

THE CALL TO FOLLOW JESUS - 3

(Luk 4:13-21) 8/5/18

Grace Bible Church, Gillette, Wyoming

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I. SITUATION OF NAZARETH

- A. Nazareth was where Mary (Luk 1:26) and Joseph (Luk 2:4) lived before Jesus was born (Luk 2:39).
- B. While coming back from Egypt, Joseph was warned by God not to go to Judea, so they went back to Nazareth (Mat 2:21-23).
- C. Nazareth was not mentioned in the OT specifically and many saw it as a non-essential city in regard to the Messiah (Joh 7:42, 52). In addition, it was a town known for its crude and violent ways. It is for these two reasons that Nathaniel questioned if anything good (i.e. the Messiah) could come from Nazareth (Joh 1:46).
- D. Christ was forever identified as a Nazarene (Joh 18:5; 19:19; Act 2:22 cf. Act 22:8) and his followers were called Nazarenes (Act 24:5).
- E. The derogatory term, "Nazarene" depicted what the other prophets have said, namely that Christ was "despised and forsaken of men," "a man of sorrows" and "pierced through for our transgressions" (Isa 53:3-5; Isa 49:7 cf. Mat 12:24; 27:21-23; Joh 6:66).
- F. Nevertheless, Nazareth was indeed the town in which Jesus grew up and lived for most of His 33 years.
 1. It was a town situated about 55 miles north of Jerusalem in the region of Galilee.
 2. Nazareth itself it located on a hill about 5 1/2 miles from Mt Tabor.
 3. It contained several springs, the key for ancient any town throughout Israel.
 4. It was an agricultural town with crops such as wheat, grapes (vineyards), olives, and pomegranates. In addition, sheep were raised in nearby fields.
 5. Several occupations and domestic activities such as carpentry (Mat 13:55, *tektōn* - *craftsman*), stone masonry, selling of wool, and weaving were part of everyday life in Nazareth.

II. SPIRIT EMPOWERED MINISTRY (13-16)

- A. After Jesus' Temptation (13) - Considerable time lapsed from Luke's account of Jesus' temptation (Luk 4:1-13) to Jesus entering Nazareth (Luk 4:16). John's gospel fills in the details from Joh 1:19-4:43 with such events as: disciples first call (Joh 1:35-51), Jesus' first miracle (Jn 2:1-12), first Temple cleansing (Joh 2:13-25), Nicodemus' visit (Joh 3:1-21), and the Samaritan woman (Joh 4:4-43).
- B. Ministry in Power of the Spirit (14a) - However, Luke mentions several things about Jesus. In vs. 14, Luke tells us that after Jesus was baptized, successfully avoided sin, and the Spirit descended upon Him (Luk 3:21-22), He began His ministry with the power of the Spirit (cf. Luk 4:18). Moses parted the Red Sea (Exo 14:21-22), Joshua parted the Jordan River (Jos 3:16-17), Elijah divided the Jordan River (2Ki 2:7-8), but when Jesus was baptized the heavens parted and the Holy Spirit descended.
- C. Synagogues
 1. Synagogue is a transliteration of the Greek word *sunagōgē* which means a gathering or assembling together. Synagogues were established places where Jewish people congregated for the purpose of worship and instruction.
 2. Synagogues did not come into existence until after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple in 586 BC by the Babylonians. While in exile, the Jews began to congregate and ask questions regarding the Law. Men like Ezekiel and Ezra explained and expounded the Scriptures (Eze 14:1; 20:1 cf. Eze 7:10; Neh 8:1-9). This became the custom that was the origin for synagogues.
 3. Some have estimated that there were approx. 240 towns in Galilee in Jesus' day. Many of these towns had their own synagogue and the larger cities had more than one. According to the Jerusalem Talmud, there were 480 synagogues in Jerusalem alone.
 4. Since only ten men in a town were needed to establish a synagogue, there could have been several hundred synagogues in Israel. According to archaeologist Rachel Hachlili, *Nearly 200 ancient synagogues have been discovered by archaeologists at numerous sites in the Land of Israel as well as in the diaspora* (Synagogues: Before and After the Roman Destruction of the Temple, Biblical Archeology Review).
 5. Synagogues were not in competition with the Temple, either Zerubbabel's Temple or Herod's. There were no sacrifices at synagogues. The Temple remained the main place of Jewish sacrifices, priestly duties, and Feasts.

6. Synagogues for the most part, according to Philo, the “place of instruction.” It was religious instruction as well as civil instruction (formal and informal), so that we find Jewish people congregating at synagogues often, especially on the Sabbath.
- D. Taught in Synagogues (14b-15) -
1. Luke also tells us that Jesus went through Judea and Galilee stopping and teaching at all the synagogues. Since synagogues were where the people congregated for religious and civil activities, Jesus would have many opportunities to teach concerning the kingdom of heaven, especially on the Sabbath.
 2. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus’ main ministry was preaching and teaching, going from synagogue to synagogue in each town (Mat 4:23; 9:35; 13:54; Mar 1:21; 6:2; Luk 4:15; 6:6 13:10). In fact, one of the reasons why Jesus performed miracles was so that they would see His authority and listen to His teaching.
- E. Entered Nazareth Synagogue (16) - Luke emphasized the fact that “**He had been brought up**” in Nazareth. This was the first time He was back in Nazareth since His Spirit empowered ministry began. Jesus had a pious upbringing according to Luke because He had been customarily brought to the synagogue by His parents and He continued that custom into adulthood. We don’t know if it was Jesus’ custom to read nor do we know if He selected this passage. Nevertheless, it was a divine appointment of a divine reading from a divine person.

III. SCRIPTURE READ FROM ISAIAH 62:1-2a (17-19)

- A. Spirit of the Lord
1. Numerous passages mention the Spirit with reference to the Messiah. This in no way takes away from the fact that Jesus was the Son of God. It however, does highlight the unified work of the Trinity.
 2. It highlighted that it would identify the Messiah (Isa 61:1 cf. Joh 1:32-33 cf. Joh 1:35-36)
 3. It highlighted that Jesus would have a “spirit of wisdom and understanding” (Isa 11:2-5).
 4. It highlighted that Jesus would bring forth “justice to the nations” (Isa 42:1)
 5. It highlighted that Jesus would speak the LORD’s words (Isa 59:21).
- B. Anointed - Jesus was the “Anointed One” (*Christos - anointed one - Messiah*), the Messiah. He was **anointed** with the Holy Spirit as an act of divine “choosing” (Isa 42:1), divine identification (“My Servant” - Isa 42:1), and divine authority (“My words” - Isa 59:21).
- C. Preach the Gospel - As Messiah, Jesus would preach the gospel of salvation to the Jews. But they would reject that salvation when they understood that Jesus Himself was the way of salvation (Joh 6:66; Mat 27:20 cf. Joh 14:6; Joh 6:51, 68-69).
- D. Give Sight to the Blind - No one in the OT healed the blind. This was a miracle assigned only to the Messiah through the Spirit. It was this identification of the Messiah that gave confidence to John the Baptist in his moment of doubt (Luk 7:19-22). It also had application to those who were in spiritual darkness to receive Jesus who was the light (Joh 8:12 cf. 2Co 4:4).
- E. Set Captives Free - Isaiah was not talking about literal imprisonment. Rather he was referring to mankind who was captive to sin and Satan (2Ti 2:26). Jesus came to set us free by His death on the cross. Those who come to Him by faith receive His forgiveness (Mat 11:28-30). He also frees us with the teaching from His Word (Joh 8:32).
- F. Favorable Year of the Lord
1. This may have been a reference to the year of Jubilee (50th year) when debts were forgiven and slaves set free (Lev 25:8-17).
 2. In the same way it is a time of grace. God has always given grace, but there has never been a time like now when God’s grace came in the revealed person of the Son of God (Joh 1:14, 16; Heb 1:1-2).
 3. Jesus purposely omitted the next phrase to indicate that there is another time coming, a time of God’s Wrath (the day of vengeance of our God). These times coincide with the Lord’s two advents (1st and 2nd Coming).

IV. SCRIPTURE FULFILLED AT NAZARETH (21)

- A. This was a revelation by Jesus that He was the one who fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy and all the prophecies. This was a full declaration that Jesus was the Messiah.
- B. The people in His hometown had the opportunity to hear Jesus’ declaration in the beginning of His ministry.
- C. Jesus was fulfilling this prophecy and He would continue to fulfill this prophecy (“fulfill” - perfect participle of *plēroō*). He would do so through His death and resurrection, the basis for fulfilling all prophecies.