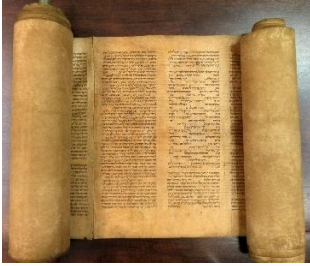


Service for Week 20th -26th January
2025- By Chaplain Andy



Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, instead of making you an integral part of our lives, we often treat you as an optional extra, there to turn to when it suits us.

Teach us Lord to put our faith and trust in you, so that we may serve you and the people surrounding us in our lives, to the glory of your name. **Amen**

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name

Amen

Bible Reading Luke 4:14-30

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read.

The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

"I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian." All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Holy words, Holy wisdom,

Thanks be to God

Reflection

I have written before how Jesus was known in Nazareth as the 'Joseph's the carpenter/builder's son'. Our reading describes what happen one day when Jesus, a recognised Rabbi there, stood up to read the lesson from the scriptures.

The scripture was handwritten in Hebrew on a very large rolls of parchment (see photo over), and the scroll of the book of Isaiah was given to Jesus to read. When he had finished reading and handed back the scroll, he was initially praised for the way he read and his obvious understanding of Isaiah's words. Jesus went on to tell them that the person Isaiah had been describing when he wrote- "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor" and to heal the sick, is none other than Jesus himself. He is telling them that he is that person - the Messiah, sent from and of God.

Well, the people were amazed to hear such teaching from one of their own—the carpenter's son. This was wonderful that the Messiah should come to Nazareth and be of great benefit to them there, preaching and healing the sick. But then Jesus continues to tell them that God has not come in human form just for Nazareth's benefit. No, he has come to start his ministry which is for all regions, for all countries, in fact for the

whole world. Jesus then reinforces this message by referring to two incidents in the past where the prophet Elijah and the prophet Elisha did not restrict their healing and good works to the people that they lived among. They brought healing to foreigners and gave help to people in other regions.

Well on hearing this, as you can imagine, the mood in the synagogue changed rapidly. They were furious, it says and they got up and drove him out of the town. They intended to throw Jesus off a cliff, but he walked through them and went away.

There are times when we may think that Jesus came in a time, to a country and a culture which is very different to ours today. We may find that some of the religious attitudes and practices described in the bible are alien to our modern age.

Jesus made it clear to those people in the synagogue that he did not come just for that country, or to conform to the religious practices and faith at that time. He came for everyone and he came for each of us today.

Amen

Closing prayer

Gracious God, take my faith, flawed as it is, my love poor though it may be, to use in your service. Through Jesus Christ my Lord.

Amen

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett