

Luke Chapter 4 Continued

Luke 4:16 "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

“He came to Nazareth”: Luke acknowledged (in verse 23), that Christ had already ministered in Capernaum. Yet Luke purposely situated this episode at the beginning of his account of Christ’s public ministry. Here is an example of Luke’s ordering things logically rather than chronologically.

“As his custom was”: Nazareth was His hometown, so He would have been well known to all who regularly attended this synagogue.

Hebrew children were allowed to go to synagogue at 5 years old. Hebrew boys, after completing Bar Mitzvah at 12, were expected to attend as an adult would. In the synagogue, it was the custom to stand and read from the Holy books.

Jesus had already been attending, and his fame as a preacher had spread; so it was natural for Him to be the one to read. Nazareth was the town Jesus had lived in as a boy and was well known in this area.

Luke 4:17 "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,"

This is the book of Isaiah. The head of the synagogue would bring the book out to be read. It appears that it was not turned to the Scripture Jesus intended to give, so He (Jesus), found the place He wanted to read from. The Scripture He was about to read was in Isaiah.

Isaiah 61:1-2 "The spirit of the Lord GOD [is] upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to [them that are] bound;" "To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn;"

Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

“He hath anointed me”: I.e., the Spirit Himself was the anointing (verses 1, 14).

Luke 4:19 "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

“The acceptable year of the Lord”: Or, “the year of the Lord’s favor.” The passage Christ read was Isaiah 61:1-2. He stopped in the middle of verse 2. The rest of the verse prophesies

judgment in the day of God's vengeance. Since that part of the verse pertains to the Second Advent, He did not read it.

Jesus, in this reading of the Scripture from Isaiah, is showing that this Scripture is fulfilled. Jesus, in just a few words, tells what His ministry on this earth will be. Jesus is filled to overflowing with the Spirit. He has the fullness of God.

We know that Jesus was not a respecter of persons, but truly brings the gospel message to the poor; to those rejected by the world. He laid His hands on the sick and they recovered, He opened blind eyes, He raised the dead, He even went into hell itself and preached and brought those held captive out with Him.

His miracles were so numerous and so great, all the books in the world could not contain them. He truly fulfilled this Scripture in Isaiah to the fullest.

Luke 4:20 "And he closed the book, and he gave [it] again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him."

"And sat down": It was customary for a teacher to stand respectfully during the reading of the Scriptures (verse 16), and sit humbly to teach.

When Jesus spoke, people marveled. He spoke with such authority. It was as if there was a supernatural drawing when the Lord Jesus spoke.

Luke 4:21 "And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

"This day is this scripture fulfilled": This was an unambiguous claim that He was the Messiah who fulfilled the prophecy. They correctly understood His meaning but could not accept such lofty claims from One who they knew so well as the carpenter's son (verse 22 and Matt. 13:55).

Jesus very boldly tells them that He is the fulfillment of this Scripture.

Luke 4:22 "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?"

We see here, that Jesus' Words were so overwhelming that these people could not believe their own ears. Suddenly they ask each other, Isn't this the carpenter's son that lives down the road here? We saw Him grow up like our own children. How could He be the fulfillment of this Scripture?

They still believe that Joseph is Jesus' Father. They are looking at the flesh, and not the Spirit. Even today, nearly 2000 years later, the world still says this cannot be God, He was just a man. Jesus was in fact, God the Son.

Luke 4:23 "And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country."

“Capernaum”: Obviously Christ had already gained a reputation for His miraculous works in Capernaum. Scripture gives few details about that first year of public ministry. Most of what we know about those months is found in John’s gospel and it suggests Christ ministered mostly in Judea. However (John 2:12), mentions a brief visit to Capernaum, with no other details.

John 4:46-54 describes how Christ as at Cana, He healed a royal official’s son who lay sick in Capernaum. We also know that Christ had already gathered some of His disciples, who were men from the North shore of the Sea of Galilee (John 1:35-42).

He might have visited there more than once during that first year of ministry. In any case, He had been there long enough to do miracles, and His fame had spread throughout Galilee (verse 14).

We see people here who truly believe they know this carpenter's son and believe that this (by the wildest stretch of imagination), could not possibly be Messiah. They believe Him to be mad. Jesus will later say that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country and in His own house.

Those around Him, who knew Him, instead of asking Him for their healing will say heal yourself. Capernaum also, was too close to home. Many did not believe there either, even though He did many miracles.

Luke 4:24 "And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country."

“No prophet is accepted in his own country”, that is, in his own neighborhood. It generally holds, that a teacher sent from God is not acceptable to his neighbors as he is to strangers. The meanness of his family, or lowness of his circumstances, brings his office into contempt. Nor can they suffer that he, who was before equal with, or below themselves, should now bear a superior character.

Mark 6:4 Jesus said to them: "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor."

Verses 25-27: Both the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8-24), and Naaman the Syrian (2 Kings 5), were Gentiles. Both lived during times of widespread unbelief in Israel. Jesus’ point was that God bypassed all the widows and lepers in Israel yet showed grace to two Gentiles. God’s concern for Gentiles and outcasts is one of the thematic threads that run through Luke’s gospel.

Luke 4:25-26 "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land;" "But unto none of them was Elijah sent, save unto Sarepta, [a city] of Sidon, unto a woman [that was] a widow."

Jesus is telling them, here, that just as all those widows in Elijah's time did not get help because they did not have faith, it would be that way here. To receive a miracle, you must have faith.

Notice here, that this drought and famine in Elijah's time lasted 3 1/2 years. This woman of Sarepta received Elijah into her home, and God miraculously fed them the whole time. Great miracles and great faith go hand in hand. There was no faith there, and there will be no great miracles because of it.

Luke 4:27 "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian."

Naaman came to Elisha to be healed of leprosy, and Elisha told him to wash in the Jordan River seven times. He did, and his leprosy was gone. It is a beautiful story (in 2 Kings 5:3). Read all the way to the end of the chapter. There are many beautiful lessons. One of the most important of these lessons is that healing is not for sale.

Luke 4:28 "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,"

“Filled with rage”: This is Luke’s first mention of hostile opposition to Christ’s ministry. What seems to have sparked the Nazarenes’ fury was Christ’s suggestion that divine grace might be withheld from them yet extended to Gentiles.

They were filled with wrath, because Jesus was saying unto them, "Oh, ye of little faith". Jesus was telling them that they could not receive anything of God because of their cold hearts. They could not see Jesus as anything else but Joseph's son.

Luke Chapter 4 Continued Questions

1. Where was Jesus brought up?
2. What was Jesus' custom on the Sabbath day?
3. What did He do in the synagogue?
4. At what early age were Hebrew children allowed to go to synagogue?
5. At what age were Hebrew boys expected to attend?
6. We see here 18 years Jesus had been going to the synagogue. What had the preacher learned about Jesus in this time?
7. What book was brought to Jesus to read?

8. What chapter and verse did Jesus turn to?
9. In the Scripture, what had Jesus been anointed to do?
10. What special thing did Jesus say was now upon Him?
11. What was Jesus to preach?
12. Name 3 types of miracles Jesus did.
13. When He finished reading. Who was looking at Him?
14. Why were they staring at Jesus?
15. In verse 21, what does Jesus call Himself?
16. Who did these people believe Jesus to be?
17. After 2000 years, what do people believe about Jesus?
18. What proverb did Jesus say they would say unto Him?
19. What other city, besides Nazareth, would not believe?
20. They thought by the wildest stretch of imagination He could not be _____.
21. Where is a prophet without honor?
22. How many years was there famine in the land in Elijah's time?
23. Where did Elijah stay during that time?
24. Why was the woman of Sarepta chosen?
25. Why did the other widows round about not get help?
26. What goes hand in hand with great miracles?
27. Who was brought to Elisha to be healed of leprosy?
28. What did Elisha tell him to do?
29. What is one of the most important lessons to be learned in this account in 2nd Kings?
30. How did the people accept this message?
31. What was Jesus actually saying to them?