



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Luke 4:14-30

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14... Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread throughout the entire vicinity. 15 He was teaching in their synagogues, being praised by everyone. 16 He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. As was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. 17 The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written:

18 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 release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord's favor.

20 He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. And the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. 21 Then he began to tell them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled even as you heard it being read."

22 They were all speaking well of him and were amazed by the gracious words that came from his mouth; yet they said, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

23 Then he said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to me: 'Doctor, heal yourself. What we've heard that took place in Capernaum, do here in your hometown also.'"

24 He also said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. 25 But I say to you, there were certainly many widows in Israel in Elijah's days, when the sky was shut up for 3 years and 6 months while a great famine came over all the land. 26 Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them except a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. 27 And in the prophet Elisha's time, there were many in Israel who had leprosy, and yet not one of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian."

28 When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was enraged. 29 They got up, drove him out of town, and brought him to the edge of the hill that their town was built on, intending to hurl him over

the cliff. 30 But he passed right through the crowd and went on his way. (Luke 4:14-30)

SUMMARY:

In Luke's Gospel, the curtain rises on Jesus' ministry in his hometown of Nazareth. The local boy returns a hero, and the synagogue is packed for the occasion. He opens Isaiah's scroll, reads the prophecy, and declares, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." The crowd marvels at "Joseph's son," but Jesus challenges their expectations with proverbs that expose their hearts. What they hear is not a promise of hometown privilege, but a proclamation of God's sovereign grace. The people of Nazareth, certain they deserve the Messiah's favor, are confronted with a shocking truth: God's mercy is not inherited—it reaches whomever He chooses, even outsiders. Citing Elijah and Elisha, Jesus shatters their sense of entitlement. The homecoming celebration turns to fury; admiration to rage. They drive him to the cliff's edge, but God's prophet walks away untouched. Nazareth's rejection reveals Jesus' mission: to proclaim God's great Jubilee—salvation for all on an equal basis, not just a favored few.

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

A. Nazareth at Jesus' Time – an Insignificant Village

• "Jesus grew up...in Galilee in the first three decades of the 1st-century CE. His environment was thoroughly Jewish. His home village was Nazareth. Although the village was small (somewhere between 200 and 400 inhabitants), there was a synagogue. There were no pagan temples or schools. In all likelihood not a single non-Jew lived in Nazareth at that time." [Mark A. Powell, *Methods of Matthew*, p. 131]

• "Nazareth would have been about 60 acres in size, sustaining a population of between 100 & 400, a small village devoted wholly to agriculture... The village was secluded & not on any main highway." - Marianne Race

• "Because of its isolation from economic centers and trade routes during Jesus' day...Nazareth did not participate in the major rhythms of Galilean commerce. Its marginality probably contributed to the apparent disdain expressed [by] Nathaniel... 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' (Jn. 1:46)." [W.E. Mills, *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 605]

B. Nazareth's Synagogue – Jesus' Custom/Habit

• "Luke's presentation indicates not only that Jesus regularly demonstrated his piety by attendance of the synagogue on the Sabbath, but also that it was his habit to take the role of the one who read & expounded the Scriptures." [Joel B. Green, *Luke*, p. 209]

C. Synagogue/Church-Attendance – a Spiritual Discipline

• Jesus "went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read..." (Lk. 4:16b)

• Jesus...engaged in transforming habits (i.e., spiritual disciplines). He developed habits...[which] prepare the way for the Lord to work for us, in us, & through us." [Stephen W. Robbins, *Transforming Habits*, p]

• Jesus' habit was to go to the synagogue on the Sabbath. Luke tells us, 'On the Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue as was his custom'. Jesus considered worship & learning about God & His ways on the Sabbath normal spiritual behavior." [R. James Tasker, *Restoring Cultural Foundations*, p. 102]

• There are "both...personal & inter-personal [spiritual] disciplines...The Bible teaches both. Moreover, Jesus practiced both...The Bible tells us...on at least four occasions Jesus got alone to pray (...Lk. 4:42) ... We're [also] told in Luke 4:16 'as was his custom, Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day,' thus engaging in inter-personal spiritual disciplines." [Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual*

Disciplines..., p. 5]

•“Going to Church follows Jesus’ example: If we are to be like Jesus, then like Him we will attend the public worship as ordained by God for our day, along with others who want to obey God & be like Jesus...How can anyone claim to follow Jesus who won’t worship God as Jesus did? As Jesus customarily worshiped with God’s people, so should we.” [Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines with the Church*, pp.]

D.Luke’s Literary Chiasm –centered on Isaiah 61

❖ Jesus “stood up to read.

➤ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and

✓ unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written:

o‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me...’

✓ He rolled up the scroll,

➤ gave the scroll back to the attendant,

❖ and sat down”

•“The chiasmus begins in Luke 4:16 and ends in Luke 4:20. A series of verbs: ἀνέστη (stood up), ἐπέδοθη (was given), ἀναπτύξας (opening), in Luke 4:16-17ab describes the actions of Jesus preceding the reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Another series of antonymic verbs in Luke 4:20, and this time in reverse order: πτύξας (rolling up), ἀποδούς (handing over), ἐκάθισεν (sat down) describes the actions of Jesus after the reading from the scroll of Isaiah. In this way, the lexical frame functions as a spotlight upon the biblical quotation, serving to focus the attention of the audience and to create a sense of expectation. In fact, Luke does not hesitate to note that such an effect was indeed achieved, for ‘the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him’ (4:20).” [Piotr Blajer, “Luke’s Skillful Account of the Unsuccessful Inaugural Speech in Nazareth,” *Liber Annuus*, Vol. 71 (2021) p. 193]

•This [Chiasm] is perhaps the most emphatic citation formula in the NT. Certainly Luke nowhere else goes to such dramatic lengths to insert the written text [Isaiah 61] with all its physicality & attendant symbolic currency, into the narrative [Lk. 4].” [Rafael Rodriguez, “Textual Orientations,” in JB Tucker (ed.) *T&T Handbook of Social Identity in the NT*, p. 201]

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

•“...to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor, and the day of our God’s vengeance...” (Is. 61:2)

•“Jesus stopped reading after the words ‘favorable year’ & did not go on to read ‘day of vengeance’ [which] indicates a clear distinction between [Jesus’] first & second comings....Jesus inaugurated this messianic ministry, but it will not be fulfilled in its entirety until His return...At His first coming, Jesus came to proclaim ‘good news to the poor’ The Year of Jubilee...His mission at His first coming was to bring comfort & hope, not condemnation & vengeance. The latter [‘day of vengeance’] would result at His second coming.” [Michael Rylnik (ed.) *Moody Handbook of Messianic Prophecy*, p. 168]

F.A Homecoming Goes Wrong

•“Homecomings are not always easy. When Jesus returns to his own hometown & teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath, he encounters hostility (Lk. 4:16-30).” [Robert B. Slocum, *Seeing & Believing*, p.]

•Jesus’ ‘homecoming did not go well at all (Lk. 4:16-30). Initially impressed by his preaching (4:22), the town he grew up in turned on him & attempted to murder him (4:28-30)...‘No prophet is accepted in his hometown’ Jesus [said]... Applied to you & me, it may be a moment of sadness & disappointment. Applied to Jesus, it is an event of tragic eternal consequences that even causes [Jesus] to be ‘amazed’ at such unbelief (Mk. 6:6)... As we consider how Jesus was treated by his own hometown...[let’s] reflect on how we treat...the One who was rejected by those who were certain they knew him best.” [Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Mark*, p. 117]

II. Could Jesus Read? Was he Illiterate?

•15 [Jesus] was teaching in their synagogues... 16 He came to Nazareth... And as was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.” (Lk. 4:15-16)

A. Luke’s Portrait of Jesus as Synagogue-Reader/Teacher

- The Lk. 4 “scene suggests that Jesus was literate in the sense of being able to read publicly.” –Sean Freyne
- “Christians...remember[ed] Jesus as a scribal-literate teacher (e.g. Lk. 4:16-20).” –Chris Keith
- “We know from his Nazareth sermon that [Jesus] could read (Lk. 4:16-20).” –Mark L. Strauss
- “Luke portrays Jesus as having a level of literacy that lies somewhere between craftsmen’s literacy & scribal literacy.” –Jordan J. Ryan

B. “Jesus was an Illiterate Peasant from the peasant village of Nazareth” — William Kania

- “The literacy rate of [Israel] was about 3%. Jesus was an illiterate peasant from the peasant village of Nazareth. Peasants aren’t dumb, they simply aren’t literate (They don’t read & write).” –William Kania
- “Economically & socially Jesus was a peasant. He was probably technically illiterate –he may not have been able to read & write.” –Robert W. Funk
- “Jesus is an illiterate peasant, both healer & revolutionary” –John Dominic Crossan
- “Jesus was an illiterate peasant who did not care about the OT Scriptures & certainly could not have taught lengthy parables or any long discourses.” –John Dominic Crossan
- “Jesus was a peasant from a peasant village. Therefore...Jesus was illiterate until the opposite is proven.” –John Dominic Crossan, *Birth of Christianity*, p. 235] Note: This contains a logical fallacy of hasty generalization by inferring Jesus’ illiteracy solely from the low literacy rate of his community. NT /historical evidence suggests Jesus had some degree of literacy despite the population statistic.
- “Affirming that the vast majority of Jews at the time of Jesus were illiterate does not automatically mean that Jesus had to be illiterate too.” (Chris Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, p. 168)
- “All 4...Gospels...picture Jesus as a speaker of authoritative & often disturbing words, & not as a reader, writer, or head of a school tradition.” –Werner Kelber

C. Jesus had at most Craftsman’s Literacy

- Jesus “was either illiterate (unable to read or write at all) or possessed at best a craft literacy... Despite Lk. 4:17-18, it’s not likely that Jesus could read literary works.” –Douglas E. Oakman
- “That Jesus did not hold scribal-literacy doesn’t negate...some level of...craftsman’s literacy.” Chris Keith
- “The historical Jesus had...at most the literacy of a craftsman, not that of the scribe.” –Sean Freyne

D. Jesus had more than Craftsman’s Literacy

- “In one aspect Jesus was atypical...in the 1st-century AD: he was literate, & his literacy probably extended beyond the mere ability to sign one’s name... [i.e.,] ‘tradesmen’s literacy...to ‘scribal literacy’.” –J. Meier
- “When they grew up Jesus & [James, his brother] will have become...adult male Israelites who read from the Torah in Hebrew on the Sabbath & at major festivals.” –Maurice Casey

E. Jesus Taught in the Synagogues

- Jesus “was teaching in their synagogues, being praised by everyone. 16 He came to Nazareth...As was his custom, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read.” (Lk. 4:15-16)
- Each [of 4 Gospels] claims that, by teaching in the Nazareth synagogue, Jesus was simply doing in his hometown what he had already done elsewhere in Galilee to great applause. Luke further claims [this] was Jesus’ custom (4:16) ...Portraying Jesus as a synagogue-teacher ...attribute[s] to Jesus

actions reserved exclusively for the scribal-literate class.” [Chris Keith, *Jesus against the Scribal Elite*, p. 44]

- In the 4 Gospels “there are... 11 references [to] Jesus ‘teaching’ in the synagogues & 2 references to him ‘preaching’ [there].” [Aurel-Onisim Lehaci, *Jesus’ Epithets*, p. 95]

F.The Issue: “Did Jesus...struggle to read a scroll?” — Jeff Kennedy

- “Did Jesus...struggle to read a scroll? A growing number of scholars think so. Luke’s account of Jesus reading in the synagogue (Luke 4:16-30) is routinely challenged today in academia.” –Jeff S. Kennedy

G.Jesus Taught as a Public Authority Figure (Jn. 7:15)

- “...Jesus went up into the temple & began to teach. 15 Then the Jews were amazed & said, ‘How is this man so learned, since he hasn’t been trained?’” (John 7:14-15 CSB)
- Could Jesus “read as a public authority figure[?]...[Luke] depicts Jesus as a customary reader in the synagogue (Lk. 4:16-20)...The Synoptic Gospels [Matt., Mark, Luke] & John...portray him as at least orally proficient with a variety of texts, routinely & skillfully interacting over [the] interpretation in various contexts.” [Jeff S. Kennedy, *Prophet Mighty in Deed & Word*, p.]
- “The Jewish leaders were astonished & said, ‘How does this man know so much when he has never had formal instruction?’ (Jn. 7:15 NET) Note: Greek “How does this man know learning since he has not been taught?” The implication here is not that Jesus never went to school...but that he wasn’t the disciple of a particular rabbi & hadn’t had formal or advanced instruction under a recognized rabbi...” [NET]
- “I would argue...that Jesus was not formally educated as a scribe would have been [i.e., not attained scribal-literacy], but had attained a level of literacy sufficient to read a Hebrew text aloud in a public setting.” [Jordan J. Ryan, *Role of the Synagogue in the Aims of Jesus*, pp. 187-8]
- Jesus is a “man of literacy...but without formal rabbinic training.” — Werner Kelber
- “The claim of John 7:15 is simply that...Jesus’ audience...considers him to be...a person whose oral teaching reflects scribal literacy even though they assume he does not possess it.” –Chris Keith
- “The comments in Jn. 7:15...should not be taken to imply that Jesus...[was] illiterate. In fact, the opposite is probably the intended sense...Despite having no formal training, Jesus... evince[d] remarkable skill in ...Scripture & ability to interpret it... [This] lend[s] support to the probability that Jesus was literate.” (Craig Evans) ...For Evans...the evidence is in favor of a Jesus who could at least read Hebrew Scriptures & interpret them in Aramaic ...The most popular position on a literate Jesus is that, while he...was not the recipient of scribal education, he...could at least read the Hebrew Scriptures.” –Chris Keith

H.Jesus: “not a scribal-literate teacher, but many...likely thought he was” –Chris Keith

- Chris Keith concludes that “Jesus most likely was not a scribal-literate teacher, but many of his audiences likely thought he was...[Thus,] Jesus most likely did not possess...scribal literacy, but nevertheless managed to convince many among his audiences that he did...Keith’s argument ‘does not require that Jesus intended to convince his audiences that he was a scribal-literate teacher, only that he did convince them’.)...Jesus...confuse[d] his audience concerning his scribal-literate status... Jesus’ own life and ministry produced conflicting convictions about his scribal-literate status...[This is] why early Christians remembered Jesus as a scribal-illiterate teacher, a scribal-literate teacher, & as someone who confused his audiences on the issue.” [Chris Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, pp. 5, 26, 150, 165]
- “Although I propose that Jesus likely did not hold scribal literacy, I also propose that if one were able to ask Jesus’ contemporaries whether he was a scribal-literate teacher, the answer one received would depend upon which contemporary of Jesus one asked.” [Chris Keith, *Jesus’ Literacy*, p. 168]

I.Luke portrays Jesus with scribal-literate skills

- “Luke attributes directly to Jesus scribal-literate skills that status as a carpenter would preclude...”

Luke's attribution of scribal-literate skills to Jesus is clear...The ability to read publicly, identifying words quickly in script, were not a skill...most Palestinian Jews of the 1st-century CE possessed..." [Chris Keith, Jesus against the Scribal Elite, p. 62]

III. Nazarenes were Scandalized by Jesus' Rumoured Illegitimate Birth

•"Many who heard him were astonished saying... 'Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary ...?' And so they took offense at him." (Mk. 6:2-3 NET) "took offense" Greek skandalizo: to cause to stumble, be offended

A. 'Isn't this...the Son of Mary...?' (Mk. 6:3)

•"When the Sabbath came, [Jesus] began to teach in the synagogue. Many...were astonished, saying, "Where did he get these ideas? And what is this wisdom that has been given to him? What are these miracles that are done through his hands? 3 Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary & brother of James, Joses, Judas, & Simon? And aren't his sisters here with us?" & so they took offense at him." (Mk. 6:2-3)

➤"Unusual... suggesting that Jesus' birth was in some way...illegitimate"—R. Longenecker

•"Isn't this the carpenter, Mary's son...?" (Mk. 6:3) "It would've been unusual in a parochial [insular, limited] society to identify someone by reference only to his mother, and so to speak of Jesus as 'Mary's son' ...may be something of a taunt on the lips of the local townsfolk, suggesting that Jesus' birth was in some way improper or illegitimate—and so may witness indirectly to rumors that were then current [at that time]." [Richard N. Longenecker, Studies in Hermeneutics..., p. 179]

➤"Rumors...Jesus was illegitimate...circulated in his own lifetime"—William Lane

•"Son of Mary' is probably disparaging. It's contrary to Jewish usage to describe a man as the son of his mother, even when she was a widow, except in insulting terms. Rumors...Jesus was illegitimate appear to have circulated in his own lifetime & may lie behind [6:3] as well." [William L. Lane, Mark, p. 203]

•"Mark 6:3 with its apparently offensive designation of Jesus as 'the son of Mary'...needs to be considered ... Cranfield & others have taken it as a charge against Jesus' legitimacy... An offensive remark about Jesus' birth would fit the context of Mark 6...[as] one of a series of questions whose primary purpose is to discredit Jesus' teaching & deeds by pointing to what people know of his far from exalted status & origins." [Andrew Lincoln, Born of a Virgin? p. 34]

➤"Their 'slur against [Jesus'] legitimacy'."—Larry Hurtado

•"I judge it likely that this reference...to Jesus by those pictured in the scene as offended by him, is to be taken as their 'slur against his legitimacy'." [Larry Hurtado, Lord Jesus Christ, p. 319]

➤"Jesus...was thought to be the son of Joseph" (Lk. 3:23)

IV. Nazarenes Scandalized by Jesus' Social Class – "A Carpenter," "A Carpenter's Son"

A. Jesus: "A Carpenter" (Mk. 6:3), "A Carpenter's Son" (Mt. 13:55)

•"54 Then [Jesus] came to his hometown & began to teach the people in their synagogue. They were astonished & said, "Where did this man get such wisdom & miraculous powers? 55 Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother named Mary? And aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, & Judas? 56 And aren't all his sisters here with us? So where did he get all this?" 57 And so they were offended by him." (Mt. 13:54-57) [Note: "Luke never refers to Jesus as a manual laborer"—Chris Keith.]

•"Jesus is traditionally known as a 'carpenter' (Mk. 6:3) or the 'son of a carpenter' (Matt. 13:55). Yet the Greek word used here, tekton, also has the broader meaning of a builder, including a mason, or a maker of tools for farmers, including plows & yokes. Such workers were paid a daily wage, & had a relatively low social status." ["Life & Times of 1st-Century Palestine," Saint Mary's Press (2010) p. 8]

•"Matthew especially suggests that Jesus' claims are incommensurate [do not match] with his [family] lineage ('Is this not the carpenter's son... Where then did this man get all this?' (Matt 13:55- 56)."

[Aaron J. Kuecker, Spirit & the 'Other,' p. 87]

B. “Nazarenes’ claim...Jesus, as a carpenter, doesn’t belong in the role of a teacher” –C. Keith

•“Mk. 6:1-6 & Matt. 13:54-58 constitute the lone example of a member of the manual-labor class actively teaching in the 2nd Temple Jewish synagogue in the historical record... The Nazarenes’ rejection of [Jesus] is utterly consistent with [the historical record...The Nazarenes’ claim that Jesus, as a carpenter, does not belong in the role of a teacher; he belongs with his family & fellow manual laborers...[He is]

6‘putting on airs’ or ‘getting above his [station]’...Their complaint is ‘Is he not a common worker with his hands even as the rest of us are?’...In Mk. 6 (& Mt. 13)...Jesus’ hometown rejects him explicitly on the basis that he is a manual laborer...” [Chris Keith, *Jesus against the Scribal Elite*, pp. 46-47]

➤ Jesus as Prophet-Teacher “appears pretentious for a hometown carpenter” –JA. Sanders

•“Mark & Matthew both...explicitly state that the folk at Nazareth [‘they were taking offence at him’ (Mt. 13:57; Mk. 6:3)], the offense is that of a prophet not being honored in his own country nor by his own kin; his general wisdom and works appear pretentious for a hometown tekton (carpenter).” [James A. Sanders, “From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4,” in J. Neusner (ed.) *Christianity, Judaism...*, p. 92]

•“The matter here is not what Jesus says, but who Jesus is. As the son of a modest artisan, Jesus should not be teaching with such authority, honor, & influence. This story reflects the problem of the honor-shame code when it meets God’s prophetic disclosures & intentions. The prophetic word & messianic power rise up from below the social caste system.” [Shively Smith, “Commentary on Luke 4:21-30” *Working Preacher*, Jan. 2022]

➤ Judged to be pretentious: trying to impress by affecting greater importance than actually possessed.

•“The synagogue congregation is initially astounded...Jesus appears among them as a powerful sage & teacher, but the sheer unlikelihood of the report that’s come to Nazareth, together with Jesus’ humble pedigree, shows him up for what he really is – a common tradesman, no more significant than his brothers & sisters, pretending to an ill-gotten & therefore dubious greatness...[So,] ‘They took offense at him’... & Jesus marvels at the congregation’s unbelief.” [David A. Smith, *Luke & the Jewish Other*, p.]

➤ “Jesus’ ‘reading’ in the synagogue...was actually a performance” — Pieter Botha

•“According to Botha, Jesus’ ‘reading’ in the synagogue (...the text technically never claims Jesus read) was actually a performance –‘a highly rhetorical verbal presentation of stories & oral interpretations’—rather than a literal reading of the text...[Jesus] is the Son of God who can employ various techniques, including ‘reading’ (Pieter JJ. Botha, *Why Jesus?* p. 31).” [Chris Kieth, *Jesus’ Literacy*, p. 15]

➤ Jesus the Scripture-Reader oversteps as a Scripture-Interpreter

•“As a lay reader of texts, Jesus was expected to read the [passage], resume his place in the congregation, & defer to a more learned scribal-interpreter. However, Christ offends his hometown congregation by taking the posture of an authoritative teacher. In Lk. 4:16-30, Jesus demonstrates his prophetic status... He claims to fulfill the Isaiah...passage.” [Jeff S. Kennedy, *Op. cit.*, p. 21]

V. Luke: Nazareth Rejects the Isaiah-Interpretation of Jesus the Prophet-Messiah**A. Luke vs. Matthew & Mark**

•“Unlike Luke, Mark (6:1-6) & Matthew (13:53-58) focus on Jesus’ [person &] works rather than on his preaching in their report of this event...” [Craig A. Evans, James A. Sanders, *Luke & Scripture*, p. 20]

B. Jesus, ‘Son of Joseph,’ & Synagogue Reader in Lk. 4:16-30

•“Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” (Lk. 4:22) Here “the question is not...a denigration of Jesus based upon the low honor status of his family. Rather, the question celebrates the fact that Jesus is a member of their own subgroup because Nazareth is Jesus’ [own townsfolk].” [Aaron J. Kuecker, *Spirit &...’Other,’* p. 86]

•“The people of Nazareth respond favourably; [Jesus’] ‘gracious words’ impress them. ‘Is not this

Joseph's son? Expresses approval & local pride. Yet it has within it the seeds of misunderstanding... So Jesus quotes a proverb...that points to the inevitability of a city's rejecting the prophetic message of one who is its own. Familiarity limits expectations & resents challenge. It presumes upon the relationship & assumes that any...good news must include natural associates within its sphere (4:23). It fails to recognize ...the challenge that's actually being made." [John Barton, John Muddiman, Oxford Bible Commentary, p. 932]

C.Rejection not based on Jesus' reading of Isaiah

•Luke's portrays Jesus "as a culturally-acceptable reader whose interpretive exposition made him culturally unacceptable to the religious authorities & devout Jews of his day... [Luke is not] portraying Jesus as a scribe-gone-rogue, or a pretentious scribal-literate, [rather] Jesus' claims signal that he has God's own authority to announce a startling 'new' tradition." [Jeff S. Kennedy, Op. cit., p. 21]
 •"Luke's portrayal of Jesus as a capable public reader & expositor of Scripture (Lk. 4:16-30) is historically credible and Christologically significant in...signal[ing] Jesus' divine authority to both his immediate audience & subsequent readers of Luke's Gospel. [Jeff S. Kennedy, Op. cit., p.]

D.Jesus' use of Isaiah 61:1-2; 58:6 in Luke 4:18-19

•"In the 1st-century it wasn't uncommon to pull two or more passages out of their...context & read them together...[when] they had at least one word...the same. Here it was the Greek word aphasis, meaning release or forgiveness: to preach [release] to captives (Is. 61:1) &...send the oppressed in [release] (Is. 58:6) ...Luke's Jesus...joined the...passages from Isaiah fully in the spirit of Is. 61 which was composed...of Jubilee traditions ...periodic release or liberty ...Of greatest interest ...in Nazareth...was release from ...Roman oppression. [They] might have thought...Jesus was the herald to proclaim...release from Roman oppression." [Craig A. Evans, James A. Sanders, Luke & Scripture, p. 22]

E."What offended...was his...interpretation of one of their favorite passages of Scripture." – Craig Evans, James Sanders

•"Nothing in the reading itself seems to give rise to the threat on Jesus' life that follows." –Mary Schertz
 •"Luke puts [this episode] at the beginning and provides a citation from Isaiah & a sermon based on it. Luke...highlight[s] the event as a harbinger of the crucifixion... He clearly states that Jesus' own home congregation, his relatives, & friends, reject him because of his interpretation of the Isaiah passage. ...Luke stresses that what offended Jesus' contemporaries the most was his...interpretation of one of their favorite passages of Scripture." [Craig A. Evans, James A. Sanders, Op. cit., pp. 20-21]
 •"Just after Jesus' reading...the people would've interpreted the passage favorably to their own position: but when Jesus used the...prophetic critique the people were deeply offended." –James Sanders

VI.Jesus identifies as the Prophet-Messiah

A.Jesus Explicitly Claims to be the Messiah (the Christ) (Lk. 4:18-21)

❖Jesus "found...where it was 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)

➤Jesus is The Promised Messiah (the Christ)

•"Luke 4:18-19 is a programmatic statement for the rest of the Gospel. The prophecy is not only relevant for Luke 4:18-19, but throughout the book of Luke. The two main examples are from Luke 6:20-21 & 7:22: '[Jesus] answered [John's messengers:] "Go & tell John what you've seen & heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, & the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them.'" (Lk. 7:22) ... Isaiah 61:1-3a is originally Messianic & kingly. The Qumran community [Dead Sea Scrolls] interpreted the prophecy in a Messianic way. It is

no surprise...that Luke similarly uses this text to portray Jesus as the Messiah; indeed, his use of ['anointed'] in 4:18 poignantly points to Christ being the Χριστος [Christ –Messiah]" [Evan Zhou, "Spirit of the Lord is upon me," Reformed Theological Seminary – Charlotte, NC. (Dec. 2024) pp. 7-8]

•"If the people of Nazareth were shocked & offended by Jesus' sermon, what offended them was not the concept of the herald & his message, but the idea that the son of a local carpenter could claim such a role in the unfolding drama of salvation." [John J. Collins, "Isaiah 61:1-3 & its Actualization in the DSS," in CA. Evans (ed.) Quest for Context & Meaning, p. 240] [Q: At what point were Nazarenes offended?]

•"That Jesus is a prophetic Messiah is shown clearly in the story of his rejection in Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-30) ...In Nazareth he reads from Isaiah 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor' (Lk. 4:18) He then announces, 'Today, this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (4:21). Luke understands the title Messiah (anointed) literally: Jesus is Christ, 'the anointed,' because he has been anointed by the Holy Spirit." [Luke Timothy Johnson, Writings of the NT, p. 202]

•"There... are some fairly good reasons for thinking that Jesus did in fact claim to be a Messianic figure... Isaiah 61, about the coming anointed figure, seems to have played a significant part in Jesus' own understanding of his role. There is an explicit appeal to a Spirit-anointed ministry in...Luke's [special] material (Lk. 4:18-21) & similar... echoes [of Isaiah] in material common to Luke & Matthew...(Lk. 7:18-23)." [Michael F. Bird, Jesus is the Christ, pp. 11-12]

•"The word 'anointed' has obvious messianic connotations, & when Jesus declares that God has anointed him with the Spirit, he is making a de facto messianic claim. It is entirely plausible that we have [here] echoes of a royal Davidic figure, the final [end-time] prophet, the Suffering Servant, & the Messiah all put into one compressed presentation of Jesus. Some may wish to see...Jesus' claim... as merely prophetic rather than messianic. Yet this is unlikely..." [Michael F. Bird, Op. cit., p. 36]

•"What does the combination of Davidic identity & the reception of the Spirit mean? It means that Jesus is the [end-time] Davidic deliverer, & as part of his vocation [Jesus] receives the Holy Spirit to designate him as Israel's Anointed One, that is, the Messiah." [Michael Bird, Bird's Eye View of Luke-Acts, p. 203]

•"The statement...'The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he has anointed me,' is the same as saying, "I am the Messiah." Messiah is the Hebrew word Mashiach, or anointed one. No clearer claim to messiahship could be made than to identify Himself with the anointed one of Is. 61:1" –William Varner

B. Jesus identifies as a Prophet

•Jesus "also said, "Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in his hometown'." (Luke 4:24)

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

•"When he is rejected by the people of Nazareth, Jesus retorts that 'no prophet is accepted in his hometown' (Lk. 4:24) with the clear implication that he is a prophet." [John J. Collins, "Isaiah 61:1-3 & its Actualization in the DSS," in CA. Evans (ed.) Quest for Context & Meaning, p. 239]

•"When Jesus is in Nazareth, he identifies himself with the prophetic figure anointed by the Lord for a prophetic ministry (Lk. 4:18-21; Is. 61:1). The Davidic & Isaiah's senses of 'anointed one' (i.e., Messiah) converge at a key juncture in the Gospel [of Luke]." [Michael Bird, Op. cit., p.]

•Jesus identifies as the "Servant of the LORD." a "Light to the Nations" (Is. 42:5-7; 49:5-6)

•"Luke in his programmatic passage presents Jesus as the Christ as well as a prophet & Servant of Yahweh..." [Robert O'Toole, "Jesus is the Christ in Luke 4:16-30," Biblica, Vol. 76, No. 4 (1995) p. 501]

•"This is what the true God, the Lord, says—6 "I...officially commission you; I take hold of your hand. I protect you & make you a covenant mediator for people, & a light to the nations, 7 to open blind eyes, to release prisoners from dungeons, those who live in darkness from prisons." (Is. 42:5-7 NET)

•"Now the Lord says, the one who formed me...to be his servant—'Is it too insignificant a task for you to be my servant, to reestablish the tribes of Jacob, & restore the remnant of Israel? I'll make you a

light to the nations, so you can bring my deliverance to the remote regions of the earth.” (Is. 49:5-6 NET)

C. Jesus’ Interpretation of the ‘Acceptable Year’ was Unacceptable!

•Those “in the Nazareth synagogue ...would’ve interpreted [Is. 61] ...as beneficial to themselves. They would’ve identified with the poor (for they were poor), the captives...the blind...& the oppressed. They [felt] the blessings of the Jubilee would devolve on them ...They would’ve understood it in terms of God as the Redeemer of Israel...When Jesus said the passage was fulfilled that very day, he seemed to bolster their hope...But then Jesus continued, ‘Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted [dektos] in his hometown’ (Lk. 4:24) ...[&] a year acceptable [dektos] to God... Luke has Jesus stop his reading at Is. 61:2 ‘...to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.’ He ended his reading with the word ‘acceptable’ [dektos] a year acceptable to God...[Not] a year acceptable to Israel! Which emphasizes God as the Redeemer God of Israel only! ...[Jesus’ interpretation emphasizes] the freedom of God as Creator of all peoples.” [Craig A. Evans, James A. Sanders, Op. cit., pp. 22-23]

D. Key word –the verbal adjective, ‘acceptable’ (dektos) Luke 4:19, 24

•In the programmatic sermon Jesus reads from the Isaiah scroll...at Nazareth, announcing... ‘the acceptable/dektos year of the Lord’ (4:19). This announcement is received with wonder & welcome until Jesus flows the prophecy with a proverb, saying ‘no prophet is accepted/dektos in the prophet’s hometown’ (4:24)... These two occurrences of dektos...are the only two in the Third Gospel.” [Pamela Shellberg, *Cleansed Lepers, Cleansed Hearts*, p. 9]

E. 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)
 •“Although Jesus has proclaimed ‘a year acceptable (dektos) to the Lord (4:19), he himself is not accepted (dektos) by those with whom he grew up.” [John Gillman, *Luke*, p. 50]
 •“The irony is that the word ‘accepted’ (or ‘acceptable’) [4:24] ...is the same word...in 4:19. The prophet who is to announce the ‘acceptable’ year of the Lord is himself not ‘acceptable’ to his own people...Those prophets who spoke the word of God often found themselves...‘unacceptable’ to the ruling political & religious establishments of their times...[They] spoke what God wanted said.” [CA. Evans, *Luke*, p. xxvi]

VII. Why the Radical Change in Nazarenes’ Attitude to Jesus –from Praise to Rage?

➤“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)

A. “The congregation’s surprisingly murderous turn...is the interpretive [issue]” –DA Smith

•“When Jesus announces that he is the [end-time] prophet in Is. 61 he is at first accepted warmly, but then the townsfolk turn against him, &...they attempt to kill him.” –John Topel

•Luke presents a more positive initial reception of Jesus in Nazareth [compared to Mark], even as he prepares for a more starkly negative turn. Luke presents a more positive initial reception of Jesus in Nazareth [compared to Mark], even as he prepares for a more starkly negative turn. The congregation’s surprisingly murderous turn of heart is the interpretive [issue] of this passage ...In Luke, the congregation’s ‘seemingly inexplicable [about face]’ against Jesus is in response not to his parochial [limited] background but to Jesus’ teaching [application]...” [David A. Smith, *Luke & Jewish Other*, p.]

•“The more usual interpretation of this incident is that...there’s a change in the mood of the congregation in Nazareth, from fascination [with]...this local carpenter turned religious leader...to outright hostility towards him by the townspeople...as a result of the claim that Jesus made...[that]

Isaiah's words would be fulfilled by [him, i.e., Jesus]." [Patrick Whiworth, Gospel for the Outsider... Luke, p. 25]

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

➤ "Many readers are puzzled by this apparent shift from Lk. 4:22, where the response of the listeners is (if not admiring) at least neutral, to Lk 4:28, where wrath spills over into attempted manslaughter." – Luke T. Johnson

❖ 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)

➤ "It was Jesus [exposition] of Is. 61 by means of the material from [OT 1 & 2] Kings on Elijah & Elisha which disturbed his family and friends at Nazareth... Just after Jesus' reading... the people would've interpreted the passage favorably to their own position..." [James A. Sanders, Op. cit., p. 102]

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

• Jesus told them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to me: 'Doctor, heal yourself. What we've heard that took place in Capernaum, do here in your hometown [Nazareth] also.'" (Lk. 4:23)

• "The proverb in Lk. 4:23 should be taken to mean that a physician's first responsibility is to his own family [his own people, own townsfolk]. This is unpacked... [when] Jesus explains that they will expect Him to do the same things in Nazareth that He has done in Capernaum." [Myron C. Kauk, "Luke's Account of the Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30)," ETS, 2013 p. 11]

• "Jesus' pointed response is a rejection... of a social assumption that Jesus' townsfolk share. Jesus' townsfolk assume that their privileged status as members of Jesus' subgroup [Nazarene townsfolk] grants them special entitlement to benefits conferred by Jesus [He rejects their assumption]." [Aaron J. Kuecker, Spirit & the 'Other,' p. 83]

• "Jesus explicitly rejects the implicit assumptions of the crowd & the shared social script upon which they are based: 'Truly, I say to you that no prophet is acceptable in his hometown' [4:24]... While the villagers might assume that their shared subgroup identity carries privileged access to the Isaiah [61:1-2] benefits... Jesus... alerts us to the fact that their paradigm is about to be shifted." [Kuecker, Op. cit., p. 92]

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

• "In Lk. 4:25-27 Luke provides scriptural examples... [which] follow logically on 4:23-24 as... a response from Jesus to... his [Nazareth] neighbors who claim a place of privilege at the... fulfillment that Jesus had proclaimed... Elijah & Elisha... carried out their prophetic work outside the community of the chosen people [Israel] ... [This] could help to explain the eruption of the townspeople's wrath... [Jesus' application] challenged that assumption of privilege... [Isaiah's] text of promise was turned into a threat: the 'poor' to whom the good news would come & the 'captives' who would be set free might be any of God's [potential] children." [Sharon H. Ringe, Jesus, Liberation &... Biblical Jubilee, pp. 41, 44]

• It's not the case here that "charity begins at home" because what's at stake here is prophecy, & the prophet often must speak a hard & unpopular word to those closest at hand. The assumptions & amazement attributed to Jesus' neighbors are brought up short when the people encounter the... message of a prophet, with whom the home town & its people cannot assume special privilege." [Sharon Ringe, Op. cit., p. 41]

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

• "What makes [Jesus'] preaching so 'unacceptable' is that the people of Jesus' time expected

Messiah to ...destroy Israel's enemies, not minister to them. ...The Jewish people of the 1st-century held... two basic beliefs: (1.) Every generation believed that the coming of Messiah was very near... (2.) All believed that when Messiah would come he would vanquish the Gentiles (& perhaps the corrupt of Israel) & restore & bless Israel. Is. 61:1-2 was...felt to witness to this second belief. It was believed that the blessings...were reserved for Israel alone, while the 'day of vengeance'...was reserved for Israel's enemies. When Jesus announced that Is. 61:1-2 was fulfilled 'today', he fulfilled...the first commonly-held belief. However, ...he [Jesus] flatly contradicted the second belief. This...led to their outrage..." [Craig A. Evans, Luke, p. xxvii]

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

•"The Nazareth incident can be interpreted compellingly as Jesus' refusal to be bound by the entitlement claims of his own Nazareth subgroup [his townsfolk] ...It must be asked, what is it about the shared social script in Nazareth that prompts Jesus to reject the apparently positive response of his townsfolk?" [Aaron J. Kuecker, Op. cit., pp. 80-81]

F.Who are the "poor, captives, blind, & oppressed"? Nazarenes: "It's us," the 'in-group'

•What "differs radically in Jesus' [view is] who the 'poor, the captives & the blind' would be...[In the standard view] the 'captives to be released are the in-group...Jesus' citation of the gracious acts of Elijah & Elisha towards the Sidonian widow & the Syrian leper shows he does not subscribe [to that view. By bringing together] the acts of Elijah & Elisha and Is. 61, Jesus clearly shows that the words meaning '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." [JA. Sanders, Op. cit., p. 97]

G."God's freedom to bless those whom God wills in the way that God wills" — Sharon Ringe

•Luke's "emphasis is on God's freedom to bless those whom God wills in the way that God wills. Thus, the townspeople of Nazareth are depicted as being provoked to rage at hearing the prophetic message that lets them know that they do not hold a place of privilege in the fulfillment of the promises of God depicted by the prophet Isaiah." [Sharon H. Ringe, Op. cit., p. 44]

VIII.Prophetic Examples 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

•"Elijah & Elisha do not encounter either the widow or Naaman because they [Elijah, etc.] have been rejected by Israel; they encounter these people because of divine sending (Elijah to the widow & Naaman to Elijah). Likewise, to this point in the [episode] Jesus has not been rejected by his people. Instead, the Elijah and Elisha stories demonstrate that prophets are unbound by typical identity boundaries. At God's impetus, Elijah & Elisha granted non-Israelites precisely the benefits to which Israelites expected exclusive entitlement. Reading this interpretation back into the Nazareth [episode], this means that shared subgroup identity [e.g., belonging to Nazareth] is not the basis of special claims of entitlement. Jesus presses home his subversion of the Nazarene assumption that privileged identity leads to privileged entitlement by implying that the benefits of God are available beyond the primary category altogether... By virtue of his refusal to grant exceptional resources to his Nazareth in-group, Jesus is no longer an acceptable member of his [own hometown]." [Aaron J. Kuecker, Op. cit., pp. 93-94]

B.Jesus Doesn't Privilege his own 'Entitled Townsfolk'

•"The Elijah & Elisha stories indicate that, with regard to entitlement, ethnic identities are... not restrictive to the work of God that crosses group boundaries with impunity. This emphatically does not mean that Israelites are rejected. Rather, Jesus' proclamation makes the circle of identities with access to God...larger...For this reason, the unwillingness to privilege one's own people because of a

commitment always to speak the word of God, that prophets are often unacceptable.” [A.J. Kuecker, Op. cit., p. 94]

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. The resistance of Jesus’ townsfolk is resistance to Jesus’ refusal to privilege his [own townsfolk] subgroup while restricting the extension of benefits to the ‘other’ [outsiders].” [Aaron J. Kuecker, Op. cit., p. 95]
- 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
- “Jesus’ refus[es] to privilege his [own townsfolk] subgroup while restricting the extension of benefits to the ‘other’ [i.e., outsiders].” –Aaron Kuecker
- 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
- “Luke makes it very clear...that the offense taken by the faithful of Nazareth was at Jesus’ midrash [exposition /application] on the Isaiah passage...The people would’ve been exceedingly pleased to hear that the great day had arrived, but they would’ve been puzzled that Jesus, a local personage, would have arrogated to himself the role of...herald of the Great Day, a role Qumran...reserved for Melchizedek.” [James A. Sanders, “From Isaiah 61 to Luke 4,” in J. Neusner (ed.) Christianity, Judaism..., p. 93]
- “In Luke it is not Jesus’ general wisdom nor his works which offend the people, as...in Mark & Matthew: in Luke it is the specific application Jesus makes of the Isaiah passage.” [James A. Sanders, p.]
- “It was Jesus [exposition] of Is. 61 by means of the material from [OT 1 & 2] Kings on Elijah & Elisha which disturbed his family and friends at Nazareth...Just after Jesus’ reading...the people would’ve interpreted the passage favorably to their own position: but when Jesus used the...prophetic critique [of their implicit assumptions] the people were deeply offended.” [James A. Sanders, Op. cit., p. 102]

D. Elijah & Elisha: God’s Sovereign Grace extended to ‘Outsiders’

- “Jesus refers to the prophetic reception of Gentiles [e.g. Elijah & the widow; Elisha & Naaman the Syrian] in Israel’s sacred traditions as a defence of his...programme to include...outsiders that many Jewish groups would reject from a restored Israel.” [Michael F. Bird, Jesus & the Gentile Mission, p. 64]
- “The two persons selected as examples [the widow, and Naaman the Syrian leper] are not representative of the Gentile mission, but of outsiders experiencing God’s mercy. The Gentile-ness of the 2 characters is merely one aspect of their marginalized & outsider status...Consequently...[these cases are not] explicitly anti-Jewish or a justification for the Gentile mission.” [Michael F. Bird, Op. cit., p. 67]
- “Jesus challenges [accepted notions] ...‘By the [cases] of Elijah, Elisha, & Isaiah 61, Jesus demonstrates that the words meaning ‘poor, captive, blind, & oppressed’ do not apply exclusively to any in-group, but to those to whom God wishes them to apply’ (J. Sanders). Israel, though in need of redemption, has not recognized the Lord’s messenger... [but, rather,] has rejected the prophetic messenger...resulting in a dramatic redefinition of...the identity of the ‘captives to be set free,’ [they] are outsiders: widows, women, lepers & even Gentiles who respond to Jesus.” [Michael F. Bird, Op. cit., p. 68]

IX. Results of Nazareth’s Rejection of Jesus

A. Jesus the Rejected Prophet

- “They got up, drove him out of town, & brought him to the edge of the hill that their town was built” (4:29)

•In “the episode at Nazareth (Lk. 4:16-30) ...Jesus reads from Isaiah 61 [&] acts...out [the role of rejected Prophet] in miniature –after reading the text, Jesus refers to himself as a prophet (4:24) & is rejected by the synagogue crowd (4:28-29).” [Christopher J. Luthy, Rethinking the Acceptable Year, p. 101]

B. Jesus is Disowned by his Hometown, Nazareth

•Nazareth’s rejection “costs [Jesus] his place in his own [‘hometown’]...Jesus’ refusal to act in accord with [Nazareth’s] shared social script results in a subtle... shift from Nazareth as [‘hometown’] to Nazareth as [‘town’]. In the crowd’s rage Jesus is expelled from ‘the city’ & nearly thrown off the cliff upon which is built ‘their town’...Jesus is no longer an acceptable member of his [‘hometown’].” [A.J. Kuecker, Op. cit., p. 94]

C. An Historical Record

•“Jesus’ inauspicious beginning in Nazareth is scarcely flattering – [he was] able to work a few miracles [Mk. 5:5b] & having to escape from the [Nazareth] mob’s death threats –and would not likely have been invented [therefore probably historically accurate].” [Craig Blomberg, Jesus & the Gospels, p.]

D. Jesus relocates to Capernaum

•“Then [Jesus] went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, & was teaching them on the Sabbath.” (Lk. 4:31)

•“Jesus made Capernaum his home base during much of his [Galilean] ministry” –LaMoine F. DeVries

E. Jesus does Not ‘turn to the Gentiles’

•“When Jesus leaves Nazareth, we might...expect that he would forego ministry to Jews & direct his attention to the local Gentile population. If so, we would be disappointed, because Luke’s Jesus goes on to heal a Jewish leper & resuscitate the son of a Jewish widow (Lk. 5:12-14; 7:11-17). Luke avoids depicting any direct contact between Jesus & Gentiles. He even alters his sources to this effect...he omits a large section of Mark.” [Jocelyn McWhirter, Rejected Prophets: Jesus & His Witnesses, p. 49]