

Jesus of Capernaum

One of the things to pay close attention to in your Bible reading is geography. When the Lord came from heaven to this earth, He spent a lot of time in the region of Galilee in Israel. One of the main towns He spent a lot of time in was Capernaum. Usually when people think of Jesus' hometown, they first think of places like Bethlehem and Nazareth. But a strong case can be made for Capernaum.

I. Jesus of Capernaum

- A. A town that sits on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. It sits about two and half miles from the mouth of the Jordan River.
- B. The name means Nahum's town. We have no evidence that the prophet Nahum had any ties to it. The town is not even mentioned in the Old Testament.
- C. It was a popular fishing town. Peter, Andrew, James and John fished near this town.
- D. Its location had strategic value to the Romans. Capernaum served as a toll-collecting station, to gather tax revenue from caravans passing from Damascus to the Mediterranean coast and to Egypt. Matthew, the tax collector, had an office in this city (Matthew 9:9).
- E. It was occupied by a large army of Roman soldiers. It was the residence of a centurion and nobleman (Luke 7:2; John 4:46).
- F. It sat on a hill that rose up from the Sea of Galilee.
- G. It was literally a city on a hill (Matthew 5:14).
- H. It was the center of Jesus ministry
 - 1. He took up residence there (Mark 2:1).
 - 2. He preached in the synagogue (Luke 4:31-32; John 6:35).
 - 3. He performed several miracles.
 - a. He healed Peter's mother-in-law (Mark 1:29-31).
 - b. He casts out demons (Mark 1:21-28, 32-34).
 - c. He made well a centurion's servant (Luke 1:1-10).
 - d. He healed a nobleman's son (John 4:46-50).
 - e. He healed a man paralyzed (Matthew 9:1-8).
 - f. He restored a man's withered hand (Mark 3:1-6).
 - g. He healed a woman with an issue of blood (Matthew 9:18-22).
 - h. He raised Jarius' daughter from the dead (Matthew 9:23-26).
- I. Capernaum is still important in Israel today!
 - 1. There has been uncovered a 4th century white limestone synagogue. It was built on top of the first century one that Jesus would have preached in.
 - 2. There was a home unearthed that is "traditionally" said to be the home of Peter's mother-in-law.

II. Lessons from Capernaum:

- A. Jesus is who He claimed to be! The miracles confirmed this (Mark 2:1-12).
- B. Preaching the truth causes mixed reactions.
 - 1. Some accept it and become faithful (Mark 1:16-20).
 - 2. Some merely believe like the demons (James 2:19).
 - 3. Some flat out reject it.
- C. There are serious consequences for rejecting Jesus (Matthew 11:20-24).

Conclusion: Will we learn from the mistakes made at Capernaum?