

Matthew 2:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Analysis

Matthew's statement about Nazareth fulfilling prophecy is puzzling since no specific Old Testament text says 'He shall be called a Nazarene.' Most likely, this references the Hebrew 'netzer' (branch) in Isaiah 11:1, or reflects Nazareth's despised status (John 1:46), showing Christ identified with the rejected and lowly. This demonstrates Christ's humiliation in taking on human nature in its weakest, most despised form.

Historical Context

Nazareth was an insignificant Galilean village, looked down upon even by other Jews. Growing up there subjected Jesus to scorn, fulfilling prophecies of Messiah being 'despised and rejected' (Isaiah 53:3). The term may also play on 'Nazarite' consecration.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does Christ's association with despised Nazareth demonstrate His willing humiliation for our sake?
2. What does Jesus' identification with the lowly and rejected mean for our own status in the world?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐλθὼν κατώκησεν εἰς πόλιν λεγομένην Ναζαρέτ.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth

G2532

G2064

G2730

G1519

G4172

G3004

G3478

ὅπως πληρωθῇ τῶν ὅηθὲν διὰ τῶν προφητῶν ὅτι
that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by which the prophets G3754

Ναζωραῖος κληθήσεται

a Nazarene He shall be called

G3480

G2564

Additional Cross-References

Judges 13:5 (Parallel theme): For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

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