

First Rejection at Nazareth

Luke 4:16-30

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Texts:

Luke 4:16-30,

16. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.

17. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written.

28. “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind,

19. to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

20. Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

21. and he began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

22. All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

23. Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

24. “I tell you the truth,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.

25. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land.

26. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

27. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed – only Naaman the Syrian.”

28. All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

29. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff.

30. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Commentary:

I. Jesus was rejected by the Jews of his hometown twice, once at the beginning of the great Galilean ministry (Luke 4:16-31a) and one at the end of the Galilean Ministry (Matthew 13:54ff).

A. Jesus gave even these who tried to kill him a second chance.

II. It was the custom of Jesus to regularly attend synagogue worship and to participate in a public way in the services.

A. According to Jewish obligatory customs, those reading in synagogue worship from the law and the prophets were required to stand while reading.

Luke 4:16-20, He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him,

I. Jesus opened/unrolled the scroll which was similar to those in Jewish synagogues today.

II. Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1ff.

A. Jesus was evidently permitted to read any passage he wished.

III. This passage stated that the Messiah would:

A. have the Spirit of God upon him.

B. be anointed to preach good tidings to the poor.

C. proclaim release to the captives. 2 Timothy 2:26, and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will.

D. proclaim recovering of sight to the blind. John 9:39, Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind."

E. set at liberty those who are bruised.

F. proclaim the acceptable year of God.

IV. Jesus closed/rolled up the scroll and returned it to the attendant, sat down to teach as was the custom of that time, and had all the eyes in the synagogue fastened on him/glued on him.

V. The fact that every eye was fastened on Jesus indicated interest in what was read and the marvelous way in which Jesus had read the passage.

Luke 4:21, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

I. Here Jesus declared that he was the fulfillment of this prophecy, the long awaited Messiah.

Luke 4:22, All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

I. The initial reaction to Jesus’ presentation was favorable.

A. Jesus was an unsurpassed orator. His speech is here called “words of grace.”

B. They were amazed that a carpenter’s son who had grown up among them could speak in such a masterful way.

C. They knew Joseph who may have still been living at that time.

Luke 4:23, 24, Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.” “I tell you the truth,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown.”

I. Jesus anticipated the objections of the people of his hometown.

A. Jesus anticipated that his listeners would want a duplication of the miracles performed in Capernaum. Matthew 11:23, And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.

B. Jesus said no prophet has honor in his hometown and that miraculous performances would not change this.

- C. The people must have by then begun to murmur while Jesus was speaking.
- D. This same type objection continued even to the cross. Here: “Physician, heal thyself...” Cross: “He saved others; himself he cannot save.” (Matthew 27:42)
- E. Plutarch said, “You will find that few of the most prudent and wisest of mankind have been appreciated in their own country.”
- F. “Familiarity breeds contempt.”
- G. The Nazarenes may have been jealous that Jesus had performed miracles in Capernaum instead of in his home town, Nazareth.

Luke 4:25, 26, I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

- I. The Old Testament record of these events is to be found in 1 Kings 17 and 18.
 - A. This famine lasted three years. James 5:17, Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.
 - B. A Gentile widow, a Sidonian, was the one to whom Elijah was sent, not to Jewish widows.
 - C. The Jews of that day were filled with unbelief. Elijah went to a person with an open mind.

D. So it was with Jesus who worked miracles in Capernaum rather than Nazareth.

Luke 4:27, And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed – only Naaman the Syrian.”

I. Many lepers were suffering in the days of Elisha, but he only healed Naaman the Syrian, a Gentile.

A. This account is found in 2 Kings 5:1-14.

B. The prophet then as Jesus in his day performed miracles among people of faith, Jew or Gentile.

II. These illustrations aroused prejudice against Jesus from the Jews in the synagogue at Nazareth.

Luke 4:28, All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

I. Jesus had spoken the truth to these people in the synagogue, but they were filled with wrath nonetheless!

II. We see similar rage elsewhere.

A. Stephen. Acts 7:51-54, “You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your father: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him – you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.” When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.

- B. Paul. Acts 22:22, The crowd listened to Paul until he said this. Then they raised their voices and shouted, “Rid the earth of him! He’s not fit to live!”

III. Jesus, Stephen, and Paul spoke the truth in spite of the fiercest opposition.

Luke 4:29, 30, They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

I. These “religious leaders” of Jesus’ hometown attempted to murder him.

- A. These “religious leaders” were attempting to kill Jesus without a trial and without due process of law.

- B. Unbridled anger is a terrible thing.

- C. This uncontrolled “lynch law” is seen at other times and places in the New Testament.

- 1. John 8:59, At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

- 2. John 10:21, But others said, “These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

- 3. Acts 21:31, 32, While they were trying to kill him, news reached the commander of the Roman troops that the whole city of Jerusalem was in an uproar. He at once took some officers and soldiers and ran down to the crowd.

When the rioters saw the commander and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

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Questions

1. Jesus went to _____, where he had been _____ up, and on the _____ he went into the _____, as was his _____.

2. Jesus stood up and _____ from the _____ of the _____.

3. Jesus said this prophecy was fulfilled that day. The prophecy said, "The _____ of the _____ is on me, because he _____ me to _____ to the _____. He has sent me to _____ for the _____ and _____ of _____ for the _____, to _____ the year of the _____'s _____.

4. Jesus said, "No _____ is _____ in his _____." The people of Nazareth wanted Jesus to do these miracles such as had been performed in _____.

5. During the _____ that lasted _____ and a _____ years, Elijah was sent to only one _____. This widow lived in _____ in _____.

6. _____ the prophet healed only one _____, _____ the _____.

7. What point was Jesus making in regard to these two examples? _____

8. What was the significance of Jesus' using a Sidonian and a Syrian in these illustrations? _____

9. All the people in the _____ were _____ when they heard this, drove Jesus out of _____ and intended to kill him by throwing him off the _____ on which _____ was built.

10. These religious people conducted themselves in a dreadfully sinful way! When have you seen religious people conduct themselves in flagrantly sinful ways? _____

11. Jesus _____ right through the _____ and went on his _____.

12. Jesus was rejected by people of his _____
_____. He even gave these people a _____
_____.

13. By applying Isaiah's prophecy to himself, he clearly stated he was the long awaited _____.

14. _____ anticipated the _____ of the
_____ of his _____.

15. Others in the New Testament who suffered because of the wrath of religious people include _____ and _____.
(See Acts 7 and Acts 22).

Finished exam can be mailed or dropped off at:
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