

The Gospel of Matthew

Jesus the “Nazarene”?
(Matthew 2:19-23)

1

Jesus the “Nazarene”

A Stumbling Block:

“Surely the Messiah is not going to come from Galilee, is he? Has not the Scripture said that the Messiah comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” (John 7:41-42)

(the Jewish leaders to Nicodemus) *“You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”* (John 7:52)

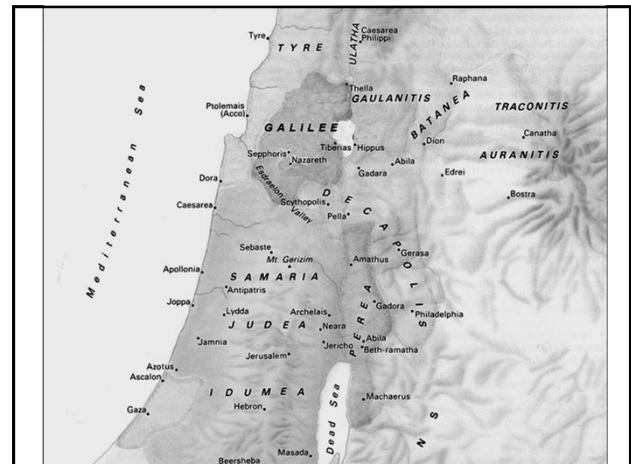
2

Jesus the “Nazarene”

Matthew aims to show...

- how Jesus, though born in Bethlehem, came to reside in Nazareth of Galilee
- how even this was directed by God and was a “fulfillment” of Scripture

3



4

Jesus the “Nazarene”

Fulfilled the Prophets (?)

Observations:

- No prophet specifically said Messiah would be called a “Nazarene” (the word is nowhere in the OT)
- Matthew does not have in mind a quotation but a theme of the prophets
- *Various suggestions*: word-play with “Nazirite” or with the Hebrew word “branch” (*neser*)

5

Jesus the “Nazarene”

Fulfilled the Prophets (?)

➤ to be called a “Nazarene” implies that He would be unrecognized and despised

- As a “Nazarene”, He fulfills the motif of the despised, suffering servant given by the prophets
- As a humble, suffering Messiah, Jesus did not conform to Jewish expectations

6

Jesus the “Nazarene”

Conclusion

➤ Jesus, as the Davidic king who comes to reign and deliver God’s people, will achieve this as a “Nazarene” (a despised, suffering Savior)

Do not stumble over Jesus the Nazarene