

GOSPEL PEARLS

Zebulun and Naphtali

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Hearing that John had been arrested, Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled: 'Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan, Galilee of the nations! The people that lived in darkness has seen a great light; on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death a light has dawned.' From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues,

proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people. His fame spread throughout Syria, and those who were suffering from diseases and painful complaints of one kind or another, the possessed, epileptics, the paralysed, were all brought to him, and he cured them. Large crowds followed him, coming from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judaea and Transjordan. (Matthew 4, 12-17.23-25)

Zebulun and Naphtali were two of the nine tribes that, after the death of Solomon, separated from the Kingdom of Judah giving birth to the Kingdom of Israel which, although more populous and powerful, was less united in faith in the One God. Despite these sins, centuries earlier the prophet Isaiah had foreseen what happened when Jesus began to preach, that is, the darkness of evil would be overcome precisely by the light that arose in those very lands. Do you allow yourself to be enlightened about every aspect of your life by the light of Jesus, instead of seeking the darkness of sin in that particular area not yet touched by God's grace.