

Matthew 9:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

Analysis

After healing the demon-possessed men in Gadara (8:28-34), Jesus returns to 'his own city' (την ιδιαν πολιν/tēn idian polin), referring to Capernaum. Though born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth, Capernaum became Jesus' ministry headquarters (4:13). The crossing by ship indicates the Sea of Galilee journey from Gentile territory back to Jewish Galilee. This transition sets up the healing of the paralytic (9:2-8), demonstrating Jesus' authority to forgive sins. The phrase 'his own city' emphasizes Jesus' true home is not merely geographical but relational—wherever He establishes His teaching and healing ministry. Capernaum's rejection of Jesus despite witnessing His mighty works would later bring severe judgment (11:23-24).

Historical Context

Capernaum was a thriving fishing village on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, with a population of approximately 1,500. Archaeological evidence reveals a prosperous first-century town with a synagogue, residential areas, and commercial fishing operations. The town sat on the Via Maris trade route, making it strategically important. Jesus chose Capernaum rather than Jerusalem as His Galilean base, fulfilling Isaiah 9:1-2. Matthew, a tax collector, would have worked in Capernaum collecting customs. Peter, Andrew, James, and John also resided there. Despite extensive miracles performed there, Capernaum ultimately rejected Jesus, leading to its prophesied destruction.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does Jesus' choice of Capernaum as His ministry base reveal about His mission strategy?
2. How does Jesus' identification with a specific community challenge our understanding of incarnational ministry?
3. Why would a town that witnessed so many miracles still reject Jesus ultimately?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	έμβας	εἰς	τὸ	πλοῖον	διεπέρασεν	καὶ	ῆλθεν	εἰς
And	he entered	into	G3588	a ship	and passed over	And	came	into
G2532	G1684	G1519		G4143	G1276	G2532	G2064	G1519

τὴν	ἰδίαν	πόλιν
G3588	his own	city
	G2398	G4172

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 4:13 (Parallel theme): And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

Luke 8:37 (Parallel theme): Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear: and he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

Mark 5:21 (Parallel theme): And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people gathered unto him: and he was nigh unto the sea.

Matthew 8:18 (Parallel theme): Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

Matthew 7:6 (Parallel theme): Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

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