



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Why Nazareth Rejected Prophet-Messiah Jesus

Bible Reading: Luke 4:14-30

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I. Nazareth's Synagogue – the Setting for Jesus' Inaugural Sermon

- A. Nazareth at Jesus' Time – an Insignificant Village
- B. Nazareth's Synagogue – Jesus' Custom/Habit — a Spiritual Discipline
- C. A Homecoming Goes Wrong

II. Jesus the Returning Hometown Hero

- A. Jesus the Hometown Hero: 'Son of Joseph,' & Synagogue Reader (Lk. 4:16-30)
 - "Isn't this Joseph's son?" "The question is not...a denigration...Rather, [it] celebrates the fact that Jesus is a member of their own subgroup because Nazareth is Jesus' [hometown]." –Aaron Kuecker
 - "The people of Nazareth respond favorably; [Jesus'] 'gracious words' impress them. 'Is not this Joseph's son?' Expresses approval and local pride." –John Barton

III. Nazareth Rejects the Isaiah-Interpretation of Jesus the Prophet-Messiah

- A. Rejection not based on Jesus' reading of Isaiah
- B. "What offended...was his...interpretation of...their favorite passage of Scripture." –C. Evans, J. Sanders

IV. Jesus identifies as the Prophet-Messiah

A. Jesus is the Promised Messiah (the Christ)

❖ Jesus "found...where it's written: 18 The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me"...21 Then he told them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read." (4:17-8, 21)

B. Jesus identifies as a Prophet

• "That Jesus is a prophetic Messiah is shown clearly in...Nazareth" –Luke T. Johnson

C. Jesus, the 'Un-acceptable Prophet' proclaims the 'Acceptable Year' (Lk. 4:19, 24))

•“Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown.” –Jesus (4:24)

V. From Praise to Rage; from Hero to Zero! Why the Radical Change in Attitude toward Jesus?

- “They were all speaking well of him & were amazed by the gracious words...from his mouth” (Lk. 4:22)
- “When they heard this, everyone...was enraged. 29 They got up, drove him out of town, & brought him to the edge of the hill...their town was built on, intending to hurl him over the cliff.” (Lk. 4:28-29)
- “Many readers are puzzled by this apparent shift from 4:22, where the response...is (if not admiring) at least neutral, to 4:28, where wrath spills over into attempted manslaughter.” –Luke T. Johnson

A. When did Nazareth's Praise turn to Rage? At Jesus' Elijah-Elisha Application

❖ 24 He...said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25...There were...many widows in Israel in Elijah's days... 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them except a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27 At the prophet Elisha's time...many in Israel...had leprosy...yet not one of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” 28 When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was enraged.” (4:24-8)

B. The Nazarenes claim Privileged Status as Jesus' own Townsfolk

- Jesus told them, “No doubt you'll quote this proverb to me: ‘Doctor, heal yourself. What we've heard took place in Capernaum, do here in your hometown [Nazareth] also.’” (Lk. 4:23)
- “The proverb in 4:23 should be taken to mean that a physician's first responsibility is to his own family [his own people, own townsfolk].” –Myron Kauk
- “Jesus' townsfolk assume that their privileged status as members of Jesus' subgroup [Nazareth's townsfolk] grants them special entitlement to benefits conferred by Jesus.” –Aaron Kuecker

C. Jesus' Message: Nazarenes Don't have a Privileged Claim on God's Promises

• Nazareth “encounters...a prophet, with whom the hometown & its people cannot assume special privilege.” – Sharon Ringe

D. Concept: Messianic Benefits for Nazarenes & Israel; Vengeance for their Enemies (Outsiders)

• Note: What Jesus Did Not Read: “to proclaim...the day of our God's vengeance” (Is. 61:2b)

E. The Nazarenes view themselves as Entitled to God's Favor/blessings

- Who are the “poor, captives, blind, & oppressed”? Nazarenes: “It's us,” the ‘in-group’
- The “‘poor, captive, blind, & oppressed’ do not apply exclusively to any in-group but, on the contrary, apply to those to whom God wishes them to apply. God sent Elijah & Elisha to outsiders.” –J. Sanders
- “God's freedom to bless those whom God wills in the way that God wills” — Sharon Ringe

VI. Examples of Elijah & Elisha: No Privileged Entitled Insiders; God's Grace to Outsiders**A. The “poor, captives, blind, & oppressed”? anyone who is the object of God's grace –Jesus****B. Jesus Doesn't Privilege his own 'Entitled Townsfolk'****C. Jesus: 'I'm God's Prophet, not your Returning Hometown Hero'**

- “Jesus...is reacting against claims to entitlement based upon [membership of] the...Nazareth subgroup. ... Jesus' townsfolk...resist...Jesus' refusal to privilege his [own Nazareth] subgroup while restricting the extension of benefits to the ‘other’ [outsiders].” –Aaron Kuecker
- It's the prophets' “unwillingness to privilege one's own people because of a commitment always to speak the word of God, that [means] prophets are often unacceptable [to their hometown].” –Aaron Kuecker

D. Elijah & Elisha: God's Sovereign Grace extended to 'Outsiders'**VII. Results of Nazareth's Rejection of Jesus****A. Jesus the Rejected Prophet**

• Jesus' “refusal to grant exceptional resources to his Nazareth in-group, [means] Jesus is no longer an acceptable member of his [own hometown].” –Aaron Kuecker

B. Jesus is Disowned by his Hometown, Nazareth

C. Jesus relocates to Capernaum. (He does Not 'turn to the Gentiles')