

Intro Jan 26

The basic unifying theme is that **Light** will dispel the **Darkness**. XT is the **Light**. We are called to bring **Light** to the Gentiles, who up till now have lived in **darkness**.

Seems like there are a lot of people today still living in darkness.

ISAIAH announces that the area around the Sea of Galilee—up till now in darkness—have seen a great light. Pagans + bad Jews = **darkness**. Jews and Gentiles will rejoice in the **LIGHT—of XT!** I include a link to Handel’s Messiah “The People that Dwell in Darkness”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liLJC6p3sjM>

he sings these first 5 lines:

*First the LORD degraded the land of Zebulun
and the land of Naphtali;
but in the end he has glorified the seaward road,
the land west of the Jordan,

the District of the Gentiles.*

then the next 6

*Anguish has taken wing, dispelled is darkness:
for there is no gloom where but now there was
The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom
a light has shone.*

{Handel in His Messiah has captured the essential theological points with the passages he picked.}

The GOSPEL has Jesus leaving Judah, the Southern Kingdom, ruled by Herod, because Herod has thrown JohnBap into prison (and does kill him). So Jesus goes to Galilee, ruled by Herod’s brother. To the Old town of Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. Again MATT quotes Isaiah to show that Jesus fulfills the prophets. Matt’s quote from Isaiah’s words HERE are not exactly identical to Isaiah’s words (above). That is because a definitive TEXT had not been established; and people learned it orally—not by READING—yet every Jew knew the ESSENTIAL words of Isaiah.

In Capernaum there lives a fisherman, Simon Peter! fishing with his brother. So XT chooses simple Fishermen to help him spread the light. XT then picks some more simple, hard-working brothers to help spread His LIGHT into the Darkness. Not Rabbis; not leading officials. Nope, the LEAST likely. Just like He chooses YOU and ME—the least likely. Who would have thought? Maybe God.

ATTACHED##[doc Jan 26 Capernaum—Do view VIRTUAL TOUR of the modern church above!] I have some pics of **Peter’s House**. A **Church** was built around it in **300**, then a larger one—all can be seen beneath a modern church on **STILTS!** The old churches built over Peter’s home **are 8-sided!** Why? Because nearby is the **Hill** where Jesus addressed the crowds in a natural hillside amphitheater. His essential message is **the 8 Beatitudes!**

I have some pics of The Church of the Beatitudes (8 sided), built by the Italians in 1929, on top of the hill. It is 8-sided because the Beatitudes are the “EIGHT commandments” (not 10) of the New Testament.

The Psalm says basically: I do not fear because I will DWELL with the Lord.. .in the *Land of the Living*. That is, I fully expect and HOPE to be living with God forever.

St. Paul’s letter to the People of Corinth says (at the end): YOU people of the Church belong to None of us. Neither I nor Apollos or Cephas [Peter] ‘saved you’. We only brought the Good-News; XT is the one, who on the CROSS “redeemed”, that is *purchased* you. You are HIS. You should serve Him as faithful servants. So we ALL who are living today in the 21st Century are HIS!

To summarize it all:

Isaiah hammers home that NON-Jews, the Gentiles, are equally *Children of God*. The fact that the Apostles were comfortable speaking Greek living with Pagans prepared them to spread the Gospel.

The main city on the Sea of Galilee was Capernaum. Look at the many pictures of Capernaum, the town, where Peter lived. Peter's house is still there—with several octagonal churches built around it. Jesus picked his first followers there. Those Apostles were SIMPLE fishermen. NOT Rabbis or Scholars. God **always picks the least likely**. *Fishermen* rather than Rabbis makes no sense!

Be sure to look at the Virtual Tour of the modern church over Peter's house. Give it time to load.

There are always those scandalized that all Xtians are not **perfect saints**. Paul and Acts and James all say how WONDERFUL THE CHURCH WAS as it grew. But next sentence, they are commenting on disagreements in the Early Church. Gentile Xtians saying they are not getting treated like the Jewish Xtians. "Stop the quarreling!" they say. Why? Because those new Xtians were learning how to be a 'coming-together', an Ekklesia, a Christian Church. We also are working our way through life, with God's grace, learning how to live as followers of XT, trying to do our best. Quarrels happen. We ARE imperfect. But we are on our WAY, looking toward the *Land of the Living*.