Chapter One
A Despised Place

"And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all
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them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears.”

Luke 4:16-21

Nazareth was the place of Jesus’ upbringing. It was a despised place that provoked ridicule and sneers amongst the remainder of society. Being that God allowed His only Son, Jesus, to take on a body and come into the earth, it seems as though, according to natural humanistic reasoning, that the Son of God should have been born in a palace with all the privileges afforded a dignitary. However, God set Jesus in the midst of a destitute family in a condemnable community. The city was a place that provoked a common question, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

Prophetic Principle #1

God set Jesus in the midst of a destitute family.

I believe that if Jesus were living today, His “Nazareth” would be the inner city ghettos, like Harlem or Brownsville, that strike a sense of repugnance amongst most of polite society who fear to tread upon the streets and have little respect for the true beauty of those neighborhoods. Jesus’
Nazareth would be comprised of the communities of Los Angeles today---the place where there was riotous activity; the place where they are using crack; the place where the drug dealers are conducting their repugnant trade.

Prophetic Principle #2

Deliverers taste the bitter gall of infamy.

When God raises deliverers to begin to proclaim His truths into the ears of the nation, He doesn’t cause them to emerge from a palace. But rather, they are individuals who have tasted the bitter gall of infamy in the low places of life. He elevates those that are despised; the rejects of society that have been marked as failures and labeled as outcasts. God raises up deliverers out of institutions where unjust men desire to restructure the image of God upon an individual and prophesy doom into their future by saying, “You are a waste”, “You don’t qualify”, “You don’t have the right color skin”, “Your hair is too nappy”, “We don’t like your speech”, and “You’re not like us”.

When you have wandered in the darkness of rejection, you will be drawn to the Light. You will also be drawn to individuals of the same spirit, who are pregnant with the same revelation, and who
have been through the same struggles. You will identify with one another. God has a way of joining individuals who have been rejected by society.

**Prophetic Principle #3**

God elevates those that are despised.

As a young boy, I suffered from ridicule and rejection because I suffered from an embarrassing case of stuttering. I was handicapped in that I could not successfully complete a sentence. I could not express myself properly, and I was sent for speech therapy because of this impairment.

In the second grade, the "powers that be" decided to "integrate" me. I was bused out of the secure womb of my inner city neighborhood—not understanding that it was despised—and I was suddenly forced into a rude awakening! Even though my speech was impaired, my teachers, who equated a black male child with retardation, couldn't understand why my reading abilities far surpassed their expectations. I was sent to a guidance counselor, and subjected to test after test, as though I existed for nothing more than their personal experimentation. They would isolate me from the remainder of my classmates, and scrutinize the color crayon that I would choose, or attempt to interpret
why I would draw particular pictures, all the while attempting to psychoanalyze my brain.

It became quite evident that the message they were transmitting to me was that I was psychologically defective. Whether I displayed brilliance or mediocrity, I was regarded as a specimen for their studies, along with many other black children. And the imagery that was built within had long lasting effects.

Prophetic Principle #4

Images have lasting effects.

Jesus was born of a despised people. Had the technology of the 60’s been present in His day, He would have been treated the exact same way. The Bible records that His ability to read the Scriptures provoked an amazed response in the learned people that heard Him. That which is despised will provoke curiosity, for it is never understood according to the terminology of the day, for it breaks the established mold of understanding and frustrates expectations.

Going Back Home

Jesus was sent back home. The worst feeling that you will be faced with as a result of your calling is
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going back home to minister in the place of your origin. When Jesus left home, He didn’t have the power of the Spirit in demonstration before the people. But now He is coming back to Nazareth as a different type of individual. People were amazed at His stature, and commented, “Who does He think He is?” They were doing mental gymnastics because now He has extricated Himself from the established environment that “prophesied” a dismal failure for His future. He has come out -- He has had a meeting with God and He came back as a Deliverer!

Prophetic Principle #5

Jesus was sent back home.

When God raises you up as a deliverer, He is going to send you back to your first stop -- to your Nazareth. Jesus had to go back to Nazareth; the place of His upbringing. You too will have to go back to the place where you were brought up. It is a place of familiarity; a despised place where people don’t respect you, where people will look at you and say, “Oh, we remember when we changed your diaper”. “Oh, we remember when you were just coming to know Jesus. Oh, yeah, we know you and we are not sure about your salvation yet.”
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When you can win victory on your homefront, then you are ready for the world. The problem with many saints is that we want to go into all the world, Africa, Europe, China, or Asia to preach the Word of the Lord, and neglect the first assignment which is in your Jerusalem.

**Prophetic Principle #6**

*When you can win victory on your homefront, then you are ready for the world.*

You must compel your family members and your loved ones to come to know Jesus. You can't be ashamed to speak to your cousins and your relatives, and then adopt a pretense of preaching that desires to touch the stranger first. During the holidays, you have to gather with your family and not sit and joke as in times past, but show that there is a distinction between you because Jesus is in your life. You have to go back to the place of your upbringing and bring to them your ministry.

Many people want to prophesy in the house of God, but not to their loved ones. Go back home; go to the place where you have been brought up; in the difficult spot. You have to go back home to that husband who is not saved and is acting like the devil. Go back home to that wife who might be
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acting like a lunatic. You must go back to those children who are rebellious and acting stupid. God first works things out in your Jerusalem, before He prepares you for Judaea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

We need to go back to our Jerusalem so that people can see the transformation that has taken place in our lives. In other words, we can no longer be like FBI saints, doing secret service for the Lord. We must be individuals who are not afraid to declare the true gospel of Jesus Christ; not afraid to declare that we are identified with Jesus Christ; not afraid to walk with the Lord, and not afraid to become a living epistle, scrutinized of men.

**Prophetic Principle #7**

Your past is research for your future.

When people say, "Do you believe in Jesus?", you should be able to lift up your voice and say, "YES, I know the Man. I will not deny Him. I will not doubt Him because I know too much about Him." You should be able to articulate your belief. As we become bold witnesses for the Lord, we will be unmovable and threaten the kingdom of darkness.

When you understand the significance of Nazareth, you will also understand that your past is
research for your future. When you examine your past, you will find that your past was already prophesying your destiny. For example, Jesus' earthly stepfather, Joseph, was a carpenter. It wasn't by chance that God placed Jesus in that type of family. He wanted Him to become familiar with the feel of wood because He knew that Jesus' ultimate destiny was to be nailed to a wooden cross.

Sometimes God will have you handle the very things that are your ultimate destiny -- your ultimate crucifixion. But, realize that death is not the end, but rather, its the beginning. When you understand this, you will begin to say unto death, "Oh, death, where is thy sting? Oh, grave, where is thy victory?"

Prophetic Principle #8

Your past prophesies your destiny.

God has given you the power over dead things. When a "Judas" shows up in your life, it is just the proof that you're about to experience a 72 hour resurrection! Death is just a signal that you'll rise again! It is not over!

Knowing the Contract

"And there was delivered unto him the book of
The prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written. - Luke 4:17

When Jesus opened the book, He found the place where it was written. In other words, He found the contract. He read the paper work. He knew what was in the law of God. He knew that there was something that God was saying and declaring for the season that He was living in.

Prophetic Principle #9

Death is just a signal that you’ll rise again.

This book was a roll or a scroll. The word "opened" is a medical term that Luke used that literally means, "to unroll". Medically, it referred to the surgical opening of the various parts of the body. When a doctor begins to cut and do surgery, he unfolds the skin. There are times when you can look at the letter of this Word, but then there are times when the Holy Spirit comes in and breaks it open; no longer are you looking at the outward part, but now you are looking at the inward part. Deep begins to call unto the deep.

They may have heard the Scripture that Jesus was about to read many times, but this time it was not
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just the logos, the letter of the Word, but after Jesus dissected and unfolded the revelation that was veiled to their eyes, He took them into the depths of the Spirit in the life of that Word. There is a time where you need to understand that the letter killeth, but it is the Spirit that giveth life.

Prophetic Principle #10

You must learn what is written in the Word of God.

Jesus found the place that it was written. It seems as though He had found it by chance; almost as if He wasn't looking for it. But we see that He began reading at the place where the roll had opened of itself and He was trusting the divine guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Have you ever asked God to give you a word for the day and you opened the Bible and a verse just pops out of the page? It may say, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadows of death, I will fear no evil”. You may turn to another passage and it says, “Fret not yourself for evil doers....”

You may flip to the epistles and all of a sudden get a revelation out of the scroll where it says, “I have made you more than a conqueror”. As you begin to open up the Word of God, there is rhema that He begins to bring out and say, “This is your
word today and this Scripture is being fulfilled in your ears”.

That is why if the devil can’t get the Word out of you, he will get you out of the place where the Word is. There is power in the Word of God.

Jesus said that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him. You have the Holy Ghost in you and He has empowered you for a purpose. I believe that we have been hearing the gospel through the mouths of our oppressors too long. This is now the time where we must begin to hear a language from the mouth of the oppressed. When the oppressed begins to preach the Word, they will preach a word that will not only deliver the oppressed, but the oppressor as well.

Prophetic Principle #11

The letter killeth, but it is the Spirit that giveth life.

The oppressor doesn’t want the oppressed to go free. He understands that if the oppressed goes free, he will suffer a decline of power. He will be forced to submit himself to those that he despised.

There are some people who make money from your continued oppression. There are some people who put their sons through school from your
oppression. There are some individuals who rise to the top because of your oppression. God has raised up prophets to prophesy to those who are profiting from the oppression of the people of God.

**Prophetic Principle #12**

The oppressor doesn't want the oppressed to go free.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me to preach the gospel," Jesus said. The gospel means "good news". It means that God has some good news for me. In other words, the message that we have heard for so long in church, "Women, you have to wear your dresses so long, you need to cover this up, take the earrings out of your ears, and take that make-up off," that is not the gospel, for that is not good news.

When you have sat through a church service and leave more depressed out of the house of God than when you entered -- the gospel has not been preached. Jesus was anointed to preach the gospel.

The Church is the only place on the earth where the black man can go and attain a sense of dignity. In the world, the spirit of the oppressor attacks him at every turn. When he tries to purchase a car, his price is higher; when he goes to apply for a job, his
wages are lower than everyone else who works the same job. There is a force in the earth that is designed to make our black men insane.

**Prophetic Principle #13**

Jesus performs an operation on the inward man.

When a black man begins to ask for that which is rightfully his, then he is accused of making trouble or of being out of place. For some strange reason, assertiveness within a black man is considered threatening in this society, and provokes an immediate response that will attempt to silence his voice...at whatever cost. Death becomes a cheap price to pay to suppress the opinions of a black man.

There may be some that are reading this that may wonder why I've made reference to the struggle of black men in particular. For one thing, I am black, and particularly sensitive to the persistent racism that is encountered on a daily basis at every level. There is not a black person in America that is immune to the force that despises their color. Racism is a heinous sin...one that affronts the sovereignty of God by doubting His wisdom in His creation, and seeks to denigrate His image within His creation...for it was He that said, “Let us make man in our own image.” And, unbelievably, the
Church is one of the main sources that helps to promulgate this abomination.

I went to a particular Christian radio station that broadcasts our weekly radio show and told them that I didn't want to be on at 12:45 a.m. any longer. As a ministry, we had proven ourselves. We accepted the unusually late hour that was offered to us, and we were quite innovative in our approach, having the highest response to our show that the station had ever seen. We paid them a year in advance, and after proving that we were a viable ministry with something valuable to offer the Body of Christ, when our contract came up for renewal, we requested to be moved to prime time. Their reaction was startling as they said, "Preacher, you are causing trouble. You are causing a disturbance. We can't sell you that time slot." Being the prophet that I am, I replied, "Why not?" Through sources that they themselves would be surprised at, I found out that they offered spots at a higher price to us than they were offering to others of a different ethnic expression.

Once I confronted them with this knowledge, which was supposed to remain an unwritten policy that they followed, they became angry. So, as the prophet that I am, I decided to go on the air and talk about their behavior during our hour program that we paid for. They were extremely disturbed by
this and indicated that we were tearing the station apart. They said that they were going to cancel our contract and not let us back on the air. The station representative said, "We don't understand what is wrong with you. We offered you a 10:00 p.m. spot at night and you are still not satisfied with that. Now you want a 2:00 pm spot, and we're not going to sell this to you." It was almost as if the insinuation was that black ministries should only speak at night...and not during the more accessible daytime where they felt their more "profitable" listeners were available.

The reason that I was discontent was because I recognized that I was dealing with a spirit that was attempting to hold me back. It was the same spirit that Rosa Parks dealt with that said, "Rosa, we let you on the bus to sit on the back. What is wrong with the back? You have a seat. What's wrong with you?" Like Rosa, I am tired of the back of the bus—I want to sit in the front.

You have African-American people who are operating by the rules of White America. There are some nations where all Africans are in charge, and they still have the same spirit of Colonialism. It is still the same force that oppresses people.

We are dealing with spiritual forces in the universe. This is not only in America, it is in Europe, and has permeated the entire globe. I
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observe oppressed people everywhere that I travel -- people who still find themselves herded to the back of the bus. However, I located something in the contract! I located in the Word of God where Jesus said that He was anointed to preach the gospel (the good news) to those who are poor, broken hearted, and captive!

When Jesus closed the book, it was like a surgeon putting a wound back together with sterile bandages. Sometimes when Jesus comes in your midst, you need bandages....bandages made of the purity of God’s Word that haven’t been infected with the sin of man’s ambitions. Jesus performs an operation on the inward man. There are some things on the inside of you that you don’t like and are just waiting for an encounter with Jesus. However, oftentimes when He says, “I am ready to operate,” you reply, “Lord, I am not ready yet. I am fearful. I am frightened.” If you will just lie there and let Him work on your inward parts, He will put you back together without scars.