

## Jesus's Itinerant Ministry

Jesus had an itinerant ministry, taking Him to Jerusalem and Judea in the south, Samaria and Galilee in the north, even as far as Tyre and Sidon, and to the Ten Cities (the "Decapolis") on the east, being on the other side of the Jordan River and Sea of Galilee. Furthermore, Jesus's fame grew to the extent that "vast multitudes" traveled from Syria, Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan to see and hear Jesus (Matthew 4:24-25). The Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus came "to seek and to save" (Luke 19:10), and this observation is evidenced by His many travels.

After Jesus moved to Capernaum, He began by preaching all around Galilee, and teaching in the various synagogues: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among people" (Matthew 4:23) These miracles validated Jesus's message: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." (John 19:37-38)

Unlike a modern-day pastor whose sermons vary week to week, it is likely that Jesus repeatedly preached a nearly identical message in various locations, which explains the similarities between the "sermon on the mount" (Matthew 5-7) and the "sermon on the plain" (Luke 6:17-49). Although very much alike, these two locations tell us that Matthew and Luke were not recording the same sermon. Furthermore, these two locations tell us that Jesus preached in the outdoors as well as in synagogues, probably due to the size of the crowds.

The common topic of these two sermons is the gospel of the "kingdom", which Jesus announced was "near", "among you" and "in you". For example, the sermon on the mount begins with the statement: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3). Likewise, the sermon on the plain begins as follows: "Blessed by ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God."

In the sermon on the mount, there are repeated references to this kingdom: Matthew 5:3, 10, 19, 20; 6:10, 13, 33; 7:21. Best known of these references is Matthew 6:33, which reads: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."