

Research on: Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth
Luke 4:16, 22-24, 28-32

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.

“**As his custom was]** When living at Nazareth, Jesus had been accustomed to read the lessons as an ordinary member of the congregation. Even boys under age were allowed to do this.

“**Stood up for to read]** The Law and the Prophets, but not the Hagiographa, were read standing. The rabbis said: 'They do not read the law otherwise than standing up’ (Dummelow, www.studylight.com).

“Children were admitted to the synagogue at the age of five. At thirteen attendance was obligatory. It was open to any man of reputed knowledge and piety, with the sanction of the ruler of the synagogue, to read the lessons (one from the Law and one from the Prophets), and our Lord’s previous life had doubtless gained the respect of that officer. Up to this time, it would seem, He had confined Himself to reading. Now He came to preach, after an absence possibly of some months, with the new power that had already made Him famous” (Ellicott’s Commentary, www.biblehub.com).

22And 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?

“... on this occasion he delivered his thoughts with such strength of reason, clearness of method, and, perhaps also, beauty of expression, that his townsmen, who all knew he had not had the advantage of a liberal education, were so astonished, that in their conversation one with another they could not forbear expressing their admiration. (Benson Commentary).

“This points to a gradual change in the feeling of the listening Nazarenes. The Jews in their synagogues did not sit in silence,

but were accustomed to give full expression to their feelings, and to discuss and make remarks aloud. Jealousy began to work among them, [Matthew 13:54](#); [John 6:42](#)." (Cambridge Bible).

23And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

“. . . this proverb— "Charity begins at home." whatsoever, &c.—"Strange rumors have reached our ears of Thy doings at Capernaum; but if such power resides in Thee to cure the ills of humanity, why has none of it yet come nearer home, and why is all this alleged power reserved for strangers?"

They were filled with pride and jealousy.

24And he said, Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

“No prophet is accepted - Has honor, or is acknowledged as a prophet”(Pulpit Commentary).

28And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

“**Were filled with wrath.**—The admiration they had felt at first was soon turned into bitterness. They heard themselves spoken of as though there might be a faith in Zidon and in Syria which

was not found in Israel, of which they themselves were altogether destitute.” (Ellicott’s Commentary).

“*were filled with wrath*] The aorist implies a sudden outburst. Perhaps they were already offended by knowing that Jesus had spent two days at Sychar among the hated Samaritans; and now He whom they wished to treat as “the carpenter” and their equal, was as it were asserting the superior claims of Gentiles and lepers. (Cambridge Bible).

“Unhappy Nazareth, where Christ had now lived more than thirty years! They had seen him growing up, increasing *in wisdom and stature, and in favour both with God and man*, **Luke 2:52**; they had had the first fruits of his ministry, and, **Luke 4:22**, they *bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*; they knew his education, so as they could not think he had this wisdom and knowledge from any advantages of that, but must have it from Heaven; yet when they hear him preaching, and but touching them for their contempt and rejection of him, and tacitly comparing them with their forefathers in the time of Ahab, and preaching the doctrine of God’s sovereign and free grace, and hinting to them that the grace of God should pass to the Gentiles, while they should be rejected, they are not able to bear him.” (Matthew Poole Commentary).

29And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

“Those of Nazareth which were in the synagogue hearing these things, are filled with wrath, *thrust Christ out of the city*, as not fit to live among them, and go about to kill him, by throwing him down headlong from the brow of the hill upon which their city was built.” (Matthew Poole Commentary).

30But he passing through the midst of them went his way, 31And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days.

“**He passing through the midst of them.**—The words do not necessarily involve a directly supernatural deliverance, as though the multitude had been smitten with blindness, or our Lord had become invisible. We have no right to insert miracles in the Gospel records. Calmness, silence, the moral power of self-possessed righteousness have in themselves a power, often proved, to baffle the fury of an angry mob.” (Ellicott’s Commentary).

“Passing through the midst of, them, went his way - This escape was very remarkable. It is remarkable that he should escape out of their hands when their very object was to destroy him, and that he should escape in so peaceful a manner, without violence or conflict.” (Barnes’ Notes).

32And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

“*they were astonished*] The word expresses more sudden and vehement astonishment than the more deeply seated ‘amaze’ of [Luke 4:36](#).

at his doctrine] Rather, **at His teaching**, referring here to the *manner* He adopted.

his word was with power] St Matthew gives one main secret of their astonishment when he says that “He taught them as one having authority, *and not as the scribes*,” (Cambridge Bible) Char