

James the Lord's brother, and the very same guy who wrote the epistle of JAMES. (That's a whole other study in itself, but one we are not going to address further here.) You can read ACTS 15:5-11 where Peter addressed this conference in Jerusalem, and then in ACTS 15:12 Paul and Barnabas gave their presentation on how they had been proclaiming the word of God to the Gentiles, and how the Gentiles were getting saved as Luke had previously recorded in ACTS 13 and 14. Then we find in ACTS 15:14-18 the Holy Ghost inspired words of James. James says in ACTS 15:14 *Simeon (Peter) hath declared how God at the first (for the first time in ACTS 10) did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. 15 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, 16 After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: 17 That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. 18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

James, nor any in attendance at this conference, had the remotest inkling of the time frame James was defining in this statement. As we previously briefly mentioned, these verses really define this present day parenthetical Church Age we are currently living in, which time frame is fast approaching two thousand years since this conference. The mindset of all that were in attendance at this conference was that Jesus was coming again soon to set up His Kingdom. "Soon" didn't mean two thousand years down the road to them. Notice these facts in their writings: Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 1:4-9 these timeless words: *I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; 5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; 6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: 7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: 8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* Paul didn't expect those of Corinth to wait two thousand years for Jesus return, but rather he also expected Jesus to return at any time. Perhaps the urgency of the Lord's soon coming is better expressed by Paul when he writes in 1 THESSALONIANS 4:15 *For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.* When he stated "we which are alive and remain" he was speaking of himself looking forward to the fact that Jesus could come again at anytime, even during his lifetime, and that this would be the defining moment when the Church Age will end!

James himself expressed this same urgency when he wrote: JAMES 5:7 *Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* Peter also wrote a whole chapter about the soon coming of the Lord, and on your own you can read what he had to say in 2 PETER 3. We know that the Apostle John was also at this conference in Jerusalem, being one of the Kingdom Apostles referenced in ACTS 15:2 & 4, and here is one scripture that the Apostle John wrote concerning the soon coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: 1 JOHN 2:28 *And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.* Also in REVELATION 22 John wrote: REVELATION 22:7 *Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.* REVELATION 22:12 *And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.* REVELATION 22:20 *He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Jesus Himself had warned his disciples of His soon return, stating in MATTHEW 24:44 *Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.* Brother Copley who went to be with the Lord in 1945 was constantly looking for the Lord's soon appearing, and he asked Brother Hill many times, "do you think He will come today?" Brother Hill in every service reminded us that Jesus is coming soon, maybe even today! Our Pastor, Jesse O'Dorisio, has often told how Brother Hill in his last hours, under very personal trying times, after falling down

asked Jesse: “do you think he will come today?” We too with eager anticipation are looking for Jesus to come at any moment, and there is no reason He couldn’t come and catch us away today! It’s hard to believe that Jesus hasn’t caught us away before 2021!

So until our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ returns, the words of James expressed in ACTS 15:14-18 are still valid. And remember as we study this important passage that it was the Holy Ghost who inspired Luke to write this important part of church history. ACTS 15:14 *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.* 15 *And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,* 16 *After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up:* 17 *That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.* 18 *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.* Brother Hill often quoted from this portion of scripture, especially verse 14. Brother Hill used a Scofield Bible, as do many of you, (the 1909, and 1917 version). Most of Scofield’s notes are doctrinally correct, and the following Scofield note was pointed out by Brother Hill to be a good note concerning what James said in ACTS 15:14-18, which note can be found starting on the bottom of page 1169 of your Scofield Bible, and ties in with what we have been discussing. Scofield writes: “Dispensationally, this is the most important passage in the New Testament. It gives the divine purpose for this age, and for the beginning of the next. (1) The taking out from among the Gentiles of a people for His name, the distinctive work of the present, or church-age. The church is the ecclesia-- the “called-out assembly.” Precisely this has been in progress since Pentecost. The Gospel has never anywhere converted all, but everywhere has called out some. (2) After this [viz. the out-calling] I will return. James quotes from AMOS 9:11 & 12. The verses which follow in AMOS describe the final regathering of Israel, which the other prophets invariably connect with the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant (e.g. ISAIAH 11:1, 10-12; JEREMIAH 23:5-8).” {End of quoting C. I. Scofield.}

Next I want to read Brother Copley’s comment on this from his ACTS study book, which you can find in the Grace and Glory study book section of the Living Waters Tabernacle website if you don’t already have the printed version. Brother Copley writes: “And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me. Simeon (Peter) hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for His Name. And to this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written” (ACTS 15:13-15). Peter proved that salvation was by faith through grace, by showing the beginning of God’s plan for this age. Then Barnabas and Paul demonstrated that salvation was by faith through grace to the Gentiles also, by their invincible witness to God’s mighty works. Finally, James confirmed the arguments of those three faith-warriors by Old Testament prophecies. He introduced his remarks by recalling what Peter had said. Then he made known three vital truths: First, during this age, God is “taking out a people for His Name.” Second, at the end of this age, “the residue of men” that is, Israel, will seek the Lord. Third, “and all the Gentiles,” that is, nationally all, but not literally every individual, for some will yield to Christ’s reign with pretended obedience. (See Psalm 18:44; 66:3; 81:15).”

“Study closely Verses 14-18. People talk of converting the whole world today. They claim very religiously, a whole city for Christ. Despite all the headlines that the whole city turned to the Lord, there is no record of any entire city being saved. The nearest to such a victory was in Paul’s time, when “almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the Word of the Lord” (Acts 13:44). But, did all these people who were there believe? If they did, why did they expel the apostles from their midst a few weeks later? Bear in mind that God is only making a visit to the earth during this age, to gather out a Body of people, and build a Bride for His Son. Men look in vain for a world-wide revival in view of ushering in a democratic millennium, and that, without Christ!”

“After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom My Name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things” (ACTS 15:16-17). James quoted Amos 9:11-12. The personal return and presence of the

Lord, not simply as a visitor, but as a permanent resident, is the promise of God and the hope of believers. Only this can bring in the Millennium. Jesus must come and rebuild the tabernacle of David. Then Israel will be restored and then the long-for world-wide revival will come, even the millennial day. Jesus must be sitting upon the throne of universal dominion and His lovely Bride with Him for these things to be accomplished. It will not be popular evangelism, but Christ and His people will convert the world during their honeymoon. Hallelujah! “Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world” (ACTS 15:18).” {End of quoting Brother Copley.}

We have now been engaged in a long discussion that began by pointing out the Luke wrote more about the kingdom of God than did all the other writers of scripture combined, mentioning the phrase “the kingdom of God” forty times in the combination of LUKE and ACTS. This led to us defining the Kingdom Apostles, and the Church Apostles, and pointing out the different gospel message they preached. The Kingdom Apostles were sent unto the children of Israel, and the Church Apostles, the Apostle Paul being chief, were sent unto the Gentiles. And most recently we have referenced ACTS 15, and GALATIANS 2, which explained further this very same thing; that the Kingdom Apostles were sent to the circumcision (the Jews), and the Church Apostles were sent unto the uncircumcision, the heathen, also called the Gentiles. The age we are now living in is called the Church Age, also the Age of Grace. The Church Age is a parenthetical period between the Age of Law, and the Millennium. As Brother Copley noted in the above portion: “Bear in mind that God is only making a visit to the earth during this age, to gather out a Body of people, and build a Bride for His Son.” In the language of ACTS 15:14 the purpose of this Church Age is when God is visiting *...the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.*

James’ Holy Ghost inspired words of ACTS 15:14 are still valid: *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.* We are going to spend a few more moments diving into the depths of verse, and discover some things that even James didn’t realize the Holy Ghost was speaking through him. We will start with the word “visit.” The Greek word found here for “visit” is “*episkeptomai* {ep-ee-skep'-tom-ahee}, number 1980 in The Strong’s Greek Concordance, and in part means: to look upon in order to help or to benefit, to look after, have care for, provide for: of God; and it also means: one to choose! Next let’s look at the phrase “a people for His name.” “A people for His name” in the broadest sense can most simply be defined as Christians. Christians properly described are believers in Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. Such believers are termed by many other names also, such as Sons of God, children of God, brethren, disciples, Saints, all of these are scriptural terms. One commentator expounded this verse like this: “to take out of them a people for his name; for Himself, for His own glory, to call upon His name, to bear His name, and support His Gospel, His cause, and His interest.” In these nearly two thousand years since James spoke these words of ACTS 15, millions upon millions of Gentiles have become believers, having accepted Jesus Christ as their own personal Saviour. None of this conference could have fathomed the far reaches of this statement: *Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name.* As Brother Copley wrote above: “Bear in mind that God is only making a visit to the earth during this age, to gather out a Body of people, and build a Bride for His Son.” By believing in Jesus millions of Gentiles during this Church Age, as well as some Jews, have become “His people,” “a people for His name,” and a small rib portion few even have become “a **peculiar** people,” which we found in TITUS 2:14 to be a *periousios* (per-ee-oo'-see-os) *sugkleronomos* joint-heir Bride to reign with Him in the Millennium, the Kingdom Age.

This Church Age is now approximately two thousand years old. At the end of this Church Age there will be a seven year tribulation, which will usher in the yet to come Kingdom Age, the Millennium, where Christ will reign with Israel over the nations. The Millennium will be the thousand-year reign of Jesus Christ as God Almighty. We read in ISAIAH 9:6 & 7 -- *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and*

*upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this. It will be during this time that the Lord Jesus Christ will reign as ...the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords...* spoken of in 1 TIMOTHY 6:16. ISAIAH 9:6 also proclaims *...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* We read in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:24-28 the end results of this thousand-year Millennial reign. 1 CORINTHIANS 15:24 *Then cometh the end, (of Christ's millennial reign) when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* This is when what is said in ISAIAH 9:7 kicks in: *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.* So we find that Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour will reign as God Almighty for 1000 years, but His reign over Israel, upon "the throne of David" will continue on for ever, meaning even unto eternity. This does not mean that God the Father will be in subjection unto His Son Christ Jesus during the Millennium, for as Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 15:27 *...it is manifest that he is excepted, (meaning God the Father is outside the boundaries of subjection) which did put all things under him.* Then at the conclusion of His thousand-year reign *...when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all...* 1 CORINTHIANS 15:28.

We have now spent several Sunday School lessons pointing out some of the differences between the Kingdom Apostles, and the Church Apostles, and what they taught. The Church Apostles taught Paul's gospel message that the Lord Jesus Christ gave Paul to preach, which is the gospel message for this yet present Church Age. Paul's gospel message was primarily unto the Gentiles as ROMANS 11:13 states: *For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office.* Paul and the other Church Apostles also preached about the kingdom of God on earth, which was the same message Jesus preached, and the doctrine the Kingdom Apostles preached unto the children of Israel. However the Kingdom Apostles did not preach anything else of Paul's gospel, for they were not given Paul's gospel message to preach during this Church Age. Again Paul's gospel message went way beyond preaching the kingdom of God on earth, for Paul also preached the of Christ's heavenly kingdom, and about the gospel of His glory, and about meeting the Lord in the air, and reigning with Him as join-heirs with Christ. We are to follow Paul as he followed Christ in his pursuit of pressing *...toward the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus...* which Church Apostle Paul wrote about in PHILIPPIANS 3:14. Luke, being a follower of the Apostle Paul, was very familiar with Paul's gospel message written unto the Gentiles of this Church Age. The Kingdom Apostles, who were sent unto the children of Israel, didn't know Paul's gospel message, thus they couldn't teach Paul's gospel message.

Luke lived at the beginning of the Church Age, and mentioned more about the kingdom of God than all the other authors of scripture combined as we previously noted. Luke wrote the phrase "the kingdom of God" thirty-three times in LUKE, and seven times in ACTS. Of the thirty-three times Luke wrote the phrase "the kingdom of God" in The Gospel According to LUKE, twenty-six of these times Luke was quoting the words of Jesus, who taught, and spoke about "the kingdom of God." Twenty-six is the number that points to the GOSPEL, or the GOOD NEWS of the gospel. Jesus said in LUKE 4:43 *...I must preach the kingdom of God...* and recall also what we read earlier in LUKE 9:1 how Jesus *...called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.* Then we also mentioned earlier in this study that after His resurrection, Jesus and His disciples, some of whom were His Kingdom Apostles that were sent by Jesus unto the Jews, were once again

written about by Luke in ACTS 1. We read this in ACTS 1:3 *To whom also he (Jesus) shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.* This was the first of seven times in ACTS where Luke writes more of the kingdom of God. We noted also that Luke wrote in ACTS about the Apostle Paul, a Church Apostle, preaching about the kingdom of God five times, and the Apostle Paul himself wrote the phrase “the kingdom of God” eight times in his epistles. Again eight is a number that among other things is associated with the BRIDE of Christ, and the Lamb’s wife will reign with Christ in the kingdom of God during the Millennium.

The purpose of noting Luke’s mentioning the kingdom of God more than any other gospel writer was to point out Luke’s understanding of what both Jesus and Paul taught concerning the kingdom of God. And in studying Luke’s character we have also found that Luke also wrote more about the Holy Ghost than all the other authors of scripture combined! Luke referenced the Holy Ghost eleven times in LUKE, and forty-two times in ACTS, for a total of fifty-three times. In total the term “Holy Ghost” is found ninety times in scripture, so we clearly see that Luke wrote more than half of these scriptures. The mighty power of the Holy Ghost is magnified in Luke’s writings, and certainly was also amplified in Luke’s own life.

In these fifty-three scriptures where Luke uses the term “Holy Ghost” we find what I am going to call a Lukeism, that is a phrase found in scripture that only Luke wrote. The phrase is “full of the Holy Ghost.” This phrase “full of the Holy Ghost” describes some full overcomers, the first one being Jesus, who said in JOHN 16:33 *...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.* Luke wrote in LUKE 4:1 *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, 2 Being forty days tempted of the devil.* At the conclusion of this temptation we read in LUKE 4:14 *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.* The second time we find the phrase “full of the Holy Ghost” is in ACTS 6:3 in reference to the seven men chosen in ACTS 6. ACTS 6:3 *Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.* Philip the evangelist, and Stephen were in this group. Recall that Luke first got to meet Philip the evangelist when Paul and company stayed with him in ACTS 21:8 & 9. The probability is that Luke also later got to interview Philip the evangelist during the two years Paul was in prison at Caesarea, for certainly both Luke and Philip the evangelist visited Paul while he was in prison. The third reference where we find the phrase “full of the Holy Ghost” is in ACTS 7:55 at the conclusion of Stephen’s sermon, where Luke writes: *But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.* Luke never met Stephen, but the Holy Ghost revealed to Luke what words he should write. The final time we the phrase “full of the Holy Ghost” is in ACTS 11:24 where the reference is to Barnabas before he became a Church Apostle. ACTS 11:24 *For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.* This was the first time Barnabas visited Antioch, Syria before the time that Paul first visited Antioch. In this portion it is Luke who tells us that Barnabas “full of the Holy Ghost” went to Tarsus to seek for Saul of Tarsus, and then brought him to Antioch, Syria.

One of the other things that we have briefly discussed about Luke is that he was led of the Holy Ghost himself to record several sermons both in LUKE and in ACTS. It is also interesting to note that of the twenty-seven verses in scripture where we read the word “preaching,” Luke wrote thirteen of them! The number twenty-seven itself has to do with THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL. The New Testament contains twenty-seven books for THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL! Twenty-seven is the product of three times nine. Three is the number associated with the HOLY SPIRIT. Nine is the number pointing to FINALITY, or DIVINE COMPLETENESS. The FINAL touches in a full overcomer can only be DIVINALLY COMPLETED by THE HOLY SPIRIT. True effective PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL must be inspired by THE HOLY GHOST. Our Brother Luke recorded several HOLY GHOST inspired sermons, where THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL spiritually speaking “turned the world upside down,” a statement Luke wrote in

ACTS 17:6. So we note that Luke truly loved THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL by men “**full of the Holy Ghost.**” And thank God THE HOLY GHOST inspired Luke to record THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL in THE HOLY GHOST inspired sermons he recorded in both The Gospel According to LUKE, and The ACTS of the Apostles. You may find it interesting to note that the word “sermon” is not found in scripture, yet Luke recorded several sermons in his two books that he wrote; sermons we otherwise wouldn’t have!

The question comes up about what Luke wrote concerning the sermons he recorded, and the many testimonies he wrote, which is where did he get all of this information? Again our answer is in his introductory remarks of LUKE 1:1-4 where he tells us that he got this information from the early eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, whom Luke got to interview during his two years at Jerusalem while Paul was in prison at Caesarea. So in a few moments we will mention some of Jesus sermons recorded in LUKE. Some of these sermons we will look at are only recorded in scripture by Luke. Some of the main eyewitnesses to the sermons Jesus preached were His mother Mary, and in most instances His disciples, some of whom became Kingdom Apostles. The Kingdom Apostles certainly were ministers of the word, and people whom Luke got to interview while in Jerusalem.

The next question that comes up is how many sermons did Luke record? Luke records the preaching of John the Baptist in LUKE 3:1-18. Jesus’ first sermon is found in LUKE 4:16-30. Next the sermon on the mount that Jesus preached can be found in LUKE 6:20-49. Within this sermon we find the first of eighteen Parables that Luke records. A Parable is not a sermon in itself, but rather a short story that teaches a moral or spiritual lesson, and the Master Teacher was the best Parable teacher! Look at LUKE chapter 8 for a moment. LUKE 8:1 *And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, 2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, 3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.* Here we find here that Jesus went about preaching, and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. In LUKE 9:11 we read: *And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.* Was this a sermon? This went on all day, and was where the five loaves and two small fishes fed the 5000 plus, and the fragments that remained afterward filled twelve baskets! This was indeed a sermon, followed by numerous miracles. In LUKE 9:46-48 we find the sermon on the child, which is also recorded in MATTHEW 18:1-10, and MARK 9:33-37. So far we have found references to six sermons recorded in LUKE. In LUKE 11:29 *...when the people were gathered thick together...* Jesus preached another sermon. Jesus taught his disciples what is called The Olivet Discourse in LUKE 21. We are now up to eight sermons by my count that Luke recorded in LUKE, and I may have missed some. In LUKE 24:27 we find after Jesus resurrection that he truly preached to the two Emmaus disciples, for this verse says: *And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.* All good Holy Ghost inspired preaching expounds the scriptures. In addition to the nine sermons we found in LUKE, in the book of ACTS Luke continued to record some of the sermons that were preached by the Apostles, and others including Jesus Himself. Read ACTS 1:4-9 to read Jesus last short sermon preached here on earth, this after his resurrection. Earlier in this study we found six sermons that Peter preached recorded by Luke in the book of ACTS. Stephen preached a sermon in ACTS 7 to the Sanhedrin Council. We also made mention of the four sermons Paul preached that are recorded in ACTS, and we may have missed a couple. (See and study ACTS 13:15-41; 17:22-31; 20:16-38, and ACTS 28:23-31.) So at a minimum we find twelve sermons that Luke recorded in the book of ACTS. Thus we find at a minimum that Luke documented twenty-one sermons in his writing The Gospel According to LUKE, and The ACTS of the Apostles!

Here’s couple of more thoughts before we look at a sermon of Jesus in LUKE 4. How many sermons have you heard in your lifetime? This is a question none of us can really answer. Can you write down word for word the words of any sermon you have heard? The answer is most likely no.



And thank God that today we have recordings of many of our favorite sermons, which we can listen to over, and over again if we wish. I have a book of Charles Spurgeon's sermon notes. Spurgeon was known as the "Prince of Preachers," who preached to over 10 million people in his lifetime, and published thousands of sermons. Spurgeon certainly had a way with words. I also have two books of Smith Wigglesworth sermons. But the best book of sermons that I have is the same book that you have called the Bible. The Bible is the word of God, and the source of all Holy Ghost inspired sermons where sound doctrine is expounded. The most powerful sermons are the ones that have the inspiration, and the power of the Holy Spirit behind them. Holy Ghost inspired preaching is magnified by the *...effectual working of his power...* (quoting from EPHESIANS 3:7). Each of us could probably write an essay about sermons, but the best sermons are the one where the Holy Ghost speaks to your own heart. And if you are really honest with yourself the majority of these sermons come during your own private study time in the word of God! Sometimes these sermons come to us at two in the morning while we meditate upon the word of God. A Pastor or an evangelist can't preach an impactful sermon without the Holy Ghost first preaching it to him, or her. A Christian songwriter that was filled with the Holy Ghost, who Sue and I met in New Mexico wrote a song with the words: "I am not a preacher, but there is a preacher living in me." Peter never preached a sermon until he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and the preacher living in him then brought forth powerful sermons. "*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:...*" Jesus told His disciples in ACTS 1:8, and the Holy Ghost will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ as is told us in JOHN 16:14.

### Jesus' Sermon of LUKE 4

Next we are going to spend some time looking at the first sermon of Jesus that only Luke records in scripture, which is found in LUKE 4. And before we get into this, the majority of the things that we have been discussing in this study are the points unique to Luke. In other words we have spent most of our time examining the things that only Luke recorded in scripture. And this would be a long list of things if we could break it down into a list. The sermon of Jesus we are going to examine in LUKE 4 is also unique to Luke, for he is the only Gospel writer who records what happened here.

As we get into this recall what is said in LUKE 4:1 *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost...* . Jesus Christ Himself knew that being full of the Holy Ghost was mandatory before He could begin His ministry. LUKE 4:1 *And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan*, (after being baptized by John the Baptist in LUKE 3:21) *and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*, 2 *Being forty days tempted of the devil*. There are a couple of more important points to highlight in these two verses before we will move on, and looking at these notable points will help us get the maximum benefit on what we are going to study later in this chapter.

(In reading scripture we sometimes miss a lot of good things because we have become good skimmers, and poor readers, skipping over the very important facts that the Holy Ghost wants us to see. And I can give one quick example before we look at these points. We often hear quoted 2 TIMOTHY 3:4 in reference to the times we are now living where men are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. But that is not what this scripture says. This part of 2 TIMOTHY 3:4 actually reads: *...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*. Did you catch the difference here? Read it again until you see the second "s" in pleasures. Pleasures means more than one pleasure, and truly today men are lovers of more than one pleasure. I for one do not want to miss all that God has for me in scripture, and part of studying, and rightly dividing the word of God is to slow down, and enjoy all of the individual letters, and the individual thoughts in the word of God.)

So back here in LUKE 4:1 we find that Jesus right out of the gate before He even preached one sermon, *...was led by the Spirit into the wilderness*. And in verse 2 we find He was here in the wilderness forty days. By now you know that the number forty is the number that has to do with PERFECT TESTING. LUKE 4:2 informs us that Jesus was PERFECTLY TESTED (tempted) forty

days of the devil. Before Moses could lead the children of Israel for those forty years in the wilderness, he first had to spend forty years on the backside of the desert before God could use him to lead the children of Israel. The backside of the desert was into the wilderness. The phrase “into the wilderness” that we read here in LUKE 4:1 is found 33 (PROMISE) times in scripture! There is a lot we can learn from what takes place “in the wilderness,” and this phrase “in the wilderness” is mentioned 157 times in scripture. A large majority of these verses have to do with the children of Israel being PERFECTLY TESTED, and perfectly protected by the Lord these forty years they wandered “in the wilderness.” Let’s read just one example of this found in NEHEMIAH 9 where the history of the children of Israel is recorded if you choose to read, and study the whole chapter. We will only examine a small portion of this chapter where we find the phrase “in the wilderness” a couple of times. NEHEMIAH 9:19 *Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness: the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to shew them light, and the way wherein they should go. 20 Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst. 21 Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.* Take note than while being PERFECTLY TESTED these forty years that the Lord didn’t ever forsake them, nor leave them, but sustained them, sheltered them with a pillar of the cloud by day, and warmed them with a pillar of fire by night, and sustained them with manna, and gave them water for their thirst, and caused their clothes not to wax old, nor their feet to swell, and all during this time in the wilderness they lacked nothing. In addition God gave them His good spirit to instruct them! Ponder these thoughts the next time you are faced with a deep test.

Brother Hawkins study book of LUKE notes the following: “David spent most of his early years with his father's sheep, and fought a good many battles in the wilderness before he was able to fight against Goliath. He spent more time in the wilderness after that great victory, before taking the throne of Israel.” {End of quoting Brother Hawkins for now.} Study 1 SAMUEL 17:16 and find that Goliath had really TESTED Israel for forty days before David slew him later in that chapter. We also know that David wrote many of the PSALMS, and he wrote one where he specifically addressed facing an “in the wilderness” situation. Let’s learn something from this Old Testament worthy of faith, who wrote us how to deal with an “in the wilderness” situation. PSALMS 63 **A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.** PSALMS 63:1 *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; 2 To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. 3 Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. 4 Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. 5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: 6 When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. 7 Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. 8 My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me. 9 But those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth. 10 They shall fall by the sword: they shall be a portion for foxes. 11 But the king shall rejoice in God; every one that sweareth by him shall glory: but the mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped.* In this PSALM we find noted that every part of David’s being was saturated with the longing for the Lord. We find in this PSALM that the healthy soul wants the Lord, thirsteth for the Lord, longeth for the Lord, seeks the Lord, praises the Lord with joyful lips, and uplifted hands, blesses the Lord, rejoices in the Lord, meditates upon the Lord, remembers the Lord, follows hard after the Lord, and is satisfied with the Lord day and night. There are a lot of clues in this chapter of how to be a full overcomer.

GALATIANS 1:17 tells us how the Apostle Paul was led into the wilderness of Arabia, and after ward came out equipped with Paul’s gospel message for this church age. In 2 CORINTHIANS 11:26 Paul tells of eight perils that he faced while running his race, and one of them was perils “in the wilderness.” In 1 CORINTHIANS the Apostle Paul writes eight “know ye not” statements, and the last one of them is found in 1 CORINTHIANS 9:24, which reads: *Know ye not that they which run in*



*a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.* We have learned that one of the meanings of the number eight has to do with THE BRIDE OF CHRIST. THE BRIDE OF CHRIST will be a racecourse winner, who learned like Moses, and David, and the Apostle Paul how to be a full overcomer, and they did so, in part, by facing numerous trials and tests, and many perils "in the wilderness" times of their life.

We are still in LUKE 4 introducing some thoughts before we examine the first sermon of Jesus that Luke recorded. And we read in verse 14 & 15 what took place after Jesus was tempted of the devil those forty days in the wilderness. LUKE 4:14 *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.* 15 *And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.* These events all happened before Jesus returned to Nazareth where He had been brought up. And we find here in LUKE 4:14 that *...Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee...* after His into the wilderness testing. Again in LUKE 4:1 we found that Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost, and now here in verse 14 we find Him being led of the Holy Ghost back into Galilee, the very same region where Nazareth His home town was. And *...there went out a fame of him through all the region round about...* LUKE 4:14 continues. We find next in verse 15 that Jesus also *...taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.* As we read further we next find Jesus visiting His hometown of Nazareth.

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.* We are going to look at a couple more things before we get to His sermon. First of all note that Jesus "went into the synagogue," and this phrase is another Lukeism, a phrase only written by Luke. Besides here in LUKE 4:16 we also read the phrase "went into the synagogue" in ACTS 13:14; 17:10; and 19:8. Secondly we are going to spend a few minutes discussing the order of a synagogue service, as it has been a while since we first discussed this topic. Matthew Henry's Commentary states that in the Jewish synagogues they had seven readers every Sabbath, the first a priest, the second a Levite, and the other five Israelites of that synagogue. This would mean that on each Sabbath day two portions of scripture would be read, in course; one from the five books of Moses (the law), and one from the other books of the Old Testament (the prophets). During one years' time in the Jewish Sabbath day services, all of the Old Testament scriptures would be read out loud in the synagogue one time. Thus in the course of any 52 week period all of the Old Testament scriptures would have been read aloud in Sabbath Day services, this in part was due to the fact that so few copies of the Old Testament scripture existed. We are not told in scripture the order of that Sabbath day service there in Nazareth, but it seems to be an extraordinary day, for Jesus *...stood up for to read.* This may have been the first time Jesus had done this at Nazareth, however scripture doesn't tell us one way or the other. If you think back to the time when Jesus was twelve years old that Luke writes about in LUKE 2:41-52, when Jesus came to the temple and was found astonishing the doctors of the law with His questions, and answers, what were they discussing? The answer has to be the scriptures, which were the Old Testament scriptures, and these scriptures are the word of God, who also is Jesus Christ The Word of God, so it seems to me that it would nearly be impossible for the Man Christ Jesus to be silent concerning the scriptures for eighteen years. I am confident that He had long discussions with His family concerning the scriptures, but that was as far as it went because He knew His hour was not yet come as He stated to Mary in JOHN 2:2, meaning the time for His public ministry had not yet come. But now here in LUKE 4 was the time for His public ministry. Prior to this time Jesus hadn't yet began His public ministry, nor had He received His training "in the wilderness." But by the time frame of LUKE 4 Jesus public ministry had began, and this event was outstanding to the hearers, for they remembered it years later when they told it to Luke, who put it in writing for our learning.

Consider this for a moment before we move on, when Jesus *...came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day...* who do you suppose came with Him to the synagogue? We are not told this in scripture, but it would be hard to imagine Jesus mother Mary not being with Him. Surely she attended all the Sabbath day services in Nazareth where she still lived at this time. And certainly she wouldn't want to miss out

on the opportunity to once again attend Sabbath day services with her first born Son Jesus. So to my way of thinking it would have been Mary the mother of Jesus who related this account to Luke, who wrote the events of this chapter in LUKE, with the guidance, and inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And while we are considering this thought, recall that we have already noted something about all twenty-one of the sermons Luke recorded for us in scripture. Certainly Luke would have asked Jesus mother Mary if she had heard any of His sermons. And what we find recorded in LUKE 4:16-30 would have been her answer.

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.* For a few moment let's discuss the topic of "the Sabbath day." The Sabbath day was ordained by the Lord in the days of Moses as a day for rest. The Sabbath day was part of the law given unto the children of Israel, and we read starting in EXODUS 20:8 *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: 11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* So we find that the Sabbath day is the seventh day of the week, which is Saturday. Let's next read some verses from EXODUS 31. EXODUS 31:14 *Ye shall keep the sabbath therefore; for it is holy unto you: every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death: for whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 15 Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the LORD: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death. 16 Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.* That was the way it was for the children of Israel born under the law. And Jesus Christ Himself was born under the law as we are told in GALATIANS 4. The Apostle Paul, the Apostle sent unto the Gentiles wrote in GALATIANS 4:4 & 5 -- *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.* In this study of Luke we spent several weeks discussing the birth of Christ, who was born under the law, and how His parents fulfilled the customs of the law concerning Jesus. So when Luke write in LUKE 4:16 that Jesus *...as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day...* it was because He was still under the law. But ROMANS 10:4 also informs us that Christ is the end of the law. ROMANS 10:4 *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.* We further read in GALATIANS 3:13 that: *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.* We are not under the law thus we do not keep the Sabbath day, but most Jews still do, not having accepted Jesus Christ as their Messiah, and Lord and Saviour. The Apostle Paul wrote in ROMANS 10:1 *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved.* With that kind of heart's desire for his own people, our Apostle Paul attended as many Synagogue service as he could, and all these Sabbath day services were held on Saturday. And the Apostle Paul preached a number of sermons on the Sabbath day. HEBREWS 9:15 explains that Jesus Christ is the mediator of the New Testament, and we live in New Testament times. JOHN 20:19; ACTS 20:7 and 1 CORINTHIANS 16:2 also informs us that the New Testament believers assembled on the first day of the week after Jesus resurrection. The first day of the week is Sunday, the beginning of a new week. The common practice since that time has been for Christian church services to be held on Sunday. The book of ACTS records that all of the Apostles had services daily, and ACTS 2:47 ends with this statement: *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* Now for the most important point of this discussion, it isn't the day that is important, it is the Lord who is important, and we assemble in church services, no matter what day it is, to worship the Lord! The Apostle Paul stated it like this in ROMANS 14:5 *One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. 6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.*

Paul added in HEBREWS 10:24 & 25 -- *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

So as we get to LUKE 4:17 we find that Jesus on that Sabbath day service in Nazareth had *...stood up for to read...* the scriptures as was the common practice during a Sabbath's day service. LUKE 4:17 *And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias (Isaiah).* Let's stop here for a moment. Recall that there were few copies of the Old Testament scripture that existed at that time, so individual books of Old Testament scripture were indeed rare during the days of Christ, but each synagogue had copies of the books of the Old Testament. Almost forty years later our Apostle Paul wrote Timothy, and requested that he bring with him *...the books, but especially the parchments...* in 2 TIMOTHY 4:13 where once again we still find individual copies of scripture were few and far between even in Paul's day. Back here in LUKE 4:17 there was a copy of the book of the prophet Isaiah delivered to Jesus, and we learn from verse 20 that it was the minister of that synagogue who delivered it to Jesus. The minister was the one in the synagogue who was in charge of the books, the Old Testament scriptures. At the end of the reading of the scriptures the book was given back to this attendant minister, who replaced the book of ISAIAH in its proper place.

We are not told if Jesus requested the book of ISAIAH, but we also know that from the eternities past He knew what would happen this day, and that He would be given the book of ISAIAH to read from. The synopsis of ISAIAH is that it has been called the "Miniature Bible" with each of its 66 chapters corresponding, exactly, and consecutively, with the books of the Bible. Now in Jesus time the New Testament wasn't yet written, but that is the way ISAIAH is laid out. ISAIAH is a book of prophecy, and there are sixteen books of prophecy found in the Old Testament. All of the books of prophecy were written mainly to Israel. Part of the prophecies of ISAIAH concerns the first coming of Jesus. We will read a few of these prophecies concerning Jesus found in ISAIAH, which we are probably the familiar with. ISAIAH 7:14 *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* This is the verse quoted in MATTHEW 1:23, which reads: *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.* Next in ISAIAH 9:6 & 7 we read: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.* The first part of this prophecy references Christ's first advent that we read about in ISAIAH 7:14. The second part where Jesus Christ is found with *... the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever...* speaks of Jesus' reign in the Millennium, and His reign upon "the throne of David" forever, meaning unto eternity. Our next prophecy of Christ is found in ISAIAH 11 where the whole chapter deals with the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant. The first part of ISAIAH 11:1 deals with the Man Christ Jesus: *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse,...* . Jesse was the father of David, and Jesus was of the lineage of David as is also told in LUKE 2:4 *And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:).* And one of the most famous prophecies of Christ Jesus found in ISAIAH is found in ISAIAH 53. ISAIAH 53:1 *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? 2 For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. 3 He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet*

*we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

Back in LUKE 4 Jesus didn't read any of these scriptures we just referenced in ISAIAH that announced who He was, but rather He chose to read from ISAIAH 61:1 and part of verse 2, which also announce who He was. And let's put ourselves in this Synagogue service for a few minutes, and learn from the Master Teacher. Recall as we get into this that Jesus was full of the Holy Ghost, and full of the power of the Holy Spirit as He stood up for to read in LUKE 4:16. The scripture He was going to read from in ISAIAH 61:1 and the first part of verse 2 was where His sermon came from. And I am going to give this sermon a title, which I will give you in a moment. Some of us remember sermons that Brother Hill preached by their titles, like The Dark Mile, Diamond Dust, Hinds Feet, The Second Mile, The Cross Pull, The Axe Head, and many others. We have heard many sermons about salvation, and about the coming of the Lord. What did Jesus preach about in LUKE 4? He didn't preach about the Lord's soon coming, but rather, I am here. He preached about Himself! His sermon could have been entitled: Here, Hear Now. I am HERE, HEAR me NOW was His message.

Recall when Jesus was twelve years old in LUKE 2:49 He asked his parents this question: *...wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?* He was announcing that as the Son of God He came to earth as the Son of Man to be about His Father's business. In other words He was on a business trip. Later in JOHN 8:29 during His earthly ministry Jesus made this statement concerning His most important business trip: *And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.* Now as we begin to study what Jesus said in His first recorded sermon found in LUKE 4, what we find is that He expressed the purpose of His most important business trip as He stands up and reads in the Nazareth Synagogue the text inspired of the Holy Ghost, written some 700 years earlier found in ISAIAH 61. ISAIAH 61:1 *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; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,...* and he stopped. Now let's read LUKE 4:16-22. 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. 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, 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 brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. 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. 21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. 22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* We will stop here in the middle of verse 22 for now, right here in the middle of His sermon.

I think most of us enjoy hearing a true story told by someone who lived through the events they were telling about, especially if they could paint a good picture with their words. This is exactly what Jesus was doing here in His Nazareth Synagogue sermon, painting from Old Testament scripture a vivid portrait of Himself. Hold that thought for a moment, and jump ahead some three plus years later to the time after His resurrection when Jesus expounded unto the two Emmaus disciples all the Old Testament scriptures the things concerning Himself as LUKE 24:27 tells us. Yet at that point in time the two Emmaus disciples didn't recognize Him, but later that evening at dinner their eyes were opened, and they knew it was the Lord Jesus Christ who was speaking unto them, and at that instance He vanished out of their sight. LUKE 24:32 tells us: *And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?* Now here in LUKE 4 in Nazareth where He grew up Jesus was just beginning to reveal Himself to those whom He grew up amongst. Back in LUKE 24:16 when Jesus first drew near unto the two Emmaus disciples *...their eyes were holden that they should not know him.* The word "holden" is not common to our modern day English, but it simply means that they did not know who He was. Again here at Nazareth they did not know who He was, so Jesus was giving them a quick snapshot of who He was by reading the Old Testament verse from ISAIAH 61:1 & 2. And we find here in LUKE 4:22 that His impact was just as great as it was upon the two Emmaus disciples, who also heard His gracious words, and felt within their own spirit, their own hearts burning within as He read aloud ISAIAH 61:1 & 2. Jesus gracious words we find in LUKE 4:22 were "wondered" upon by those in the Nazareth Synagogue. The word "wondered" here means that they truly were struck with the truth, and the Holy Ghost inspired force of His words. May we too feel the impact of these gracious words, this word picture left for us in scripture that describes our precious Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

Take special notice of the first words Jesus spoke after the reading of the scriptures, which is this statement in verse 21, *...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* I am HERE, HEAR me NOW was His message. *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* We read in ROMANS 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.* Those in attendance that day at Nazareth where Jesus had been brought up had just witnessed, and heard the word of God read to them by The Word of God Himself! He made it real unto them. And then Jesus, who is The Word of God, emphasized the point of reading this particular portion of scripture by teaching them *...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* Again I am HERE, HEAR me NOW was His message. This certainly got their attention for we read next in 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?* These words Jesus had just read from ISAIAH 61 had just explained who He was: *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.* This was the purpose of His business trip.

The very next words Jesus spoke were this statement in verse 21, *...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.* The Apostle Paul quoted from ISAIAH 49:8 when he wrote 2 CORINTHIANS 6:2, which says: *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)* Jesus here at the Nazareth synagogue was saying the very same thing: *...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.* In other words today, this day is the day of salvation; *...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears...* I am HERE, HEAR me NOW! Sixteen (LOVE) times in New Testament scripture we find the statement "let him hear" found in similar statements like the one found in LUKE 8:8 *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.* Recall for a moment the question asked by the Philippian jailor in ACTS 16, and Paul and Silas' answer; ACTS 16:30 *...Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* In reality this was Jesus message in LUKE 4:21 *...This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears...* I am HERE, HEAR me NOW, *...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the*

*day of salvation... Believe on Me, the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Bringing it down to today, this day that you are hearing this, and reflect on this statement found in MATTHEW 18:20, which are words of Jesus: For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Today our Lord and Saviour is in our midst for we are gathered together in His name, and He said He is in our midst, so the encouragement for us is the very same as it was for those in the Nazareth synagogue, I am HERE, HEAR me NOW, ...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*

With all of this as background information let's now go back and study the word Jesus read from ISAIAH, and then look at the results. This scriptural reading gave several points for discussion. Luke had already acknowledged that "*The Spirit of the Lord...*" was upon Jesus, noting that He was full of the Holy Ghost in LUKE 4:1, and that Jesus came to Nazareth "*...in the power of the Spirit...*" in LUKE 4:14. This in part was why we read in verse 22 *...And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* As we noted above the word "wondered" here means that they truly were struck with the truth, and the Holy Ghost inspired force of His words. And they further "wondered" at Him when they remembered that he was a native of their own place, and that they had long been acquainted with Him, and all bare witness of this fact. They further "wondered" on how He should now, after all of these years having been in their midst, claim to be the Messiah, after giving so much evidence from scripture that He was the Christ! They also "wondered" at His gracious words.

Jesus was stating that "*The Spirit of the Lord*" was *...upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor...* in LUKE 4:18. This was Jesus first priority, *...to preach the gospel to the poor.* Brother Hawkins comments that this word poor here "means 'distressed, cringing as a beggar,' and shows the desperate need of men." Poor as defined by Thayer means: lacking in anything. One translation translates "poor" here as destitute. Certainly we were all born in sin destitute of a Saviour, which is exactly why Jesus Christ came into this world, to save sinners, as the Apostle Paul pointed out in 1 TIMOTHY 1:15. We find the phrase "to the poor" nineteen times in scripture, nineteen being the number of FAITH. The poor unto whom Jesus came were by Him given the power to become rich; rich in faith. We read this in JAMES 2:5 *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?* We also find the phrase "to preach" in seventeen verses of scripture, seventeen being the number pointing to VICTORY IN CHRIST JESUS. Three times in this little portion Jesus read from in ISAIAH we find the phrase "to preach." Jesus came *...to preach the gospel to the poor, ...to preach deliverance to the captives, ... and ...To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.* So the first point of emphasis in this portion of scripture that Jesus read from ISAIAH 61 was that Jesus was anointed *...to preach the gospel to the poor...* LUKE 4:18.

The second part of His ministry, His business trip, also found in LUKE 4:18 was that God the Father *...hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.* The brokenhearted are those who are deeply afflicted and distressed on any account. I was surprised to find the word "heal" in only thirty-nine verses of scripture. The number thirty-nine is the number associated with THE WORD OF GOD, and THE WORD OF GOD is Jesus Christ according to REVELATION 19:13. Who else but Jesus could heal those with a broken heart? PSALMS 34:18 tells us: *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.* Again in PSALMS 147:3 we read: *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds.* Here's a question for you to ponder on your own time; when Jesus "sweat as it were great drops of blood" in LUKE 22:44, was it from a broken heart? Truly Jesus was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities" as is expressed in HEBREWS 4:15. Again we read in LUKE 4:18 that God the Father *...hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted.* Jesus was telling in LUKE 4:18 that God the Father had sent Him to be our healer. We read in MATTHEW 4:23 *And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.* Also in MATTHEW 9:35 we read: *And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every*



sickness and every disease among the people. LUKE 9:11 tells us: *And the people, when they knew it, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.* We just read three of the fourteen times that the word “healing” is found in scripture. Fourteen again is the number pointing to DELIVERANCE, or SALVATION.

This brings us to the third point of emphasis in the scriptures Jesus read from ISAIAH 61, and that being He was sent ...*to preach deliverance to the captives.* Jesus said in JOHN 8:36 *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.* There are many aspects to preaching deliverance to the captives. Brother Hawkins noted that bondage is common to man, and it comes in many forms, and affects the spirit, soul, and body. So we must note that the list is long of those who need deliverance, for every man ever born needs first and foremost deliverance from sin. The psalmist David wrote in PSALMS 51:5 *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.* Every man who was ever born was conceived in sin, and as ROMANS 3:23 tells us: *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* This is exactly why Christ Jesus came into the world, to set us captives free from sin, which is what he did upon the cross. 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 *For he (God the Father) hath made him (Christ Jesus) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* ROMANS 8:2 *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Truly Christ Jesus is ...*deliverance to the captives.*

The fourth phase of Jesus ministry was the ...*recovering of sight to the blind.* There are two kinds of blindness, physical blindness, and spiritual blindness. Jesus can heal both. There are several accounts in the four gospel records of Jesus healing blind eyes. Let's read one of these accounts recorded in LUKE. LUKE 7:19 *And John (John the Baptist) calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? 20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? 21 And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. 22 Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. 23 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.*

There is another example of Jesus healing blind eyes in LUKE 18, a story also recorded in MATTHEW 20, and MARK 10. LUKE 18:35 *And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way side begging: 36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant. 37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by. 38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me. 40 And Jesus stood, and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him, 41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? (It was obvious to all, and to Jesus also that this man was blind, but Jesus looked beyond this man's fault, and saw a deeper need. Certainly this man wished to receive his sight, but Jesus was more interested that his spiritual eyesight be given him also, so for the benefit of the multitude, Jesus asked him...) 41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight. 42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee. 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise unto God.*

We are still examining the part of LUKE 4:18 that describes the fourth phase of Jesus ministry, which was the ...*recovering of sight to the blind.* And Jesus was reading from ISAIAH 61:1 & 2. Now compare LUKE 4:18 with ISAIAH 61:1 & 2, which reads: *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; 2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,...* . Where in ISAIAH 61:1 or 2 do we read the statement ...*recovering of sight to the blind,...* ? It appears we don't read this statement in ISAIAH 61:1. Yet we know from REVELATION 19:13 and many other scriptures that

Jesus Himself is The Word of God, so we know He didn't get it wrong when he stood up to read this portion of scripture here in the Nazareth Synagogue in LUKE 4. We find here that in fact Jesus was opening this scripture unto them of Nazareth, to open their blind eyes as to who He was. Jesus had lived among them 18 years, yet they didn't view Him as anything other than the carpenters' son. But God had sent Him *...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...* . The word "recovering" in LUKE 4:18 is only found this one time in scripture, number 309 in The Strong's Greek Concordance, and it means: recovering of sight. The statement of LUKE 4:18 *...recovering of sight to the blind...* is hidden in ISAIAH 61:1 in this statement: *...the opening of the prison...* . The word "prison" used in ISAIAH 61:1 means: opening (of eyes), wide. The word "prison" used in ISAIAH 61:1 is number 6495 in the Strong's Hebrew Concordance, and is also only found this one time in scripture! How many people are blind to the fact that they are really trapped in the prison of sin? ISAIAH 42:6 & 7 reads like this: *I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; 7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*

The subject Jesus brought up in LUKE 4:18 concerning the fourth phase of Jesus ministry was the *...recovering of sight to the blind...* which we began to examine above really has two parts, physical blindness, and spiritual blindness. Way back in EXODUS 4:11 where we first read the word "blind," we find the Lord talking with Moses: *And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?* Here the Lord was talking about physical blindness. And we also just read in LUKE 7:21 that Jesus during His earthly ministry He healed many, *...and unto many that were blind he gave sight.* The whole 9<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Gospel According to JOHN deals with the subject of blindness. We are not going to read this whole chapter, but in JOHN 9 a blind man from his birth was healed of his blindness in this manner as we start reading in verse 4, where Jesus tells His disciples: *I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, 7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.* Take the time to study the whole of both JOHN chapters 8 & 9, and see how Jesus amplified the fact we just read in JOHN 9:5 *As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.* In JOHN 8:12 Jesus said: *...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.* Do you know why the world we live in today is so full of darkness? It is because the majority of the 8 or so billion people in this world today are blind to the Light of life, who is Jesus! The natural blind do not see light, and the spiritual blind do not see the Light, who is our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Apostle John in his introduction of Jesus in JOHN 1 wrote the following starting in verse 4: *In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. 9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (We are going to find this true even in His hometown of Nazareth.) 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.*

Saul of Tarsus, (who later became our Apostle Paul), his natural eyes were blinded by the bright Light of Jesus on the road to Damascus. And while his natural eyes were blinded, his spiritual eyes were then opened to receive the fact that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, of whom Saul of Tarsus perceived he was chief. We studied this at length during our lessons on the life of the Apostle Paul, and learned in ACTS 26:16-18 that the Lord Jesus Christ gave Saul of Tarsus a life sentence in these ninety-nine words of ACTS 26:16-18 Jesus spoke to Saul on the road to Damascus. Jesus told