

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S6E4

Can Anything Good Come Out Of Nazareth? - (Luke 4:16-19)

Description – Join us today as we look at Nazareth, the place where Jesus grew up. A small backwater town in Galilee, yet a hotbed of insurrection and people looking for the Messiah.

We're back in Luke 4 again today.

Luke 4:16-17

¹⁶He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. As usual, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. ¹⁷The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written:

Nazareth - it was a town that was a hotbed for insurrectionists, for people who thought the Messiah would come from there.

Why?

Jeremiah 23:5

⁵“Look, the days are coming”—this is the LORD’s declaration— “when I will raise up a Righteous Branch for David. He will reign wisely as king and administer justice and righteousness in the land.

Isaiah

Zechariah 3:8

⁸“Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your colleagues sitting before you; indeed, these men are a sign that I am about to bring my servant, the Branch.

Isaiah 11:1-2

Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and strength, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Zechariah 6:12

¹²You are to tell him: This is what the LORD of Armies says: Here is a man whose name is Branch; he will branch out from his place and build the LORD’s temple.

So, leading up to the coming of Jesus, the city of Nazareth was known as “Shoot-ville” or “Branch-town” because everyone knew the Messiah would come from this town.

The picture is of a small, backwater town of roughly 200-300 people at the time of Jesus. But in this town there was a focus on watching for the Messiah.

Most of the men of this town worked with their hands. They were craftsmen. The greek word is the word “tekton.” - the original KJV translators translated this as “carpenter.”



Map of Nazareth and Sepphoris (roughly 7-8 miles from Nazareth)

In Sepphoris there was a huge rock quarry that Herod used to build his city by the sea, Caesarea.

So the men were “tektons” craftsmen, working with their hands. Remember, Israel doesn’t have lush forests of wood and lumber; but they have literally tons of stone.

Joseph would have been one of these men; teaching Jesus as a little boy about working with his hands, and teaching him about various types of stone.

Luke 4:16-19

¹⁶ He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. As usual, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day and 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 year of the Lord’s favor.

Isaiah 29:11-12

¹¹ For you the entire vision will be like the words of a sealed document. If it is given to one who can read and he is asked to read it, he will say, "I can't read it, because it is sealed." ¹² And if the document is given to one who cannot read and he is asked to read it, he will say, "I can't read."

The people based on this verse believed that no one other than God could actually read and interpret the scroll of Isaiah.

Acts 8:30-31

³⁰ When Philip ran up to it, he heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you're reading?" ³¹ "How can I," he said, "unless someone guides me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

Explaining the Synagogue service: There was a formula / structure to it. It had 3 major parts.

Back then, they read scripture for 40-50 minutes. This was the reading of the Word that everyone would stand up for.

The sermon part where they would "preach" / "teach" was only 5 to maybe 10 minutes. Most were around 5 minutes.

The reason for this? They had no personal bible for Bible Study. The only time they got to hear God speak through God's Word was this weekly gathering at the Synagogue.

Trip to England / Scotland info:

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So the Synagogue service would start with the people entering and praying a prayer of blessing, the Shema, from Deuteronomy 6.

There were three parts of the serv

1. Perisha - Reading from the Torah
2. Haftarah - Reading from the Prophets
3. Deresha - Explanation of the reading, either from the Torah or the Prophets.

The Jewish people have a calendar of reading. They had a reading plan, so that regardless of where you were, or what Synagogue you went to, they were all reading and teaching on the same passage.

The scrolls / scripture were all stored in the scripture cabinet.

So here's the scene, Jesus has returned home with at least 5, maybe 6 of his disciples at this point.

They've seen the miracle at the wedding, they've gone on a short term mission trip, they've seen him heal the official's daughter. Word is starting to spread about what Jesus is doing.

Jesus comes into the synagogue with his disciples, with the seat of Moses on the back wall, and a table to read the scroll on, and a torah closet where they kept the scrolls. The attendant who worked at the synagogue had the job of giving the scrolls to whoever was teaching that day.

Jesus would have ceremonially cleansed himself before coming into the synagogue at the Mikvah, the baptistry.

1. Head - cleanse my thoughts
2. Hands - cleanse my actions
3. Heart - cleanse my emotions
4. Feet - cleanse where I've gone

Jesus comes up to the altar and then the attendant hands him the scroll. Jesus then finds the place and begins to read. He's going to the reading plan for that day.

Homework for next time: Look at what Jesus says and reads.