

In search of...



Truth & Right

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The Garden of Ignorance

"Princely gardens" is the possible etymology for its name. This "garden" was renowned for its abundant water and fertile soil. Its fruits "had such high repute among the rabbis that they were not allowed in Jerusalem at the time of the feasts, lest any might be tempted to come merely for their enjoyment (Neubauer, Géog. du Talmud, 45 f). Apparently it was also the "garden" of forbidden, tempting fruit because they were such a delight. Its name was Gennesaret.

Another garden's name means "delight." Scripture records that a river within the garden (Genesis 2:10) gave it abundant water and that its soil produced fruit of every kind (Genesis 2:9). It too was renowned for its fruit – fruit producing eternal life plus forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:9) that was tempting because it was a "delight to the eye" (Genesis 3:6). Its name was Eden.

Jesus traveled to

Gennesaret (**Matthew 14:34**). God walked in Eden (**Genesis 3:8**).

Within Gennesaret, inhabiting one man, there were demons named "Legion" (**Mark 5:9**). Within Eden, invading man's land, there was THE demon, the devil, also known as Satan.

In Gennesaret, Incarnated God cast out the demons from the man. In Eden, God cast out man from the garden because of THE demon.

Within Gennesaret there are swine, ceremonially unclean to the people of God. What were swine doing in the land of God? God's people must have been unclean too. Within Eden there is Satan, the epitome of unclean, ceremonially, morally, spiritually and any other way. What was Satan doing in the garden of God? God's original people became spiritually unclean.

There are many lessons here for us to learn.

First, double check the facts because the above analysis is partially incorrect. All of the facts about both Gennesaret and Eden are true except "Gennesaret" is not where Jesus cast out demons. "Gerasenes" (**Mark 5:1; Luke 8:26**; also known as "Gadarenes" **Matthew 8:28**) is where Jesus cast out demons. Checking and double-checking

our facts takes work. Yet being right is worth the work. I thought Gennesaret and Gerasenes were the same place. I was wrong.

Second, don't assume anything. I figured since inspiration gave two different names ("Gerasenes," "Gadarenes") for the same region that this third similar name ("Gennesaret") although different, had to be the same place. This assumption came about due to my own unfamiliarity with the region and with the admittedly "weird" names. It is easy to get confused when we are unaccustomed to another culture. The danger here is reading our times into their times. The danger is interpreting first according to our culture instead of their culture. There is a difference between studying and assuming. I assumed Gennesaret was Gerasenes. I was wrong.

Third, not all comparisons are parallels. With all of the similarities between Eden and Gennesaret, I figured it had to be the place of demons being cast out. The Bible is filled with parallels that are rightly compared and divinely inspired. Not this time. I was wrong.

Fourth, it is too easy to find what we are looking for even if it is not there. Admittedly, there

are a lot of parallels between Gennesaret and Eden when it comes to the topic of fruit. Personally I think parallels are incredibly interesting and intriguing. Such a "type" of study is even Biblical. It is called "type" and "anti-type." Due to some linguistic mistakes coupled with my desire to find parallels, I thought Gennesaret was a type of Eden. I was wrong.

Fifth, we should always do our own study. It can be dangerous to take someone's word for it. Such a mistake as illustrated in this study might be spiritually innocuous. But some mistakes can be eternally damaging. Before my confession, did you know I was wrong?

Sixth, all of the above mistakes should not discourage us. Each mistake is based in truth.

One, we always must check our facts which only prove that facts can be checked and verified. We can know the truth.

Two, we should never assume to know the truth and should never be surprised at what truths we discover. The Bible is filled with complementary facts that harmonize and do not contradict. Scripture records many paradoxical truths. When we study Biblical cultures, languages, histories and customs, the outcome is learning more about how truth exemplified itself in their time. When we do that, then we can more adequately make application to our time.

Three, the Bible is filled with parallels; therefore we should look for them. Just because it is disproven in one text does not mean they do not exist in another. The parallels between Joseph and Jesus, for example, make for an enlightening study – and such parallels are not accidental. To discount such biblical methods of revealing truth is to miss out on God's imaginative teaching methods.

Four, while it is dangerous to look for what we want to find, and therefore risk finding what is not there; we should want to find truth. And if we truly and sincerely want to find truth, then we shall.

Five, searching the scriptures is a privilege that we should not leave up to others to do for us. The New Testament does not reveal any clergy system. None of us can be saved based upon the faith and knowledge of someone else. We need to study for ourselves.

And finally, being wrong from time to time can teach us valuable lessons about how to properly study if we are willing to admit, "I was wrong."

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Biblical Rivers

N B I T J N P E Z T Y A R K O N Q V V I
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- Naaman would have rather washed in this river (2 Kings 5:12)
- This was one of the boundaries of the Moabites (Judges 11:18)
- In Revelation, this great river of Mesopotamia is named (Rev. 9:14)
- Solomon was anointed king by this river (1 Kings 1:45)
- Shortly after crossing this, Jacob wrestled with God (Gen. 32:22)
- John baptized many to repentance in this river (Matt. 3:6)
- This mighty river of Egypt was turned to blood (Ex. 4:9)
- This river was also "better" than the rivers of Israel (2 Kings 5:12)
- One of four rivers described as being around Eden (Gen. 2:11)
- At this river of Babylon Daniel received a terrifying vision (Dan. 10:4)
- The Yarkon River formed the border between Dan and Ephraim