

THE BRUISTINGS AND TRIUMPHS OF JESUS THE CHILD AND YOUTH.

It is quite clear from Lk.2v48-50., that Jesus suffered great loneliness in His mission and calling. Even Joseph who had an angelic visitation in a dream, and Mary, who had an open visitation of the great archangel Gabriel, did not understand the purpose of Christ's mission and life on earth. Mt.1v20-25. Lk.1v26-38. Jesus was on His own in His mission, and the heart-rending and painful words of Ps.69v20., were even fulfilled in His own home. The Amplified Bible gives us the true meaning of the Hebrew Text of Ps.69v20., and reveals that the lack of understanding of the mission of Jesus by Joseph and Mary, and everyone else, was a real bruising experience for Jesus. We read that the lack of understanding and opposition to the work and ministry of Jesus even effected His physical health, and made Him distressingly sick. The Amplified Bible correctly translates **Ps.69v20.**, "Insults and reproach have broken my heart; I am full of heaviness and I am distressingly sick. I looked for pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none." All His life Jesus looked for spiritual helpers who would understand the great responsibilities and burdens that were of necessity laid upon Him, because of His ministry, and because He was the Lamb of God who was to make atonement for, and take away, the sin of the world. Jesus looked in vain for those who would show compassion and pity upon Him, and give Him real help, comfort and understanding. However, instead of being given help, Jesus was despised and rejected by men, this did not deter Him from His mission, our wonderful Saviour gritted His teeth went forward, won though, and triumphed, without any help. Blessed be His Name!

That Jesus suffered real inward pain because of this lack of understanding is clearly seen in **Luke 2:48-50., v48.** "So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought you anxiously." **v49.** And He said to them, "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" **v50.** But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them." NKJV. Jesus fought His way forward in spite of the lack of understanding and unbelief of Joseph and Mary, and His brothers and sisters, and the opposition of all those around Him, and developed a mighty prophetic ministry, and a full manifestation of spiritual gifts, and a full knowledge of the truth of the Scriptures. The wonderful child Jesus dedicated Himself completely to the Father's will and our salvation.

The Scriptures give us some very important details and incidents regarding the early years of Jesus, which give a blast of light on the dedication and tenacity of the child and youth Jesus, and the trials of faith and character and bruising incidents, which He had to overcome. A remarkable insight into the life of Jesus is the statement in the Majority Greek Text, of Lk.2v40., that Jesus "became strong in spirit." A minority of Greek texts omit "pneumati," "in spirit," we will examine the evidence for both readings.

DID JESUS BECOME STRONG IN SPIRIT? Luke.1v80. and 2v40. (In the Majority Text., NKJV and KJV)

In Luke.1v80., we are told that John Baptist, "became strong in spirit," as a result of God's divine education, and John's dedicated communion with God as a child, and during his years in the wilderness. In Lk.1v80., "grew," is the imperfect active "euxane," was growing. "Became strong," is again the imperfect, "ekrataiouto." The child John Baptist kept growing in strength of body and spirit. "His showing," is "anadeixeos autou," it only occurs here in the New Testament. In the Majority Text of Luke 2v40., we read that Jesus, "grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." God the Father educated our Lord for thirty years at Nazareth, to prepare Him for His ministry. Is.49v1-3. 50v3-7. Those who deny the amazing spiritual growth of Jesus, and say that He had just to turn His deity on, deny the stated facts of Scripture in Lk.2v40,52., that Jesus had to grow in spiritual strength, and in knowledge of the truth.

Is the textual reading in Lk.2v40., that Jesus "became strong in spirit," correct?

The words "in spirit," in Lk.2v40., are omitted from most modern translations, however, the Jamieson, Fausset and Brown commentary states that they are left out without sufficient reason and evidence. This is true, for the Greek "pneumati," "in spirit," is only omitted from Aleph and B from the fourth century, D and W from the fifth century, L from the eighth century, N from the sixth century; the Latin manuscripts p eighth century, and c twelfth century; the Coptic (Egyptian) versions, third and fourth centuries; the Sinaitic Syriac, fourth century; and Origen, who died A.D. 254. **The evidence that "pneumati" is the original and correct reading is overwhelming, for it is found in all the remaining uncials including, A, Theta, Psi, 053, etc; every known cursive copy and the massive Byzantine evidence include it; so do the f1 and f13 codex compilation of important manuscripts by Kirsop Lake. All the lectionaries; the Latin manuscripts Aureus 7th century (aur), the Brixianus 6th century (p), the Monacensis 7th century (q); the Syriac Peshitto, second century; the Syriac Harklean, the seventh century; and the Gothic version, from the fourth century, also contain "in spirit."** Many early Church fathers quote or discuss "pneumati" and accept it as correct; Leontius of Cyprus, 6th century; Theodoret, died 466; Epiphanius, died 403; Cyril of Alexandria, died 444; Theodore of Mopsuestia, died 428; and others.

Burgon defends the Majority Text, in his book, "The Causes of Corruption of the New Testament Text."

In a compilation of Burgon's works called "Unholy hands on the Bible," from his book called, "The Causes of

Corruption of the New Testament Text, on pages B-95,96, Burgon states that "pneumati," "in spirit," was deliberately removed from Lk.2v40. in some manuscripts by orthodox Christians, because they feared that those who denied our Lord's deity would use this text to say, "How could Jesus be perfect God, if it says that His spirit waxed strong." Burgon records that Epiphanius states (2:36) that some of the orthodox, out of jealousy for our Lord's divinity, also eliminated from Luke.19v41., the record that the Saviour wept.

Burgon goes on, "Codexes B, Aleph, D may be regarded as specimens of Codexes which have been once and again passed through the hands of such a corrector. Saint Luke.2v40. records concerning the infant Saviour, that 'the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit.' By repeating the same expression, which already had been applied to the childhood of John the Baptist (Lk.1v80.), **it was clearly the design of the Author of Scripture to teach that the Word 'made flesh' submitted to the same laws of growth as every other man.** The body grew; the spiritual part waxed strong. The consequence might have been foreseen. Certain of the orthodox were ill advised enough to erase the word 'pneumati' ("in spirit") from the copies of Lk.2v40. And, lo, at the end of 1500 years four 'corrected' copies, two versions, one Greek father, survive to witness to this ancient fraud. And because it is Aleph, B,D,L, Origen, and the Latin, the Egyptian, and the Lewis versions, which are without the word 'pneumati,' Lachmann, Tregelles, Tischendorf, and the revisers jump to the conclusion that it is a spurious accretion to the Text. They ought to reverse the proceeding, and to recognise in the evidence that this is one more indication of the untrustworthiness of certain witnesses.

How can it be supposed that this word 'pneumati' ever obtained its footing in the Gospel? They assure us that it was imported from S. Luke 1v80. We answer, How does the phrase 'ekrataiouto pneumati' in 1v80. explain that 'pneumati' now can be found in every known copy of the Gospels except four, if in these 996 places out of a thousand it is an interpolation? Is it credible that all the remaining uncials, and every known cursive copy, besides all the lectionaries, should have been corrupted in this way? Is it credible to suppose that the truth should survive exclusively at this time in only four uncials, B, Aleph from the fourth century, D from the sixth, and L from the eighth?" **End of quote from Burgon.**

"Becoming strong in spirit" is an essential prerequisite for the operation of a powerful prophetic ministry. The divinely given gift of prophetic ministry is developed by divine education, through continuous manifestations of revelation wisdom and knowledge, and acts of divine power, **and many trials of faith.** The human response to this education should be submission to God, prayer and fasting, and a deep study of the Word of God, for even the greatest prophets can err if they do not know the correct meaning of the Scriptures, just as John Baptist did when he asked the Lord Jesus, "Art thou He that should come? or look we for another." Jesus told John that the wisdom and knowledge He imparted in His preaching to the poor, and the signs, wonders and miracles that He did, fulfilled prophecy and proved that He was the promised Messiah. Mk.12v24,27. Lk.7v19-23. N.B. v22 with Is.8v18. 11v1-3. 29v18,19. 35v3-10. 42v1-7. 60v1-3. 61v1-3.

Both John Baptist and our Lord had to "grow strong in spirit." Lk.1v80. 2v40. God knows that it takes time to become strong in spirit, so God gave the Lord Jesus time to grow in spiritual strength before He sent Him out on His ministry. God will give us time to grow, for He is a thoughtful Father who will not overburden us, but **"much more"** than any earthly parent will wait for, and watch over, our spiritual development, graciously and kindly recognising and making allowances for our immaturity. Jesus also will not overburden us, His yoke is easy and His burden is light. Mt.11v28-30. **Even in our immaturity we can know our Heavenly Father's "much more" generous giving, and His bountiful outpourings of the Holy Spirit. Lk.11v9-13.** It is a great pity that the Church is emphasising intellectual growth, but neglecting growth in spiritual strength and power, strength of spirit is an essential part of prophetic ministry. However, we must always remember that God's spiritual gifts and ministry gifts are not products of our own personality, they are "charismata," that is, "grace gifts" from our Heavenly Father.

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.

Luke.2v40-52. "And the Child grew **and became strong in spirit**, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him." **v41.** His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. **v42.** And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. **v43.** When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know it; **v44.** but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among their relatives and acquaintances. **v45.** So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. **v46.** Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. **v47.** And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. **v48.** So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought you anxiously." **v49.** And He said to them, "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" **v50.** But they did not understand ("suniemi," 4920, to bring together, to put together in the mind, to comprehend) the statement, which He spoke to them. **v51. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them,** but His

mother kept all these things in her heart. **v52. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.**" (NKJ)

In both Luke 1v80., and Lk. 2v40., "grew," is "euxano," the imperfect of the verb "auxano," to grow; and "waxed strong," or "became strong," is "ekrataiouto," the imperfect passive of "krataioo," 2900, to make strong, to empower; the passive means, to be strengthened, to grow strong, to increase in vigour. So these two boy prophets grew physically, and became strong spiritually, as the years passed by, John in the desert hills near Hebron, probably after Zechariah and Elisabeth had died, Jesus as the young Carpenter of Nazareth, both were waiting for the day of their "showing unto Israel" by God. Luke also adds that Jesus "filled with wisdom" "pleroumenon sophiai," the present passive participle, shows that Christ's intellectual process of filling with wisdom kept pace with His bodily and spiritual growth. The spiritual and intellectual growth of Jesus, like His physical growth, was real, Jesus was not a Docetic phantom, He was really human. Jesus did not possess the unlimited attributes of deity; power, knowledge and wisdom. Jesus was truly human and had to learn, and grow in power, knowledge and wisdom.

In Lk. 2v52., we read that Jesus, "advanced in wisdom and stature," "proekopten tei sophiai kai helikiyai," the imperfect active of "prokopto," 4298, to drive forward, as if by beating, to advance (from "kopto," to chop), it reveals that Jesus "kept cutting his way forward as through a forest or jungle, like pioneers do." This was not easy, it was very difficult to cut a way through the labyrinth of false tradition. In spite of all these difficulties Jesus kept growing in stature, "helikia," this can mean age, as in Lk. 12v25., but here it probably means physical height and strength. The fact of Christ's growth in wisdom, which was stated in Lk. 2v40., is again confirmed in Lk. 2v52., wisdom is more than knowledge, for true wisdom speaks of a true appraisal of life, people, and God and His Word. The physical, intellectual, moral perception, and spiritual development of Jesus was real and perfect, as Plummer states, "At each stage he was perfect for that stage."

There is no contradiction between the revelation in Ps. 69v8-12., that Jesus experienced vicious backbiting and criticism from many people at Nazareth during the 30 years of His life there, and Lk. 2v52., that says that Jesus "grew in favour ("chariti.") with God and man." Jesus was full of grace as a child, youth and man, and His friendly, kindly, and lovely personality was attractive, charming, and winsome, to the few good people that were at Nazareth. In addition to His gracious character and beautiful words, Christ's work as the carpenter of Nazareth was so perfect and reasonable in price, that Jesus had favour with just and unbiased people. However, Ps. 69v8-12., reveals that Satan opposed the dedicated prayer life and holiness of Jesus, and stirred up criticism, slander and opposition against Him from the prayerless and unholy people in Nazareth, and we sadly read that this included His own brothers and sisters. Ps. 69v8-12. v8. "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; v9. Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. v10. When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. v11. I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. v12. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards." (NKJ) "The zeal for your house has eaten me up," is quoted in Jn. 2v17., and confirms that Ps. 69v7-21., is a prophetic insight into the life of Jesus. This section is certainly not referring to David's experience, who was famous, extolled, and celebrated after he killed Goliath.

We are not told when this widespread persecution of Jesus at Nazareth started, some was undoubtedly there from His earliest years through evil people, but it seems that the worst of this occurred from Christ's teens onward. The opposition from the people of Nazareth, and His own family, did not deter Jesus from doing the Father's will. He set His face like flint and resolved with a steely determination to bring about their salvation, and the salvation of mankind through His atoning death. Is. 50v3-7. Lk. 9v51. This was certainly accomplished with His family, they came from unbelief to faith in Jesus, and James and Jude became believers in Jesus, and were authors of two powerful New Testament epistles, and wrote about Jesus in awe as "the Lord Jesus Christ."

THE BOY JESUS OUTSHONE, AND SURPASSED, ALL THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS.

Prophetic ministry is not an instant gift, we read in Jer. 1v5., that Jeremiah was ordained to be a prophet before he was even born. God has gone to great pains, and spent many years preparing His greatest prophets. Moses, Jeremiah, Amos, and many others were surprised that God had chosen them to be His prophetic voice, and did not relish having a prophetic ministry and the tasks that it involved, but God had been preparing them for their prophetic work, even without their knowing it, through the events and trials of daily living. The development of prophetic ministry also involves both Divine training and Divine revelation, and if possible the guidance of those with mature and proven prophetic ministries. If people who are developing prophetic ministry have mature prophets to guide and help them, they will develop a good prophetic ministry much quicker than if they have to break through on their own. There are interesting references to "the sons of the prophets" in the Old Testament, prophets trained their sons in prophetic ministry. We also read that there were schools of the sons of the prophets at Bethel, Jericho, and Gilgal, who received further training in prophetic ministry under the supervision of Elijah and Elisha. 1Kings. 20v35. 2Kings. 2v3,5,7,15. 4v1,38. 5v22. 6v1. There were prophets ordained by God who did not have a father who was a prophet; Moses, Samuel, Amos, and John Baptist, spring to mind. Lk. 7v26,28. See

Amos.7v14. "Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit:"

The Lord Jesus went the hard way in developing His prophetic ministry, having no earthly prophetic father, He was exclusively trained in prophetic ministry by His heavenly Father. **The spiritual darkness of Nazareth made our Lord's task even more difficult.** We read in Jn.21v2., that Nathaniel, lived in Cana, this was between four and eight miles North East of Nazareth. (Two sites been looked upon as Cana of Galilee, the village of Kefr-Kenna, about four miles North East of Nazareth, which in pre Crusade times was said to be the site of Cana, and modern Tourist guides follow this opinion. The other site is Khirbet, about four or five miles further North of Kefr-Kenna. Scholars increasingly believe that Khirbet is the Cana where Jesus turned the water to wine). Since Nathaniel lived within four to eight miles from Nazareth, he knew well, by personal experience, the very bad spiritual condition and reputation of Nazareth, when he said in Jn.1v46., "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Jesus overcame Nazareth's gross darkness by practical and caring holy living, a dedicated study of the Scriptures, and a life of prayer and communion with God His Father. Christ's spirituality did not just drop upon Him from Heaven, it was blood, sweat, and tears all the way, a fight and victory of faith in the worst circumstances possible, by Him who was the Author and Pioneer of faith and the Finisher of faith. Heb.12v2. No one has had the vast number of trials of faith, and victories of faith that Jesus had at Nazareth. When we get to Heaven we will know the innumerable victories of faith, and triumphs over evil that Jesus won at Nazareth. Then we, with all the habitants of Heaven, will truly sing from all our hearts, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honour and glory and blessing!" "Blessing and honour and glory and power, be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!" Rev. 5v11-14.

We read in Is.49v1-3., that God filled Jesus with wisdom and made His mouth a sharp sword, and made Jesus a polished shaft that went straight to the mark, and did exactly what the Father desired. This was more than knowledge, it was divine direction by vision ministry, the experience of God directing Him by vision, that we read of in Jn.5v19,30., was perfected at Nazareth. The supernatural education of Jesus by God the Father is clearly seen in **The Revised Standard translation of Isa.50v3-7.,** "I clothe the heavens with blackness, and make sackcloth their covering. **v4. The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of those who are taught, that I may know how to sustain with a word him that is weary. Morning by morning he wakens, he wakens my ear to hear as those who are taught. v5. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious, I turned not backward. v6. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to those who pulled out the beard; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. v7. For the Lord GOD helps me; therefore I have not been confounded; therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be put to shame.**" (RSV)

The New American Standard Bible renders Isa.50v4. "The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of disciples, that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. He awakens {me} morning by morning, He awakens my ear to listen as a disciple."

The New King James Bible reads. "The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him who is weary. He awakens me morning by morning, he awakens my ear to hear as the learned."

THE WONDERFUL AND ASTOUNDING BOY JESUS.

We read in Luke.2v41., "Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover." God commanded this in the law. Exod.23v17. God commanded all the male children to go to Jerusalem three times a year. Exod.34v23. Jesus was twelve years old at this time. (In Luke.2v42., "twelve years old," is "eton dodeka." At twelve a Jewish boy became a "son of the law" and began to observe the ordinances, putting on the phylacteries as a reminder of his spiritual heritage and obligation to keep the Law.) This was almost certainly the age at which the male children were obliged to appear before the Lord at the three public festivals, the Passover and the feast of unleavened bread; the feast of weeks, that is, Pentecost; and the feast of tabernacles. It was also the age, which according to the Jewish canons, at which they were obliged to begin to learn a trade.

Jesus was sent by God His Father to the Temple, to ask questions of Israel's leading theologians.

We read in Luke 2:43., "And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it." The feast covered a period of eight days, one day for the Passover, and the other seven, the days of unleavened bread. See Mt.26v2. Matt 26:17. **(Adam Clark's Commentary states about the first day of the feast of unleavened bread.** "As the feast of unleavened bread did not begin till the day after the Passover, the fifteenth day of the month, Lev 23:5-6; Num 28:16-17, this could not have been, properly, the first day of that feast; but as the Jews began to eat unleavened bread on the fourteenth, Ex 12:18, this day was often termed the first of unleavened bread. The evangelists use it in this sense, and call even the paschal day by this name. See Mark 14:12; Luke 22:7. **End of quote. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown's Commentary,** states on Lk.22v7, "And though "the days of unleavened bread" properly

began with the 15th, the preparations for the festival being made on the 14th, it was popularly called, as here, the "first" day of unleavened bread-as we learn from Josephus, whose way of speaking agrees with that here employed. **End of quote.**)

Luke 2:44. But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they earnestly sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance. The practice was to travel up to Jerusalem with your relatives and neighbours, among such a caravan it was possible to lose a child for a day. When Mary and Joseph are not able to find Jesus, they are driven by a sense of enormous fear and loss, and tormented by the feeling that they had been badly negligent and careless. Luke 2:45. "And when they did not find Him, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him." Lk.2v45.

We read in Luke 2:46., "And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions." These were the leading rabbis, who explained the law and the ceremonies of the Jewish religion. "Asking them questions." **Josephus**, who lived in the same century as Jesus, records in his "Life, section 2," that, "when he was about fourteen years of age, the chief priests, and the principal men of the city, were constantly coming to him to be more accurately instructed in matters relative to the law." **End of quote.**

This shows that even the most important Rabbis were very willing, and not too proud to learn from a young person, and this explains why they were listening with such captivated and enthralled attention, to the questions, answers, and knowledge of Jesus. Luke.2:47. "And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." This is a valuable lesson and example for all of us to follow.

Luke 2:47. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding, ("sunesei") and answers. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, states on "sunesei," "understanding." "The noun "sunesei," 4907, is akin to the verb "suniemi," which means, to bring together, to set together. It denotes not only an understanding of facts, but the way that facts are related to each other, to understand, denotes (a) "the understanding, the mind or intelligence," Mk.12v33.; (b) "understanding, reflective thought," Luke.2v47; 1Cor.1v19, RV, "prudence", Eph.3v4." **End of quote.**

So "understanding," is the noun "sunesei," 4907, which means, "a mental putting together," from the verb "suniemi" 4920, "to bring together." It is a quality of mind, which combines, not just the understanding of truth and facts, but also facts in their relation to other important truths and facts. It is used to speak of intelligence, insight and wisdom, and the ability to quickly comprehend truth. See the adjective "sunetos" 4908, which signifies "intelligent, sagacious, understanding," and is translated in Mt.11v25., as "the prudent." Even as a child Jesus had a penetrating insight into truth, and a comprehension of spiritual truths, which amazed all those who heard Him speak. We read in Mt.11v25., that God hides truth from those who trust in their natural understanding and wisdom. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise ("sophos" 4680, the wise, learned, theologians, philosophers.) and prudent (the adjective "sunetos" 4908, [from the verb "suniemi" 4920; to mentally put together] it means astute, shrewd, prudent), and hast revealed them unto babes. v26. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." (KJV)

However, in Mt.15v16. and Mk.7v18., Jesus told His apostles that they were, "without understanding," "asunetos" 801, when they could not grasp the truths that He was telling them. They had been poisoned by the leaven of the Pharisees, and in spite of all Christ's teaching, were like the Pharisees, without spiritual insight and comprehension. In Rom.1v21 and 31., the godless unbeliever is also said to be "senseless" and "without understanding," both Scriptures have "asunetos" 801.

In Mk.12v28-34., Jesus commended a Scribe for saying, "And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding ("sunesei" 4907," the ability to put together, comprehend, and love God for His great love and glorious character), and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." See Mt.22v34-40. We read in Lk.10v25-28., that a similar incident had taken place earlier in our Lord's ministry.

In Lk.2v40., Jesus is referred to as, "the child," "to paidion;" in Lk.2v43., Jesus is called, "the boy" "ho pais," the diminutive "to paidion," is no longer used. The boy Jesus was told by His heavenly Father, to go and speak to, and question, the leading theologians of Israel. Mary and Joseph found Jesus on the third day, "in the temple," "en toi hieroi," and found Jesus hearing and asking questions of Israel's leading biblical scholars. Jesus was probably on the terrace where the leading Rabbis and members of the Sanhedrin gave public instruction on Sabbaths and feast days. Jesus did not go there to show off His knowledge, He needed answers from the Scriptures. Jesus went to learn from the greatest biblical scholars of His day. Jesus was "both hearing them and asking them questions," like Paul who sat at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts.22v3. Christ's eager open face and thoughtful questions amazed the theologians, His knowledge, obtained in His Heavenly Father's school, had a wisdom, insight and power that

tradition could never impart.

All who heard Jesus, including the Rabbis, "were amazed at His understanding and answers." "Amazed," is "existanto," the imperfect of "existemi," which indicates that they stood out of themselves with astonishment, "as if their eyes were bulging out." The imperfect tense reveals their continual astonishment at the knowledge and comprehension of Jesus. Jesus not only asked hard questions, He had astounding answers to their questions, which were way beyond anyone, never mind a normal child of His age. Jesus amazed and challenged the intellect, theology and spirituality of Israel's leading theologians. This reveals the assiduous study, earnest praying, and communion and education by God, which had taken place in these first twelve years. Jesus had an intense thirst for the truths in God's Word, and the spiritual knowledge that only God can give. Jesus proved, by His dedication to God's will, the truth of Jn.7v17., "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

In Luke 2:47. "and all that heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers." "At his understanding," is "epi tei sunesei." "**Sunesei,**" speaks of not only of a grasp and comprehension of truth, but also of the ability to put together, and combine and compare the Scriptures. The Rabbis asked Jesus difficult questions to test Him, as was their normal practice in teaching, but they were astounded by His answers, "tais apokrisisin 612, autou." They were amazed "existanto" 1839, the imperfect indicative of "existemi" 1839, they stood out of themselves with continuous repeated astonishment at the spiritual and intellectual perception of Jesus. We read in Lk.2v48., that Mary and Joseph were also "amazed," "exeplogesan," the aorist passive of "ekplesso," 1605, a very strong verb meaning, literally, to strike out or drive out by a blow; and so, to drive out of one's senses, the passive indicates, to be overwhelmed, astonished and greatly amazed. To amaze is to throw into a maze or labyrinth; and this gives an exact sense of the Greek word here. Mary and Joseph were totally overwhelmed and astonished by what they saw and heard. This reveals that they had little knowledge of the intellectual abilities, and spiritual heights, that the wonderful child Jesus had reached and achieved. Jesus had pressed through to God the Father, and triumphed gloriously in obtaining truth and spiritual understanding, without anyone in Nazareth, including His family, knowing it.

In Lk.2v50. "They understood not," is "ou sunekan," is the negative "ou" 3756, and the aorist active indicative "sunekan" 4920." the aorist active indicative of "suniemmi" 4920, to mentally put together and comprehend, and understand; the very same word that is used of our Lord's understanding, but with the strong negative "ou." **In spite of the divine interventions into their lives, Joseph and Mary were not able to comprehend and put together what the boy Jesus meant when He virtually said, "My Father is God, and I must be about His business." They failed to link and bring together the events of Christ's early life and these present events. They failed to remember and put together the prophetic instructions of the angels, and the prophecies of Zechariah, Simeon, and Anna, and our Lord's remarkable childhood.** Mary failed to understand what Jesus meant, or what His Messianic calling really involved, in spite of Christ's miraculous birth and her many treasured memories. Jesus virtually answered, "You above all should realise that my Father is God, and that it is a divine necessity ("dei," "it is necessary, or it behoves.") that I must be in the things of my Father." How Jesus must have longed during His years at Nazareth, to fulfil the visions, which the Father revealed to Him, of His future ministry to the multitudes. However, Jesus knew that He had to be fully equipped by the Father before He could bring the visions and the Scriptures to pass, and so He prayerfully prepared and waited for the Father's "kairos" time.

Joseph and Mary did not understand that Jesus was obeying His heavenly Father, and express deep concern at what Jesus had done. Jesus answers them in Luke 2:49. "And he said unto them, how is it that ye sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus, in effect, answers Mary's question with the words, "Where is a child to be found but in his Father's house, and in the things of His Father?" Our Lord's first recorded words express amazement that his parents should not know that there was only one possible place in Jerusalem where He could be, in the Temple, learning truth from the leading theologians of Israel, and almost certainly exposing error.

"I must be" is "dei einai me," the Father's divine compulsion was driving Him forward to His Messianic calling. At twelve Jesus was fully conscious of the gigantic demands laid upon Him by the sin of mankind. The boy Samuel was a remarkable child, but Jesus was infinitely more remarkable, He knew He was to be the Lamb of God, and bear the sins of the world, and have a ministry like to that of Moses, and He steadfastly set His face to prepare Himself for His ministry and His death, and accomplish both of them, and bring them both to the goal.

The compulsion Jesus felt to perfectly attain all the goals the Father had for Him, and also to be, "The Lamb of God." We read of the completion of our Lord's goal and purpose in Jn.19v28 and 30., where the word "tetelestai," is translated as, "It is accomplished," and "It is finished," to emphasise the completion of our Lord's life and ministry. In Jn.19v28-30., the Greek word "tetelestai," occurs twice, "**v28.** After this, Jesus knew that all things had been **finished,** completed and accomplished ("tetelestai"), said, in order to fulfil the scripture, "I

thirst!" **v29**. Now a vessel full of vinegar was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. **v30**. So when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is **finished**, completed and accomplished ("tetelestai")!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit."

On the Cross Jesus knew that He had only one more Scripture to fulfil, this was, Ps.69v21., "and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." So when Jesus had tasted the vinegar, He knew that He had accomplished, completed, and perfectly brought to the goal everything in His earthly life that the Father had desired Him to do. This is the meaning of "tetelestai" here. Even at twelve, the boy Jesus was aiming at, and consumed by this goal. Even at twelve the zeal for our salvation was consuming Him, and driving Him on. How wonderful!. The divine compulsion, "I must be about my Father's business." Jesus did not die with a sense of failure, but rather with the knowledge of a perfect fulfilment and attainment of His Father's will and goals.

The tenses in John.19v28-30., are very instructive. v28. "After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, ("tetelestai" the perfect passive indicative of "teleo" 5055), that the Scripture might be fulfilled (might be fulfilled is "teleiothe," the first aorist passive subjunctive of "teleio" 5048, instead of the usual "plerothe" 4137) said, "I thirst!" 29. Now a vessel full of vinegar was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. 30. So when Jesus had received the vinegar, He said, "It is finished!" ("tetelestai" the perfect passive indicative of "teleo" 5055) And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." We read in John.17v4., "I have glorified You on the earth. **I have finished** the work which You have given Me to do." NKJV. "Have finished," is "teleiosas" the aorist active participle of "teleio," 5048, a verb derived from "teleios" 5046, meaning "perfect." The aorist tense indicates that Christ's work was already finished and accomplished. See Jn.4v34. Jesus was the obedient sent messenger and apostle, "apesteilas" 649," of the Father. Jn.17v3. The New English Bible translates John.17v4., "I have glorified thee on earth by completing the work which thou gavest me to do." Jesus completed, finished, and accomplished all the works that He dedicated Himself to as a child, and glorified God the Father in the doing of the Father's works and will.

We read in John 19:28., that Jesus knew that all prophetic Scripture regarding Him was accomplished, except Ps.69v21., and the time had come to fulfil that last prophecy before His death. The shattered body of Jesus burned with thirst. See Ps.22v15. His cry, "I thirst," caused the soldiers to give Him the vinegar to drink, and so fulfilled His earthly prophetic destiny. Jesus had earlier refused the drugged vinegar, but He now took the vinegar, which was a stimulant, and so completed His prophetic earthly course. Now imprisonment in Hades awaited Him, and when He had taken our place there, and had been resurrected, He had finished the work of redemption, "and made reconciliation for iniquity." One day Jesus will complete the prophecy of Dan.9v24-27.,and "bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision and prophecy."

Mary and Joseph searched intensively and sorrowfully ("odunomenoi") for Jesus for 3 days. "Have sought," is the imperfect tense "ezetoumen" 2212, "were seeking;" the imperfect describes the long drawn out search for three days. Mary went over in her mind the anxious search of the last three days.

"I must be," is "dei einai me," "must," is "dei," 1163, which literally means, "it is necessary, or it behoves." A word that is often used by Jesus concerning the work His Father had given Him to do. Mt.16v21. 26v54. Mk.8v31. Lk.4v43. 9v22. 13v33. 17v25. 22v37. 24v7,26,44,46. Jn.3v14. 9v4. 10v16. 12v34. See Rev.13v8. 17v8 Mt.25v34.Titus.1v2. 1Pet.1v20-23. etc. In, Jn.4v4., "And he must needs go through Samaria," "must," is "deo" 1210, "to bind, tie, to fasten, even with chains," as the demoniac in Mt.5v3,4.: It is used to describe Satan binding someone Lk.13v16.; and Jesus binding Satan. Mt.12v29.: It is used when John Baptist was bound and imprisoned. Mt.14v3.; and of Jesus being bound, Jn.18v24.; Peter being bound. Acts.12v6.; and Paul being bound. Acts.21v11. Col.4v3. (In John.4v4., "deo" is used concerning the work which God the Father appointed Jesus to do. Jesus was absolutely determined to fulfil the works, that He had promised to do before the foundation of the world, to fulfil the Father's perfect will, and to be the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. The boy Jesus totally dedicated Himself to the duty and constraint of caring and redeeming love.

The subjection and obedience of Jesus to Mary and Joseph at Nazareth for many years.

See Luke.2:51., "And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and he was subject unto them: and his mother kept all (these) sayings in her heart." Mary kept, treasured, and guarded the details and events of Christ's childhood in her heart. "Kept," is "dieterai," the imperfect active of "diatero," to keep, to treasure, to guard safely;" it only occurs here in Lk.2v51. and Acts.15v29., in the N.T., but it occurs in the Septuagint of Gen.37v11.. The preposition "dia" indicates that Mary thoroughly and faithfully kept all these events in her heart. A similar synonym "suntereo," is used in a similar phrase in Lk.2v19., we read that after the shepherds left the newly born infant Christ, Mary pondered and kept in her mind ("soneterai," the imperfect of "suntereo," to keep in mind, to treasure up), and brought together ("sumballousa," the present participle of "sumballo," to reflect upon, to place together for comparison) the words and events surrounding Christ's birth. Mary had a heart and mind filled with the glowing facts of divine revelation, and God's greatest act of intervention in human history. Bengel states, "Not even to the angels fell such an honour as to the parents of Jesus."

In Lk.2v51., "And he was subject to them:" "subject," is "hupotassomenos," the imperfect passive participle of "hupotasso," 5293," to place or arrange under, to subordinate; the passive means to submit oneself, to become subject, to obey. **The imperfect tense reveals the habitual, continuous nature of the subjection and obedience of Jesus to Mary and Joseph.** Jesus willingly did whatever they asked Him to do. Jesus willingly obeyed Joseph's demands and expectations for Jesus to train Himself to be a carpenter. There were obviously no more episodes like the one that occurred at twelve. Jesus had an eye kept upon Him by Joseph and Mary, particularly when He went to Jerusalem with them. Jesus was well and truly on His own. Jesus was an affectionate, gentle, thoughtful, and obedient boy. Even before, he had been subject to them; but this is mentioned now, when it might seem that he could by this time have exempted himself. Jesus did not make His Divine call an excuse to avoid His responsibilities to His parents. He worked hard and long in the carpenter's shop, to learn His trade, and also to help His parents in the struggle to make a living for their large family. His hands were hardened and had big calluses on them through the hard work, the sweat ran down His brow, and soaked His clothes as He laboured hard for His parents and the family. Jesus lived the Sermon on the Mount in His home and Nazareth before He preached it to the multitudes.

During the next eighteen years at Nazareth Jesus grew into manhood, and worked with His hands at Joseph's business, and succeeded Joseph as the carpenter of Nazareth, "Is not this the carpenter?" Lk.3v23. Mk.6v3. Mt.13v55. Joseph is mentioned in Mt.13v55., for the last time. No child among the Jews was brought up in idleness, Jesus spent those years working hard at the family business, and mastering the work of being a carpenter. His yokes were easy on the animals, and His work the very best. However, Jesus longed for the day when He could start His ministry and fulfil His heavenly Father's will. How terribly frustrating it must have been to hear the false doctrines of the Pharisees, and have to restrain Himself, and hide His great knowledge. This amazing boy, who knew more than His parents and rabbis, had to hide away all the truth He knew until His Father's kairos time came. Constrained for the time to be "the carpenter of Nazareth." Mk.6v3. Joseph's successor. Mt.13v55. But looking and longing for the day when His Heavenly Father called Him to His Messianic task of healing and redemption.

Mary's and Joseph's lapse in faith, and Mary's growth in faith.

By the time that Jesus turned the water to wine at Cana, Mary's understanding of her Son's mission, and faith in His prophetic ministry had certainly increased since His visit to the Temple at the age of twelve. We read in Lk.2v48-52., that Joseph and Mary did not understand what Jesus meant when He said to them, in His first recorded words, "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" "About my Father's business," is "en tois tou patros mou," literally. "in the (things) of my father." Adam Clark says it means, "in my Father's concerns;" Vincent, The Expositor's Greek Testament, and Wuest, say, it means, "in the things of my Father.

The Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, states, "The meaning may be, as our translators have taken it, 'about my Father's affairs' or 'business.' So too, Calvin, Beza, Maldonat, de Wette, Alford, Stier, Van Osterzee, etc. Or the sense may be, 'in my Father's house' [sc. oikemasin (NT:3612), or doomasin (NT:1430)]. This latter shade of meaning, besides being the primary one, includes the former. So most of the fathers and of the moderns, Erasmus, Grotius, Bengel, Olshausen, Meyer, Trench, Webster, and Wilkinson." **End of quote.**

A.T. Robertson also says it means, "in my Father's house." **Bloomfield** states that it is possible that Jesus spoke with "a studied ambiguity" to include both senses, and that Jesus spoke in this way "to suggest a matter for serious reflection, and to be comprehended afterwards." I believe that Bloomfield is correct, Jesus spoke in this way to include both senses, for surely Jesus wanted them to understand all the things connected with His mission as Messiah. There can be no doubt that "in the things of my Father," has a wider application than, "in my Father's house," and would include "in my Father's house."

However, no matter which way we translate this first statement of Jesus, it could not have been easily misunderstood, in the light of the events surrounding Christ's birth, but Joseph and Mary did not understand it, which reveals a deep lapse in their faith, and a real lack of comprehension about Christ's person and mission. This lack of spiritual perception could have been due to of the many pressures on their lives, which arose through bringing up a large family, and running a family business. It could also have been to the appalling spiritual condition of Nazareth, which gave them no spiritual help, and caused them to neglect their spiritual lives. The fire that had once burned brightly because of Divine revelation had lost its glow. Whatever the reason for their lack of spiritual perception about our Lord and His mission, the attitude of Mary and Joseph reveals that during those early years Jesus had won through His spiritual battles to obtain a mighty prophetic ministry, without their understanding and help. By the time Jesus left the family business for His ministry, Mary, by living with Jesus, had come to understand in some large measure, the glory of His being, and the spiritual gifting that Jesus had received from the Father. The angel Gabriel's words to her could never be forgotten, and she knew that the conception and birth of Jesus was totally miraculous.

Jesus truly had a very lonely walk, and we can see this in the Messianic prophecy in Ps.69v20,21., "Insults and reproach have broken my heart; I am full of heaviness and distressingly sick ("nuwsh," 5136, to be sick). And I looked for sympathy and pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. v21. They also gave me gall for my food and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." See Mt.27v34,48. **The reproach, hatred, opposition and loneliness, broke the heart of Jesus, and made Him physically ill.**

Keil & Delitzsch write in their commentary on Is.53v3., "He was despised and forsaken by men; a man of griefs,

and well acquainted with disease; and like one from whom men hide their face: despised, and we esteemed Him not." **"Moreover, He was "mak^aobowt" 4341, "iysh" 376, a man of sorrow of heart in all its forms, i.e., a man whose chief distinction was, that His life was one of constant painful endurance." End of quote.**

These are indeed, the most soul sobering words, they show that Jesus had a very hard life, all His life. We will not know the extreme severity and vast number of trials that Jesus had to endure and overcome to be our Saviour and High Priest, until God the Father reveals it to us in the kingdom of Heaven. The matchless, magnificent devotion and resolute brave endurance of Jesus in His earthly life is breathtaking, and indescribably wonderful, and all the brave acts of men fade into insignificance in the light of the brave endurance and courage of His life.

See Heb.12v3., "For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls." (NKJ) The word for "hostility," is "antilogia," 485, and describes a violent speaking against. Jesus bravely endured ("hupomeno," 5278), the vicious verbal attacks and ill treatment of His enemies. Mary also suffered considerable dishonour, criticism and ostracism for being willing to be the means of God the Word becoming flesh.

"IS NOT THIS THE CARPENTER?" Mark.6v3.

Jesus the carpenter's son and man.

We read in Mk.6v3., "Is not this the carpenter?" "Ouch houtos estin ho tekton;" whereas Mt.13v55., calls Jesus **"the carpenter's son"** "ho tou tektonos huios." He was both, for obviously, since the death of Joseph, Jesus had carried on the family business, and was "the carpenter" of Nazareth. The word "tekton," 5045, it was originally used to describe a worker in wood, in other words, a carpenter, or joiner. Then it was used of any craftsman, or workman, in metal or stone, as well as in wood. It was even used to describe some who did sculptures, and others who plied themselves in writing poetry and songs. We know that Jesus worked in wood, for Justin Martyr speaks of the ploughs, yokes, and other wooden implements that Jesus made. Jesus almost certainly worked in stone and may even have helped to build some of the stone synagogues in Galilee. The word "carpenter" gives a vital and vivid insight into the first thirty years of the life of Jesus.

Just as David was trained by God to fight Goliath, through faithfully caring for his flock of sheep, and defending them from the onslaught of a lion and bear, so Jesus was prepared by the trials, tribulations, and bruising events of daily living at Nazareth to fight the spiritual foes that attacked Israel. It was, indeed, a very fiery furnace, with many bitter and soul-destroying experiences. One can well imagine how Satan used the carnal, worldly and unspiritual people of Nazareth to test the soul of Jesus to the very limit. Difficult and unreasonable customers who wanted their work done yesterday, people who argued over their bills, and others who looked upon Jesus as a charity and would not pay their bills, and there were undoubtedly violent and aggressive customers. Life was very bruising for the Lord Jesus at Nazareth, as a boy, youth and man.

Behold the workman Jesus!

After Pilate had scourged Jesus and put the crown of thorns and scarlet robe upon Him, **Pilate brought Jesus our before the people and said, in Jn.19v5., "Behold, the man!" "Idou ho anthropos, ("Ecce Homo!").** "Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!" By this mock coronation of Jesus Pilate intended both to humiliate the Jews by showing what he had done to their supposed king, and also perhaps to show that the charge of the Sanhedrin was completely ridiculous, how could such a pitiable figure be guilty of treason. **Pilate did not realise that he was calling attention to the greatest person of world history, the man Christ Jesus. If we do not meditate upon the early life of Jesus at Nazareth, and His life as a workman, we too can be blind to the glory and victory of our Lord over the pressures of providing for Mary's large family, and the pressure of running a family business among an overtaxed and poor people.**

Jesus had a very pressurised, hectic and trying work life at Nazareth. "Behold the workman Jesus!" The sweat poured from Him through long hours of work in the hot sun. His muscles were strong and hard through years of hard labour with primitive tools. His ingenuity and moral fibre was taxed and tried through difficult and demanding work. His hands were strong and had many seggs on them through building with rough stones. Behold, and worship the diligent and industrious workman Jesus, who was so often badly exhausted through overwork, through meeting people's material needs.

Jesus the carpenter, the provider for Mary's large family.

After Joseph died the Lord Jesus had to take upon Himself the responsibility of providing for Mary's large family, and took over the running of the family business. This involved years of long hours of hard work, and dealing with difficult and poor people. Satan would make sure that Jesus had to deal with difficult customers and greedy people, who would not pay their bills, or people who wanted a lot of work done for next to nothing. Jesus knew

what it was to have bad debts. There were also the genuine poor and widows who could not pay for work that they needed doing. Our Lord's attitude to others in His life at Nazareth is clearly seen in His sermon on the mount. Jesus lived the Sermon on the Mount before He preached it. The pressures of life that Jesus endured at Nazareth at home and in the family business were all part of the Father's plan for Jesus. Jesus was tempted and tried in all points so that He could be the perfect High Priest and Saviour. We know that He understands because He has been there, done that, and wore that tee shirt. The extremely hard work that Jesus did also gave Him a strong physical constitution, which was necessary for the demanding ministry, which He was to do.

Providing for the large family of Mary and running the family business put huge demands on the time and energy of Jesus, but in spite of this Jesus prepared for the work and ministry that God the Father had for Him. It is a wonderful fact that Jesus prepared for His ministry while doing many hours of hard demanding work in the hot sun for six days a week. Jesus was probably working a twelve to sixteen hour shift each day to provide for His mother and brothers and sisters, It is also very likely that His story of rescuing a sheep on the Sabbath, which had fallen into a hole, was taken from His own personal experience, and had probably happened with sheep and other animals on several or many occasions, the Law commanded that this help should be given. Mt.12v11,12. Exod.23v4,5. Deut.22v4. The zeal for God and the redemption of God's people consumed Jesus, and His remarkable dedication under the heavy responsibilities that were placed upon Him, fills us with amazed and thankful love and praise. Jesus was not an out of touch holy man, He personally experienced the severe and overwhelming pressures of life.

Jesus was undoubtedly mocked for His celibate life, in a society that was built around the family, and having a wife was the norm, Jesus would be looked upon as abnormal. Jesus was consumed by a desire to do the Father's will, and we read in Ps.69v9-11., that He subdued all human desire by fasting and prayer and communion with God His Father. Jesus was tempted in all points like we are, but conquered them all by self discipline and communion with His heavenly Father. Heb.4v14-16.

The people of Nazareth knew the answers to the questions they asked, they were a way of ,expressing the shock, astonishment, and unbelief that they felt, they would not accept that the son of Joseph the carpenter , and Mary His mother, could have such wisdom and do such wonderful acts. They knew Jesus, His parents and His brothers, James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, and all his sisters, for they were living in their village. Their prejudice blinded them, and we read in both Mt.13v57. and Mk.6v3., "and they were offended in him," "kai eskandalizonto en autoi," they "were made to stumble in him," they were trapped like game by the "skandalon," 4625, a trap-stick, or snare, by their contemptuous unbelief and cynical and hostile familiarity. At Nazareth Jesus became "a stone of stumbling," "petra skandalou," to unbelievers. 1Pet.2v7,8. Rom.9v33. "And he could do no mighty work there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them." Mk.6v5,6.

Both Mark.6v4. and Mt.13v57., record the declaration of Jesus that a prophet lacks honour in his own country.

In Mk.6v4, "Jesus said unto them, a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." See Mt.13v57., "And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, a prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house." On his previous visit to Nazareth Jesus said in Lk.4v24., "Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country." On his return to Galilee long before this, we read in Jn.4v44., "For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet has no honour in his own country." The people were astonished ("ekplessomai," be astonished, be overwhelmed. See Mk.1v22.), at the remarkable preaching of Jesus, but they rejected both His preaching and Himself.

Jesus definite claim to be a prophet, seer, and the promised Messiah, were despised and rejected by His own townspeople, but received by the despised Samaritans. Lk.4v16-30. John.4v25,26,39-42. The most hurtful thing was that His own brothers and sisters did not believe in Jesus, and His Messianic claims, as Jesus sadly said that unbelief reigned, "among his own kin and in His own house, "en tois suggeneusin autou en te oikia autou." Mk.6v4. Mt.13v57. Mk.3v21,31-35. Jn.7v5. Ps.69v7-12. We read in Mk.6v6., "And He marvelled because of their unbelief," "kai ethaumasen dia ten apistian auton," the aorist tense. Jesus marvelled at the faith of the Roman centurion and the Syrophenician woman, they had great faith where one would not expect any faith. Mt.8v5-13. 15v21-28. Lk.7v9. Jesus marvels at the lack of faith where he had a right to expect it, not just among the Jews, but also in his own hometown, among his kinspeople, and even in his own home. From Mk.3v21,31., it appears that Mary was unwillingly pressurised by the rest of the family to help them to forcibly take Jesus home, when they heard how He had offended the religious hierarchy of Israel. The evidence is that Mary never lost faith in her Son. Jesus left Nazareth and "went round about the villages teaching," "periegen tas komas kukloi didaskon," the imperfect tense, "periegen." Jesus resumed His task of being a roving preacher in Galilee.

Mark.6v1-6. Then He went out from there and came to His own country, and His disciples followed Him. v2 And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished ("ekplesso," 1605, to strike out, to expel by a blow, to strike one out of self-possession, to strike with panic, to

shock, to astonish, to be struck with amazement, to be amazed), saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this, which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands! v3. "Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him. v4. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house." v5. Now He could do no mighty work there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. v6. And He marvelled because of their unbelief. Then He went about the villages in a circuit, teaching.

In Mt.13v55., Jesus is described as the son of Joseph the carpenter, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" "Ouch houtos estin ho tou tektonos huios?" The translation by Phillips suggests that there is a bite to the words, he translates it, "He's only the carpenter's son." However, in Mark.6v3., we read, "Is not this the carpenter? "Ouch houtos estin ho tekton;" After Joseph's death Jesus had carried on the family business and was "the carpenter" of Nazareth. The Greek word for "carpenter," is, "tekton," 5045, it is from "tekein, tikto," to beget, create, (like "techne," craft, or art). "Tekton" originally applied to the worker in wood or builder with wood like our carpenter. Then it was used of any artisan or craftsman in metal, or in stone as well as in wood and even of sculpture. The noun "carpenter" may refer to one who builds with wood or stone. As there was a limited supply of wood in Palestine, houses were usually constructed of stone, which was also more durable and more secure. It is, therefore, quite possible that it would be more correct to call Jesus "the builder and stone mason of Nazareth," however, the majority of the translators prefer to translate "tekton" as "carpenter." We can be quite sure that Jesus worked in wood. Justin Martyr speaks of ploughs and yokes, which were made by Jesus. Jesus almost certainly worked in stone and may even have helped to build some of the stone synagogues in Galilee.

We read in Mt.13v35., "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?" The people of Nazareth knew Joseph, Mary and Jesus, and His younger brothers and sisters, (who were technically Christ's half brothers and sisters). They would not accept that a person with the origin of Jesus and the background of Nazareth could possess the wisdom, which he had in his teaching, "edidasken."

In Mt.13v57., "And they were offended in him," is "kai eskandalizonto en autoi," the imperfect passive, it literally means, "And they were stumbled in him." They would not accept the holy character and spiritual power of Jesus, or that He was different from them. "Not without honour," is "ouk estin atimos," every prophet of consequence has proved this to be true. This is a proverb found in the works of Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers. The unbelief of Christ's townspeople blocked the will of God, and the power of Jesus to heal people and do "mighty works," "dunameis," 58, powers..

In Mk.6v1., "into his own country," is "eis ten patriida autou," and exactly the same Greek phrase also occurs in Mt.13v54., scholars say this means, "to his own native place," and like "patriida" in Mk.6v4., has the specific meaning of "home town," not just a general sense of "country," or "fatherland." It is definitely speaking of Nazareth. Just as in His first visit, recorded in Lk.4v26-31., at the beginning of His Galilean ministry, our Lord's ministry and gifting was largely rejected, at this second visit to His hometown. Jesus had not lived in Bethlehem since his birth, Nazareth was the town where He was brought up.

We read in Mt.6v2., that Jesus "began to teach," "erxato didaskein," this was His normal practice in the synagogue on the Sabbath. The ruler of the synagogue, the "archisunagogos," who asked people to speak, was aware of the excited rumours, which were circulating all over Galilee about Christ's ministry, and so moved by curiosity he asked Jesus to speak. See Mt.5v32. The reputation and proven ministry of Jesus opened the door for Him.

In Mk.6v1-6., the reaction of the people of Nazareth to our Lord's sermon was the very opposite of welcoming, reasonable, respectful and good-natured, they said "Whence hath this man these things?" The literal translation of "pothen toutoi tauta," is even more contemptuous, curt, and derisive, "Whence these things to this fellow?" There was a bitter rejection of Jesus, as their words, attitudes, and actions demonstrate. Jesus was amazed at their determined rejection of Him, and their unbelief.

We read in Mk.6v2., that the people of Nazareth were continually amazed and overwhelmed, ("exeplessonto," the imperfect passive tense of "ekplesso," to amaze, the passive means, to be amazed, to be overwhelmed), at the wisdom ("sophia") with which Jesus spoke, and the reports of "the operations of power and mighty works" ("hai dunameis"), which were being repeatedly wrought ("ginomenai," the present middle participle of "ginomai," to become, that is, to come into existence, to come to pass, to happen; when used of miracles, to be wrought), by His hands, "dia ton cheiron."

In Mk.6v2., "mighty works," is a translation of "dunameis," which is often translated as "miracles," it literally means "acts of powers," they were signs done by the power of God; God stopped people in their tracks by His

miracles. These acts of power produced amazement, wonder, and awe in those who beheld them. People marvelled and gasped in amazement, and "stretched out their necks" to see them.

In Mt.13v57., "and they were offended in him," is "kai eskandalizonto en autoi," the imperfect passive, which literally means, "they stumbled at Him." As with the Jewish leaders, envy and jealousy distorted and perverted the judgement of the people of Nazareth, "It was unpardonable for Jesus not to be commonplace like themselves."

In Mk.6v4., Jesus said, "a prophet is not without honour," "ouk estin prophetes atimos." Scholars say the double negative "not without" may need two sentences, and a repetition of the thought to give the complete sense and necessary contrast. The following translations illustrate this, "a prophet has respect everywhere, but not with his townspeople," "in his own country a prophet is not honoured, but everywhere else he is honoured." Jesus spoke out and confirmed the truth of the proverb that is found in Roman and Greek writers as well as Jewish writers. Jesus said that prophets who speak God's Word are welcomed, honoured, respected and wanted almost everywhere, but they are not welcome, wanted and respected in their own town.

The people of Nazareth were stubbornly entrenched in unbelief, they were obstinate and implacable, and quite unwilling to believe that God would work miracles through Jesus. In blind unreasoning unbelief they rejected the overwhelming impact of Christ's ministry, and refused to recognise or submit to Him. The years of rejection and mockery of Christ's spirituality while He lived at Nazareth, which are revealed in Ps.69v7-12., had so hardened their hearts against Jesus, that they were not able to receive anything from Him. They could not deny the wisdom of Christ's words, or the rumours of the wondrous works that were circulating all over the land, but Satan persuaded them that there was something doubtful and dubious about Christ's ministry. Jesus had lived with the people of Nazareth for 30 years in prayerful integrity, holiness and love, but they despised, rejected and mocked Him, and treated His divinely beautiful life with contempt. God hid Christ's prophetic ministry away from these scoffers. They knew that Jesus was an extraordinarily prayerful person, and mocked him for it, but they never suspected, nor would they believe, even when our Lord's ministry was manifested, that He possessed such extraordinary wisdom, spiritual gifts and graces.

Appendix. The insights that the epistle of James gives us into the life of Jesus at Nazareth.

James was one of the five sons of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and he lived with Jesus for almost 30 years. Mt.13v56. Mk.6v1-6. The bitter rejection of Jesus by the people of Nazareth badly affected James and Christ's other brothers and sisters. They were appalled when the Rabbis and other leaders tried to kill Jesus, and they felt totally unable to stand with Christ against the hostile and violent opposition that came against Him. However, Jesus revealed Himself to James after His resurrection and the scales dropped from his eyes, and he saw the glory, beauty and majesty of our Lord's life at Nazareth. The epistle of James gives us a priceless insight into the life of Jesus at Nazareth, for the practical wisdom of James is derived from the memories that James had of the life of Jesus. Every Christian who met James undoubtedly asked, "What was Jesus like to live with in the home? What did He teach? Tell us about it." This epistle gives the answer. People listened with bated breath as James told the facts about Christ's patient endurance of trials, His practical caring love for all, particularly widows and orphans, His remarkable wisdom, and how He worked so very hard to provide for Mary's large family after Joseph died. The practical advice that James gives, came out of living with Jesus, and the truths that Jesus not only spoke, but also lived out, during His life at Nazareth.

When in James.1v2,12., James speaks of endurance in trial, and joy in tribulation, he recalls how Jesus overcame the violent hostility at Nazareth with constant enduring love. In James.5v7-12. the patient endurance of Job and Jesus, is set forth as an example for us to follow. In James.2v1-13., the impartial integrity and justice of God and Jesus is revealed. In James.1v17., when James speaks of the invariable goodness of God, he remembers that Jesus was always the same, and had no bad days.

James had seen how the people of Nazareth had been led astray by sinful desires, James.1v13,14., and in sharp contrast had seen the sinless purity of Jesus, who kept Himself unspotted from the world. Jesus was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. Heb.4v15. The temptations of Nazareth were lethal, vicious, and unrelenting, but Jesus conquered them all. James warns us that worldliness will bring God's judgement upon us. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world and seek to do the will of God in our daily living, just like Jesus did in His everyday life for 30 years at Nazareth. James.4v1-17.

James learned from Jesus that "faith without works is dead and worthless." James.2v20. We see in James.2v14-26., the practical nature of the faith of Jesus. James saw pure, undefiled, and caring religion manifested in the life of Christ. Jesus met the needs of the poor, widows and orphans, He lived out the sermon on the Mount at Nazareth before He preached it. James.1v22-27. Like Abraham, who is used here as an illustration of faith with works, Jesus proved His faith by His works, and so must we.

James is thinking of Jesus when he speaks of the perfect man who controlled Himself and bridled His tongue.

Jesus was totally open and without guile, and free from hypocrisy, He lived out the pure, peaceable, gentle, merciful, and impartial wisdom of God, in spite of the vicious opposition, slander and criticism that was hurled against Him at Nazareth. James.3v1-18. James could not forget this rejection and criticism of Jesus, for he joined in with Christ's critics against Him. Ps.69v7-10. The Scribes accused Jesus of doing miracles by Satan's power, when His family heard of this, they said, "He is mad," and His brothers came to take Him home by force. Mk.3v21-35. Jn.7v5. James and Jude certainly regretted their alliance with the enemies of Christ, for they write with awe about Jesus, and say they are a lowly servant "doulos" 1210, of "the Lord Jesus Christ." James.1v1. Jude.v1.

Christ's scathing criticism of the selfish rich is clearly seen in James.2v1-7. 5v1-6.. James warns the rich against defrauding the labourers of their rightful wages. Jesus certainly did not try to make Himself popular with the rich. Mt.23v1-39. Lk.16v13-15.

In James.5v13-20., James states that prolonged determined praying will bring healing to the sick, and uses Elijah as an example to prove it. "The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man avails much." James was also thinking of the matchless prayer life of Jesus, which brought ostracism and criticism from James and Christ's other brothers and sisters. Ps.69v7-10. We see from the parable in Lk.11v9-13., that the desire to get bread for others had been the driving force of our Lord's dedicated prayer life. Jesus had prayed through into complete victory, until everybody was healed, who came to Him for healing. Mt.12v15. 14v14. 15v30. 19v2. 21v14. Lk.5v15. 6v19. We read in Mt.8v16,17., that all healing flows from the atoning death of Jesus. James followed our Lord's example in holy living, he was known as "James the Just." He also tried to imitate our Lord's prayer life, it is said that he prayed so much on his knees, that his knees became as calloused as a camel's knees.

CONCLUSION.

For our conclusion we will again read Ps.69v6-21.

"Let not those who wait for You, O Lord GOD of hosts, be ashamed because of me; let not those who seek You be confounded because of me, O God of Israel. v7. Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. v8. I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children; v9. Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. v10. When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach. v11. I also made sackcloth my garment; I became a byword to them. v12. Those who sit in the gate speak against me, and I am the song of the drunkards. v13. But as for me, my prayer is to You, O LORD, in the acceptable time; O God, in the multitude of Your mercy, hear me in the truth of Your salvation. v14. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink; let me be delivered from those who hate me, and out of the deep waters. v15. Let not the floodwater overflow me, nor let the deep swallow me up; and let not the pit shut its mouth on me. v16. Hear me, O LORD, for Your loving-kindness is good; turn to me according to the multitude of Your tender mercies. v17. And do not hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in trouble; hear me speedily. v18. Draw near to my soul, and redeem it; deliver me because of my enemies. v19. You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonour; my adversaries are all before You. v20. Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. v21. They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." (NKJ)

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