
THE UNFAVORED FAVOR OF THE LORD:
LUKE 4:22-30
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RECAP OF LAST WEEK'S SERMON

Through a citation of Isaiah 61:1-2a, Jesus revealed his status as the Messiah and the nature of his mission: to bring the Jubilee of Jubilees, the year of the Lord's favor (i.e., grace). The grace of the Lord gives liberty (*aphesis* = "forgiveness") to those captive to sin and death. As Daniel promised, the Anointed One would "finish the transgression, put an end to sin, atone for iniquity, bring in everlasting righteousness, seal both vision and prophet, and anoint a most holy place" (9:24).

THE UNFAVORED FAVOR OF THE LORD

Luke 4:22-30 reveals that the Nazarene Jews will not receive the Lord's favor because . . .

1. They do not accept Jesus;
2. They do not accept Jesus's message; and,
3. They do not accept what his message implies about them.

LUKE 4:17B-21

“He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written, ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.’ And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, ‘Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.’”

LUKE 4:22-24

“And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, ‘Is not this Joseph’s son?’ And he said to them, ‘Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’ And he said, ‘Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown.’”

LUKE 4:25-27

“But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”

LUKE 4:28-30

"When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away."

THE IMMEDIATE RESPONSE OF THE PEOPLE

"And all spoke well of him and marveled at the gracious words that were coming from his mouth. And they said, 'Is not this Joseph's son?'" (Luke 4:22).

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Do not confuse the "admiration of Jesus" with "acceptance of Jesus." Admiration alone for Christ does not save.

JESUS REPROVES THE PEOPLE

“And he said to them, ‘Doubtless you will quote to me this proverb, “Physician, heal yourself.” What we have heard you did at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’ And he said, ‘Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable in his hometown’” (Luke 4:23-24).

JESUS REPROVES THE PEOPLE

The proverb, "Physician, heal yourself," is used in 2 different ways in antiquity:

1. Used to call out hypocrisy: "Fix your own condition before treating others"
2. Used to demand a self-serving proof: "Prove your claim by benefiting your own first! (Show us the favor of the Lord!)"

THE REASONS FOR JESUS'S REPROOF

1. They do not accept him;
2. They do not accept his message; and,
3. They do not accept what his message implies about them.

THE REJECTED JESUS

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me . . . to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (*dekton*)" (Luke 4:18a, 19).

"And he said, 'Truly, I say to you, no prophet is acceptable (*dekton*) in his hometown'" (Luke 4:24).

THE REJECTED MESSAGE

The end of Isaiah 61:2 says:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me . . . to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God."

The Jews wanted to see God's vengeance; they longed for it!

THE REJECTED MESSAGE

Second Temple Jewish literature is replete with hopes for the destruction or enslavement — or both — of the Gentiles:

- Psalms of Solomon 17-18
- The War Scroll (1QM)
- Pesher Habakkuk (1QpHab)
- 4Q285
- 1QSb
- 4Q161
- Testament of Moses 10

THE REJECTED MESSAGE

Jesus's references to the ministries of Elijah and Elisha reveal that Jesus had left out the phrase, "and the day of vengeance of our God" in Isaiah 61:2 on purpose.

Before he brought destruction to the wayward Gentiles, he would offer them "liberty" (*aphesis*), that is, "forgiveness"!

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW (1 KINGS 17:8-16)

“But in truth, I tell you, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heavens were shut up three years and six months, and a great famine came over all the land, and Elijah was sent to none of them but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow” (Luke 4:25-26).

ELISHA AND NAAMAN (2 KINGS 5:1–19)

"And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian" (Luke 4:27).

God did not show partiality. He showed grace to Gentiles in their time of need and rewarded obedience to the words of the prophets.

THE REJECTED CRITIQUE

Again, the Nazarenes believed they were entitled to God's favor:

"He said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire'" (Luke 3:7-9).

THE REJECTED CRITIQUE

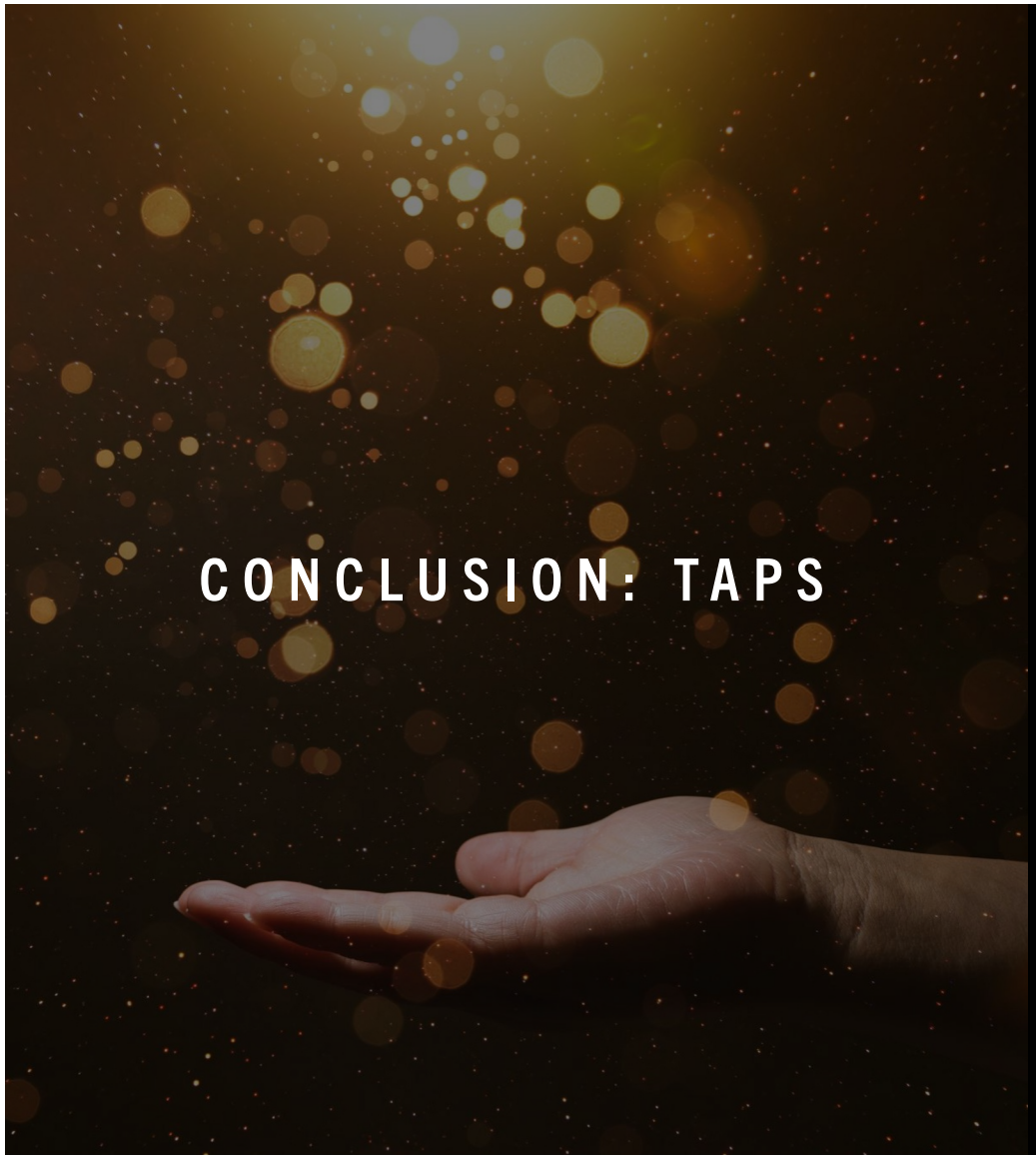
Jesus compares the Jews of Nazareth to their wicked, wayward Israelite ancestors who did not experience the favor of Yahweh because of their apostasy.

Since the Nazarenes did not accept the Prophet-Messiah, his message, or his critique, “the year of the Lord’s favor” was not for them. But “the day of vengeance of our God” will be!

THE PEOPLE'S VIOLENT RESPONSE

"When they heard these things, all in the synagogue were filled with wrath. And they rose up and drove him out of the town and brought him to the brow of the hill on which their town was built, so that they could throw him down the cliff. But passing through their midst, he went away" (Luke 4:28-30).

Jew and Gentile are saved the same way: by the Lord's favor, through faith in Jesus. Likewise, they are condemned the same way: by rejecting Jesus the Anointed One.



1. You can’t have the Lord’s favor without accepting the Lord
2. Rejection didn’t stop the gospel; it didn’t stop Jesus; it shouldn’t stop you