

22 And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?" 23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'" 24 And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. 25 "But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; 26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian." 28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; 29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. 30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

This story, this event is both wonderful and frightening. It's wonderful to see Jesus in action. We've been waiting for that.

All through Luke's long introduction, proving without a shadow of any doubt the veracity of who Jesus is by all of the different 3rd party witnesses, on earth and in heaven, I can sense the desire to get to the meat of spending time with Jesus as He engages his people.

We've waited to get to this part, where He's moving amongst His people, with His disciples, in meat and potatoes ministry. That part is wonderful.

But the reaction of these folks in Nazareth is frightening. They have listened to His words, weighed the evidence, and arrived at dis-belief. How does that happen? We are awe struck looking at this story of rejection.

Because they didn't just reject Jesus, they rejected eternal joy with God, in sparkling white garments, sins forgiven, enjoying the glory of God forever. And every time someone does that we should be overwhelmed with the gravity of those realities.

Eternal joy, or eternal torment hang in the balance on this fulcrum, the axle that can swing either way, of belief or dis-belief. And we spoke 2 weeks ago about the sin of un-belief. The fact that the weight of the evidence makes unbelief purposeful and obstinate.

God will hold court on judgement day and these folks will say, we didn't have enough evidence to believe, and God will say, no, you had more evidence, My Son dwelt in your midst, you had mountains more evidence than all these with Me who had less, and yet believed.

Christians like to throw around the biblical idea of the unforgivable sin. Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. But if you study that, and we will, the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is to receive all of the evidence that the Spirit provides about the Son, all of the miracles, all of the teaching, the life lived, the death inflicted for our sins, and then the undeniable resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven, everything that happened surrounding Jesus, and decide to keep your sin, stay in darkness, come up with some bogus reason . . . not to believe.

In studying this passage this morning together, I want us to dig in and try to understand the mechanics of dis-belief. It's both fascinating, and frightening. Fascinating to consider the push and pull behind the scenes for each soul by Satan who hates us and God who loves us.

And frightening because we actually have so little control, in the process, for those we love. Jesus Himself couldn't change these peoples minds, and we must accept the fact that when we've done all we can, with the Holy Spirit's help, we are helpless also to cause belief in

someone we care about.

Paul explains this phenomenon to the christians at Corinth. In 2 Cor. 4:

3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

From that we must concur that there are people who are perishing. They're already in that process. They have heard the gospel. Clearly. But there was no connection. It's like the seed that fell on the pavement like hard ground and it just lays there. Nothing happens. Why? Next verse;

4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

People we love are perishing, because the gospel is veiled, they don't receive it or understand it, and the further reason for that, the cause; is blindness. Satan the accuser, who hates them and hates God, blinds their eyes so that the gospel is veiled. Not received. DOA. Dead on arrival.

The unforgivable sin is to die . . . in that condition. Jesus explains to the jews in John 8;

23 Then He told them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 That is why I told you that you would die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

In Proverbs 8:36 there are these terrifying words . . . *all they that hate me love death*. That's really the bottom line in it's simplest form. We are born dead. Born separated from God because of sin. And we love it. We love our sin. We love . . . death. We've made our choice. We love sin and our current condition, which is death, spiritual separation from

God. *all they that hate me love death.* Sinners love their sin and hate God.

These are terrifying truths, because eternity hangs in the balance. So then, we need to begin by **reviewing** what Jesus has just said that causes their reaction of unbelief, and murderous intent.

Luke 4: 16 *And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,*

*18 “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO
THE POOR.*

*HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE
CAPTIVES,*

*AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,*

19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

*20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, “**Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.**”*

He has just told them that He is, in fact, the person who the prophet spoke of, and they understood that He has just claimed to be the Messiah.

And the first reaction is, all the ladies are swooning. Even in the basest of people, there is a human reaction to the power of a good speaker. A powerful speaker gets an affect.

We loved to listen to Mr. Obama. Because even if he was saying something wrong, he did so wonderfully. He had the charisma, the intelligence, the twinkle in the eye and the beauty of the words. There is power in that.

Not my gift. I have to read from my carefully studied and written manuscript, and depend on the Holy Spirit to cause any affect. But many people have the gift of charismatic powerful speaking. And Jesus certainly did.

In John 7 when the chief priests sent officers to seize Jesus and they came back empty handed, the pharisees asked them why? Why didn't you seize Him and bring Him to us. And their answer is classic. They said, "*Never a man spake like this man.*" No one ever spoke with such power as Jesus did. They couldn't do it. Just the power of His speaking . . . dis-armed them.

That's the immediate reaction in vs. 22 *And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips;*

This is Jesus Josephson. Who knew He could speak publicly. And so beautifully. His words fall graciously from his lips. He was mesmerizing to listen to. Wow, who knew. He never had much to say before. This guy can SPEAK.

That's the first reaction. Unarguable. You get swept up in the power of an effectual speaker.

When I used to go to Grace Church in the 1970's as a kid, John MacArthur was in his first decade as pastor teacher there, and people would come up to him all the time and say, Why are you wasting time doing this? You've got the gift man. You could make real money with this gift of powerful speaking you have.

And he would say, the prophet of God trumps being king. Why would I be king, if God has given me the higher calling of speaking His truth with power. That trumps everything.

Jesus had that going on. And that's the first reaction. WOW! What power and grace this man has. We could listen to Him all day long, just because it's mesmerizing.

But then the bubble has to pop. But?? Did He just claim to be the person Isaiah spoke of? That would be Messiah. And this is Jesus Josephson. He grew up here. We know His mother and His brothers and sisters. Nice family. But messiah?

I don't know what their idiom was, but in our slang, we say "that dog won't hunt". That's what they're going to say next. 22b *and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

This isn't adding up. Messiah? Joseph's son Messiah? I don't think so. That dog won't hunt.

So the initial reaction is questioned by the ubiquitous pundits. We always have those guys, don't we. As soon as someone gets done speaking, the pundits pipe up.

These days you can choose your pundits. If you want to believe the President you turn on Fox news. If you don't want to believe, you turn on CNN. We get to choose our pundits.

In Nazareth the pundits say He speaks awesome. And the other pundits say, Yeah, he does, but he's just Jesus Josephson. He just claimed to be the Messiah. He's just a local boy. He talks powerfully, but we know better. Messiah doesn't come from a poor carpenters family in dog's breath Israel. Nazareth was a hick town. They knew that.

But did anyone consider to check Joseph's genealogy? Mary's genealogy. Joseph would have been in the direct line to be King if that whole deal had survived the Babylonian captivity.

No more kings, but if there were, Joseph is the first in line. He may live in Nazareth and barely survive as a carpenter but he and Mary are heir apparent if anyone cared to check. Prince and princess. Next in the Davidic line to be king.

And did anyone ask Mary about those rumors 30 years ago that Jesus was virgin born, conceived by the Holy Spirit in her. He isn't Joseph's son. He's God's son, if anyone cared to check. They did not. Unbelief doesn't like to be confused by inconvenient facts. *and they were saying, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

23 And He said to them, "No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.'"

Physician heal yourself. That was *their* idiom. You claim to be a physician, but you can't seem to make yourself well. Why should we believe you're a physician if you can't even heal yourself first.

It's like the doctor who told you to quit smoking and as you pull out of the parking lot after your appointment, he's standing outside the back door of the office, smoking.

Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well

The news about what He's done in Capernaum beat Him to Nazareth. They heard about the miracles. He healed everyone in town. Of everything.

So basically they're saying. Joseph's son ain't no Messiah, but we'd love to see the tricks. You want us to believe you're Messiah, that dog won't run, but you should at least do the same tricks here as you did in Capernaum.

The root problem with that is, tricks don't make anyone believe anything they've made up their minds they won't believe.

We'll get to Luke 16, one of these years. But Jesus discusses this very phenomenon of miracles and belief. You'll recall the story of the rich man and Lazarus the begger.

The rich man is in hell, or hades, as it were, in torment, and Lazarus is with Abraham in glory. And the rich man in his torment says, I have 5 brothers, since there's no hope now for me, can you please send Lazarus to warn my brothers who are still alive.

Luke 16:27 'Then I beg you, father,' he said, 'send Lazarus to my father's house, 28 for I have five brothers. Let him warn them so they will not also end up in this place of torment.'

29 But Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the prophets; let your brothers listen to them.'

30 'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone is sent to them from the dead, they will repent.'

31 Then Abraham said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.'"

God has given us His revealed truth in a book. If unbelief prevails after the written word is known, miracles won't change anything. Even someone rising from the dead, which happened, with many reliable witnesses, if someone loves death and sin, miracles won't change a thing.

And in fact we saw in Mark 6 that in Nazareth, because of their unbelief, the Holy Spirit withheld miracles. Jesus couldn't do miracles there . . . because of this very unbelief.

God responds to unbelief with a spiral downward. And then Jesus, after giving them the best news ever, the uncursing of the Genesis 3 curse, the Messiah is in your midst to restore sight and health and life, spiritually, to release you from your captivity, the sin that has held you captive, that was the offer.

Disbelief followed, and then the downward spiral starts, and the magnificent news is going to be replaced with some desperately bad news. Horrible news. Worse than the original curse news.

24 And He said, "Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. 25 "But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; 26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 "And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian."

Jesus reminds them of two other times when Israel was so hard headed and hard hearted in their sin and unbelief that God took His prophets and His miracles outside of Israel to the gentiles.

This is fascinating and frightening. Two other prophets who were rejected by Israel, and the gentiles got the blessings. That's what God will do to Nazareth because of hard hearted dis-belief. It's like they went from heaven offered; to hell realized in one fell swoop. Do not pass go. Go directly to jail.

That's what unbelief causes. God will take the good stuff away from you

and give it to someone outside your little clubhouse. Someone you hate gets the goodies. You get hell.

We have time this morning and I want to look at the two examples Jesus used here. They asked for miracles. Jesus says, Oh yeah, there WILL be miracles, but like in the two stories he refers to, the benefits won't come to you, they'll go to someone else, outside your nation, some gentile will get to see the miracles while you wallow in your unbelief.

Elijah and Elisha were prophets who both saw powerful miracles. God uses miracles in times of great movement with His chosen people. Moses did many miracles as God delivered His people Israel from Egypt. They confirm that God is doing something new.

In Elijah and Elisha's case, the nation is moving from a time during the period of the Judges, where every man did what was right in his own eyes, to a time of Prophetic revelation from God.

Moses was new revelation. The Prophets were new revelation. Jesus is new revelation, and the miracles He will do far overshadow anything seen previously.

Once the written revelation, this book, the completed canon of God spoken scripture is closed, miracles are over. The next time real miracles will be seen is when Anti-christ does miracles that lead the whole world astray into perdition.

First case study: Elijah.

25 "But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; 26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

This is from 1Kings 17 and the context is that God is going to punish King Ahab, the most wicked king of Israel, with a devastating drought.

1 Now Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the settlers of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, surely there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word."

Elijah has the miraculous powers given to Him by God, to carry out the plan of God to punish unfaithful Israel by turning off the rain and the dew. Totally. And Elijah says it's controlled by his words.

That could tend to cause you a problem, if you're the prophet who holds the magic words that can turn the rain off. Or on. That could be a problem for you. So ;

2 The word of the LORD came to him, saying, 3 "Go away from here and turn eastward, and hide yourself by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 4 "It shall be that you will drink of the brook, and I have commanded the ravens to provide for you there."

God says, you go hide east of the Jordan by the brook Cherith and I'll command the ravens to feed you. First miracle, the rain gets shut off. Second miracle, Ravens bring you bread and meat, morning and evening, daily.

Perhaps I should have more respect for Ravens. They make a mess on my cameras out at work and I tend to dis-like them. Rather intensely. But when God commands Ravens to do His bidding, they obey Him, perfectly. He has far less trouble with Ravens than with people.

5 So he went and did according to the word of the LORD, for he went and lived by the brook Cherith, which is east of the Jordan. 6 The ravens

brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he would drink from the brook. 7 It happened after a while that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

The brook Cherith dries up. New plan, and this is the story Jesus refers to, the rest was just interesting background.

8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, 9 “Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and stay there; behold, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you.” 10 So he arose and went to Zarephath, and when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks; and he called to her and said, “Please get me a little water in a jar, that I may drink.” 11 As she was going to get it, he called to her and said, “Please bring me a piece of bread in your hand.” 12 But she said, “As the LORD your God lives, I have no bread, only a handful of flour in the bowl and a little oil in the jar; and behold, I am gathering a few sticks that I may go in and prepare for me and my son, that we may eat it and die.” 13 Then Elijah said to her, “Do not fear; go, do as you have said, but make me a little bread cake from it first and bring it out to me, and afterward you may make one for yourself and for your son. 14 “For thus says the LORD God of Israel, ‘The bowl of flour shall not be exhausted, nor shall the jar of oil be empty, until the day that the LORD sends rain on the face of the earth.’” 15 So she went and did according to the word of Elijah, and she and he and her household ate for many days. 16 The bowl of flour was not exhausted nor did the jar of oil become empty, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke through Elijah.

Zarephath is in the region of Sidon. Up the coast of the Mediterranean, north of Israel. Outside of Israel. Gentile territory north of the promised land. These folks were the enemies of Israel.

But Elijah goes up there and the drought lasts 42 months. Israel suffers for their sin and idolatry, but meanwhile, the prophet whose word can

begin and end the trouble, is dining with a widow up in Zarephath. Her jar of oil and bowl of flour never runs out, all those months. God miraculously replaces the oil and the flour for many months.

A gentile gets the blessing and the miracles while Israel goes without. That's Jesus point, and they hear Him loud and clear.

Next, Elisha: 27 *“And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.”*

The story of Naaman the Syrian. Also Israel's enemies. In fact it's a little slave girl stolen from Israel that brings the blessing of the God of Israel to Naaman. 2 Kings 5:

*1 Now Naaman, captain of the army of the king of Aram, was a great man with his master, and highly respected, because by him **the LORD** had given victory to Aram. The man was also a valiant warrior, but he was a leper. 2 Now the Arameans had gone out in bands and had taken captive a little girl from the land of Israel; and she waited on Naaman's wife. 3 She said to her mistress, “I wish that my master were with the prophet who is in Samaria! Then he would cure him of his leprosy.” 4 Naaman went in and told his master, saying, “Thus and thus spoke the girl who is from the land of Israel.” 5 Then the king of Aram said, “Go now, and I will send a letter to the king of Israel.” He departed and took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand shekels of gold and ten changes of clothes.*

That's about 150 pounds of gold and 750 pounds of silver. Add that value up. Such was the value of Naaman to this king of Aram.

6 He brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, “And now as this letter comes to you, behold, I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy.” 7 When the king of Israel read

the letter, he tore his clothes and said, “Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man is sending word to me to cure a man of his leprosy? But consider now, and see how he is seeking a quarrel against me.”

The king of Israel tears his clothes because he's thinking, this king of Syria asks me to do something impossible, and sends the impossible price, and when I can't do it, he's going to go to war with us! He wants a war.

8 It happened when Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his clothes, that he sent word to the king, saying, “Why have you torn your clothes? Now let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.”

That sounds a little boastful, but the idea is that a prophet can't do anything unless a powerful God is doing it through him. Send him down here and he'll see God do mighty things.

9 So Naaman came with his horses and his chariots and stood at the doorway of the house of Elisha. 10 Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh will be restored to you and you will be clean.”

Elisha doesn't even go to the door. He sends a messenger. The butler goes back and tells Naaman what to do. Elisha doesn't consider the mighty man and all his money important enough to go to the door himself.

11 But Naaman was furious and went away and said, “Behold, I thought, ‘He will surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place and cure the leper.’”

Low church ~ high church. Why is it that the farther people are from

God the easier they accept high church. Low church is; go baptize yourself seven times in the Jordan. High church would be to come out in white jeweled robes with a funny hat and a pot and a stick and make a good show of waving your wand around and calling God down to do this mighty thing for this mighty man. Naaman continues his rant . . . :

12 “Are not Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. 13 Then his servants came near and spoke to him and said, “My father, had the prophet told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean’?” 14 So he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child and he was clean.

Jesus point is, there were lots of lepers in Israel, but God allowed a little girl, a precious little girl to be in the household of some warrior from an enemy country, and he gets cured, not anyone in Israel.

Why is that? I said we needed to get to the mechanics of belief and unbelief. Of blessing and cursing. How does this work.

Fair warning. At first, you won't like the answer. Then gradually you will discover the answer I'm going to try to give you, is very wonderful.

Let's go back to the words of Isaiah that Jesus quoted before He claimed He owned them.

*18 “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME,
BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO
THE POOR.
HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE
CAPTIVES,*

*AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,
TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED,*

19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD

First, He is speaking on a spiritual plane, not a physical one. These claims are true of a war between God and Satan. A spiritual war.

Satan has taken spiritual captives. Because of sin, souls are bankrupt. Destitute. These are the poor Jesus is speaking of, not physically poor people. You can be Donald Trump and be just as bankrupt as the drunk in the gutter. This is spiritual bankruptcy. The result of sin.

And He is talking about spiritual blindness. Satan brought sin to Adam and Eve and all of their children. Sin caused captivity, oppression, bankruptcy, and blindness, in the spiritual realm.

If we were going to try to rank these things in the order necessary for people to respond to the good news, which one would come first in order.

Blindness. Blindness. No one is going to know they are bankrupt and captive in oppressive bondage who is blind. No one responds if blindness doesn't let light in.

Who is it that brings recovery of sight to the blind. Messiah does. God does. And unless that happens, none of the other things takes place. Spiritually dead people are blind. They cannot respond, of themselves. Dead people don't make themselves alive. Blind people don't open their own eyes.

Why did the people in Nazareth respond first in dis-belief, and then quickly, as we will see, in anger. Because they couldn't see the Messiah standing in their midst, sitting in their midst. They were blind to Him.

Here's the part you won't like. Jesus is the one who opens spiritually blind eyes. The reason these folks didn't see Him in Nazareth because of their spiritual blindness, and we're sitting here this morning instead, a bunch of pagan gentiles who hopefully were awakened spiritually, who received spiritual sight, is because of the sovereignty of God.

God chooses. He selects whose eyes will be opened. Sovereign choice. He is a sovereign king who chooses who He wills, and leaves the blindness intact on those who are perishing in dis-belief.

Isaiah says Messiah will come and open the eyes of the blind. But most people will remain blind, and dead, and oppressed, and captive. Sovereign God chooses who He wills, and to our poor tiny minds, it's impossible to understand.

The reason a horrible syrian captain of armies who has been raiding Israel steaing human slaves gets healed instead of anyone in Israel is because sovereign God chose to do that for His own glory.

The reason some widow in Sidon gets a meal ticket in a drought is because God sovereignly chose her for that blessing. He doesn't tell us why. And the reason the good people of Nazareth remained blind and God sent the gospel to the gentiles is because He sovereignly chose to leave their eyes blind and to open mine so I could see Him.

He tells Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*. God is sovereign over everything. Who gets to sovereignly choose who will stay blind, and who gets to see. He doesn't tell us why He chooses one person and leaves another person in their sin.

The reason is; ***I am that I am***. He doesn't have to explain Himself. He has told us that He is righteous altogether and that He loves everyone, and that who-so-ever will may come. We can't understand the rest, and

our minds are troubled trying to sort it.

Believe He is righteous. Leave the rest to Him. He knows what He's doing. He is the mighty King. Pray for those you love who do not know Him, whose eyes are still blind. We did that for folks last night. It's our only resource. God, please, open their eyes. Remove the veil.

So then, Jesus has just illustrated that He is Messiah and because of their hard hearted dis-belief the benefits of Messiah will be given to gentiles. Did they understand? Yes, perfectly. Did they repent? No, mob violence ensued.

28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; 29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff.

Their response was to murder Him and they would have accomplished it. That day! Except for the single miracle they did get to witness.

30 But passing through their midst, He went His way.

They were doing their best to throw Him over a cliff, and He said "freeze" and they stopped frozen in time while Jesus walked away right through the middle of the mob. Or at least, that's how I picture it.

However it happened, it was a miraculous deliverance from a murderous mob. This time. In God's perfect sovereign timing though, He *will* be delivered up to a mob and murdered.

In my place. For my sins. And yours. The angel in the book of Revelation says "who-so-ever will may come". The doors are wide open for anyone to believe. Messiah has come to break us free from our oppressive captor. Sin has been paid for.