

hearted—(Matt. 5:4; Rom. 8:12. The light which the death and resurrection of Christ have thrown upon a future life cheers the dying, consoles the sorrowing, and brings heaven with its glorified ones very near to us.

The Captives—The gospel is like the sound of Jubilee trumpets. (Lev. 25:10). Compare John 8:32-36 and Rom. 6:16-18.

The blind—We perceive the real evil of sin and our danger from it only when the gospel of Christ has touched our hearts. Ps. 119:18; Prov. 4:19; Acts 26:18; Eph. 4:18.

Bruised—(Isa. 58:6; Matt. 11:28-30; Isa. 55:1-4.) Those who are crushed under the sad burdens which sin imposes.

19. The acceptable year—The year of Jubilee was the type of the gospel dispensation. A time in which God will show his willingness to accept those who come to him through Christ. (2 Cor. 6:2; Isa. 49:8; Eph. 1:6, 20). Notice that he does not finish the quotation. He does not speak of God's vengeance on his enemies, but his love and pity for the suffering.

20. The minister—R. V. "the attendant." He rolled up the scroll and gave it to the officer who had charge of the sacred manuscripts. **Sat down**—It was customary to sit when addressing an audience as a teacher. This was a sign that he was about to expound the passage. Every eye was fixed on Jesus with the greatest interest. His natural and reverent manner and his impressive reading would awaken anticipations in their minds of something different from what was usually heard in that place.

II. EXPLAINING ITS MEANING. **21. Began to say**—"A solemn beginning" (Bengel), indicating the calm dignity with which he made this astounding announcement. Alford and others think that it means that the following words are only the first words, or synopsis, of a lengthy discourse. It corresponds rather with the expression "He opened his mouth and said." **Fulfilled**—By the fact that Jesus was now doing what it predicted. "He explained the passage and by explaining fulfilled it." "Our Lord most completely verified the words of the prophet, both in their literal and spiritual meaning. He preached the gospel to the poor in fortune, the poor in spirit, and the poor in religious knowledge. He healed the broken-hearted; he raised and comforted those that were oppressed with calamity, disease and sin. He gave sight to the blind; to those that sat in darkness he disclosed at once the cheerful light of day, and the more glorious light of divine truth. To the captives, to them that were bruised, he preached deliverance: he preached a doctrine which not only released from spiritual bondage those that had been led captive by their sins, but diffused throughout the earth such a spirit of mercy and humanity, that the heavy chains of personal slavery were gradually broken in most parts of the Christian world; and they, that had been for so many ages bruised by the cruel hand of pagan masters, were at length set

free." (Bishop Porteous.) We can hardly imagine a sane man, and it is impossible to conceive of a good man, making this statement if it were not absolutely true. That Jesus was both sane and good is beyond question. His words confirm his claims. "This passage testifies decisively that from the beginning of his ministry Jesus already had the clear and certain consciousness that he was the Messiah." (Meyer.) **In your ears**—"A concrete and individualizing mode of expression," added for the sake of vividness and emphasis. Compare ch. 1:44; 9:44; Acts 11:22; Jas. 5:4.

22. Bare him witness—Testified in his behalf. Shewed by their countenances and attention, as well as in conversation with one another, that they recognized, with admiration and wonder, the marvellous attractiveness of his manner and words. **Words of grace** (R. V.)—He spoke with sweetness and majesty. Compare John 7:46; Ps. 45:2. They wondered where he could have learned to speak like that. (Matt. 13:54; Mark 6:2; ch. 2:47; John 6:42). We need not confine their commendations to his manner merely; they felt the beauty of the sentiments that he uttered. One may admire an eloquent sermon and yet have no heart for the gospel that is preached. **Which proceeded out of his mouth**—Another graphic "concrete mode of expression." **Is not this Joseph's son?**—That is, these words, or the like, passed from one to the other. In Jewish synagogues it was not considered improper to make remarks upon what was said, or even to interrupt the speaker with questions and contradictions. Their words are given more at length in Matthew and Mark. "Their village beggarly pride cannot comprehend the humility of the great One." (Steir). "Who is he that he should lecture them in this fashion."

23. Heal thyself—"Don't spend all your favors on strangers, but do something for your own people here where you were brought up." This taunt was thrown at him when on the cross. Jesus would not work miracles to satisfy curiosity or convince unbelief. Read Matt. 13:58; Mark 6:5.

24. Jesus often referred to this fact, which is as true now as it was then. Matt. 13:37; Mark 6:4; John 4:44.

25. Jesus justifies his refusal to work miracles in Nazareth by the example of two of the greatest prophets, whose most wonderful miracles were wrought for those who were outside of Israel altogether. The humble-minded receive blessings which the proud and self-sufficient cannot get. Those who feel their own unworthiness most are most worthy in God's sight. **Elijah**—see 1 Kings 17:9; 18:1; Jas. 5:17.

26. Sarepta—Zarephath (1 Kings 17:10.) Our Saviour means to say, "We do not read of his being sent to any others."

27. Elisha—2 Kings 5:14. The Israelites of those days did not receive these blessings because their hearts were estranged from God, so their unbelief led Jesus to refuse to