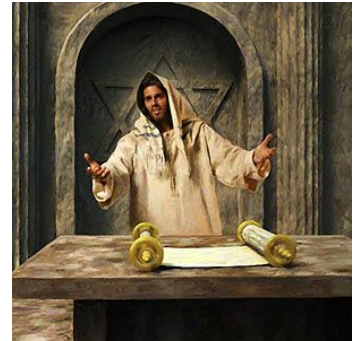


Scripture Readings: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 ✕ Psalm 96:1, 2-5, 11-13 ✕ Luke 4:16-30

When Jesus read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah, and then sat down, He made a commentary on what He had read, identifying Himself as the prophet who was sent to “bring glad tidings to the poor... to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the LORD.”



He also identified Himself with two other prophets, Elijah and Elisha, who ministered to non-Israelites, to a hungry widow Zarephath, and to a leper from Syria who had been cured of his affliction. Jesus was saying to the people at Nazareth that He had come for those who were in the greatest need; it didn't matter who they were or from where they came.

On hearing Jesus claim this vision of generosity as His own mission, the people of Nazareth became very angry. They thought, since Jesus was one of their own, they would receive special treatment from Him, but Jesus came to save *all* those in need. If He did have any partiality, it was towards those who are broken in body, mind, or spirit.

The LORD is continuously reaching out to us in our need and our pain; all He asks is that we receive Him as He is, on his own terms, which the people of Nazareth were unable to do. The LORD is always close to all of us; it is our need, our suffering, whatever form it takes, which can bring us close to Him. ✕