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**APOSTOLIC VERSE BY VERSE BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

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**REPENT: FOR THE KINGDOM**

**OF HEAVEN IS AT HAND**

**MATTHEW 4:12-25**

***Matthew 4:12 "Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;"***.

Jesus shifted His base of operations back to Galilee in the north, probably because of the threat posed by Herod Antipas who incarcerated John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-12). It was also a logical place for Jesus to begin the more aggressive phase of His ministry. Galilee was open, densely populated, and laced with roads that fostered its bustling commerce. We will see, here, that the end of John's work (proclaiming the coming of the Christ) would be the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Just as Jesus came not for those who already knew God, He began His ministry in a very spiritually dark place. Without Jesus Christ, there is no hope, nothing to look forward to. God's purpose in His beginning in the dark place was to show that His power and might were not drawn from Jewish law. This was a new day. Jew and Gentile alike would have to receive Him not through law, but through grace.

***Matthew 4:13 "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the seacoast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:"***

***Matthew 4:14 "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying," Matthew 4:15 "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, [by] the way of the sea, beyond***

***Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;"***

***Matthew 4:16 "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up."***

***Matthew 4:17 "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."***

Matthew indicates that Jesus’ relocation fulfilled Isaiah 9:1-2, which said that those living in darkness in Galilee would see a great light. This prophecy is also connected with the birth of the Child in Isaiah 9:6-7 and refers not to the restoration of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali after the exile but to the ultimate restoration of Israel in messianic days, aspects of which were beginning during Jesus’ ministry. That’s when Jesus’s public ministry officially began, and he preached in continuity with the kingdom message of John: Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near. Repent means “to change one’s mind (about the seriousness of one’s sins) and behavior.” It does not carry the primary sense of sorrow over sin, nor is it usually understood in the Gospels strictly as a mental adjustment. When John the Baptist preached repentance, he expected it to be accompanied by a change in behavior. Later on, we will hear Jesus say that He came not for those whoneed not a physician, but for the lost. It is very interesting, to me,that God would have Jesus come from Nazareth where it would be spoken(that "no good thing could come out of Nazareth".)The "sea", mentioned here, was the Sea of Galilee, a large rough sea where much fishing was going on. This sea had several towns scattered along the banks. Capernaum was where Peter's home was. Because of so widespread unbelief here, this city would be destroyed. Today it is a tourist sight. Walls are thrown down and rubble is everywhere. Many of the activities of Jesus took place near this sea. The demonic man was freed of the legion of demons near here, the feeding of the multitude took place here, the draft of the fishes was here. Even all the fantastic miracles that Jesus did here, was not enough to convince these people of who He was. A prophet is not accepted in his or her own area. Many of the Gentiles believed, but their Jewish friends already had the law, and felt they were not in need of a Saviour.

***Matthew 4:18 "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers."***

***Matthew 4:19 "And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."***

***Matthew 4:20 "And they straightway left [their] nets, and followed him."***

***Matthew 4:21 "And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James [the son] of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them."***

***Matthew 4:22 "And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him."***

In these verses we have the calling of the first disciples: Peter and his brother Andrew, and James and his brother John, the sons of Zebedee. All four men were fishermen. And when Jesus called them to follow him, he said, I will make you fish for people. There’s an important principle here. If you’re not fishing, you’re not following. If your Christian life does not involve evangelizing the lost, you’re not functioning like the disciple Jesus intends you to be. Evangelism includes sharing the gospel and intentionally seeking to convert the hearer to faith in Jesus Christ. When called, Peter, Andrew, James, and John immediately left their jobs and followed Jesus. It is unclear what other exposure to Jesus Peter and Andrew might have had before this call, but it is likely that there was some. Not every believer is called to a full-time Christian vocation, but every believer is called to be a full-time Christian. That means that following Christ must be your number one priority. Fishers of men, in contrast to their previous vocation, suggests that their role would be to help win people to the movement started by the Lord. Their response was immediate, but while Peter and Andrew left their nets, James and John left their father, implying a deeper sacrifice. This is the same message John the Baptist was preaching. This Sea of Galilee, as we said, was a popular place for the men in this area who made their living fishing. This sea is about six miles wide and seventeen miles long. When the wind would get up, it would be really rough; so rough that you could easily lose a ship and all aboard. These 3 verses tell us a lot about our Lord Jesus Christ while He walked on the earth. He spoke and these two men obeyed. These men, by vocation, were fishermen. When the call came for the ministry, they did not hesitate. We could take a real lesson from these men. So many times, when the call comes to the ministry, we hesitate and try to finish the job at hand before we answer. These men dropped everything and followed Jesus. This call, that Jesus made to these two men, was not for salvation, but to work with Him. They had to give up the comforts of home, and even the living they had, for an uncertain future of winning souls. This call brought them out of the worldly into the spiritual. These men were strong. It takes a lot of muscle to pull in fish nets full of fish. The name "Andrew" means manly, and "Peter" means rock. You can see by their names, that these men were powerful physically. Jesus was about to make strong spiritual men of them. They would face more hardships as ministers of the Word than they ever did as fishermen. These men were just ordinary men. They had no degrees in ministry, only the call of God upon their lives. These two were to become part of the elite 12 that would, through Jesus, make a giant impact upon the world.

***Matthew 4:23 "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people."***

Matthew 4:23 has a virtual twin in Matthew 9:35, with minor differences. This feature, called an inclusio, implies that Matthew intended the material between 4:23 and 9:35 to be read as a thematic whole.

***Matthew 9:35 “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”***

That primary theme is Jesus’ authority. In 4:23a, b, c, Jesus exercised His prophetic authority by His teaching and preaching. A grand example of this was the Sermon on the Mount, chapters 5–6–7. In 4:23d-24, Matthew reported that He showed His authority as He healed the people (see 8:9; 9:6, 8; 10:1), a theme developed through the nine miracles in chaps. 8 and 9.”

***Matthew 4:24 "And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them."***

Matthew tells us the hallmarks of Jesus ministry as he traveled throughout Galilee: teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. Teaching involves clearly articulating the content of the message. Preaching includes calling for a response to what is taught. Healing consists of a visible demonstration of the power of the message. Jesus was about the Father's business. He taught, preached, and healed in their churches and wherever people had needs. There were a number of little towns in Galilee. Many miracles were done in these cities. Jesus stated that if the miracles that were done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom, they would have repented and been saved. In Capernaum, they believed that Jesus was the carpenter's son, not the Son of God. The Bible says that if all the miracles that Jesus did were written in a book, there would not be enough books in the entire world to hold them. You can easily see how this fame would spread. Literally thousands were healed, freed from demon spirits, restored to sanity, and stopped shaking from the palsy. All these people had to do was to believe, and just one touch from Jesus' hand restored them. You can easily see that His powers were not limited. As we will see in verse 25, people from all areas, that were in traveling distance, brought their sick to Jesus and then carried the message back of His great powers. He not only healed the body, but the spirit, as well.

***Matthew 4:25 "And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and [from] Decapolis, and [from] Jerusalem, and [from] Judaea, and [from] beyond Jordan."***

As Jesus did these things, the news about him spread, and large crowds followed him. When he taught, preached, and healed, there was standing room only. We know of several occasions of over 5,000 people following Him. This was a great company of people. Where did they all disappear to when He was crucified?

**QUESTIONS**

1. What did Jesus hear had happened to John before He went into Galilee?
2. When John's ministry ended, what happened to Jesus' ministry?
3. Jesus' ministry beginning in a spiritually dark place, showed what?
4. Galilee was an area similar to what, here in America?
5. Capernaum was near what body of water?
6. The people, which sat in darkness, saw what?
7. What negative thing was spoken about Nazareth?
8. What was the main occupation of people around the Sea of Galilee?
9. Where was Peter's home?
10. Where is a prophet not accepted?
11. Why did the Jews believe they did not need a Saviour?
12. What two brothers did Jesus call to the ministry in verses l8-l9?
13. How big was the Sea of Galilee?
14. What occupation did Peter have?
15. What does the word "Andrew" mean?
16. Who were the two sons of Zebedee that Jesus called?
17. What special name was John called by?
18. What wish of James' and John's mother did Jesus not do?
19. Jesus went about Galilee doing what?
20. What four kinds of people were brought to Jesus for help?
21. How many books would it take to hold a list of Jesus' miracles?