

A Light for the Nations

Scripture Reading — Luke 4:14-30

“There were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

—Luke 4:27 —

Jesus stood in the pulpit of his hometown; everyone knew him and eagerly anticipated what he would say. But why did they get so upset? What was wrong with what he said?

Jesus knew that many of the people there had come to see him perform—as if miracles were magic tricks, not signs that pointed to his anointing as the Messiah, the Savior. So he reminded everyone what had happened in the days of the prophets. Elijah was sent to help a widow—but not a Jewish one. And Elisha healed a leper—but he was the commander of an enemy army. Had God extended his grace to the “wrong” people?

Jesus wanted the people of Nazareth to see that the Messiah came to save not just the Jews but everyone. God’s grace is for people of all nations. The passage he quoted in Isaiah is about being a light to all nations, not just one nation. That was a shocking message, so Jesus’ own people turned on him.

The wideness of God’s mercy and the depth and breadth of God’s grace may shock us still today. Jesus Christ came to save sinners—even those we might not think are worth saving. Jesus’ words challenge us to rethink our self-interested agendas. The good news of the gospel is for the whole world. Are we sharing it or keeping it to ourselves?

Prayer

Light of the world, help us not to hide our light under a basket but to shine brightly and clearly with the good news of your salvation. Amen.

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