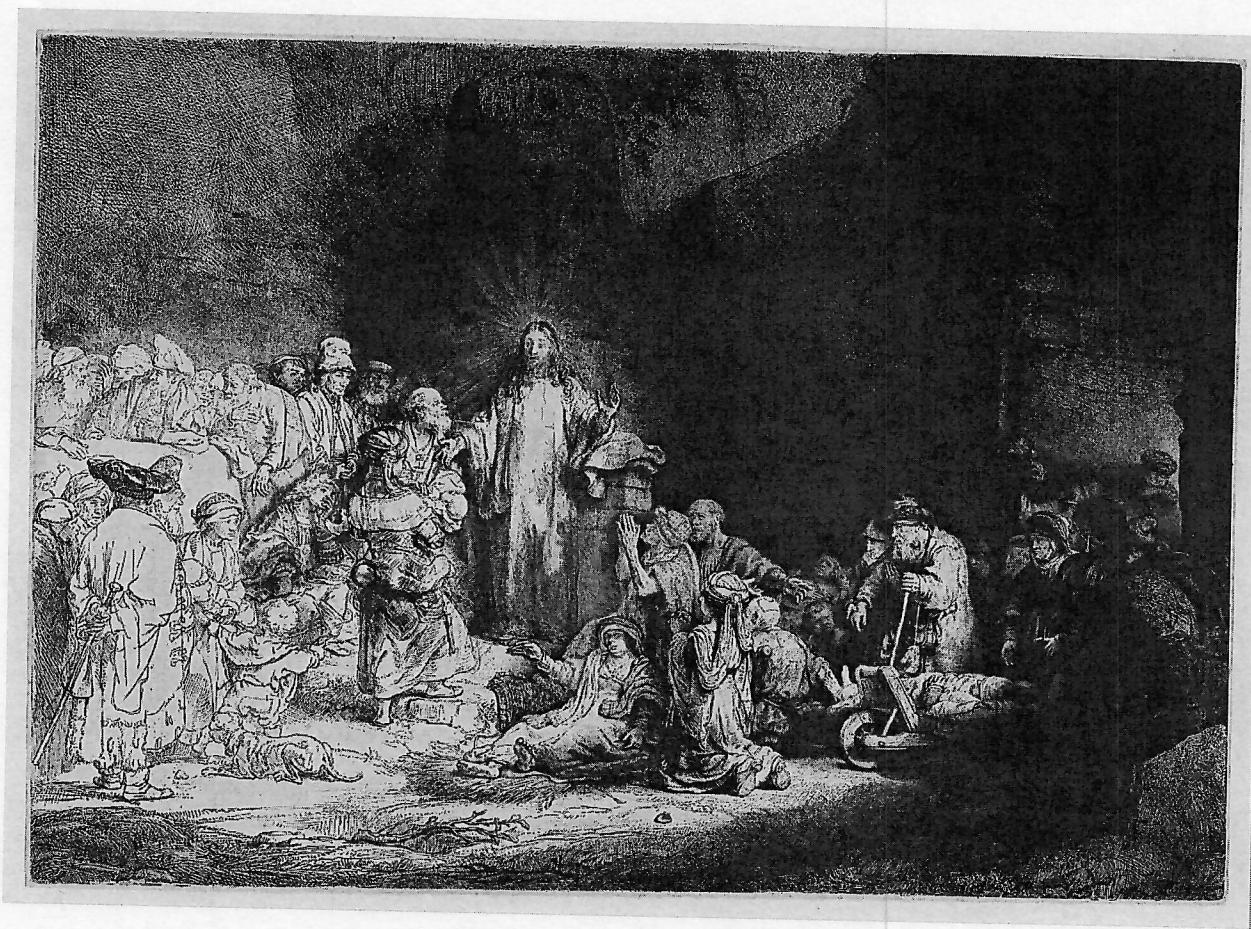


C - Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, January 26, 2025

"The spirit of the Lord God is upon me" Sunday



Rembrandt van Rijn (1606 – 1669) – The Hundred Guilder Print c. 1648

Introductory Reflection – This magnificent and famous Rembrandt seems appropriate for Jesus' three public statements quoting Isaiah "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." In this print the illuminated Jesus is speaking to the sick and healthy, the poor and rich, and the those psychologically free and captive with many believing the hope and promise of Jesus' message.

Reading 1 – Urantia Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 123 – The Early Childhood of Jesus, Section 5. School Days in Nazareth, Paragraphs 9 - 11

123:5.9 (1363.2) Throughout his years at the synagogue he was a brilliant student, possessing a great advantage since he was conversant with three languages. The Nazareth chazan, on the occasion of Jesus' finishing the course in his school, remarked to Joseph that he feared he "had learned more from Jesus' searching questions" than he had "been able to teach the lad."

123:5.10 (1363.3) Throughout his course of study Jesus learned much and derived great inspiration from the regular Sabbath sermons in the synagogue. It was customary to ask distinguished visitors, stopping over the Sabbath in Nazareth, to address the synagogue. As Jesus grew up, he heard many great thinkers of the entire Jewish world expound their views, and many also who were hardly orthodox Jews since the synagogue of Nazareth was an advanced and liberal center of Hebrew thought and culture.

123:5.11 (1363.4) When entering school at seven years (at this time the Jews had just inaugurated a compulsory education law), it was customary for the pupils to choose their "birthday text," a sort of golden rule to guide them throughout their studies, one upon which they often expatiated at their graduation when thirteen years old. The text which Jesus chose was from the Prophet Isaiah: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to set the spiritual prisoners free."¹

Reflection – This is the first of three occasions that Jesus quoted this Isaiah text which was central to his mission. Remarkably, he was only 7 at this time, only about two years after the arrival of his Personalized Thought Adjuster. Later Urantia states that this Chazan's daughter was one of the 12 members of the Women's Evangelistic Corp. She was present at Jesus' death on the cross at Calvary.

Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15²

R. (8) "Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul."

"Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul. Your testimony is faithful, enlightening those who do not understand."

R. "Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul."

¹ Replaced Reading 1 - Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10

Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, which consisted of men, women, and those children old enough to understand. Standing at one end of the open place that was before the Water Gate, he read out of the book from daybreak till midday, in the presence of the men, the women, and those children old enough to understand; and all the people listened attentively to the book of the law. Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that had been made for the occasion. He opened the scroll so that all the people might see it — for he was standing higher up than any of the people —; and, as he opened it, all the people rose. Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people, their hands raised high, answered, "Amen, amen!" Then they bowed down and prostrated themselves before the LORD, their faces to the ground. Ezra read plainly from the book of the law of God, interpreting it so that all could understand what was read. Then Nehemiah, that is, His Excellency, and Ezra the priest-scribe and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all the people: "Today is holy to the LORD your God. Do not be sad, and do not weep"— for all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law. He said further: "Go, eat rich foods and drink sweet drinks, and allot portions to those who had nothing prepared; for today is holy to our LORD. Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the LORD must be your strength!"

² After and inspired by Pamela Greenberg's **The Complete Psalms – The Book of Prayer Songs in a New Translation**.

"Your providence can be easily seen, making the heart leap with joy. The tasks you ask us to do are revealed clearly, making the eyes sparkle with light."

R. "Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul."

"Awe of you is pure, lasting forever, Your decisions are true; taken together, they prove righteousness."

R. "Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul."

"May the words of my mouth and the contemplation of my heart be in keeping with your will, God, my Rock and my Redeemer."

R. "Your teaching is everywhere, reviving the soul." ³

Reflection – Greenberg's translation does not follow the order of the conventional psalm as can be seen from the citations. I have also added her 15th verse as it reflects the purpose of prayer and worship, replacing the John 6:63c response. This provides a fitting close to a psalm about our recognized and hidden faults.

In petitioning and following indications from God, Greenberg uses such apt phrases: doing God's tasks make us "sparkle with light"; she approaches God with "awe", not fear; she recognizes "intrinsic reward" in "tasks you ask us to do are revealed clearly." And finally, she asks that "hidden faults, wash from me their stain."

Greenberg affirms in this psalm that "Your teaching is everywhere", not just in "the (religious or traditional) precepts of the Lord". Hers is a much more ecumenical, inclusive and flexible approach to finding Truth, neither grasping nor letting go.

Reading 1 – Urantia Part IV. The Life and Teachings of Jesus, Paper 126 – The Two Crucial Years, Section 4. First Sermon in the Synagogue, Paragraphs 1 – 5 and 8

126:4.1 (1391.5) With the coming of his fifteenth birthday, Jesus could officially occupy the synagogue pulpit on the Sabbath day. Many times before, in the absence of

³ Replaced Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 15
R. (cf John 6:63c) Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul; The decree of the LORD is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The command of the LORD is clear, enlightening the eye.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; The ordinances of the LORD are true, all of them just.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

Let the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart find favor before you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

R. Your words, Lord, are Spirit and life.

speakers, Jesus had been asked to read the Scriptures, but now the day had come when, according to law, he could conduct the service. Therefore on the first Sabbath after his fifteenth birthday the chazan arranged for Jesus to conduct the morning service of the synagogue. And when all the faithful in Nazareth had assembled, the young man, having made his selection of Scriptures, stood up and began to read:

126:4.2 (1391.6) "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and to set the spiritual prisoners free; to proclaim the year of God's favor and the day of our God's reckoning; to comfort all mourners, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy in the place of mourning, a song of praise instead of the spirit of sorrow, that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, wherewith he may be glorified.

126:4.3 (1392.1) "Seek good and not evil that you may live, and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you. Hate the evil and love the good; establish judgment in the gate. Perhaps the Lord God will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.

126:4.4 (1392.2) "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil and learn to do good; seek justice, relieve the oppressed. Defend the fatherless and plead for the widow.

126:4.5 (1392.3) "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, to bow myself before the Lord of all the earth? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, ten thousands of sheep, or with rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? No! for the Lord has showed us, O men, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you but to deal justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God?"

126:4.8 (1392.6) And when he had thus read, he sat down, and the people went to their homes, pondering over the words which he had so graciously read to them. Never had his townspeople seen him so magnificently solemn; never had they heard his voice so earnest and so sincere; never had they observed him so manly and decisive, so authoritative.⁴

⁴ Replaced Reading 2 - 1 Corinthians 12:12-30 [Sections in brackets may be eliminated]

Brothers and sisters: As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. Now the body is not a single part, but many.

[If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended. If they were all one part, where would the body be? But as it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do

Reflection - The worshippers at Nazareth were astounded at the wisdom of the young man, a new father to his father's family, following Joseph's death about 11 months before. Jesus was a 15-year-old youth in his inaugural conducting of services in the Nazareth synagogue

Alleluia - Urantia 150:8.10

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

"Today are these Scriptures fulfilled."

R. Alleluia, alleluia.⁵

Gospel – Urantia, Part IV – The Life and Teaching of Jesus, Paper 150 – The Third Teaching Tour, Section 8. The Sabbath Service, Paragraph 8 – 10

150:8.8 (1685.6) Then the chazan went over to the ark and brought out a roll, which he presented to Jesus that he might read the Scripture lesson. It was customary to call upon seven persons to read not less than three verses of the law, but this practice was waived on this occasion that the visitor might read the lesson of his own selection. Jesus, taking the roll, stood up and began to read from Deuteronomy: "For this commandment which I give you this day is not hidden from you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it down to us that we may hear and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, who will go over the sea for us to bring the commandment to us that we may hear and do it? No, the word of life is very near to you, even in your presence and in your heart, that you may know and obey it."

not need you, " nor again the head to the feet, "I do not need you." Indeed, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are all the more necessary, and those parts of the body that we consider less honorable we surround with greater honor, and our less presentable parts are treated with greater propriety, whereas our more presentable parts do not need this. But God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy.]

Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it.

[Some people God has designated in the church to be, first, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers; then, mighty deeds; then gifts of healing, assistance, administration, and varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work mighty deeds? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?]

⁵ Replaced Alleluia Cf. Luke 4:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Lord sent me to bring glad tidings to the poor, and to proclaim liberty to captives.
R. Alleluia, alleluia.

150:8.9 (1686.1) And when he had ceased reading from the law, he turned to Isaiah and began to read: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are bruised and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

150:8.10 (1686.2) Jesus closed the book and, after handing it back to the ruler of the synagogue, sat down and began to discourse to the people. He began by saying: "Today are these Scriptures fulfilled." And then Jesus spoke for almost fifteen minutes on "The Sons and Daughters of God." Many of the people were pleased with the discourse, and they marveled at his graciousness and wisdom.⁶

Reflection - This most interesting Gospel from Luke seems to combine the memory of what Jesus said as a 15-year-old youth in his inaugural conducting of services in the Nazareth synagogue with a second appearance as a fully integrated Son of God and Son of Man near the height of his powers 13 years later.

In the first instance, the worshippers at Nazareth were astounded at the wisdom of the young man, a new father to his father's family, following Joseph's death about 11 months before. In this second instance, the one recorded above, and in Luke's gospel, he was subsequently challenged by ruffians in the crowd who had forgotten or never heard of the bloom of his youth and were jealous of Jesus. Their attempt on Jesus' life is recorded immediately after in Luke 4:22 – 28, but omitted in today's Gospel.

⁶Replaced Gospel - Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21

Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us, I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news of him spread throughout the whole region. He taught in their synagogues and was praised by all. He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them, "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing."

Look at these writings and suggest improvement:

Pro Search

Sources

paste.txt

1 source

paste

Answer

Content Organization

Structure and Flow

The lectionary text would benefit from clearer organization of its three main sections about Jesus' quotation of Isaiah. While the chronological progression is present, adding transitional phrases between these key moments would improve readability.

Reflection Sections

The reflection segments could be more focused and concise. For instance, the first reflection's art description could better connect to the spiritual significance of Jesus' three declarations¹.

Real "Intro" - Object - Reflection

Technical Improvements

Citations

The Urantia citations are well-formatted (e.g., 123:5.9), but the biblical references could be more consistently presented. The Psalm citations particularly need standardization¹.

- Object - They are not cited by line in original

Textual Analysis

The commentary on Greenberg's translation would be stronger if it compared specific phrases from the original text to demonstrate the interpretative differences being discussed.

*Object - I think
the answer is fine -*

Content Enhancement

Historical Context

The narrative could better emphasize the significance of Jesus quoting this passage at three distinct life stages:

- Age 7 as a school child¹
- Age 15 as a young synagogue leader¹
- During his public ministry¹

*I think I do
this.*

Theological Development

The text could more clearly trace how Jesus' understanding and application of Isaiah's prophecy evolved through these three presentations, particularly noting how his final declaration "Today are these Scriptures fulfilled" marked a culmination of this progression¹.

*& editing (?) - The earthly
of criticism I am looking for is not present.*