

MOSES SEAT (LUKE 4:16-21, ISA. 61:1-2)

Luke 4:16-21 *“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written, (18) **“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”** (20) And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, **“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”**”*

We need to look at a few things here to get the context. In all synagogues in the second Temple days back then (and some even today), there was a seat at the front of the synagogue that was called the “Moses Seat” (Deut. 18:15-18, John 5:45). Moses was a great prophet of course, but Yahveh said He would send even a greater prophet than Moses in latter days. This seat was there for the day this great prophet would emerge. It was reserved only for when that day arrived. No one was supposed to lean on or sit in the Moses seat, how-ever, some arrogant Pharisees had been doing so (Matt. 23:2). As a seat and cup are still set aside during the seder each Passover, so too a seat was set aside for a great Moses like prophet.

Yeshua comes into the synagogue as usual and is asked (as a Rabbi), to read the half-torah. The half torah is the same lesson in every synagogue everywhere in the world. Each week a different passage is read, but they all do it simultaneously. They handed Him the scroll of Isaiah and He is told to read what we now call Isa. 61:1 onwards. Yeshua read part of the scroll, closed it up and put it down (verse 20). All eyes were on Him wondering why. He then proceeded to sit in the Moses seat, that’s why all eyes were on Him. He continued and said, (verse 21) **“Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”** He meant that He was the fulfillment of what the prophet Isaiah had prophesied about in **Isa. 61:1-2a** *“The Spirit of Yahveh is upon me, Because Yahveh has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, **To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; To proclaim the favorable year of Yahveh**”,* Yeshua was the Great Prophet Isaiah spoke about many years prior. The next part of verse 2 says: *“And the day of vengeance of our Yahveh; To comfort all who mourn,”* This part of Isaiah’s prophesy had not yet come to pass, so Yeshua did not read it.

The people were insulted that He not only had the nerve to sit in the Moses seat, but that He claimed to be the prophet Isaiah spoke of.

To say to Orthodox Jews that *“I am the Messiah Isaiah fortold of”* would be considered blasphemy in a big way in those days. Let us continue further in the gospel of Luke.

Luke 4:28-30 *“And all [the people] in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, **in order to throw Him down the cliff.** But passing through their midst, He went His way.”* If you recall during the Feast of Atonement the

Priest led the scapegoat (which had been used to cover the sins of the Nation), into the desert and pushed it backwards off a cliff to its death. The people didn't realize that by doing this they were also making what was rehearsed in the Feast of Atonement for many years, manifest. In a way, Yeshua was the scapegoat that all the sins of the world had been cast upon and sent out to die.

(Mar 23/16) Jerry Hennig

(correction made Aug 19/16)