

BIBLE READING DAY 7, SATURDAY: MARCH 5

Jesus's Rejection at Nazareth

Luke 4:16–30

Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. As his custom was, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day. And he stood up to read, and the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. He opened the book and found the place where it is written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty those who are bruised, to proclaim the year of the Lord's gracious favor.

He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on him. He then said, "Today has this scripture been fulfilled in your hearing."

As he continued to speak, everyone commented favorably about him and marveled at the gracious words which poured from his lips. But then they began to say, "But after all, isn't this only the son of Joseph?"

Jesus said to them, "You will doubtless quote this proverb to me, 'Physician, heal yourself; do here in your own country the things we have heard that you did at Capernaum.'

I tell you truly, no prophet is accepted in his own country. I tell you the truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months and there came a great famine throughout all the land; but Elijah was sent to none of them, but rather to a widow in Zarephath, in the land of Sidon. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but rather Naaman the Syrian."

When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue was furious. And they rose up and thrust him out of the town and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town stood, intending to throw him down headlong. But passing through the midst of them, he went his way.

"...the basic premise of religion—that if you live a good life, things will go well for you—is wrong. Jesus was the most morally upright person who ever lived, yet he had a life filled with the experience of poverty, rejection, injustice, and even torture."

Timothy J. Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*

The Call of Four Disciples

Matthew 4:18–22; Luke 5:1–11

Walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (called Peter) and Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And he said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." And they immediately left their nets and followed him.

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James and John, in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. And he called them, and they immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

While Jesus was standing on the shore of the Lake of Gennesaret, a throng of people crowded close about him to hear the word of God. And seeing two boats tied at the water's edge (the fishermen had left them

and were washing their nets) he got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Now shove out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

"Master," said Peter, "we have toiled all night and caught nothing. Nevertheless, at your word, I will let down the nets."

And when they had done so, they caught such a great school of fish that the nets began to break. And they beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they were about to sink.

When Simon Peter saw all this, he fell on his knees before Jesus and exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord!" For he was astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, as were all those with him, and his partners, James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

But Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on, you will be catching men."

And when they brought their boats to shore, they left everything and followed him.

John Testifies About Jesus

John 3:22–36; Luke 3:19-20

Jesus went into the countryside of Judea with his disciples and remained there, baptizing. John, too, was baptizing at Aenon, near Salim, because there was much water there, and people were coming and being baptized. (John had not yet been put in prison.)

Now there arose a controversy between some disciples of John and a Jew over the matter of ceremonial cleansing. And they came to John and said, "Rabbi, he who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, is now baptizing, and all men are coming to him."

"A man can receive nothing except what is given him from heaven," replied John. "You yourselves bear me witness that I said, 'I am not the Messiah, but only his forerunner.' It is the bridegroom who receives the bride; but the bridegroom's friend, who stands and listens to him, rejoices greatly as he hears the voice of the bridegroom. And so my joy is now complete. He must increase, but I must decrease.

"He who came from above is above all others, but he who is only from earth is earthly, and speaks of earthly things. He who came from heaven is above all others; and he is bearing witness to what he has seen and heard, but men are not accepting his testimony. But whoever accepts his testimony affirms that God is true, for he whom God has sent is giving voice to the words of God. For to him, God gives the Spirit without limit. The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. He who trusts in the Son has eternal life; but he who refuses to obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God will remain upon him."

But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by John for taking his brother's wife, Herodias, and for all the wicked things he had done, added to all his evil doings by putting John in prison.

Approximate Timeline of Jesus's Public Ministry

BEFORE BAPTISM	BEFORE BAPTISM	1 st Feast of PASSOVER	SUMMER	1 st Feast of BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASSOVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASSOVER	SUMMER	THIRD BOOTHS	WINTER	FINAL PASSOVER
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DEVOTIONAL DAY 7 (SATURDAY, MARCH 5)

Drop the Microphone!

Based on Luke 4:16–30, Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 5:1-11, John 3: 22-36, Luke 3:19-20

Often, we as Christians love to hear good things about ourselves; what good deeds we have done in our walk with God. We feel like we have come so far without realizing how far we still have to go. God convicts me in this way about forgiveness. Sometimes arrogance and sinful pride gets in the way and blinds us from seeing where we have fallen short of, cheated, or failed God.

Jesus stood in the synagogue in Nazareth where he had been raised. Elsewhere, people had praised Him up to that point. The scroll from the Prophet Isaiah was handed to Him by an attendant and Jesus began to read. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to proclaim the 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, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”* Then He rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. Everyone’s eyes were fixed on Him when He said to them, *“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”*

There was more to be read but Jesus stopped in mid-sentence. You see, Jesus, the fulfillment of this prophecy, was here! Our Lord and Savior had just read the prophecy then “DROPPED THE MIC!”

Just like prophets are not accepted in their hometown, Jesus had not been accepted either. They had not accepted God’s message, even after Jesus made it perfectly clear he was God’s messenger who was to declare God’s way. He had performed miracles in Capernaum (see Day 5 and 6), but Nazareth was apparently not quite ready to receive Jesus as the fulfillment.

They were all astounded at what Jesus initially said until he told them what they had not done and how they had fallen short in faith. The crowd went from being astounded to running Jesus out of town and trying to kill him in the process. Through arrogance and sinful pride, they rejected Jesus of Nazareth, in Nazareth, just because they couldn’t believe what He had to say.

Imagine being out at the lake, and someone comes up to you and says, “follow me and I will make you fishers of men”. Simon and Andrew had heard about Jesus (see Day 5). But having the faith to drop everything and leave behind the tools of their profession just blows my mind. No matter how far I think I’ve come in my walk with God, I still have a long way to go.

Now suppose you’re at the same lake. You’ve been fishing all night and have caught nothing. You’re back on shore, the water is muddy, you are tired, and the wind is coming from the north. Someone tells you to go out and cast again. You know the rest of the story. Faith and Trophy Bass Fishin’.

Again, I have a long way to go to have that kind of faith. But John the Baptizer had it. You’ve heard it said, “Some folks just don’t know their place”. John certainly knew his place and had an incredible purpose. Filled with the Holy Spirit even before he was born, he didn’t blend in with everyone else, and didn’t care because he was so focused on who God wanted him to be. John was different alright but not just in dress and diet! He was different because of the way he let his faith shine through him.

Heavenly Father, thank You that we have the privilege to call You Father. Thank You for Your grace, Your mercy, and restoration. Help us to never be satisfied in our walk with You but always strive to be better and stay in Your word. Father, instill in our hearts an inclination to pray in everything we do and in all things. Convict us when we show an indifference or arrogance to an issue or a group of people in our communities or world when we think it’s too far away to affect us. Father forgive us of our sins in Jesus’ name. Amen.

–By Johnny King

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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