

9 Following the Messiah: Capernaum, The Town of Jesus

Opening:

1. You have viewed the video "Following the Messiah Episode 4 (the part 16:46 to 23:58) at www.appianmedia.org and have worked through the study guide (Lesson Nine) available at www.appianmedia.org/free-download.
2. In this study we will focus attention on Jesus and the town of Capernaum. Matthew 4:13 says that after he left Nazareth he lived in Capernaum. Matthew 9:1 describes Capernaum as "his own city."

Into the Text:

1. Following Jesus' baptism and temptation in the wilderness Matt. 4:12-17 describes him settling in Capernaum. It is from here that he began his ministry.
2. The city of Capernaum is mentioned in the following texts:
 - Matt. 4:12-17
 - Matt. 8:5-13; Lk. 7:1-10-- Healed centurion's servant
 - Matt. 11:20-24; Lk. 10:13-15 – Capernaum among unrepentant cities
 - Matt. 17:24-27 – Paid the two-drachma tax
 - Mk. 1:21-28; Lk. 4:31-37 – Taught in the synagogue and cast out an unclean spirit, amazed at his authority
 - Mk. 2:1-13 - When he returned to Capernaum a great crowd assembled and a paralytic's sins were forgiven
 - Mk. 9:33-37 – Discussion regarding the greatest among them
 - Lk. 4:23 – Request by Nazareth to do here the things done in Capernaum
 - Lk. 4:31-37 – Taught with authority
 - Jn. 2:12 – stayed in Capernaum with his mother and disciples after wedding in Cana
 - Jn. 4:46-54 – healing of nobleman's son
 - Jn. 6:16-24 – crossing to Capernaum when walked on the sea
 - Jn. 6:59 - spoke about being the bread of life in the synagogue at Capernaum
3. The people in the Capernaum synagogue found Jesus' teaching authoritative (Mk. 1:21-28; Lk. 4:31-37). He cast out a demon in demonstration of his authority. Such demonstrations established that the Kingdom of God had come upon them (Lk. 11:20) and it was this Kingdom that he was preaching (Matt. 4:17). Matthew

interprets what Jesus is doing in light of Isa. 9:1-2 which referred to the land of Zebulun and Naphtali, by the sea, in Galilee. Isaiah said, the people sitting in darkness would see a great light.

4. In Capernaum Jesus spoke of himself as the bread of life (Jn. 6:26-59).
5. Multiple miracles occurred here in Capernaum and its surrounding area. The people of Nazareth wanted Jesus to do the things there that he had done in Capernaum (Lk. 4:23). But the many signs done in Capernaum drew heavy condemnation on those who did not repent (Matt. 11:20-24; Lk. 10:13-15).
6. Some of the miracles . . .
 - Cast out an unclean spirit (Lk. 4:31-37)
 - Healed Peter's mother-in-law (Lk. 4:38-39)
 - Healed paralytic lowered through a hole made in the roof (Matt. 9:1-8; Mk. 2:1-12; Lk. 5:17-26)
 - Healed the servant of the centurion who had build the synagogue (Lk. 7:1-10)
 - Healed woman of ongoing bleeding and raised the deceased daughter of the ruler of the synagogue (Lk. 8:40-56)

Application:

1. If you had lived in Capernaum how would you have responded to Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom? How would you have responded to His authoritative teaching? To His miracles?
2. What is the role of repentance in the preaching of the Kingdom?
3. What do you think is more important, Jesus' teaching about the Kingdom or the performance of the miracles? Why?
4. When you are trying to teach others about the kingdom do you think they have more problem believing in miracles or in repenting?
5. What will you do as a result of this study? How is your life changed by the preaching of the Kingdom?
6. In the worksheets you have been encouraged to "write a prayer of gratitude to God for graciously doing everything he can to help us believe in Jesus." Have you done that?