

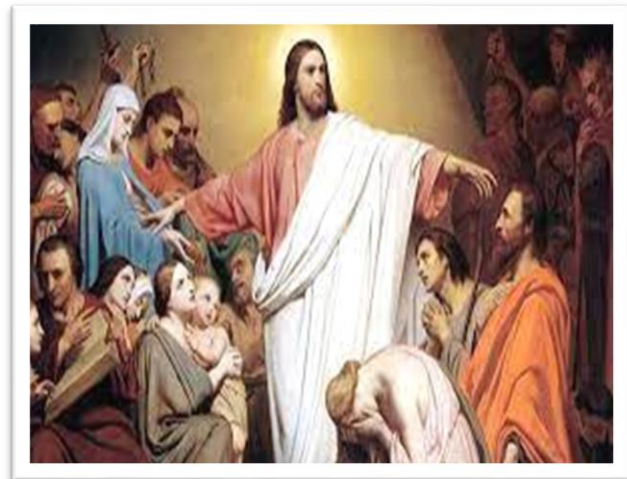
## **Jesus in Gathopher, Kisloth, and Nazareth**

Next morning Jesus approached Gathopher. The schoolmasters and Pharisees came out to meet Him and bid Him welcome, though making all kinds of remonstrances, and imploring Him not to disturb the peace of their city. They especially insisted upon His discountenancing the crowding around Him and clamoring of women and children. He might, they said, teach quietly in their

synagogue, but public disturbance they did not want to see. Jesus replied in grave and severe words that it was precisely for those that cried after Him, longed for Him, that He had come, and He reproached them for their dissimulation. The Pharisees had, in fact, on hearing that Jesus was coming, issued an order that the women should not appear on the streets with their children nor should they go to meet the Nazarene with clamorous greeting.

The cry of "Son of God," "Christ," was, they said, positively preposterous and scandalous, since everyone in this part of the country knew full well whence Jesus came, who were His parents, and who His brethren. The sick might assemble in front of the synagogue and allow themselves to be cured, but noise and excitement would not be tolerated. Such were the directions given by the Pharisees, who had likewise arranged the sick around the synagogue as they thought proper, just as if it were theirs by right to order Jesus' actions. When, however, they reached the city with Jesus, to their intense chagrin they beheld the streets filled with mothers surrounded by their little ones, and some with infants in their arms. The children were stretching out their hands to Jesus and crying: "Jesus of Nazareth! Son of David! Son of God!

Holiest of Prophets!" The Pharisees tried to drive the women and children back, but all in vain. They came pouring out of the neighboring streets and houses, while the Pharisees, eaten with vexation, withdrew from Jesus' escort. The disciples too, who were surrounding Jesus, were somewhat timorous and frightened. They would have desired a less demonstrative entrance into the city, one attended by less danger, and so they remonstrated with Jesus while attempting to drive the children back. But Jesus reproached them with their faint-heartedness. He restrained them, allowed the children



to press around Him, and showed Himself all love and affection for them. And thus they proceeded to the court before the synagogue amid the uninterrupted shouts of the little ones: "Jesus of Nazareth! Holiest of Prophets!" Even the sucklings that never yet had spoken, cried out after Him.

They were witnesses to Jesus. They bore convincing testimony before all the people. In front of the synagogue the children halted, the boys on one side, the girls on the other, the mothers with their infants in the rear. Jesus blessed the children and addressed some words of instruction to the mothers and their domestics who likewise had made their way thither. He said to the mothers that they should regard these last as their children. He spoke to the disciples also of the high value God sets on the child. The Pharisees were annoyed at these delays, and the sick were impatient for their cure. At last Jesus went to the latter, cured many of them, and then entered the synagogue, where He taught about the Patriarch Joseph. During His discourse He took occasion to return to the dignity of children. Jesus did so because the Pharisees were complaining of what they called When Jesus was leaving the synagogue, three women presented themselves before Him, requesting a private interview. When He withdrew with them from the crowd, they cast themselves on their knees before Him, and made their laments over their husbands, whom they begged Jesus to help. Their husbands, they said, were tormented by evil spirits, by whom they themselves were sometimes

attacked. They had heard, they said, that He had helped Magdalen, and they hoped that He would likewise have pity on them. Jesus promised to visit their homes. He went first, however, with His disciples to the house of a certain Simeon, a simple-hearted man belonging to the married Essenians. He was of middle age and the son of a Pharisee of Dabereh on Thabor. Jesus and the disciples partook, in this house, of refreshments standing. Simeon was desirous of bestowing all his goods upon the Community, and he spoke with Jesus to that effect.

On leaving Simeon's Jesus went as He had promised to the homes of the women, and had an interview with them and their husbands. Affairs were not just as the wives had stated, for they had thrown upon their husbands the blame of which they were themselves deserving. Jesus exhorted both parties to live in harmony, to pray, to fast, and to give alms. After the Sabbath these infirm women followed Jesus to a mountain a little to the north of

Thabor where He was going to deliver a discourse. He did not remain long there, He went southward toward Kisloth, which city the holy women passed on their road to Naim, Magdalen also, when journeying with her party. On the way Jesus again instructed the Apostles upon what was in store for them. He told them how they should behave when they arrived in Judea, where they would not be so well received. He gave them new directions as to their conduct, also for the imposition of hands and the driving out of the demon, and as an additional source of strength and increase of grace, He again conferred upon them His benediction.

Three youths from Egypt came to Jesus in this place. He received them as disciples, though picturing to them at the same time the hardships that awaited them. One was named Cyrinus. They had been playmates of Jesus in Egypt, and they were now about thirty years old. Their parents had ever revered the dwelling and the fountain used by the Holy Family as sacred memorials. The young men had visited Bethlehem and Bethania, and had gone to Dothain, to see Mary, to whom they delivered their parents' greeting.

Some Pharisees of Nazareth came to Jesus at Kisloth to invite Him to His native city. Those Pharisees who, on a former occasion, wanted to hurl Him from the rock, were no longer in Nazareth. The envoys told Jesus that He ought to go to His native city and there exhibit some of His signs and wonders. The people, they said, were eager to hear His doctrine; then too He could cure His fellow countrymen that were sick. But they laid down as a condition that He would not heal on the Sabbath day. Jesus replied that He would go and keep the Sabbath with them. He warned them, however, that they would be scandalized on His account, and as to the cures, He would condescend to their desires even if it proved to their own detriment. Upon receiving this answer, the Pharisees returned to Nazareth, whither Jesus soon followed with His disciples, whom He instructed on the way. It was noon when they arrived. Many from curiosity, others really well intentioned people, came forth from the city to meet Him.

They washed the feet of the newcomers and offered them some refreshments. Jesus had two disciples from Nazareth, Parmenas and Jonadab. With the widowed mother of the latter, Jesus and His companions took up their quarters. These disciples had been friends of Jesus in early youth, and

had accompanied Him on His first journey to Hebron after Joseph's death. He now employed them frequently in discharging commissions and errands of all kinds.

Jesus went to some sick who had implored His assistance. He knew that they believed in Him and had need of His aid. But He passed by many who wanted only to test His power or who, under the pretence of a cure, were desirous only of getting a sight of Him. An Essenian youth, paralyzed on one side from his birth, was brought to Him. He implored Jesus to cure him, and He did so on the street, as also two blind men. Then He entered certain houses wherein He cured many aged sick people, men and women. Some of them were afflicted with dropsy in its worst form; one woman in particular was frightfully swollen. Jesus cured, altogether, fifteen people.<sup>1</sup>

After that He went to the synagogue where also some sick were gathered; but He passed without curing them, and celebrated the Sabbath without interruption. The reading for this Sabbath was about God's speaking to Moses in Egypt, also some chapters from Ezechiel.

Next morning Jesus again taught in the synagogue, but healed no one. At noon I saw Him walking with the disciples and some good people on the road between Nazareth and Sephoris. They entered one of the neighboring villages, as was usual on the Sabbath. The road from Nazareth to Sephoris extended toward the north and was tolerably level, but when within about a quarter of an hour from the latter place, it began to rise. I saw Jesus on this road instructing separate groups of people. The members of some households in which reigned strife and disunion cast themselves at His feet.

He made peace between man and wife and reconciled neighbors, but performed no cures. The two young men who had so often desired to be received among the disciples met Jesus on this road. He asked them again whether they were willing to forsake home and parents, distribute their goods to the poor, obey blindly, and suffer persecution for His sake. Their only answer was a shrug of the shoulders as they turned away.

When returned to Nazareth, Jesus visited His parents' house. It was in perfect order, but unoccupied. He visited likewise Mary's elder sister, the mother of Mary Cleophas, who took care of the house, though she did not live in it.

Jesus then went with the disciples to the synagogue, preached in sharp and severe terms, called God His Heavenly Father, pronounced judgment upon Jerusalem and upon all that would not follow Him, openly addressed His

disciples, alluded to the persecution that awaited them, and exhorted them to fidelity and perseverance. When the Pharisees found that He did not intend to remain and that He would perform no more cures in Nazareth, they began to give utterance to their vexation, and to ask, first this one, then that one: "Who is He, then? Who does He pretend to be? Where did He get His learning? Is He not of Nazareth? His father was the carpenter. His relatives, His brothers and sisters-all belong here?" By these last words, they meant Anne's elder daughter, Mary Heli and her sons James, Heliachim, and Sadoch, all disciples of John, Mary Cleophas and her sons and daughters. Jesus made them no answer, but went on quietly instructing His disciples.

Then another Pharisee, a stranger from the region of Sephoris, more insolent than the rest, cried out: "Who, then, art Thou? Hast Thou forgotten that only some years before Thy father's death, Thou didst help him to put up partitions in my house?" Still Jesus deigned no answer. Then the Pharisees all began to shout: "Answer! Is it good manners not to answer an honorable man?" At these words, Jesus addressed His bold questioner in terms like the following: "I did indeed work on wood belonging to thee. At the same time I cast a glance upon thee, and I grieved at not being able to free thee from the hard rind of thine own heart. Thou hast now proved thyself to be what I then suspected. Thou shalt have no part in My Kingdom, although I have helped thee to build up thy dwelling place upon earth." Jesus said likewise that nowhere was a Prophet without honor, excepting in his own city, in his own house, among his own relatives.

But what especially irritated the Pharisees were Jesus' words to His disciples; for instance, "I send ye as lambs among wolves"; "Sodom and Gomorrha will be less severely condemned on the last day than they that refuse to receive you"; "I am not come to bring peace, but the sword."

The close of the Sabbath found many waiting to be healed, but, to the great vexation of the Pharisees, Jesus cured none. Some of the people, imitating the insolence of the Pharisees in the synagogue, cried out to Jesus: "Don't you remember this? Don't you remember that?" And they recalled circumstances in which they had formerly seen Him. The Pharisees remarked to Him that this time He had come with fewer followers than on the preceding occasion, and they inquired whether He was not again going to take up His quarters among the Essenians. As a general thing, the Essenians did not much frequent Jesus' public instructions, and He rarely spoke of

**them. The enlightened among them at a later period joined the Community. They never opposed His doctrine, but looked upon Jesus as the Son of God.**

**Jesus did, in effect, again visit those Essenians with whom He had been the last time He was in Nazareth. He and the disciples took with them a light repast, after which He taught during a part of the night. Toward ten o'clock, Peter, Matthew and James the Greater returned from the Apostles in Upper Galilee. They had left the rest in the region around Seleucia to the east of Lake Merom. Andrew, Thomas and Saturnin, who had lately arrived, and another Apostle, immediately started to replace those just come.**

**Jesus left Nazareth that night with His followers. He journeyed about two hours toward Tabor to the little place where recently, on His return to Capharnaum after raising the youth of Naim, He had cured the leprous property holder. An instruction had been announced for the following day, which was to be delivered on a height southwest of Tabor, about half an hour from the mountain itself. Jesus stopped again with the schoolmaster of the place. The latter, counting upon Jesus' coming, had received many sick into his house. Jesus restored speech to one dumb. The boy that had so cleverly delivered to Jesus the message sent by his leprous master was among the schoolmaster's pupils. Jesus spoke to him. His name was Samuel, and he afterward became a disciple**