

The Red-Letter Words of Yeshua ~ Part 12

Yeshua Rejected in Natzeret

¹⁶ *Now when He went to Natzeret, where He had been brought up, on Shabbat He went to the synagogue as usual. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and He was given the scroll of the prophet Yesha'yahu. Unrolling the scroll, He found the place where it was written* (emphasis added)

He went to the synagogue as usual, like any good Jew. *He stood up to read* publicly from a scroll. The custom in the synagogue now is to read through the **Torah** each year, with portions of several chapters read on Monday, Thursday, and **Shabbat** mornings, ending and beginning over again on **Simchat-Torah** ("Rejoicing of the Torah"), which comes at the end of **Sukkot** (September 29th this year). At an earlier stage in **Jewish** history, three years were taken to read through the **Torah**.

There is a second reading called the **haftarah** ("conclusion"); it consists of portions from the Prophets and Writings related to the **Parashat-hashavua'** ("[Torah] portion for the week"). While there is uncertainty over exactly what the first-century customs were, it seems clear that if *Yeshua was given the scroll of the prophet Yesha'yahu*, He was being offered the **haftarah** reading. Since there is uncertainty about the practices of the time, it is not clear whether *he found the place* set by the lectionary for that **Shabbat**, or the place He himself chose, or the place where the scroll happened to open.

*¹⁸ "The Spirit of Adonai is upon me
because He has anointed me
to announce Good News to the poor;
He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the imprisoned
and renewed sight for the blind,
to release those who have been crushed,
¹⁹ to proclaim a year of the favor of Adonai.*

²⁰ *After closing the scroll and returning it to the shammash, He sat down, and the eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ He started to speak to them: "Today, as you heard it read, this passage of the Tanakh was fulfilled!" ²² Everyone was speaking well of Him and marveling that such appealing words were coming from His mouth. They were even asking, "Can this be Yosef's son?"*

Verses 18–19 quotes Isaiah 61:1–2a but do not include the immediately following words, " ... *and the day of vengeance of our God.*" Although usually, a citation of Scripture implies the surrounding context, here **Yeshua** may have stopped short so that he could say, *Today, as you heard it read, this passage of the Tanakh* (up to but not including the "*day of vengeance*") *was fulfilled*.

STOP!!! Take a few moments to digest what He just said: *"Today, as you heard it read, this passage of the Tanakh was fulfilled!"* Remember the setting. He was early in His ministry and speaking to His family and neighbors. No wonder C.S. Lewis opined that **Yeshua** was either a liar, lunatic, or the Lord.

For at His first coming, He healed and brought **Good News of the Kingdom** and **salvation** (Mt 4:17); it was not His time to take vengeance or judge (Yochanan 8:15, 12:47).

Shammash in Hebrew or **shammes** in Yiddish. A synagogue attendant or caretaker, the "servant" of the congregation (the word literally means). The Greek word here is **upêretês** ("attendant, servant").

²³ *Then Yeshua said to them, "No doubt you will quote to me this proverb: "Doctor, cure yourself!" We've heard about all the things that have been going on over in K'far-Nachum; now do them here in your hometown!" ²⁴ Yes!" He said, "I tell you that no prophet is accepted in his*

hometown. ²⁵ It's true, I'm telling you - when Eliyahu was in Isra'el, and the sky was sealed off for three-and-a-half years, so that all the Land suffered a severe famine, there were many widows; ²⁶ but Eliyahu was sent to none of them, only to a widow in Tzarfat in the Land of Tzidon. ²⁷ Also, there were many people with tzara'at in Isra'el during the time of the prophet Elisha; but not one of them was healed, only Na'aman the Syrian."

²⁸ On hearing this, everyone in the synagogue was filled with fury. ²⁹ They rose up, drove him out of town, and dragged him to the edge of the cliff on which their town was built, intending to throw him off. ³⁰ But he walked right through the middle of the crowd and went away. ~ Luke 4: 16-30

Everyone was filled with fury since **Yeshua** was implying that God's grace would be withheld from them and given to the Gentiles. They *drove him out of town* and intended to kill Him by tossing Him off a **cliff** (4:29). Yet, He miraculously escaped what would have been a premature death (4:30). It was not yet His time. His death would be at the time and place of His choosing.

Our next post will examine a **Great Catch of Fish** and the calling **of Shim'on, Ya'akov, Yochanan, and Andrew.**