

RENEWING
Your
RELATIONSHIP
with
Jesus

JOSHUA SAVAGE

Copyright © 2021 Joshua L. Savage

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form whatsoever, whether by graphic, visual, electronic, film, microfilm, tape recording, or any other means, without prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief passages embodied in critical reviews and articles.

This is not an official publication of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The opinions and views expressed herein belong solely to the author and do not necessarily represent the opinions or views of Cedar Fort, Inc. Permission for the use of sources, graphics, and photos is also solely the responsibility of the author.

Published by CFI, an imprint of Cedar Fort, Inc.

2373 W. 700 S., Springville, UT 84663

Distributed by Cedar Fort, Inc., www.cedarfort.com

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021933623

Contents



Acknowledgments
Reconsideration

RE-VIEW

“Here Am I, Send Me”
“He Shall Be Called a Nazarene”
“But Made Himself of No Reputation”
“He Took the Young Child . . . and Departed into Egypt”
“I Am the Son of God”
“I Have Not Hid Thy Righteousness within My Heart”
“I Shall Make Him My Firstborn”
“There Standeth One among You Whom Ye Know Not”
“In All Things from the Beginning”

RELATE

“Evening and Morning and at Noon Will I Pray”
“He Fasted Forty Days and Forty Nights”
“Wise as Serpents and Harmless as Doves”
“The People Pressed upon Him”
“And of Them, He Chose Twelve”
“That I Should Know How to Speak a Word in Season”
“He Besought Him That He Would Come into His House”
“This Man Blasphemeth”
“We Did Esteem Him Stricken”
“The Son of Man Hath Not Where to Lay His Head”
“All They That See Me Laugh Me to Scorn”

“See That No Man Know It”
“I Am Weary of My Crying”
“The Church of the Lamb of God, and Its Numbers Were Few”

RENEW

“Do Ye Not Yet Understand”
“This Sickness Is Not unto Death”
“My Own Familiar Friend . . . Has Lifted His Heel against Me”
“Given Him His Heart’s Desire”
“He Will Take upon Him the . . . Sicknesses of His People”
“He Shall See His Seed”
“I Am Poured Out like Water”
“I Have Labored in Vain”
“Yet He Opened Not His Mouth”
“He Was Taken from Prison and from Judgment”
“Preserve Me”
“Upon My Vesture They Did Cast Lots”
“Why Has Thou Forsaken Me?”

Resolution

Appendix

Works Cited

About the Author

RE-VIEW



From Premortality to
Public Ministry

“Here Am I, Send Me”

ISAIAH 6:8

The earliest experience of Jesus, of which there is record, occurred before this earth was created. We are informed that our Heavenly Father held a council in heaven with all of His spirit sons and daughters (see Abraham 3:22–28). The Prophet Joseph Smith explained, “At the first organization in heaven, we were all present and saw the Savior chosen and appointed and the plan of salvation made, and we sanctioned it.”¹ *Why* we chose Jesus Christ to be our Savior from before the foundation of the world was clear to us during this council, and it had everything to do with Jesus’ premortal experience of doing good and becoming good.

Alma explained that all those called to the priesthood after the order of the Son of God in mortality were first called to that same priesthood in premortality, on account of their faith and good works (see Alma 13:9). He emphasized that they were called “after the order of His [God’s] Son” (Alma 13:2). In other words, those ordained were so ordained because they followed the example of the Son of God, which included exercising “exceeding faith and good works . . . and [choosing] good” (Alma 13:3). It is clear, therefore, Jesus became the foreordained Savior of the world on account of His “exceeding faith” and bringing forth “good works.”

In Revelation 5:1, the Apostle John describes a scene, shown to him by an angel, of our Heavenly Father sitting upon His throne holding a book, or scroll, sealed with seven seals. In latter-day revelation, we are informed that this book “contains the revealed will, mysteries, and the works of God; the hidden things of his economy concerning this earth during the seven thousand years of its continuance, or its temporal existence,” and that the seals “contain the

things of the first thousand years, and the second also of the second thousand years and so on until the seventh” (D&C 77:6–7). Simply stated, God is holding His plan of salvation, symbolized by the scroll, and asking, “Who shall I send?” to put this plan into motion (see Abraham 3:27). Isaiah similarly notes that we too wondered, “Who will go for us?” (see Isaiah 6:8; 2 Nephi 16:8).

In Revelation 5:2 John hears a strong angel ask all of us the question, “*Who is worthy* to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?” (Revelation 5:2; emphasis added). Notice that opening the book and initiating the plan of salvation rested upon a question of worthiness. In chapter 5, verses 3–4, John describes how you and I reacted upon hearing the angel’s question: “And no man [or woman] in heaven . . . *was able to open the book, neither to look thereon*. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon” (emphasis added). We must have understood what the plan entailed. We must have had some sense of the magnitude, the enormity, of what was required to implement the Father’s plan *and we all looked away*. None of us could even make eye contact with the angel.

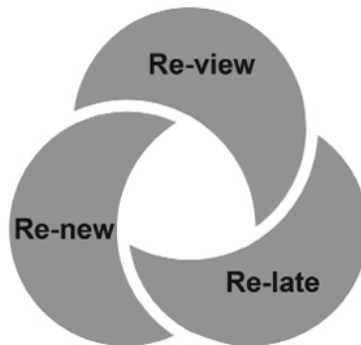
We all looked away. That there was such complete and unanimous surrender throughout the council caused John to weep much; no one, he tells us, “could be found in heaven or earth or under the earth” who could even consider *looking* at the required task, let alone perform it.

But then something miraculous happened. One of the elders of the council told John to “weep not, behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne . . . in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain . . . and he came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne” (Revelation 5:5–7). Jesus did it! He was slain but rose again to take the book out of the hand of God. He alone was worthy to save us—“as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). We couldn’t believe it. We all started to sing together a new song, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9–10).

But what did taking the book out of the hand of God portend? We all know the account: “And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he

. . . began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, And saith . . . My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death . . . And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him” (Mark 14:32–36). *This is the real thing*, the place and time when Jesus’ worthiness enabled Him to shoulder the infinitely enormous burden required to implement “the great plan of the Eternal God” (Alma 34:9). It was a burden so great and terrifying that you and I could not bear to look upon it when it was presented to us in the Grand Council.

No wonder, then, when He comes again, He shall remind us all, “I am He who spake in righteousness, mighty to save” (D&C 133:47), and we will remember what we knew so long ago “and mention the loving kindness of [our] Lord, and all that He has bestowed upon [us] according to His goodness, and according to His loving kindness, forever and ever. In all [our] afflictions he was afflicted . . . and in his love, and in his pity, he redeemed [us], and bore [us], and carried [us] all the days of old” (D&C 133:52–53).



REFLECT AND RECORD

1. How has the section helped me **Re-View** Jesus’ experience with new perspective?
2. How does my **Re-View** of Jesus’ experience affect how I **Relate** to Him?
3. How does my new **relation** to Jesus affect my desire to **Renew** my

relationship with Him?

4. Summarize the section with a one-sentence **Summary Statement**.

5. **Share** what you have learned.

1. *Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith*, 209.

“He Shall Be Called a Nazarene”

MATTHEW 2:23

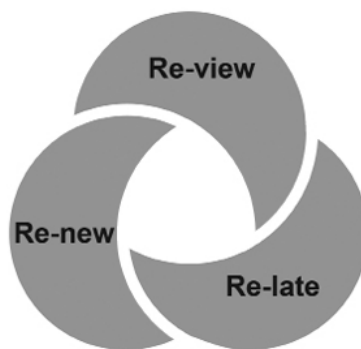
Though born in Jerusalem, Jesus’ primary residence was Nazareth (see Luke 2:4,39; 4:16). This, according to Matthew, was a fulfillment of prophecy (see Matthew 2:23). Nazareth, though small, was located near several main roads, making it a town commonly passed through by travelers.² And it was close to other towns and cities—a good place to be if you were trying to make your living as a carpenter. Historians suggest that since Nazareth was primarily an agricultural and manufacturing town, the cost of living would have been much cheaper there than in Judea (the larger city centers), prompting settlement from ethnically diverse persons, such as Phoenicians and Arabs. By contrast, Jerusalem, though larger, hosted a higher concentration of Jews with less cultural diversity.³ The ethnic diversity of a region like Galilee, its lower education levels, and its lower standards of living would have made a town like Nazareth a place of derision among Jews (see John 1:46). Many Jews would have assumed that only backwards-thinking, uneducated people lived there.

Given this information, what do we learn about Jesus’ experience? I think we can conclude that Jesus knows what it is like growing up in the “wrong part of town” or “on the other side of the tracks.” He knows what it is like to have others use His birthplace to define Him and to make incorrect assumptions about His capability. He would have spoken with a local accent and been stereotyped because of it (see Matthew 26:73). This is what Jesus would have faced as a citizen.

On the other hand, living in Galilee also meant Jesus lived among a more diverse group of neighbors, exposing Him to differing ways of living and to those potentially more open-minded—that is, compared to those at Jerusalem,

who were typically more entrenched in Jewish customs and orthodoxy. No wonder so much of His ministry is conducted within this region. Jesus had no problem seeing the faith and possibility that resided within such a place.

Does the description of Nazareth cause you to think of specific locations or people for which you harbor some bias? How might our perceptions of certain communities change—even communities that we consider to be less desirable—if we can remember that they are filled with people like unto those to whom Jesus ministered and lived? What service might you render and what gifts might you bring to such a place?



REFLECT AND RECORD

1. How has the section helped me **Re-View** Jesus' experience with new perspective?
 2. How does my **Re-View** of Jesus' experience affect how I **Relate** to Him?
 3. How does my new **relation** to Jesus affect my desire to **Renew** my relationship with Him?
 4. Summarize the section with a one-sentence **Summary Statement**.
 5. **Share** what you have learned.
-

2. Bible Dictionary: Nazareth
3. Farrar, 1998, 4th edition.

You've Just Finished your Free Sample

Enjoyed the preview?

Buy: <http://www.ebooks2go.com>