

1. Read John 1: 43-46

- **Philip** – from Bethsaida – a small fishing village east of the Jordan River in the territory of Herod Philip.
- **Nathanael** – (Hebrew נתנאל) – “given of God” or “gift from God” – from Cana (John 21:1). John waits until chap. 21 to tell us where Nathanael is from.
- **Cana** – (Hebrew - *qanah*, Greek – *Kana*) a small village north of Nazareth in Galilee. Cana is only mentioned in John! Why does Cana keep coming up in John?
- **Nazareth** – was a tiny village in the first century. It is located in the region of Galilee and in the tribal allotment of Zebulun. See Isaiah 9:1-2 –

9 But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt the land of **Zebulun** and the land of **Naphtali**, but in the latter time, he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, **Galilee of the nations**.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

2. Geography of Tribal Allotments and Galilee:

3. Galilee Recent History:

- 722 BC – The Northern Kingdom of Israel was taken into captivity by Assyrians.
- 586 BC – Babylon conquered Jerusalem and Judah.
- 537 BC – Rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.
- 500 – 165 BC – the land of Israel was ruled over by the Persians and then the Greeks.
- Maccabees and Hanukkah (the Feast of Dedication): The Jews defeated the Selucid Greeks and finally established themselves as an independent nation.
- 160 – 63 BC – a large influx of Jews who had previously stayed in Babylon moved back to Israel in hopes that God was finally going to restore his kingdom.
- 63 BC – Rome shows up in Israel. Those recent immigrants in Galilee were not happy!

4. Messianic Expectations:

- Many of the recent Jewish immigrants from Babylon settled in Galilee. They were looking for the re-establishment of the Kingdom of God under the rulership of Messiah, Son of David.
- The *names* of their new villages have Messianic implications.

5. Tribal Genealogy –

- Two tribes kept detailed records of their genealogy.
- **Levi** – particularly those descended from Aaron
 - Levites ran the operations of the Temple
 - Priests are from the tribe of Levi but must be descended from Aaron.
 - At the end of a synagogue service, only a “Son of Aaron” – a Priest – may raise their hands and pray the Aaronic Blessing.
- **Judah** – particularly those in the line of David

6. Nazareth – a recent history (see Bargil Pixner, Paths of the Messiah) –

- Settled by recent immigrants from Babylon who were descendants in the line of David.
- What do you name your new village – with the expectation of the coming Messianic Kingdom?
 - *Ntzer* – (Hebrew: נצר) – means either “shoot” or “branch”
 - **Isaiah 11:1** – a Messianic prophecy

There shall come forth a **shoot** (Hebrew: *hoter* – חטר) from the stump of Jesse,
and a **branch** (Hebrew: *ntzer* – נצר) from his roots shall bear fruit.

- Hebrew *hoter* – branch, twig, or shoot and also related to child/life.
- Hebrew *ntzer* – branch, shoot, sprout.
- Nazareth means – Shoot-ville, branch-town – they were quite literally “branch Davidians.”
 - Perhaps fanatical that the Messiah would come from them.
 - Such a small village had their own synagogue (Luke 4).
 - Perhaps village rivalries between Nazareth and Cana.

7. **Cochabah** – a small village named after the word for “Star” - (H: *kokab*) – a Messianic symbol from **Numbers 24:17**

17 I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near:
a **star** (Hebrew: *kokab* – כוכב) shall come **out of Jacob**,
and a scepter shall rise out of **Israel** (Northern Kingdom);
it shall crush the forehead of Moab
and break down all the sons of Sheth.

- the Second Jewish Revolt (AD 132-135) – also known as the **Bar Kokhba Revolt** – was led by a charismatic Messiah-like figure called Shimon Bar Kokhba – Simon, “Son of the Star.”

8. **Cana!!** – Zealous-ville –

- Hebrew *qanah* – which means zeal or zealous.
- **Exodus 20:5** – Jealous sounds petty. God is not petty – he is *Zealous* (but Zealousness has a negative connotation in our polite Christian society).

5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them,
for I the LORD your God am a jealous (zealous – *qanah* – אָנָּן) God¹

- **Numbers 25:10 - 13** – God’s Covenant with Phineas the priest -

10 The Lord said to Moses, **11** “Phinehas son of Eleazar, the *son of Aaron, the priest*, has turned my anger away from the Israelites. Since he was as *zealous* (Hebrew – *qanah*) for my honor among them as I am, I did not put an end to them in my *zeal*.”

- The Maccabees (165 BC) took on a title – the *Qanah-im* – the zealous ones. Their hero was Phineahs from Numbers 25.
- The *Qanah-im* – by the first century – are called the Zealots.
- The inhabitants of anglicized “Cana” – relocated to Galilee from Babylon and named their village Zealous-ville! How passionate do you think those people were?
- Paul was “*zealous*” himself (Philippians 3:6), but extorts us to be “*zealous* for good works” (Titus 2:14).

