

Luk4 4:14-30

New Revised Standard Version

The Message

New Testament for Everyone

What happens before: Angels appear to Zechriah, Mary, and the Shepherds. Jesus meets Simeon and Anna at the circumcision. Jesus, at 12 years old, is found sitting in the temple with the teachers. John preaches throughout the Jordan and is arrested by Herod. Jesus is baptized and his genealogy is given. Jesus is tempted in the wilderness.

¹⁴Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee powerful in the Spirit. News that he was back spread through the countryside. ¹⁵He taught in their meeting places to everyone’s acclaim and pleasure.

¹⁴Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the spirit. Word about him went out throughout the whole district. ¹⁵He taught in their synagogues, and gained a great reputation all around.

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁶He came to Nazareth where he had been reared. As he always did on the Sabbath, he went to the meeting place. When he stood up to read, ¹⁷he was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll, he found the place where it was written,

¹⁶He came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. On the sabbath, as was his regular practice, he went into the synagogue and stood up to read. ¹⁷They gave him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

¹⁸God’s Spirit is on me; he’s chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor, Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, To set the burdened and battered free, ¹⁹ to announce, “This is God’s year to act!”

¹⁸The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to tell the poor the good news. He has sent me to announce release to the prisoners and sight to the blind, to set the wounded victims free, ¹⁹ to announce the year of God’s special favour.

²⁰And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” ²²All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his mouth. They said, “Is not this Joseph’s son?”

²⁰He rolled up the scroll, handed it back to the assistant, and sat down. ²¹Every eye in the place was on him, intent. Then he started in, “You’ve just heard Scripture make history. It came true just now in this place.” ²²All who were there, watching and listening, were surprised at how well he spoke. But they also said, “Isn’t this Joseph’s son, the one we’ve known since he was a youngster?”

²⁰He rolled up the scroll, gave it to the attendant, and sat down. All eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹“Today,” he began, “this scripture is fulfilled in your own hearing.” ²²Everyone remarked at him; they were astonished at the words coming out of his mouth – words of sheer grace. ‘Isn’t this Joseph’s son?’ they said.

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²³He said to them, “Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, ‘Doctor, cure yourself!’ And you will say, ‘Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did at Capernaum.’” ²⁴And he said, “Truly I tell you, no prophet is accepted in the prophet’s hometown. ²⁵But the truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a severe famine over all the land; ²⁶yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow at Zarephath in Sidon. ²⁷There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

²⁸ When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and led him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they might hurl him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he passed through the midst of them and went on his way.

The Message

²³He answered, “I suppose you’re going to quote the proverb, ‘Doctor, go heal yourself. Do here in your hometown what we heard you did in Capernaum.’” ²⁴Well, let me tell you something: No prophet is ever welcomed in his hometown. ²⁵Isn’t it a fact that there were many widows in Israel at the time of Elijah during that three and a half years of drought when famine devastated the land, ²⁶but the only widow to whom Elijah was sent was in Sarepta in Sidon? ²⁷And there were many lepers in Israel at the time of the prophet Elisha but the only one cleansed was Naaman the Syrian.”

²⁸That set everyone in the meeting place seething with anger. ²⁹They threw him out, banishing him from the village, then took him to a mountain cliff at the edge of the village to throw him to his doom, ³⁰but he gave them the slip and was on his way.

New Testament for Everyone

²³‘I know what you’re going to say,’ Jesus said. ‘You’re going to tell me the old riddle: “Heal yourself, doctor!”’ “We heard of great happenings in Capernaum; do things like that here, in your own country!”

²⁴‘Let me tell you the truth,’ he went on. ‘Prophets never get accepted in their own country. ²⁵This is the solemn truth: there were plenty of widows in Israel in the time of Elijah, when heaven was shut up for three years and six months, and there was a great famine over all the land. ²⁶Elijah was sent to none of them, only to a widow in the Sidonian town of Zarephath. ²⁷‘And there were plenty of people with virulent skin diseases in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was healed – only Naaman, the Syrian.’

²⁸When they heard this, everyone in the synagogue flew into a rage. ²⁹They got up and threw him out of town. They took him to the top of the mountain on which their town was built, meaning to fling him off. ³⁰But he slipped through the middle of them and went away.

1. Verses 15-15: Where does Jesus go? Do you think the people in the area where he goes are excited about his arrival? Why or why not? In your opinion, given what Luke reports has transpired in Jesus’ history up to this point, are their expectations reasonable? What does Jesus do when he arrives?
2. Verses 16-17: Where does Jesus go? What connection does he have with this town? What does he do? Why? What does this tell you about Luke’s gospel as a historical record in the modern sense of the word?
3. Verses 18-19: What do these words mean to you: the poor, captives, the blind, the oppressed? Do you think these words would have the same connotations for Jesus’ audience compared to a modern audience? Why or why not?
4. What is “the year the Lord’s favor?”

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5. Did Jesus choose the “book” to read from? Did he choose the passage to read?
6. Verses 20-22: Before he began speaking, what does Jesus do immediately after reading? What does his audience do?
7. Recall verse 16. Why did Jesus go to the synagogue? Do we know if this is the first time he read the passage and spoke about it?
8. What does Jesus say about the passage in verse 21? Verse 22 mentions his “gracious words” and “how well he spoke.” Do you think the words recorded in verse 21 constitute the totality of his speaking, or do you think he said more which is not recorded here?
9. What do some in the audience say about Jesus? Do you think this is a positive, negative or neutral statement? Why?
10. Do we know what Jesus did in Capernaum before arriving in Nazareth?
11. Without knowing the full background of the story of Elijah and the widow at Zarephath in Sidon, what does Jesus summarize as the point of the story?
12. Without knowing the full background of the story of Elisha and Naaman the Syrian, what does Jesus summarize as the point of the story?
13. How do these two stories relate to Jesus statement in verse 23, “Do here in your hometown [Nazareth] the things we have heard you did at Capernaum?”
14. How do these two stories relate to verses 18-19, i.e., do they expand or restrict the application of verses 18-19?
15. Verses 28-30: After Jesus finishes speaking, how does the audience react? What do they try to do? What does Jesus do?
16. Why, do you think, the audience reacted as they did? Compare verse 22 to verse 29. How are their reactions different? Why? What, if anything, does this say about human nature?

