

An Apparent Contradiction

Question:

After the death of Herod (the Great), an angel told Joseph that he should leave Egypt and return to the "land of Israel" with his young son Jesus and his wife Mary. When Joseph and his family returned to Israel, they settled in Nazareth. Their settlement in Nazareth is said to fulfill what "was spoken by the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'" (Mt 2:23). These words, however, appear nowhere in the Old Testament. What explanation(s) can be offered for this apparent contradiction?

Our Answer:

Some believe no explanation is necessary because the verse says, "spoken," not "written." However, the gospel of John indicates that Nazareth was a despised place (see: Jn 1:46; 7:41, 52). This being the case, Matthew could have been alluding to the fact that Old Testament prophets said Christ would be despised (Ps 22:6-8, 13; Isa 49:7; 53:2-3).
