### **Jesus Rejected at Nazareth** R. Giglio 5/24/20

*EYES ON JESUS*

**

Last week we heard about the things Jesus did on the shores of Galilee; He cast out a legion of Demons, A woman was healed by touching his robe, a little girl was raised from the dead.

In chapter 6, he returns home…To **Nazareth**

Nazareth was not where He was born,(Bethlehem) It was not where he did most of His miracles (Galilee) and it was not central to the many prophecies he fulfilled (Jerusalem). It was simply the place that his parents were from and where he grew up.

Nazareth is a small village 65 miles due North of Jerusalem, and 15 miles southwest of Galilee.

Modern day Nazareth – is considered “the Arab capital of Israel”. Population is mostly Muslim Israelis, but a relatively large population of Catholics as well.

It is the site of the [The Basilica of the Annunciation](https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g297758-d379356-Reviews-The_Church_of_the_Annunciation-Nazareth_Galilee_Northern_District.html), the largest cathedral in the middle east, where Mary is said to have been visited by Gabriel to announce to her that she would be the mother of God’s son.

Also, there is a site called *Nazareth Village* that recreates a small village neighborhood very like and perhaps on the spot of the site where Jesus grew up.

 **NAZARETH PROPHECY:**

**Matt 2:23** So the family went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what the prophets had said: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

Interesting because this prophecy is found *nowhere* in the Hebrew Scriptures *(The Tenach, O.T.*), It’s also not found in the other prophetic writings (The Apocrypha). Yet Matthew boldly proclaims Jesus being from Nazareth as a fulfilled Messianic prophecy in his gospel.

Many explanations are given among scholars, Including that the word “Nazareth” sounds like “Nazar” Hebrew word for branch which could be a fulfillment *of*

*Isa.11:1, “He will be a branch(shoot) of Jesse”*

"nazer" = "branch" (nazeroth – plural)

Another reasonable explanation is that Matthew (Levi) was a very learned Jew, likely from a Priestly family. As such he would have been very familiar with both the written word and the Oral word. *Both were considered law...*

To understand this, one must first know about the traditional Jewish belief that there were two revelations at Mt. Sinai, the Written Law and the Oral Law.

According to Orthodox Jewish belief, the Written Law that Moses received from the Lord is only part of God’s revelation. Another Law was revealed as well, and handed down orally through generations. This Oral Law is said to be the necessary accompaniment that makes the commandments of the Written Law intelligible*. (Chosen People Article)*

This Nazareth Prophecy is very hotly debated by Jewish Scholars. Most of which quote ancient sages and scholars like Moses Maimonedes (12th century) that say that there is *no reference to Nazareth* in the prophets.

I often contend that *Matthew*, as a 1st century, Levite Jew who worshipped in Jerusalem during the 2nd temple, is a *much more reliable source* than anyone who came centuries after him. So if HE says that the prophecies say that “Messiah must be from Nazareth”, I believe him.

Our Text:

**Mark 6:1-6 “**Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples. **2**When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

“Where did this man get these things?” they asked. “What’s this wisdom that has been given him? What are these remarkable miracles he is performing? **3**Isn’t this the carpenter? Isn’t this Mary’s son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren’t his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him.

**4**Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.” **5**He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them. **6**He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Jesus Return to Nazareth:

1. He began teaching in the synagogue.
	1. Jesus is considered a *teacher* “Rabbi”. For those that don’t realize it, he did not forsake the Hebrew faith, he was “very Jewish Jew”, the kind that taught in the synagogue.
2. They were impressed at His wisdom and power.
	1. No one doubted his wisdom in what he taught and power to do miracles.
3. They scoffed at him because they knew him as just a local carpenter.
	1. They could not accept that the Messiah would be a common “local boy” who grew up under their nose”
4. They refused to believe him.
	1. They rejected the Messiah and refused to believe becsue he did not match the profile of what they expected.
5. He said: *“A prophet is not without honor except in his own town, among his relatives and in his own home.”*
	1. Jesus may, or may not be quoting another source (not in scripture), but what he is saying is that *when someone is too common, or too familiar, they are not often treated with the same level of respect that they would if they were from somewhere else.*

*[ International Touring artist/band - story]*

1. He could not do many miracles there because of their unbelief. In fact, He was amazed at their unbelief.

Because of their rejection, Nazareth, ***instead*** *of being a place where God’s glory* was revealed on earth with amazing miracles, significant revelations, fulfilled prophecies, and divine blessing, … became just another dot on the map. *Nothing else* of *any significance* happened in Nazareth ever again in scripture.

**All because they wouldn’t accept Jesus, because they considered him too common, too familiar, and because he also told them that God extended salvation to Gentiles who believed, not just Jews.**

**Luke’s account of Jesus’ visit to Nazareth**

*Some teachers believe that Luke 4 is a very similar visit, but a different visit altogether. I tend to agree with those who believe it’s the same visit as Mark 6, but listed in a different chronology.*

*Either way, it’s an account of Jesus visiting His home town.*

*Let’s look at this passage compared to the one we just read in Mark 6.*

**LUKE 4:14-3014**Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. **15**He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

**16**He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, **17**and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

(break)

**18**“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
    because he has anointed me
    to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
    and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
**19**    to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

**20**Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. **21**He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

**22**All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

**23**Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’”

**24**“Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. **25**I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. **26**Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

*(1st Kings 17) In Elijah’s time, the widow of Zarephath, even though she was an outsider, a (Heathen/Pagan) not considered one of the “people of God”, showed great faith in God and was blessed because of it.*

**27**And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

*( 2nd Kings 5) Naaman, the commander of the Syrian army, definitely an outsider, a Heathen, not considered one of God’s people, showed great faith in the God of Israel by coming to Elisha to be healed of leprosy, and God rewarded his faith with a miraculous healing)*

**28**All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

*Why were they furious??? It WASN’T because he said the scripture was fulfilled in him, it was because they could not accept that God was showing great mercy and giving blessings to those who are considered Heathen.*

Here is their reaction:

**29**They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. **30**But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Whoa! If they had succeeded in killing Jesus right there, that would have been his death.

If that happened, Instead of CROSSES on our Buildings, in our logos or as necklaces and jewelry, would we have “little depictions of a guy being thrown off a cliff”?

*BUT THAT DID NOT HAPPEN!, Jesus passed through the crowd and went on his way, He fulfilled his mission on earth and died on the cross for our sins on at the very time God had planned. Passover, of his final year on earth.*

*Jesus reached out to Nazareth to bless them. I believe He really wanted to see God’s glory revealed in his hometown but they rejected him and forfeited their blessing.*

*That’s how He is with us, As much as Jesus wants us to accept him, He does not force us.*

*(Even Jerusalem rejected Him. In His lament over Jerusalem we see His heart for the people he’d hoped would accept him, but they rejected him as well.)*

**MATT 23:37-3937**“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. **38**Look, your house is left to you desolate. **39**For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord

(Baruch Haba beshem Adonai)

*This was no surprise however. Jesus knew that part of the prophecy that He was fulfilling was not only to come to die, but also to be rejected.*

**ISAIAH 53:3**He was despised and rejected by mankind,
    a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

***Have you ever been rejected?*** *Most of us feel rejection many times in our lives. In our jobs, in our friendships, relationships, careers... The more meaningful the situation, the more difficult the rejection. The more we love the person who rejects us, the more pain we feel in the rejection.*

*Often in counseling, I see people whose spouse walked out on them and divorced them, or whose children disown them, feeling more pain than those whose spouse or child passed away.*

*A willful rejection and separation from a loved one, is often more painful than the grief of the death of a loved one.*

*Jesus understands that because He experienced it. So did God the Father…*

*God felt the same way when Israel wanted someone other than Him to be their King…*

*After returning them to the Promised Land, God wanted to lead His people and speak to them through the Prophets,*

*The people told Samuel that they didn’t want just God to be their King, they wanted a King like “other nations” had…*

**1 Samuel 8:4-7** **4**So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. **5**They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not follow your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.”

**6**But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. **7**And the Lord told him: “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. **8**As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you.

Many times we are like the people of Israel, we don’t want to have to seek God and be lead by Him, so we try to find ways to replace him. (Other people, Systems & methods, Organized religion,). We may reject God, but He does not reject us.

The Lord will never reject you, you are very special to Him, Hebrews tell us “He will never leave you or forsake you”. Psalm promises us…

**Psalm 94:14** “The Lord will not reject his people;
    he will not abandon his special possession.

Question, Do you reject Him?

* He wants to have a close relationship with you, and often that is unfulfilled because you and I reject Him and pursue other things instead of Him.
* He wants us to spend time with Him, as opposed to wasting precious minutes of life being preoccupied by other things.
* He wants us to give Him our undivided attention instead of allowing ourselves to be distracted by the things of the world?
* He wants you to experience His love, and love Him the way he loves you.

It’s impossible for you to do anything to make God **stop** loving you. *Many worship songs remind us… “Your love never fails”, “How Great is your Love”, “Oh how He loves us”, “How Deep the Father’s Love”.*

*It* ***is*** *possible however for us to not Love God and even reject Him.*

*He does not force us to love Him, nor does He force his will upon us. We need to accept it.*

It **IS** possible for you and I to reject God enough to where we forfeit the opportunities, that He has planned for your life in the time/place He has given you.

*(exmple: Story of Esther, “if you remain silent, you and your father’s family will perish”)*

*Jesus remains hopeful that You and I will not reject Him, and we will experience an incredible relationship with Him. His desire is to come into our lives so that, His purposes are fulfilled in us and we can experience ALL that God has for us.*

*He says to a CHURCH in Rev.:*

**Rev. 3: 19-20** **19**I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.**20**“Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.

* *It’s not just for those who have never received Him,*
* *it’s for all those whom he wants to fellowship with.*
* *It’s for You and Me.*

*If you Open the door of your heart today,*

*He will come into every area of His life that you welcome Him.*

*Let’s make that our goal, our plan, and our prayer!*