

The Greatest Life Ever Lived

A Study in the Incarnate Life of Jesus Christ and An Exposition of the Four Gospels

LESSON XXVIII : HEALING IN CANA / REJECTION AT NAZARETH / NEW HOME IN CAPERNAUM

Matthew	Mark	Luke	John	related passages
4:13-17	1:14,15	4:14-31	4:46-54	Mt 13:54-58; Mk 6:1-6

Lesson Overview

○ If (or since) we accept the Lord's earthly ministry to be approximately three and a half years, this lesson begins a stage in His ministry which we believe to have lasted for about sixteen months (Dec 27 - Apr 29 AD). Stevens and Burton calls this the First Period of the Galilean Ministry, A.T. Robertson and Hendriksen calls this "The Greater (or Great) Galilean Ministry". A very large portion of the Synoptics (Matt 4-15; Mk 1-7; Lk 4-9) is devoted to this time period. John, writing later and for a different intent, presupposes his reader's familiarity with these writings and mentions only two events during that time (Jn 4, 6).

○ After John the Baptist is thrown into prison, Jesus returns from Judea due to the intensifying of feelings by the Jewish leaders. On His way journey back He travels through Samaria, witnesses to a woman at Jacob's well, and spends two days with the Samaritans of Sychar as they welcome Him as the Messiah. This week we see Him as He arrives in Galilee.

General Account of Jesus' Teaching in Galilee

Matt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

Mk 1:14,15 *[Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee,] preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Lk 4:14,15 *And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of Him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.*

"Every preacher commissioned by God to proclaim salvation to a lost world, begins his work with preaching the doctrine of repentance. This was the case with all the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, all the apostles, and all their genuine successors in the Christian ministry." [Clarke, *Commentary*]

"To preach (kārussein): Originally, *to discard the duty of a herald*; hence *to cry out, proclaim*. The standing expression in the New Testament for the proclamation of the Gospel; but confined to the *primary announcement* of the message and facts of salvation, and not including *continuous instruction in the contents and connections of the message*, which is expressed by *didaskō (to teach)*. Both words are used in Matthew 4:23; 9:35; 11:1." [Vincent, *Word Studies*]

"The time is fulfilled: That is, the time appointed for sending the Messiah; and particularly the time specified by Daniel, Daniel 9:24-27. Here are four points worthy of deep attention, in the preaching of the Son of God.

- Every thing that is done is according to a plan laid by the Divine wisdom, and never performed till the time appointed was filled up.
- That the kingdom and reign of sin are to be destroyed, and the kingdom of grace and heaven established in their place.
- That the kingdom of God, and His reign by grace, begins with repentance for past sins.
- That this reign of grace is at hand; and that nothing but an obstinate perseverance in sin and impenitence can keep any soul out of it; and that now is the accepted time to enter in." [Clarke, *Commentary*]

"And He taught in their synagogues: We do not find that even the persecuting Jews ever hindered Christ or His disciples from preaching in their synagogues. Is it the same in every place where even the Christian religion is established by law? Would Jesus, or His apostles, or their most Scriptural representatives, be permitted to preach in one out of a thousand churches, in certain countries, unless they were strictly conformed to their external ecclesiastical customs? Nor even then, unless their doctrine were according to the taste of the managers and of the times." [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Healing at Cana of the Son of a Courtier of Capernaum

Jn 4:46 *So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where He made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum. :* This Cana is the same Cana where Jesus attended the wedding feast. Nathanael lived there (Jn 21:2). News of His arrival reached Capernaum, some twenty or so miles from Cana, two and a half miles southwest of where the Jordan leaves the Sea of Galilee. It was in Capernaum where James and John lived, was a tax-collecting center and probably the seat of a Roman military post.

Certain nobleman: a royal officer, probably one of the courtiers of Herod Antipas who Rome had assigned over Galilee and Perea

after the death of Herod the Great. Possibly a Jew since Jesus included him among the multitude of Jews who demanded a sign of Him (v48). “Elsewhere we read of people in Herod’s service, such as Chuzas (Luke 8:3), but the word used of that man is not the same as that here. We also read of Manaen, ‘the foster-brother of Herod the Tetrarch’ (Acts 13:1). Of this title F.F. Bruce says, ‘The title foster-brother was given to boys of the same age as royal princes, who were brought up with them at court.’ It does not seem as though that is meant in the present passage. Some suggest that the officer was the manager of Herod’s estates, others that he held some political office the exact nature of which has not come down to us. We do not know. All that we can say for certain is that he was a trusted official.” [Morris, *John*]

The nobleman had a son who was near death. It is uncertain if this was an only son or even if he was very young although some infer that from the language used.

Jn 4:47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto Him, and besought Him that He would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. : He besought Him: the man repeatedly begged Jesus to come heal his son. Wuest: “This one, having heard that Jesus had come from Judea into Galilee, went off at once to Him and commenced begging Him to come down at once and heal his son, for he was about to die.” Hendriksen points out two errors of which this man was committing: (1) that in order for Jesus to heal his son, He would have to come to Capernaum, and (2) he was convinced that Jesus’ power did not extend beyond death, since it was imperative Jesus came prior to his son dying. Both very natural errors which we would also have committed.

Jn 4:48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. : Jesus addresses the nobleman (*him*) but having in mind the Galilean population which he represents (*ye*). “But the words are not addressed to the nobleman alone, but to all the Galilean Jews in general; for our Lord uses the plural number, which He never does when addressing an individual. These people differed widely from the people of Sychar: they had neither a love of the truth, nor simplicity of heart; and would not believe any thing from heaven, unless forced on their minds by the most striking miracles. They were favored with the ministry of John Baptist; but, as that was not accompanied with miracles, it was not generally credited. They require the miracles of Christ, in order that they may credit the advent of the Messiah. There are many like these Galileans still in the world: they deny that God can have any influence among men; and as to the operations of the Holy Spirit, they, in the genuine Galilean spirit, boldly assert that they will not credit any man who professes to be made a partaker of them, unless he work a miracle in proof of his pretensions! These persons should know that the grace of working miracles was very different from that by which a man is saved; and that the former might exist, even in the most astonishing measure, where the latter did not.” [Clarke, *Commentary*] “In every age, not least our own, people have loved the spectacular, and it would seem that this was true of first-century Galilee. Jesus looked for people to trust Him and follow Him in faith.” [Morris, *John*]

Jesus “complains” that this man who had heard so much (and possibly even seen during the Passover) was still on the lowest rung of the ladder of faith. “Our Lord does not tell this man that he had no faith, but that he had not enough. If he had none, he would not have come from Capernaum to Cana, to beg Him to heal his son. If he had enough, he would have been contented with recommending his son to our Lord, without entreating him to go to Capernaum to heal him; which intimates that he did not believe our Lord could do it at a distance.” [Clarke, *Commentary*] “His confidence, and that of others like him, has to be constantly fed by signs and wonders. He does not believe in *the divine Person* of Christ nor even in *His word* if the latter be unaccompanied by a miracle.... These spectators were always looking for something sensational or exciting!” [Hendriksen, *John*]

Jn 4:49 The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. : While hearing the gentle rebuke of Jesus, his heart was still wrapped in the condition of his child, so he pours out this one last word of urgency. “He did not think our Lord could cure him without being present, and seems here to feel himself hurt, because our Lord did not come at his first entreaty. It is difficult for a proud man, or a man in office, to humble himself, or to treat even God Almighty with proper respect. The spirit of this man seems not much unlike to that of Naaman the Syrian, 2 Kings 5:11.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Jn 4:50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. : His faith growing, the nobleman believed Jesus upon His word only. “Jesus, who at this very moment is healing both the son’s body and the father’s soul, said to him, go your way, you son lives. This last expression must not be toned down to something like ‘is going to live.’ It indicates that by a deed of omnipotence performed at this moment the child is now fully restored and is, therefore, enjoying complete health and vigor.” [Hendriksen, *John*] “Modern translations often have something like ‘your son will live’ (RSV, New English Bible, Good News Bible) or ‘your son is going to live’ (Goodspeed). Such translations can be defended, but they miss the point that Jesus is not just giving an optimistic forecast of how the fever will turn out. He is speaking a word of power. The fever did not gradually clear up but left the boy at the moment Jesus spoke. John is not giving an account of an interesting prognosis Jesus made, which was vindicated by later events. He is telling us of a ‘sign’ that Jesus accomplished.” [Morris, *John*] Wuest: “Jesus says to him, Be proceeding on your way. Your son is living.”

“Had our Lord gone with him, as he wished, his unbelief could not have been fully removed; as he would have still thought that our Lord’s power could not reach from Cana to Capernaum: in order to destroy his unbelief at once, and bring him into the fullness of the faith of his supreme power, He cures him, being apparently absent, by that energy through which He fills both the heavens and the earth. Here it may be observed, our blessed Lord did what this man requested Him to do, but not in the way in which he wished it to be done.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Jn 4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth. : The household servants were obviously close to their master and were truly overjoyed that the son was healed. Not waiting for their master’s return, they

depart and meet him on the way back. I can see them shouting the message as soon as they see him.

Jn 4:52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. : Very natural is the father's question. The question again arises as to the time method John uses here. "It seems impossible to assume St. John intended any other than the Roman notation of the civil day, or that he meant any other hour than 7 PM. The opposite view, that it marks Jewish notation of time, or 1 PM, is beset by almost unsurmountable difficulties." [Edersheim, *Life of Messiah*]

- Using the Jewish time reckoning, it would not be possible for the father to depart Capernaum in the morning and reach Jesus by 1 PM, meaning the father would have arrived the day prior to this and not sought out Jesus until after lunch. Improbable. Then if Jesus healed the boy at 1 PM, the father would have left immediately but could not have returned home prior to nightfall, meaning he either stayed someplace through the night on the way, or he stayed until the next morning to depart. Again, improbable. If he departed in the afternoon and the servants met him half-way, their response would not have been that the boy was healed *yesterday* at 1 PM. Some have taken this opportunity to preach what they see as "faith", the father staying since he knew his son was healed then leaving the next day at his leisure. This suggests any loving concern for our children is evidence of our lack of faith which is neither scriptural nor natural.
- If the Roman time system is used (as we have already seen John to employ), the seventh hour would have been 7 PM allowing for ample time for the father to have left in the morning to find Jesus that evening as soon as he could. The father, constrained by nightfall would have probably stayed in Cana and left immediately the next morning for Capernaum. Morris however objects to this saying the Roman time was the legal method of computing time but not used in ordinary life. Personally I prefer the to believe John used the Roman time scheme throughout.

Jn 4:53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. : Hearing the time his son was healed, the father immediately knew it was the time when Jesus spoke the healing. Besides the father believing, the entire family (if there were other children) along with the servants believed and accepted. We see here **the growth of faith from the belief in Christ's miracle working power, to the faith in His word, to faith in the Person of Christ** in which faith this father was joined with his entire household.

"The sickness of the child became the mean of salvation to all the household. They, no doubt, thought at first that God was dealing hardly with them, when threatening to remove the child; but now they see that in very faithfulness God had afflicted them. Let us learn never to murmur against God, or think that He does not act kindly towards us. His wisdom cannot permit Him to err; His goodness will not suffer Him to do any thing to His creatures but what may be subservient to their best interests. By providential occurrences, apparently the most adverse, He may be securing our eternal salvation." [Clarke, *Commentary*]

In thinking of our modern healing movement, note the son was healed completely without faith on his part, despite the considerable distance between the son and Christ the Healer.

Jn 4:54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judaea into Galilee. : Having returned from Judea, this was the second sign, both in Cana and both in which the Lord manifested His glory. 'The second miracle' could be understood in several ways. Among the most natural explanations is either that this is the second miracle Jesus did in Galilee since many others were done in Judea, or this is the second which John mentions in his gospel to affirm the deity of Christ. It must be remembered many things happened in the life of Christ which was not chosen to be recorded by the Holy Spirit.

First Rejection at Nazareth

Note some harmonists place the events of Matthew and Mark to be the same occasion. Two of the three I am using makes the Luke account to be an initial rejection at the beginning of Christ's Galilean ministry while Matthew's and Mark's is a second chance / rejection at a later date. See Hendriksen, *Luke* for reasons as to why all three incidents refer to the same occasion. Right or wrong, I am following the thought that there were two rejections.

Lk 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. : while born in Bethlehem and living in Capernaum during His earthly ministry, Jesus was always known as "Jesus of Nazareth". "It is likely that our Lord lived principally in this city till the 30th year of His age; but, after He entered on His public ministry, His usual place of residence was at the house of Peter, in Capernaum." [Clarke, *Commentary*]

If sources later than the NT time period can be of any use, the usual synagogue practice was as follows:

- thanksgiving or "blessing" with the shema, "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." Deut 6:4,5
- prayer, with congregation saying amen
- reading of passage from Pentateuch (Heb followed by Aramaic translation)
- reading of passage from Prophets (Heb followed by Aramaic translation)
- sermon or word of exhortation with speaker sitting (usual rabbi position; guest speakers were frequent)

- benediction pronounced by priest with congregation saying amen; if no priest, then closing prayer

“The freedom of the synagogue” implied any person considered suitable by the ruler or rulers of the synagogue was privileged and encouraged to deliver the message. “Stood up. Not as a sign that he wished to expound, but being summoned by the superintendent of the synagogue.” [Vincent, *Word Studies*]

“As His custom was: Our Lord regularly attended the public worship of God in the synagogues; for there the Scriptures were read: other parts of the worship were very corrupt; but it was the best at that time to be found in the land. **To worship God publicly is the duty of every man, and no man can be guiltless who neglects it.** If a person cannot get such public worship as he likes, let him frequent such as he can get. Better to attend the most indifferent than to stay at home, especially on the Lord’s day. The place and the time are set apart for the worship of the true God: if others do not conduct themselves well in it, that is not your fault, and need not be any hindrance to you. **You come to worship GOD — do not forget your errand — and God will supply the lack in the service by the teachings of his Spirit.** Hear the saying of old Mr. Herbert: ‘The worst speak something good: should all want sense, God takes the text, and preacheth p-a-t-i-e-n-c-e.’” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

PRACTICAL APPLICATION: Note that Christ *stood* to read the scriptures. This is a good place to illustrate the difference between a Bible command and a Bible example. Many confuse the two, causing “scriptural” arguments and division over something which is not actually a scriptural principle. To clarify what I mean, let me ask this question:

Q: As Bible believers, do we follow the Bible to the nth degree, or do we make a difference between a Bible *command* and a Bible *example*?

A: Whether we want to admit it or not, or whether we have ever thought about it or not, *we do make a difference!*

Several examples:

- In this passage Christ *stood* to read the scriptures. “The Jews, in general, sat while they taught or commented on the Sacred Writings, or the traditions of the elders; but when they read either the law or the prophets they invariably stood up: it was not lawful for them even to lean against any thing while employed in reading.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]
Following this *example*, some today ask that we stand when the scriptures are read. That is not improper and I do not have a problem when someone asks to do so. *Yet I have heard it said that it is wrong or even sin if we do not stand.* That is a result of confusing a Biblical *command* and a Biblical *example*. The Jews would also not speak the name of God even when reading the scriptures, yet I know of no one today which follows that *example*. The Jews would bathe before writing the name of God when transcribing the scriptures, and I have heard they would either throw the pen away once the Lord’s name was written or that a new pen was used to write the name. Yet I did not stop each time I typed the word “God”, nor did I throw out my printer once this lesson was printed. That was practice the Jews had in reverence to the Lord. We are free to follow that example yet it is not sin to not follow their example. It is not something we have been *commanded* to do, even though the *examples* are before us.
- Another instance of an early church *example* is that they met daily to worship (Acts 2:46) ... wow! ... church seven days a week! Yet that is never commanded of us, and for centuries most churches have settled into a Sunday School / Sunday Morning and Evening Worship services / Wednesday evening prayer meeting schedule. There is nothing wrong with that although scriptures show us the church in Jerusalem was different. Indeed, every pastor I have ever discussed this with recognizes there would be nothing unscriptural to having the main worship on Saturday or moving the prayer meeting to Thursday night. So again, while we realize the early church was different by *example*, we also see what has been *commanded* and structure our worship accordingly.
- As another example we could look in Acts 4:32-34 to see the early church at Jerusalem had all in common to provide for the poor. Yet none would ever consider joining a church which demanded we sold our property, all of our belongings, etc and live under the welfare of the church. Our rationale is “that’s what they did in Jerusalem, but no place does the Lord *command* a church to function in such a manner” — which is exactly my point. We are not being disobedient when we do not follow that Bible *example*, even though there is “scriptural support” for doing so.
- Still another example would be that our church is not in the practice of greeting one another with a holy kiss, yet that is a scriptural *example* and even mentioned by Paul to be done (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thes 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14). We understand the *spirit* of the text and consider it’s *cultural background* when we apply it to the communion and fellowship we have as believers. It is therefore not sin when we do not stand in the foyer and kiss, yet following the spirit of what is being taught, it *would* be sin when we enter the church harboring ill-will against our brothers and sisters.
- Taken in the other direction, we do many things *without scriptural support*. We hesitate to think of such things, and the very sound of that statement has a ring of unorthodoxy, yet where do we find support for church trustees (which are required by law -- many churches get around this by giving the deacons the dual-role of deacon / trustee)? How about the office of Sunday School Superintendent, or for that matter even our Sunday Schools! Yet none would say these things are sinful since these all fall within the spirit of the New Testament church. We must be careful what we make a matter of orthodoxy, “sound scriptural teaching”, and the like.

Whether we realize it or want to admit it, we do make a difference between a Bible *command* and a Bible *example*. There are

many practical applications of this principle, one being that many of our type of Baptists disdain missionary boards and are quick to state there is no scripture to support these boards. Yet those same churches have Sunday Schools ... scriptural support, please? To continue with that thought, our type of churches are quick to point to Acts 13 showing Paul and Silas being sent out by the church at Jerusalem. True, they did that and there's nothing wrong with following that Bible *example*. But is that a Bible *command*? Is a church disobedient if they did not do in such a manner? If that is unscriptural and a matter for contention (which, by the way, is *always* used to show how scriptural and correct **WE** are while showing how unspiritual, how unscriptural **THEY** are, whoever they may be), then *where is our consistency*? If we are going to press the mission board issue, be ready to sell your house and put the monies received in the offering plate because the same church that sent out Paul and Silas also had all things in common *by example*.

The main purpose of my bringing this to our attention is not to push one way or another for mission boards. Rather the problem I see has deeper roots: **we are often narrow minded on the things which do not matter**. I think many of our churches should change their names to Gnat-Straining Baptist Church (Mt 23:24). **We make issues out of things which are not issues**, then are proud and arrogant that "we are the people", boast about how "true we are to the Word" and that "we are the keepers of the truth". *In most of these instances we lack true scriptural understanding and often miss the spirit of what is being said because we are too busy slamming others for what we perceive to be an error*. Sometimes those errors are true errors, and we do need to stand on the Word. Then other times we are merely using God's word to lift ourselves up so we can pat each other on the back as we sit in judgement. **Even when we are correct, it is possible to be right and to have the wrong attitude**. When we take a proper stand, is it done in love? Are we filled with compassion for those who lack understanding? Do our hearts break because the Word of God is being incorrectly understood, or do we use the issue as an opportunity to build ourselves up while we tear down others? *Our prayer should be:*

- *that the Lord forgive and correct our short-sightedness and melt our hard, proud hearts*
- *that He would give us proper attitudes when we do preach against error*
- *that He would give us the understanding to know the difference between a true error and what is merely our preference*
- *that He would make us a people marked by love, compassion, understanding, and grace towards others, reflecting the glory of God in our hearts*

Lk 4:17 And there was delivered unto Him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written, : whether Jesus found the place to read or it was providentially the text of the day is uncertain. Since the wording says that He *found* the text, some state He searched for this particular passage. "Did the first lines of Isaiah 61 constitute the lesson from the Prophets for that particular Sabbath day, or did Jesus Himself select these lines? The words, 'unrolling the scroll He found the place' seem to point in the direction of the second alternative." [Hendriksen, *Luke*] Others mention the synagogues were on a reading schedule in which Jesus would have had the text presented for Him to read. "Probably the place in the Prophet Isaiah, here referred to, was the lesson for that day; and Jesus unrolled the manuscript till He came to the place: then, after having read, He rolled it up again, and returned it to the officer, Luke 4:20, the ruler of the synagogue, or his servant, whose business it was to take care of it. The place that He opened was probably the section for the day." [Clarke, *Commentary*] "Found: as if by chance: reading at the place where the roll opened of itself, and trusting to divine guidance." [Vincent, *Word Studies*] Which is correct is unimportant.

"The Sacred Writings used to this day, in all the Jewish synagogues, are written on skins of basil, parchment, or vellum, sewed end to end, and rolled on two rollers, beginning at each end; so that, in reading from right to left, they roll off with the left, while they roll on with the right." [Clarke, *Commentary*] "Opened: Literally, *unrolled*. Both this and the simple verb *to close*, (verse 30), occur only once in the New Testament. The former word was used in medical language of the opening out of various parts of the body, and the latter of the rolling up of bandages. The use of these terms by Luke the physician is the more significant from the fact that elsewhere in the New Testament [another Gk word] is used for the *opening of a book* (Rev 5:2-5; 10:2, 8; 20:12) and for *rolling it up* (Rev 6:14)." [Vincent, *Word Studies*]

Lk 4:18,19 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 brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

Isa 61:1,2a Hebrew	Isa 61:1,2a LXX (Gk. Version)	Luke 4:18,19	{ commentary }
<i>The Spirit of the Lord God (is) upon me,</i>	<i>The Spirit of the Lord (is) upon me,</i>	<i>The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,</i>	The speaker throughout is evidently the Messiah, which Lk 4:21 identifies as Jesus.
<i>Because the Lord has anointed me to announce good news to the poor.</i>	<i>Because he has anointed me; He has sent me to proclaim good news to the poor,</i>	<i>Because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.</i>	The anointing implies He was set apart for this work, part of which was the proclamation of the gospel to the poor. Isaiah's passage is speaking of the destitute and realize themselves to be such, while in the beatitudes this takes a spiritual twist. "To those who feel their spiritual poverty, whose hearts are broken through a sense of their sins, who see themselves tied and bound with the chains of many evil habits, who sit in the darkness of guilt and misery, without a friendly hand to lead them in the way in which they should go-to these, the Gospel of the grace of Christ is a pleasing sound, because a present and full salvation is proclaimed by it.... Reader! what dost thou feel? Sin — wretchedness — misery of every description? Then come to Jesus — He will save THEE — He came into the world for this very purpose. Cast thy soul upon Him, and thou shalt not perish, but have everlasting life." [Clarke, <i>Commentary</i>]
<i>He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted;</i>	<i>to heal the brokenhearted,</i>		Omitted by Luke, perhaps this was not used by Jesus in His sermon that followed, perhaps because the spiritual "poor" are the broken-hearted and the second mention was not necessary.
<i>To proclaim to the captives liberty;</i>	<i>to proclaim to the captives release;</i>	<i>He has sent me to proclaim to the captives release;</i>	The underlying figure is of exiles, dragged away from their homeland and transported to foreign places to endure hardships. Symbolic of men's enslavement to sin and Satan. "To the captives: aichmalōtois; from aichmā, <i>a spear point</i> , and haliskomai, <i>to be taken or conquered</i> . Hence, properly, of prisoners of war." [Vincent, <i>Word Studies</i>]
<i>And to those bound opening of eyes;</i>	<i>and to the blind recovery of sight;</i>	<i>and to the blind recovery of sight;</i>	Following the LXX, Jesus says the blind have their eyes open, while the Hebrew could be translated "the opening of prison to those bound". Possibly it refers to those in prison set free see the light of day and in that sense their eyes are opened. Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew suggests the alternate reading of "to those bound opening of eyes". The end result is the same.
		<i>to set free the oppressed;</i>	Not in the Hebrew nor the LXX. Possibly inserted by Christ as a commentary on the preceding phrase, the sense being "when I said the blind receive their sight, I meant that this takes place when they are freed from the oppression of their sin." Not an unnatural rendering considering Isaiah 58:6.
<i>To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.</i>	<i>To announce the year of the Lord's favor.</i>	<i>To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.</i>	Referring to the Year of Jubilee which occurred every fifty years. "This was a year of general release of debts and obligations; of bond-men and women; of lands and possessions, which had been sold from the families and tribes to which they belonged. Our Savior, by applying this text to Himself, plainly declares the typical design of that institution." [Clarke, <i>Commentary</i>] Symbolic of the Messianic Age. "A literal interpretation of the word <i>year</i> gave rise among some of the Christian fathers to the theory that our Lord's ministry lasted but a single year." [Vincent, <i>Word Studies</i>]

{ from Hendriksen, *Luke* }

Lk 4:20,21 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 He began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. : "Let us try to visualize the situation: The atmosphere in the probably crowded synagogue is surcharged with curiosity. Everybody in the audience is wondering what their townsman, the former carpenter, about whom they have been hearing so much of late, is going to say in elucidation and application of the Scripture passage He has read a moment ago. He may have read more than Luke reports, but at least He has read that. All is quiet, so quiet that one can hear a feather drop. Every eye is fixed on Jesus. He opens His mouth. He begins His address. Does He start out by reminding the audience of the golden days, now gone forever, when Jehovah stretched out His mighty arm and performed miracles on earth? He does not. Does He begin by entertaining His listeners with

bright promises pertaining to the future? Not that either. Instead, He speaks about *the here and now!* He assures the people with whom He had grown up that the golden age has actually arrived. “*Today,*” says He, “while you are listening to Me, the passage I read to you have been and is being realized.” [Hendriksen, *Luke*]

Lk 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? : the audience's reaction is two-fold: amazement and doubt. “The people liked what He had said about the dawn of the Messianic kingdom, but they resented the implication that Jesus, the carpenter, who grew up among them, was Himself instrumental in bringing this about.” [Hendriksen, *Luke*]

Not to stretch words beyond their meaning, but it is interesting that what He said was “the words of grace, or the doctrines of grace.” Calvinists, be careful how you explain this!

Lk 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. : Jesus quotes a well-known proverbial saying. The phrase could have the sense of the following:

- *that which you've done in other places, do here in your hometown:* If that be the case, the second part of the verse is an explanation of the first part. “That is, heal the broken-hearted in Thy own country, as the latter clause of the verse explains it; but they were far from being in a proper spirit to receive the salvation which He was ready to communicate; and therefore they were not healed.” [Clarke, *Commentary*] The negative against this is that it forces the word *thyself* = thy home town.
- *apply what you're teaching to yourself:* Jesus had just described Himself as the Restorer of mankind; the people could have used this mockingly, “You who proposes to restore mankind, why don't you begin with yourself.” “Physician, heal thyself: a saying which Luke alone records, and which would forcibly appeal to him as a physician. Galen speaks of a physician who should have cured himself before he attempted to attend patients. The same appeal was addressed to Christ on the cross (Matthew 27:40,42).” [Vincent, *Word Studies*] This makes the best sense of the proverb itself but has little to do with what follows.
- *prove what you are saying is applicable to yourself:* Jesus just attributed the function of Messiah to Himself, Nazareth is in essence saying prove your claim by doing what you've done in other areas. “The connection of this proverb with the following words is explained, if we see in the latter a suggestion of *the means* by which Jesus may yet prevent the contempt with which He is threatened in His own country: ‘In order that we may acknowledge you to be what you claim, the Saviour of the people, do here some such miracle as it is said Thou hast done at Capernaum.’ This speech betrays an ironical doubt respecting those marvelous things which were attributed to Him.” [Godet, *Luke*]

Lk 4:24 And He said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country. : Jesus states a general rule; even today we say “familiarity breeds contempt.” Sometimes we overlook some in our own midst which go elsewhere and God greatly uses them. We should remember we all have our inconsistencies, and look to those within for possible positions of service.

Lk 4:25-27 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, 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 Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. : Jesus directs His reasoning to their mis-understanding that since this was His hometown, they had a special claim on Him. “You have done miracles in Capernaum, in Judea, to the *outsiders* ... now where do we fit in? Jesus selects two OT examples to bring forth the truth that His grace is sovereign, knowing no artificial bounds of people or country:

- *Elijah and the widow of Zarephath.* “This was evidently a miraculous interference, as no rain fell for three years and six months, even in the rainy seasons. There were two of these in Judea, called the first and the latter rains; the first fell in October, the latter in April: the first prepared the ground for the seed, the latter ripened the harvest. As both these rains were withheld, consequently there was a great famine throughout all the land.... The sentence is elliptical, and means this: To none of them was Elias sent; he was not sent except to Sarepta; for the widow at Sarepta was a Sidonian, not a widow of Israel. Sarepta was a pagan city in the country of Sidon, in the vicinity of Galilee.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]
- *Elisha and the healing of Naaman the Syrian.* “Naaman, being a Syrian, was no leper in Israel. The meaning of these verses is, God dispenses his benefits when, where, and to whom he pleases. No person can complain of his conduct in these respects, because no person deserves any good from his hand. God never punishes any but those who deserve it; but he blesses incessantly those who deserve it not. The reason is evident: justice depends on certain rules; but beneficence is free. Beneficence can bless both the good and the evil; justice can punish the latter only. Those who do not make this distinction must have a very confused notion of the conduct of Divine Providence among men.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Lk 4:28,29 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong. : having been reproved by Jesus for their arrogance, they react with murderous hatred. “They seem to have drawn the following conclusion from what our Lord spoke: ‘The Gentiles are more precious in the sight of God than the Jews; and to them His miracles of mercy and kindness shall be principally confined.’ This was pretty near the truth, as the event proved. Those who profit not by

the light of God, while it is among them, shall have their candle extinguished. The kingdom of God was taken from the Jews, and given to the Gentiles; not because the Gentiles were better than they were, but because, 1st. The Jews had forfeited their privileges; and 2dly. Because Christ saw that the Gentiles would bring forth the fruits of the kingdom.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

The brow (ophrus). Only here in New Testament.... The word is used in medical language both of the eyebrows and of other projections of the body. It would naturally occur to a physician, especially since the same epithets were applied to the appearance of the eyebrows in certain diseases as were applied to *hills*.... Stanley says: ‘Most readers probably from these words imagine a town built on the summit of a mountain, from which summit the intended precipitation was to take place. This is not the situation of Nazareth; yet its position is still in accordance with the narrative. It is built *upon*, that is, *on the side of* a mountain, but the brow is not beneath, but *over* the town, and such a cliff as is here implied is found in the abrupt face of a limestone rock about thirty or forty feet high, overhanging the Maronite convent at the southwest corner of the town.’ “ [Vincent, *Word Studies*]

Lk 4:30 But He passing through the midst of them went His way, : how are we to account for this deliverance? Nothing short of the hand of God may explain His escape. “Either He shut their eyes so that they could not see Him; or He so overawed them by His power as to leave them no strength to perform their murderous purpose. The man Christ Jesus was immortal till His time came; and all His messengers are immortal till their work is done. The following relation of a fact presents a scene something similar to what I suppose passed on this occasion: A missionary, who had been sent to a strange land to proclaim the Gospel of the kingdom of God, and who had passed through many hardships, and was often in danger of losing his life, through the persecutions excited against him, came to a place where he had often before, at no small risk, preached Christ crucified. About fifty people, who had received good impressions from the word of God, assembled: he began his discourse; and, after he had preached about thirty minutes, an outrageous mob surrounded the house, armed with different instruments of death, and breathing the most sanguinary purposes. Some that were within shut the door; and the missionary and his flock betook themselves to prayer. The mob assailed the house, and began to hurl stones against the walls, windows, and roof; and in a short time almost every tile was destroyed, and the roof nearly uncovered, and before they quitted the premises scarcely left one square inch of glass in the five windows by which the house was enlightened. While this was going forward, a person came with a pistol to the window opposite to the place where the preacher stood, (who was then exhorting his flock to be steady, to resign themselves to God, and trust in him,) presented it at him, and snapped it; but it only flashed in the pan! As the house was a wooden building, they began with crows and spades to undermine it, and take away its principal supports. The preacher then addressed his little flock to this effect: ‘These outrageous people seek not you, but me; if I continue in the house, they will soon pull it down, and we shall be all buried in its ruins; I will therefore, in the name of God, go out to them, and you will be safe.’ He then went towards the door; the poor people got round him, and entreated him not to venture out, as he might expect to be instantly massacred; he went calmly forward, opened the door, at which a whole volley of stones and dirt was that instant discharged; but he received no damage. The people were in crowds in all the space before the door, and filled the road for a considerable way, so that there was no room to pass or re-pass. As soon as the preacher made his appearance, the savages became instantly as silent and as still as night: he walked forward; and they divided to the right and to the left, leaving a passage of about four feet wide for himself and a young man who followed him, to walk in. He passed on through the whole crowd, not a soul of whom either lifted a hand, or spoke one word, till he and his companion had gained the uttermost skirts of the mob! The narrator, who was present on the occasion, goes on to say: ‘This was one of the most affecting spectacles I ever witnessed; an infuriated mob, without any visible cause, (for the preacher spoke not one word,) became in a moment as calm as lambs! They seemed struck with amazement bordering on stupefaction; they stared and stood speechless; and, after they had fallen back to right and left to leave him a free passage, they were as motionless as statues! They assembled with the full purpose to destroy the man who came to show them the way of salvation; but he, passing through the midst of them, went his way. Was not the God of missionaries in this work? The next Lord’s day, the missionary went to the same place, and again proclaimed the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!’ “ [Clarke, *Commentary*]

His New Home in Capernaum

Matt 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

Lk 4:31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath days.

Having been rejected in Nazareth, Jesus moves to Capernaum which is agreed by all to have been His home during His ministry years. “Capernaum, a city famous in the New Testament, but never mentioned in the Old. Probably it was one of those cities which the Jews built after their return from Babylon. It stood on the sea-coast of Galilee, on the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim, as mentioned in the text. This was called His own city, Matthew 9:1, etc., and here, as a citizen, He paid the half shekel, Matthew 17:24. Among the Jews, if a man became a resident in any city for twelve months, he thereby became a citizen, and paid his proportion of dues and taxes. Capernaum is well known to have been the principal scene of our Lord’s miracles during the three years of his public ministry. Zabulon, the country of this tribe, in which Nazareth and Capernaum were situated, bordered on the lake of Gennesaret, stretching to the frontiers of Sidon, Genesis 49:13. Nephthalim was contiguous to it, and both were on the east side of Jordan, Joshua 19:34.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Matt 4:14-16 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up. : called Galilee of the Gentiles (or “of the nations”),

being inhabited by Egyptians, Arabians, and Phoenicians.... The word Gentiles, from gens, a nation, signifies [those people who were not descendants of any of the twelve tribes]. It is worthy of remark, that it was a regular tradition among the ancient Jews, that the Messiah should begin his ministry in Galilee.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]

Matthew quotes from Isaiah 9:2 where it is said the people are said to *walk* in darkness. Matthew may have intentionally made the change to point out the increased misery through the years, with *sitting in darkness* expressing a worse state than *walking*. “The people which sat; Wyclyffe, *dwelt*. The article with the participle (literally, *the people, the one sitting*) signifying something characteristic or habitual: the people *whose characteristic it was* to sit in darkness.” [Vincent, *Word Studies*]

“The region and shadow of death: These words are amazingly descriptive. A region of death — DEATH’S country, where, in a peculiar manner, Death lived, reigned, and triumphed, subjecting all the people to his sway. Shadow of death: used only here and in Luke 1:79, but often in the Old Covenant ... As in the former clause, death is personified, so here. A shadow is that darkness cast upon a place by a body raised between it and the light or sun. Death is here represented as standing between the land above mentioned, and the light of life, or Sun of righteousness; in consequence of which, all the inhabitants were, involved in a continual cloud of intellectual darkness, misery, and sin. The heavenly sun was continually eclipsed to them, till this glorious time, when Jesus Christ, the true light, shone forth in the beauty of holiness and truth. Christ began His ministry in Galilee, and frequented this uncultivated place more than He did Jerusalem and other parts of Judea: here His preaching was peculiarly needful; and by this was the prophecy fulfilled.” [Clarke, *Commentary*]