

The Mount of Beatitudes

Introduction

- It has been determined that the location of Jesus' teachings recorded in Matthew 5-7 took place on a hilltop one mile west of Capernaum.
- An octagonal church, *The Church of the Beatitudes*, was built near the site and each side of the church has panels representing the eight beatitudes found in *the Sermon on the Mount*.
 - ▶ *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.*
 - ▶ *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.*
- Because of the geographic location of the hills around the Sea of Galilee, this area was like an amphitheater. Jesus could speak and 5,000 could hear Him. This ability for people to hear Jesus speak was proven with special audio equipment at the site located beside the church. A person standing at the bottom of the hill could hear the person speaking from the top of the hill.
- The feeding of the 5,000 probably took place at the bottom of the Mount of Beatitudes.
- The first town Jesus entered after His teaching on the Mount of Beatitudes was Capernaum.



Jesus' ministry at the Sea of Galilee - Logos Maps

The Sermon on the Mount

Jesus' teachings in Matthew 5-7 are masterful presentations of kingdom truth. This passage of Scripture has been misunderstood as to its application for Christians. I believe it pictures what a Christian should look like who has been saved by grace. Of course, salvation is based on faith in Jesus Christ alone. Our righteousness is not possible by works because God demands perfection. Christians receive Jesus' perfection based on His unmerited favor. It is His provision not human performance. Mutua Mahiaini, a minister with *the Navigators* rightly declared, *One who draws on God's Mercy and grace is quick to repent, but also slow to sin.*



Church of the Beatitudes Grounds



The Church of the Beatitudes



The altar with panels



The hillside "amphitheater"



A view of the Church of the Beatitudes from the Sea of Galilee

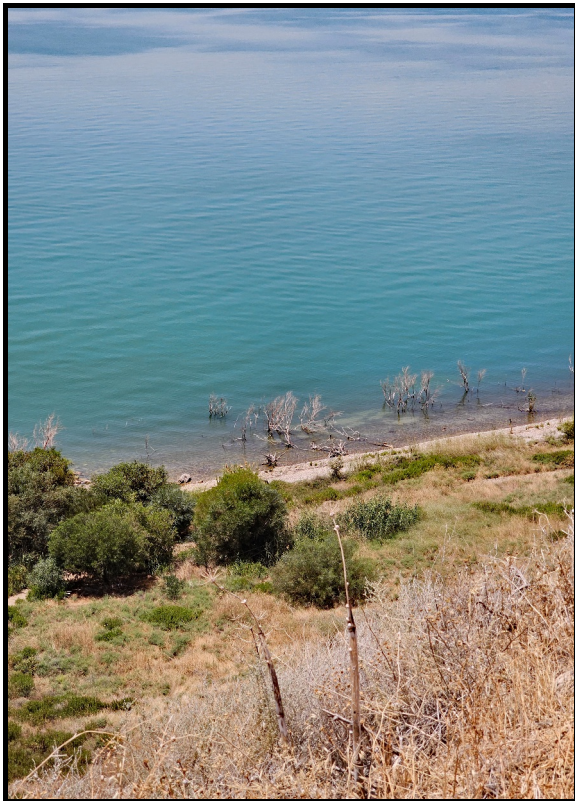
Kursi - Gergasa

Introduction

- Kursi on the northeastern side of the Sea of Galilee, was where Jesus gave the demons permission to leave the demoniac, a Gentile, and go into a large herd of pigs. They ran down a steep slope into the water and drowned. It is the only location around the Sea of Galilee where a steep hill runs directly into the Sea of Galilee.
- A short distance from the water's edge was Gergasa where a church now stands. A mountain rose above it, holding caves where the demoniac lived.
- The city of Hippos was south of Gergasa and was the home of the healed demoniac.
- This area was part of Decapolis, a region in the Golan Heights, on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was inhabited by Greek Gentiles who were loyal to the Romans.

Healing a demon possessed man

- The man was an outcast who lived in the tombs.
- He was supernaturally powerful and uncontrollable.
- He recognized Jesus and was afraid and asked not to be tormented.
- His request was that the demons not be sent away to the place of torment.
- Jesus granted the request to enter the pigs who immediately ran down the steep slope and drowned.
- R. Kent Hughes, *The swine stampeded unexpectedly, due to the shock of demonization, blindly charging into the lake to rid themselves of their new guests. Thus the demons were disembodied and, some scholars think, confined to the Abyss to await final judgment.*
- Thomas Constable, *Perhaps the people asked Jesus to leave their area because they reasoned that if He dealt so severely with evil He would eventually destroy them too.*
- William Taylor, *The Savior was better to the people than they knew. They asked Him to depart, but He left a representative behind Him who would act the part of a missionary among them.*
- It is easy to debate religion or doctrine but it is hard to deny a personal testimony with many witnesses and thousands of dead pigs.



The hill leading directly down to the water



Gary at the top of the hill now part of Israel