



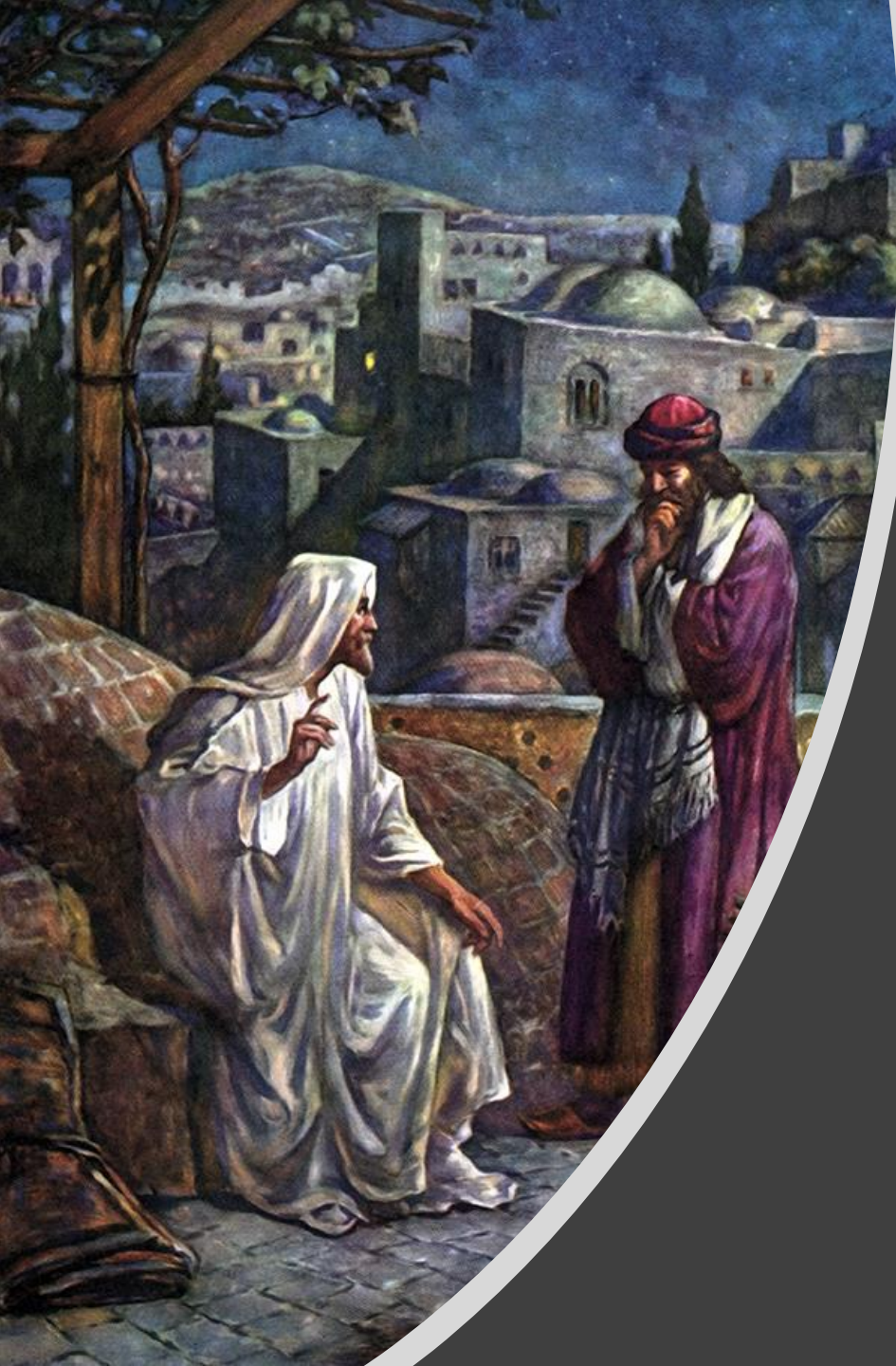
Ministry and Miracles

John 2:23-4:45



Where We Left Off

The cleansing of the Temple – a
bold and dramatic claim to
Messianic identity and authority.



John 2:23-3:31

Jesus is
interviewed
by
Nicodemus

A Preliminary Question

**Why Did
Nicodemus
Come To Jesus?**

Some Would Say:

Nicodemus was an official spokesman of the Sanhedrin; they had dispatched him to interrogate Jesus and to discern what ought to be their “official” reaction to him, much like they had done previously with John the Baptist.

A Better Explanation:

Nicodemus seems to have been, or at least eventually to have become, an honest enquirer, one who had seen the miracles of Christ, who had witnessed the events at Passover, who had compared what he saw in Jesus to the OT Scriptures, and who now had contrived to come face-to-face with Jesus Himself – all of this in the spirit of honest “seeking after God” which God has promised to reward.

Can We Be Sure? John 2:23-25

23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing. **24** But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men, **25** and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.



How Does Jesus React To Nicodemus' Questions?

John 3:1-2

1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; **2** this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

What effect do the miracles have on Nicodemus?

What are the purposes of the miracles?

Notice Jesus' Response (3:3)

3 Jesus answered and said to him,
“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is
born again he cannot see the kingdom
of God.”

Was this the question that Nicodemus
asked?

Then why is Jesus answering him in this
way?

As Jesus Dealt with Nicodemus


He stressed again the *spiritual requirements* – faith and the consequent rebirth – which *all* must fulfill in order to gain entrance into the kingdom of God.

Did Nicodemus Believe?

John Tells Us About Nicodemus

John 7:45-52

John 19:38-40



John 3:22-36

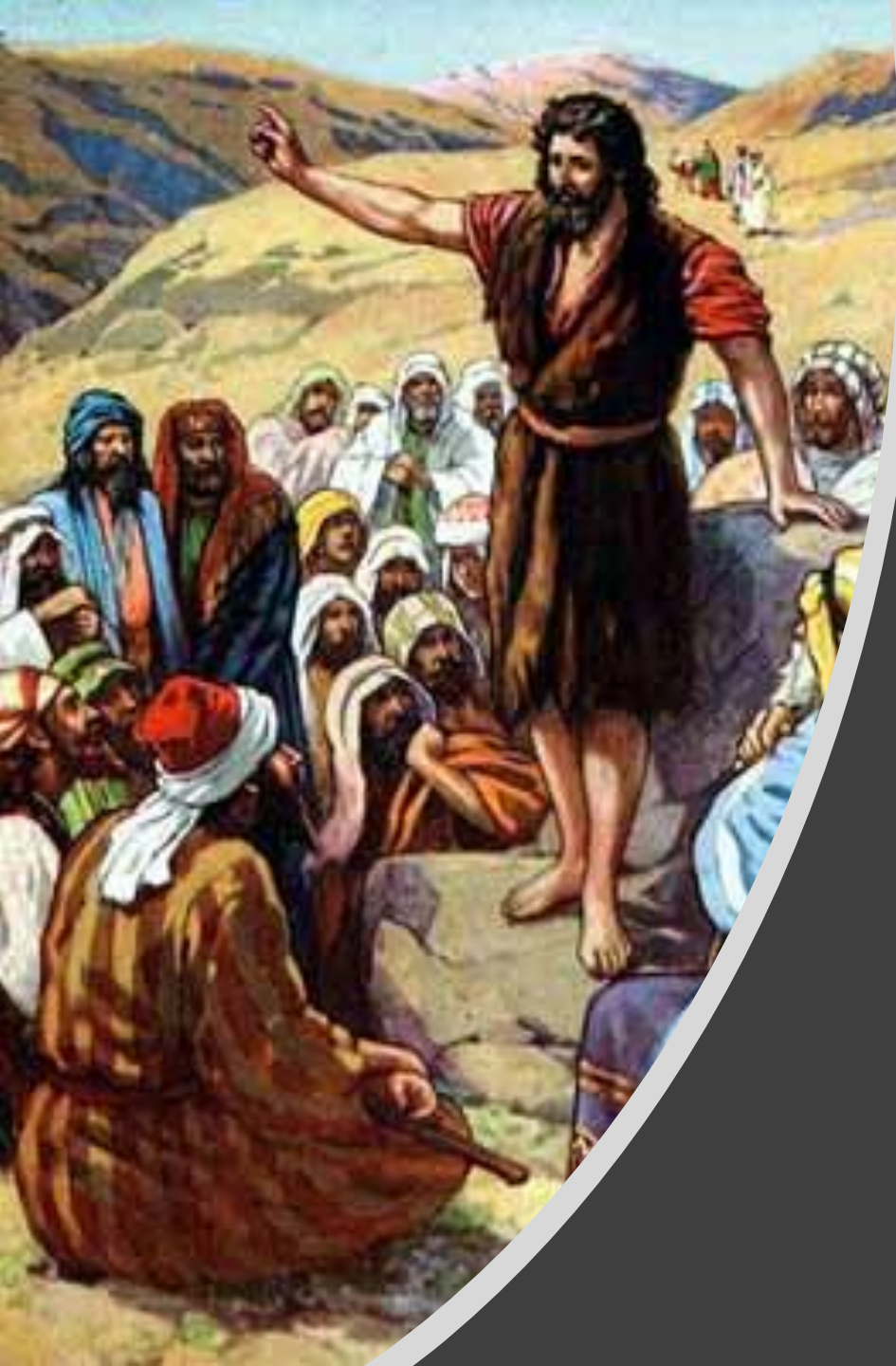
Jesus Joins Forces
with John the Baptist

The Background to this Event

- Even after Jesus had commenced His public ministry, John the Baptist had continued preaching in the Jordan Rift, calling upon the Jewish nation to acknowledge and accept this King who had now appeared and was Himself ministering in the land of Judea.
- Only this element of John's ministry had changed: he was no longer announcing a coming Messiah, but rather a present Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth.

The Crisis: John 3:25-26

25 Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification. **26** And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified, behold, He is baptizing and all are coming to Him."



John's Response

John 3:27-36

In the Strongest Terms Possible

- John insists that a greater than himself has come, and that, in his own words, “He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease.”
- This serves, effectively, as the “retirement” of John the Baptist in his ministry as the Forerunner to the Messiah.
- When John saw that his disciples were so thoroughly attached to him that they were offended by the greater popularity of the Messiah Himself, John knew that it was time for him to formally step aside.

Jesus Then Leaves for Galilee

- **Matthew 4:12** – “...He withdrew into Galilee”
- **Mark 1:14** – “...Jesus came into Galilee”
- **John 4:1** – “He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.”

But Why?

Reasons for Leaving

- **Matthew 4:12** – “Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody...”
- **Mark 1:14** – “Now after John had been taken into custody...”
- **John 4:1-2** – “Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John (although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were)”

And Notice the Route Taken

- John 4:3-4 –

“He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. And He had to pass through **Samaria.**”







John 4:5-42

John 4:5-6

5 So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph; **6** and Jacob's well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.



Understand the Antagonism

4:9 – Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

Given this dynamic, it is amazing and remarkable that Jesus would pass through Samaria at all, let alone engage in friendly conversation with a Samaritan woman.

Jesus' Approach

1. He ignited a hunger for spiritual things (10-15)
2. He made clear the seriousness of her moral condition (16-18)
3. He pointed out the utter folly of her current religious pursuits (19-24)
4. He pointed to Himself as the only answer to the needs and desires of her soul (25-26)

Two Very Important Sequels

1. Jesus deals with His disciples about the importance and delight of doing the Father's will (31-38)
2. The woman who had been converted became a witness to her townspeople (39-42).

John 4:43-45

43 After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee. **44** For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country. **45** So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.

It is at this Point...

- The Synoptics resume the account of Jesus' ministry.
- Jesus had spent 8-12 months in Judea, but only John's gospel records that period.
- Now the Lord returns to Galilee, there to commence an 18-month ministry of proclamation and demonstration.

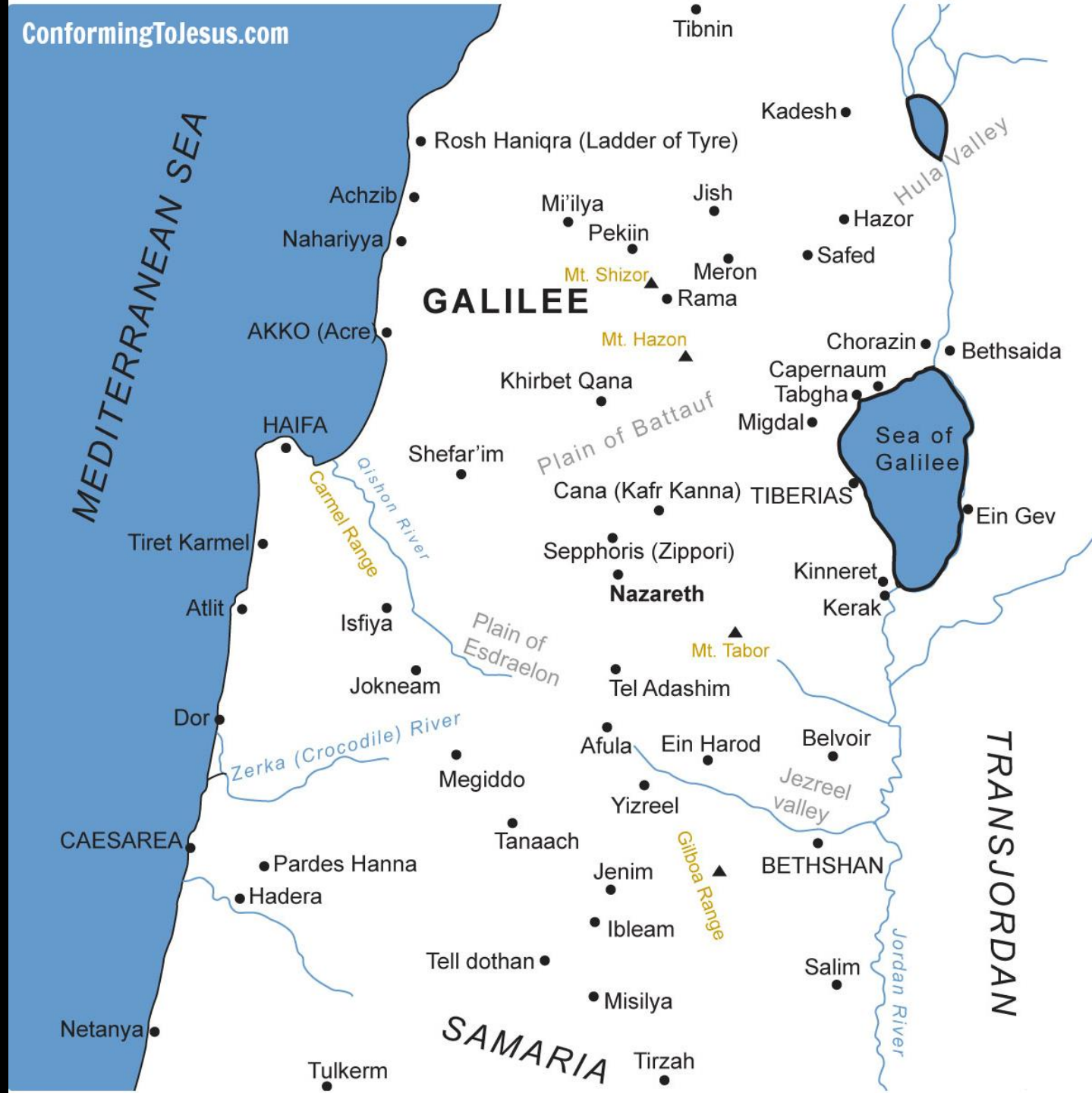
Overview of Galilean Ministry

- About 18 months
- Many of the well-known events of Jesus' ministry occur during this time.
- Notice as we progress:
 - the reaction of the nation to Jesus
 - the reaction of the leaders to Jesus

So, Why Galilee?

Two Discernible Reasons

1. Jesus had come to present Himself as Messiah to the nation of Israel (remember what He said to the Samaritan woman), and the greatest single concentration of Jews was in the land of Galilee.
2. The Galilean Jews were not as rigid and calloused in their self-righteousness and pride; they would be much more likely to be receptive to Jesus' offer of Himself, which was based upon the demand of genuine repentance.



The Land of Galilee

- **Geographically:** north of Judea, separated by the land of Samaria
- **Agriculturally:** much more productive than Judea.
- **Culturally:** the Judeans considered the Galileans very unsophisticated and unrefined, and had little but contempt for them.
- **Religiously:** Galilee had more Jews than Judea, but there were more Gentiles in the region, as well; so Galilee was not as rigorous in its observance of the Law and tradition, and as a result, the Judeans regarded the Galileans as rather impious.

The Galilean Ministry

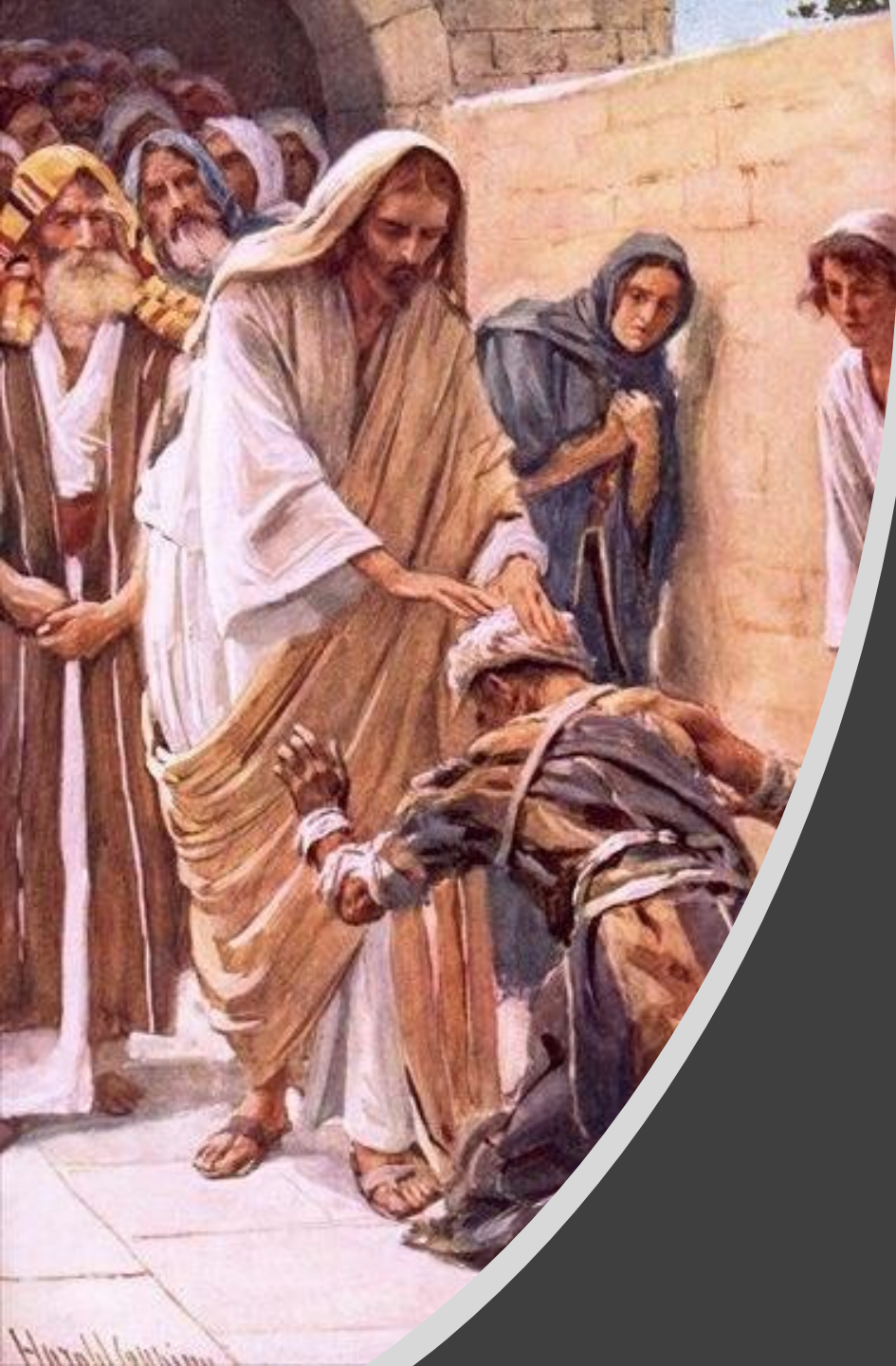
- Throughout this period, Jesus' "headquarters" was in Capernaum.
- His townspeople in Nazareth rejected both Him and His message very early.
 - There will be a final rejection at Nazareth on a later date, documented in Matthew 13:54-58 and Mark 6:1-6, where Jesus will marvel at their collective unbelief.



Luke 4:16-30

A Time of Great Miracles

- There were many sorts of miracles, but the most common were miracles of healing.
- The NT does not record all of the miracles of Jesus, but it does make it clear that He performed literally hundreds.
- The reaction to these miracles was spectacular, and the Gospelists make reference to this often.

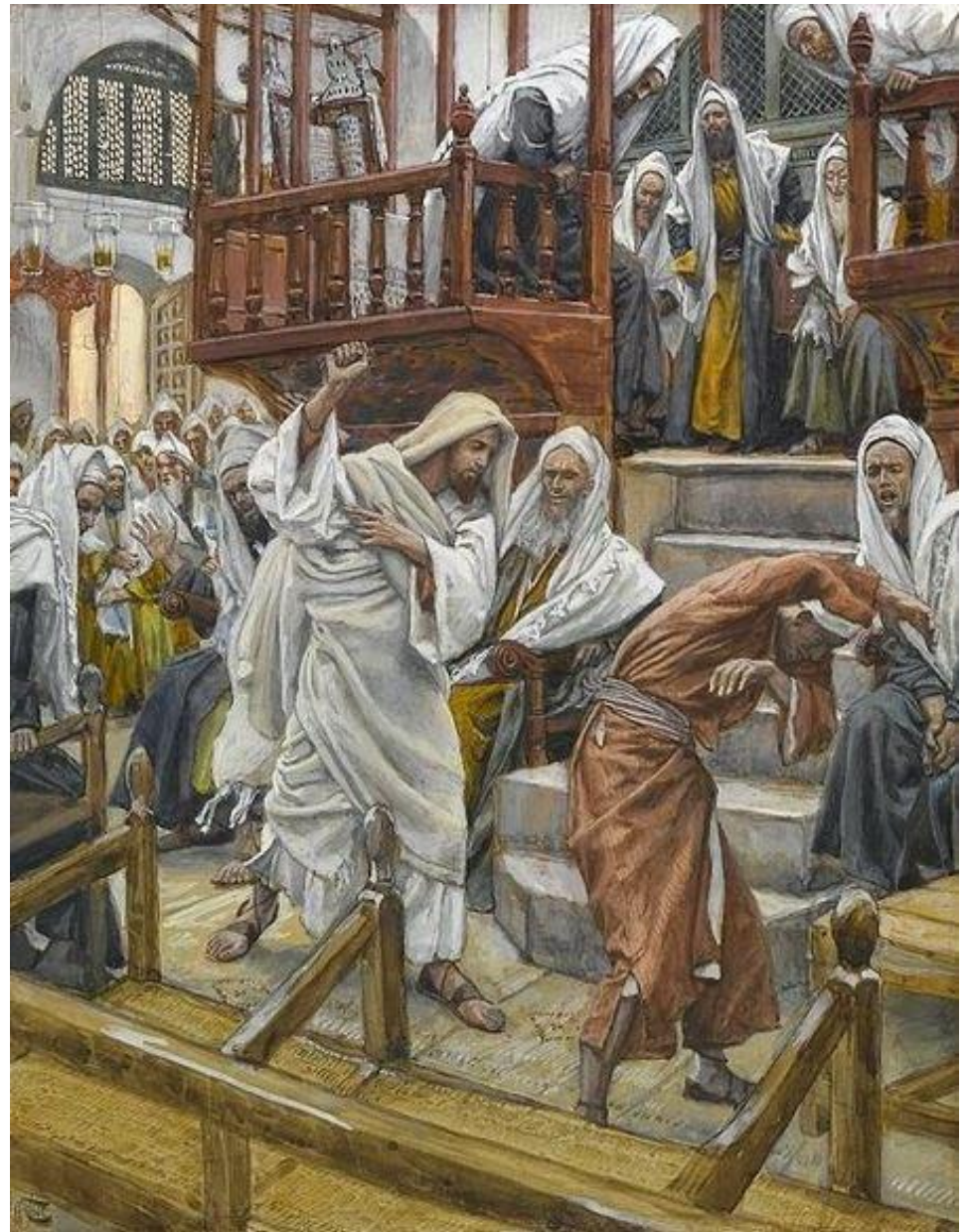


Mark 1:40-45

Mark 3:7-12



Luke 4:31-37





Luke 4:40-44

Remember:

The Purpose of these Miracles was to Vindicate the Claims of Jesus concerning Himself and His Ministry.

- Acts 2:22 –

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know”

Remember the Words of Nicodemus

**“Rabbi, we know that You
have come from God as a
teacher; for no one can do
these signs that You do
unless God is with him.”**

Next Week:
The Messiah Goes On Tour



