angels.**
- (ii) **The nation of Israel is the son of God. God called his son out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1). In Exodus 4:22, God says of the nation, "Israel is my first-born son,"**
- (iii) **The king of the nation is the son of God. In 2 Samuel 7:14, the promise to the king is, 'I will be his father, and he shall be my son.'**
- (iv) **In the later books, which were written between the Testaments, the good man is the son of God. In Sirach 4:10, the promise to the man who is kind to the fatherless is, 'So shalt thou be a son of the Most High, And he shall love thee more than thy mother doth.' In all these cases the term son describes someone who is specially near and close to God. We get a parallel to this which shows something of its meaning in the New Testament. Paul calls Timothy his son (1 Timothy 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:18). Timothy was no blood relation to Paul at all, but there was no one, as Paul says (Philippians 2:19-22), who knew his mind so well. Peter calls Mark his son (1 Peter 5:13), because there was no one who could interpret his mind so well. When we meet this title in the simplicity of the gospel story we are not to think in terms of philosophy or theology or of the doctrine of the Trinity; we are to think of it as expressing the fact that Jesus' relationship to God was so close that no other word could describe it. Now these demon-possessed men felt that in them there was an independent evil spirit; they somehow felt that in Jesus was one near and kin to God; they felt that in the presence of this nearness to God the demons could not live and therefore they were afraid.'" (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, pages 71-72).**

56 - straitly – The word "straitly" is translated from the Greek word "πολύς" or "polys". It means many, much, or large. The Codex Sinaiticus translates the phrase "straitly charged" as "charged their minds". (Codex Sinaiticus: The H.T. Anderson New Testament, Translated by Henry Tompkins Anderson, Mark, Chapter 3, Verse 12, page 70).

One might equate this part of the chapter to someone who is being judged, maybe of a serious crime. The person in this analogy is innocent, but there are many who believe him to be guilty and even more who are unsure. As the man interacts with the public, there are those who would testify to his innocence. In this group comes forward a man of poor reputation; one who has been caught and convicted of serious crimes. He begins to testify that the person being judged is innocent of all crimes. Of course you can see the problem. His testimony is not only questionable, but does more harm than good. No matter what the man of poor reputation says, the people will associate his character with the one he is testifying for. Even if he were testifying of the truth, it is better that he said nothing. Jesus was not in need of testimony from those that acted contrary to God's will. **"As his custom was, he desired no witness from devils, only from those whose testimony came from on high."** (The Mortal Messiah: Volume 2, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 60). This helped those who were seeking the truth. It helped them follow the testimony of the spirit, which always leads to truth.



Another reason that Jesus may have wanted the possessed men to not testify of His divinity, and for that fact, He didn't want the general public to make their testimony widely known, was that the states political and religious leaders would have taken such testimonies as an assault on their positions. Barclay wrote, **"We must ask, 'Why did Jesus so sternly bid them to remain silent?' The reason was very simple and very compelling. Jesus was the Messiah, God's anointed king; but his idea of Messiahship was quite different from the popular idea. He saw in Messiahship a way of service, of sacrifice and of love with a cross at the end of it. The popular idea of the Messiah was of a conquering king who, with his mighty armies, would blast the Romans and lead the Jews to world power. Therefore, if a rumour were to go out that the Messiah had arrived, the inevitable consequence would be rebellions and uprisings, especially in Galilee where the people were ever ready to follow a nationalist leader."** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series - Revised Edition, William Barclay, page 72). Eventually, Jesus would make His divinity known. That was part of the plan. But that would quickly lead to His death; also part of the plan. Before this happened, Jesus needed to teach to the humble and spiritually prepared souls. He needed to establish His church, call His leaders, and restore divine truths. When that was done, and the timing was right, then He would make Himself known to the extent that the Great and Infinite Atonement could be brought to pass. All things would be brought together to bring to pass the divine plan of His Father.

