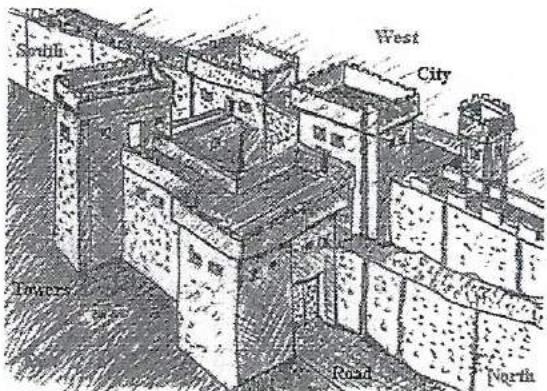
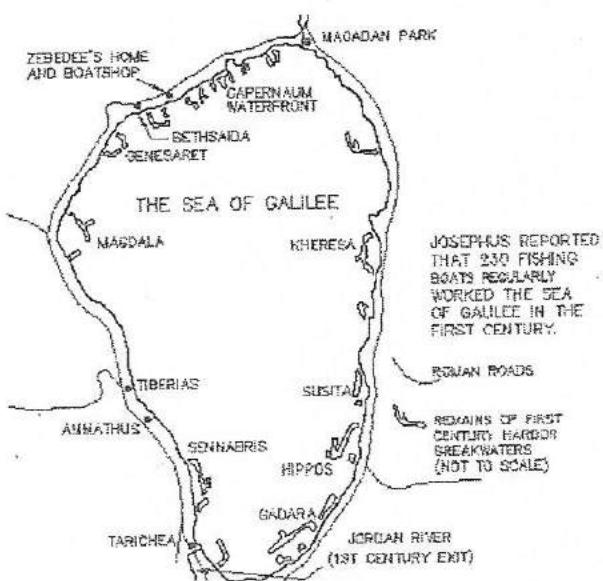
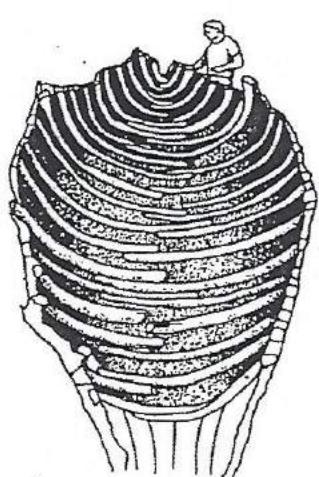


The Sea of Galilee:

Exciting Excavations along its Enchanting Shores

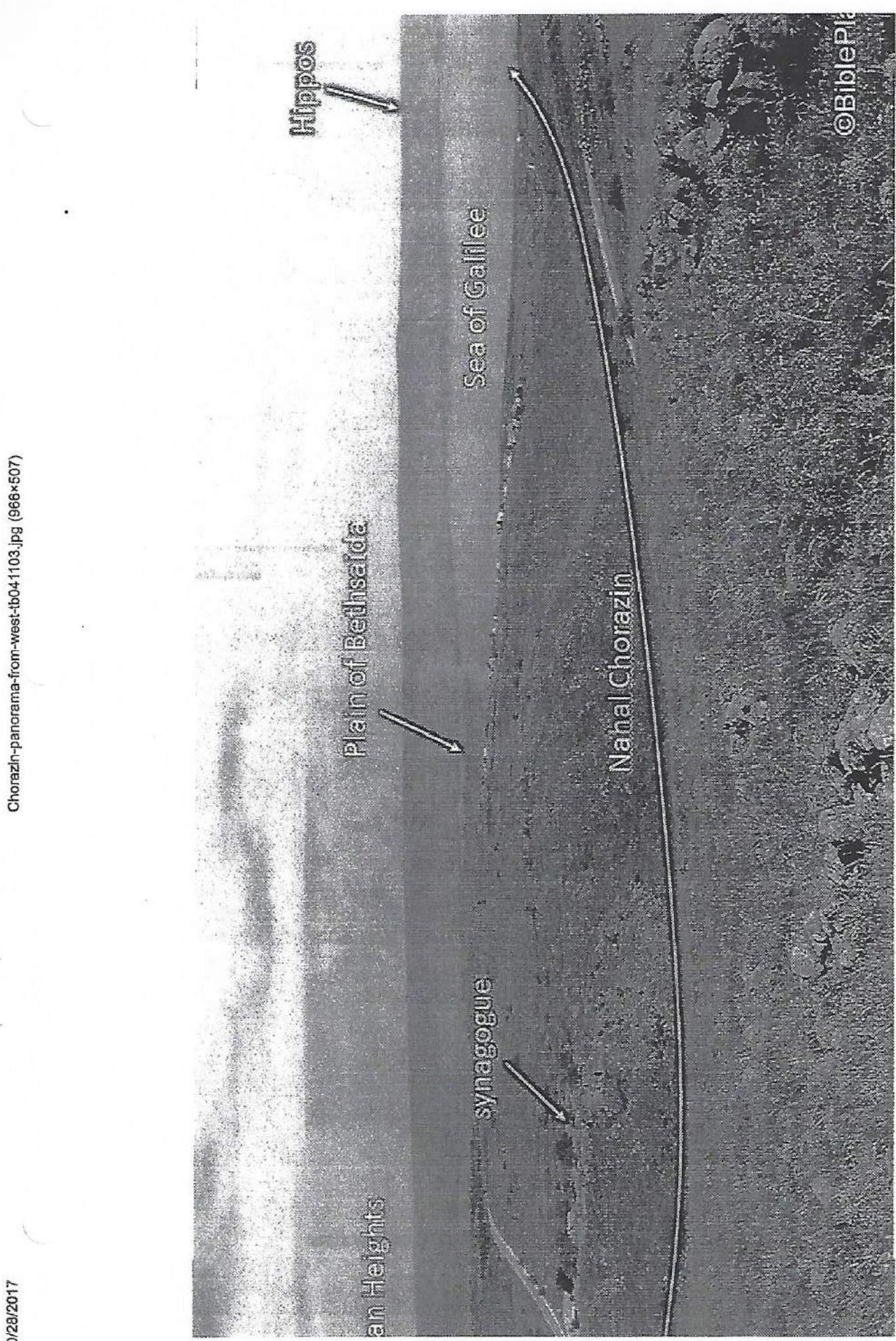


First Century Harbors on the Sea of Galilee



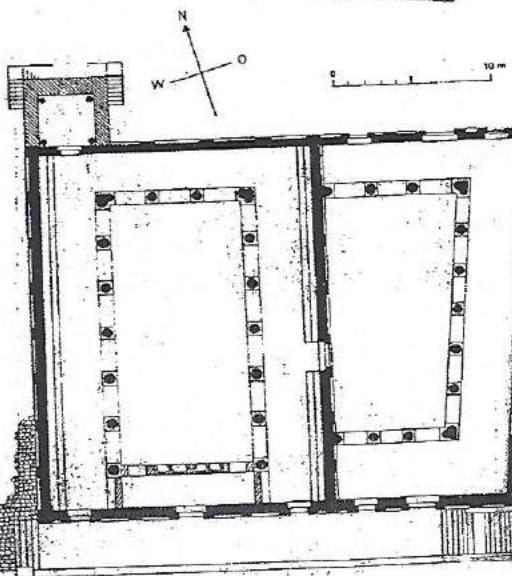
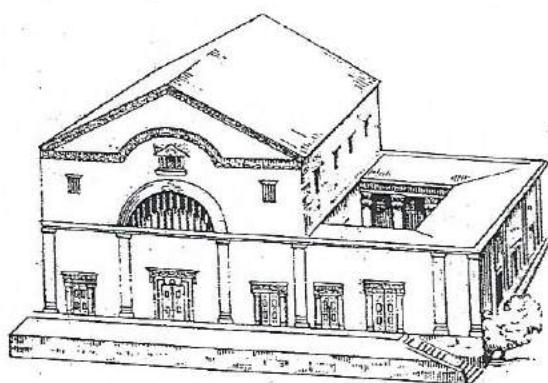
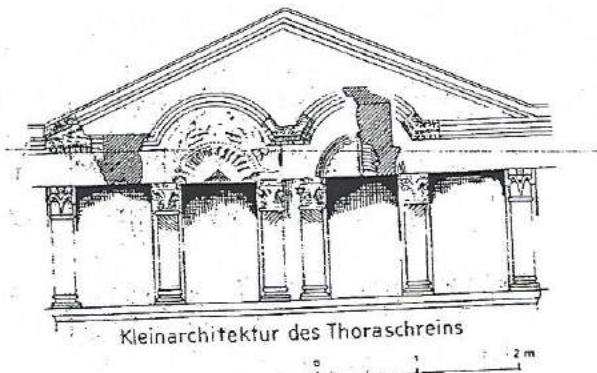
Seven Archeological Sites around the Sea of Galilee

1. *Chorazin*: a city under a curse
2. *Capernaum*: a synagogue and Peter's house,
3. *The Ancient Boat*: A discovery from the time of Jesus
4. *Magdala*: a Jewish/Christian village
5. *Susita*: spectacular mountain top city
6. *Bethsaida Julius*: strategic town of fishermen
7. *1st Century Harbors*: Mendel Nun's remarkable discoveries

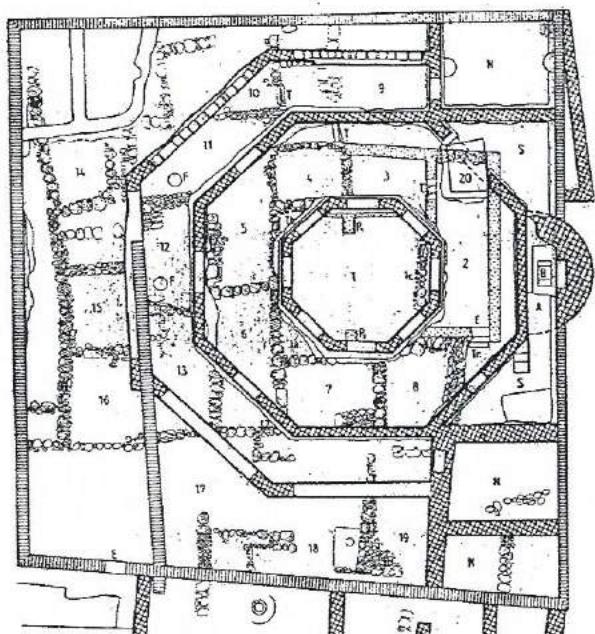


SYNAGOGE VON KAPHARNAUM

(nach H. Kohl / C. Watzinger und G. Orfali)



PETER'S HOUSE



- Mauerreste: 1.Jh.n.Chr.
- Mauerreste: Spätere Zeit
- Hauskirche der Juden-Christen
- Umfriedungsmauer
- Byz.Basilika: 1.Hälfte des 5.Jh.
- 1 Haus des Petrus
- 2-4 Hofräume
- 5-19 Wohnräume
- 20 Späterer Einbau (?)
- A Apsis
- B Taufbecken
- S Sakristei
- N Nebenräume
- E Eingang
- F Feuerstelle
- P, P₂ Pfeiler
- T Türschwelle
- T Treppen

0 5 10 m



Mary, the mother of Jesus, made her way to Capernaum with her other sons (Matthew 12:46, 48-49). It was here that Christ uttered the memorable words, "Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!"

Miracles of Christ in Capernaum

Partial list...

- Cast evil spirit from a man in the local synagogue on the Sabbath (Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:33-36) and the demon confessed "I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God." (Luke 4:34)
- Simon's mother-in-law instantly healed on the Sabbath of a serious fever and then she immediately helped serve Simon's guests (Luke 4:38-39)
- All the sick of Capernaum came to Simon's house after the end of Sabbath (sunset), and all were healed by Jesus (Luke 4:40-41), as "all the city was gathered together at the door" (Mark 1:29-34)
- Demons cast out of many people, and the devils confessed that Christ is the Son of God (Luke 4:41)
- Dead daughter of Jairus raised (Mark 5:22; Luke 8:41)
- Paralyzed man let down through the roof and instantly fully healed (Mark 2:1-12)
- Jesus caused four of the disciples to catch fish in a miraculous way (Luke 5:1-11)
- Through a fish, Jesus supplied tribute tax money needed by Peter (Matthew 17:24-27)
- Healing of the centurion's servant afflicted with palsy (Matthew 8:5-13)
- Healing of the son of a nobleman in the King's court (Herod Antipas) (John 4:46-54)



Jesus restored the life of the Capernaum synagogue ruler's daughter.

Despite the unique number of evidences our Lord presented to them, most of the people of Capernaum lacked faith in Him and remained unrepentant disbelievers. Because they turned so strongly away from the uniquely gracious light given, they were strongly judged.

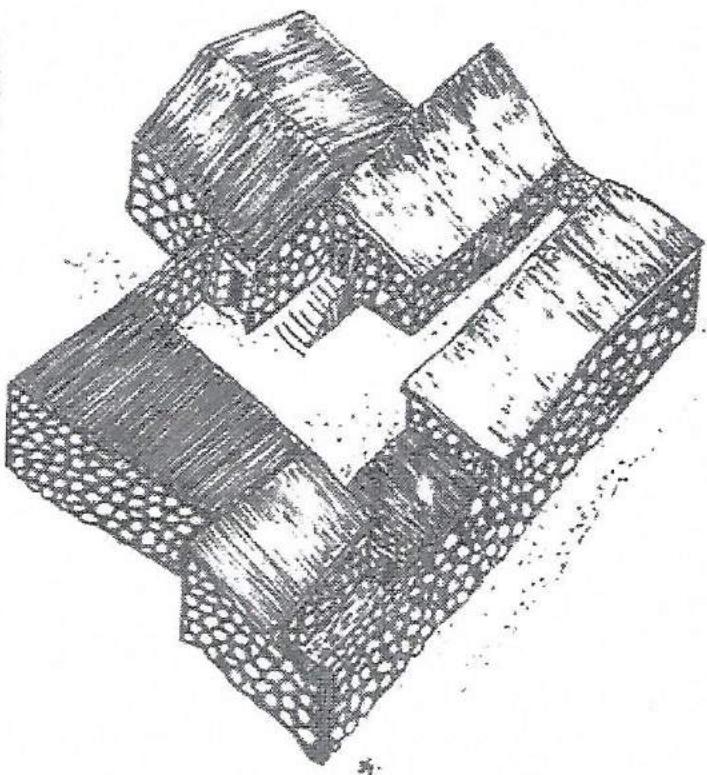
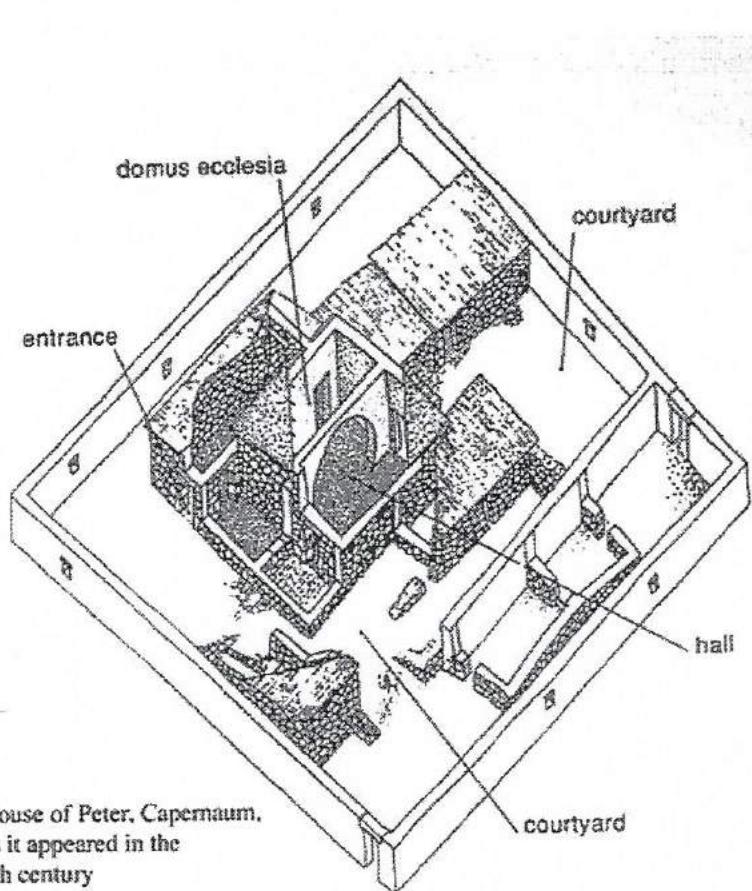
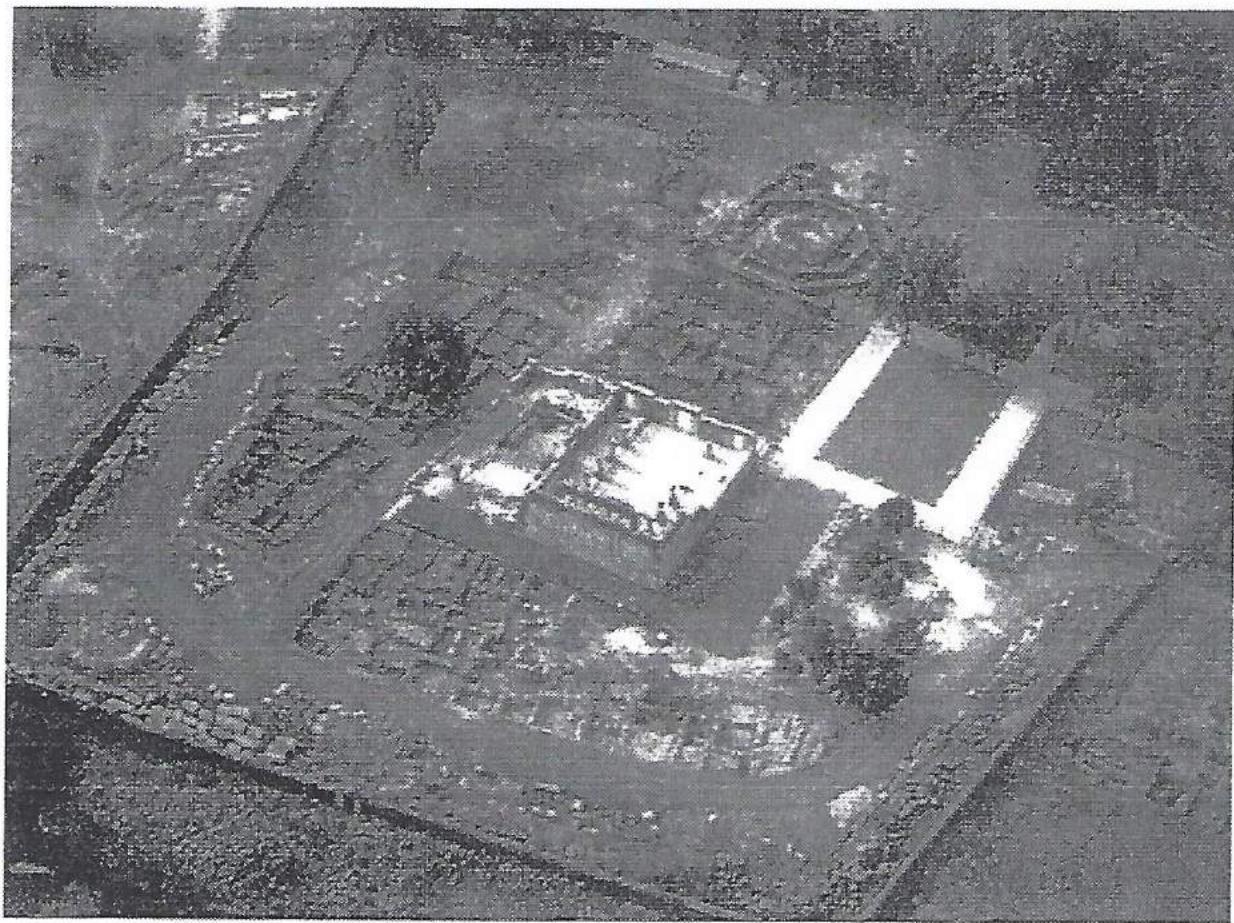
"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required..." (Luke 12:48).

Thus, along with nearby Chorazin and Bethsaida, Capernaum received a very stern warning from Jesus (Matthew 11:21-24).

"It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee."

Ultimately, the cities were all destroyed, and Capernaum became virtually uninhabited ruins for centuries.

Today, Capernaum's inhabitants include a Greek Orthodox Church and a Franciscan Monastery.



House of Peter, Capernaum,
as it appeared in the
5th century

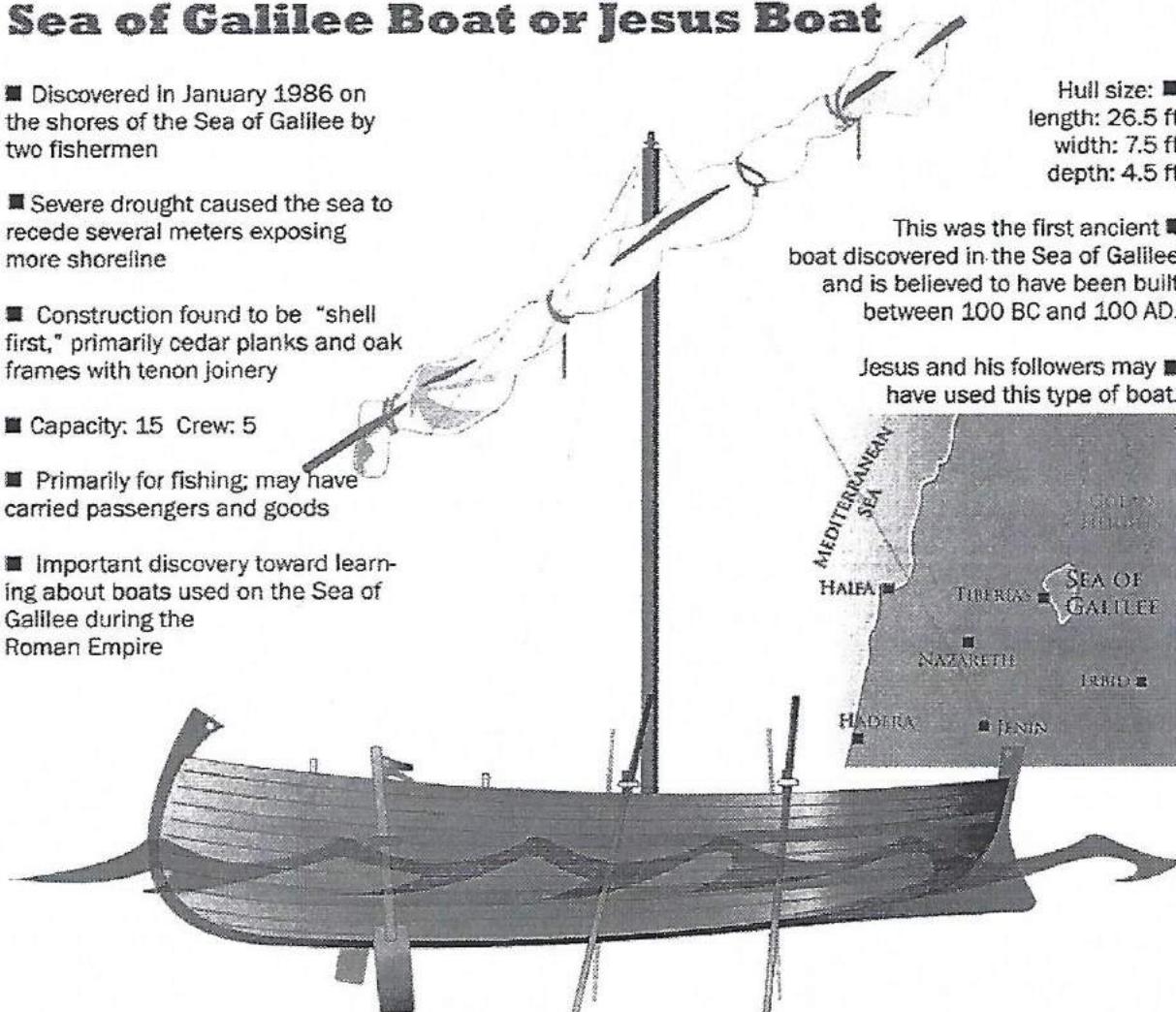
Sea of Galilee Boat or Jesus Boat

- Discovered in January 1986 on the shores of the Sea of Galilee by two fishermen
- Severe drought caused the sea to recede several meters exposing more shoreline
- Construction found to be "shell first," primarily cedar planks and oak frames with tenon joinery
- Capacity: 15 Crew: 5
- Primarily for fishing; may have carried passengers and goods
- Important discovery toward learning about boats used on the Sea of Galilee during the Roman Empire

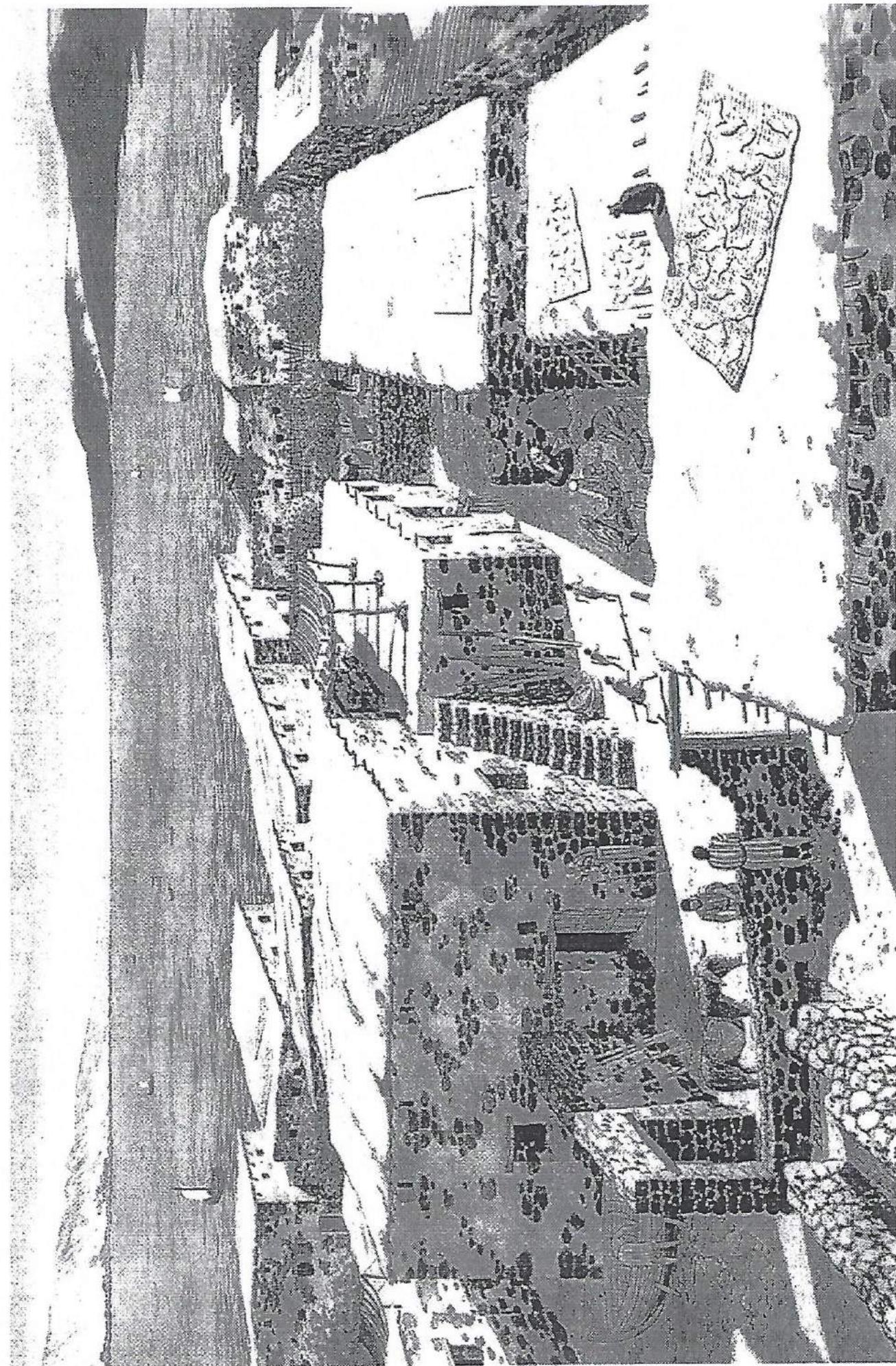
Hull size: ■
length: 26.5 ft
width: 7.5 ft
depth: 4.5 ft

This was the first ancient ■ boat discovered in the Sea of Galilee and is believed to have been built between 100 BC and 100 AD.

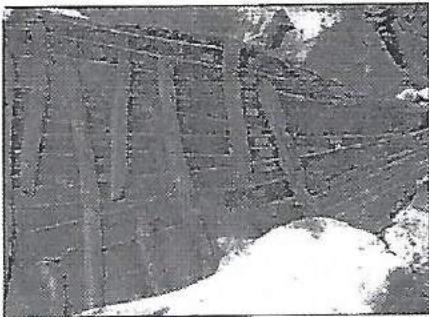
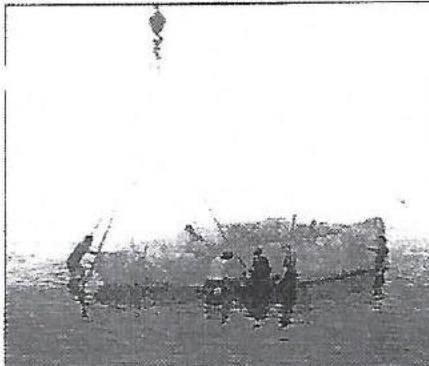
Jesus and his followers may ■ have used this type of boat.



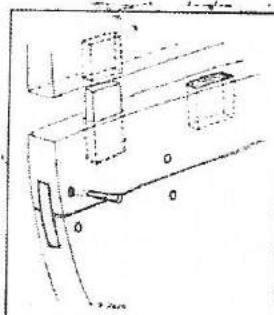
Copyright 2008 Logos Bible Software/ Artist Mike Johnson



Capernaum - House of Peter.jpg (1200x774)



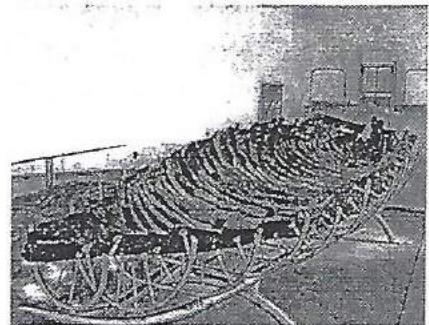
Red tags identify parts of the stern, white



Mortise and tenon construction

Sea of Galilee Boat

The **Ancient Galilee Boat**, also known as the **Jesus Boat**, is an ancient fishing boat from the 1st century AD, discovered in 1986 on the north-west shore of the **Sea of Galilee** in **Israel**. The remains of the boat, 27 feet (8.27 meters) long, 7.5 feet (2.3 meters) wide and with a maximum preserved height of 4.3 feet (1.3 meters), first appeared during a drought, when the waters of the Sea (actually a great fresh-water lake) receded.^[1] There is no evidence connecting the boat to Jesus or his disciples.



The 'Ancient Galilee Boat' housed in the Yigal Allon Museum in Kibbutz Ginosar

Discovery and excavation

The remains of the Ancient Galilee Boat were found by brothers Moshe and Yuval Lufan, fishermen from **Kibbutz Ginosar**. The brothers were keen amateur **archaeologists** with an interest in discovering **artifacts** from Israel's past. It had always been their hope to one day discover a boat in the Sea of Galilee, where they and generations of their family had fished. When drought reduced the water-level of the lake, the two brothers examined the newly exposed beach and stumbled across the remains of the boat buried in the shore.

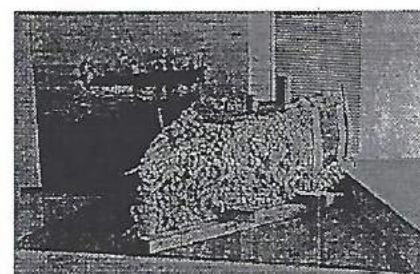
The brothers reported their discovery to the authorities who sent out a team of archaeologists to investigate. Realising that the remains of the boat were of tremendous historical importance to **Jews** and **Christians** alike, an archaeological dig followed, undertaken by members of Kibbutz Ginosar, the **Israel Antiquities Authority**, and numerous volunteers. Rumour spread that the boat was full of gold and the dig had to be guarded night and day. Excavating the boat from the mud without damaging it, quickly enough to extract it before the water rose again, was a difficult process which lasted 12 days and nights. The ancient wood was extremely fragile when exposed to the atmosphere and the boat had to be rescued from the place it was found by wrapping it in a mantle of fiberglass and insulating foam, which helped with both keeping it together, and floating it to its new location. It was then submerged in a chemical bath for 10 years before it could be displayed at the **Yigal Allon Galilee Boat Museum** in Kibbutz Ginosar.



The boat on display in its special climatised museum hall

Physical parameters

The boat's construction conforms to other boats constructed in that part of the Mediterranean during the period between 100 BC and AD 200. Constructed primarily of cedar planks joined together by pegged **mortise** and **tenon** joints and nails, the boat is shallow drafted with a flat bottom, allowing it to get very close to the shore while fishing. However, the boat is composed of ten different wood types, suggesting either a wood shortage or that the boat was made of scrap wood and had undergone extensive and repeated fixes. The boat was row-able, with four staggered rowers, and also had a mast allowing the fisherman to sail the boat.^[1]



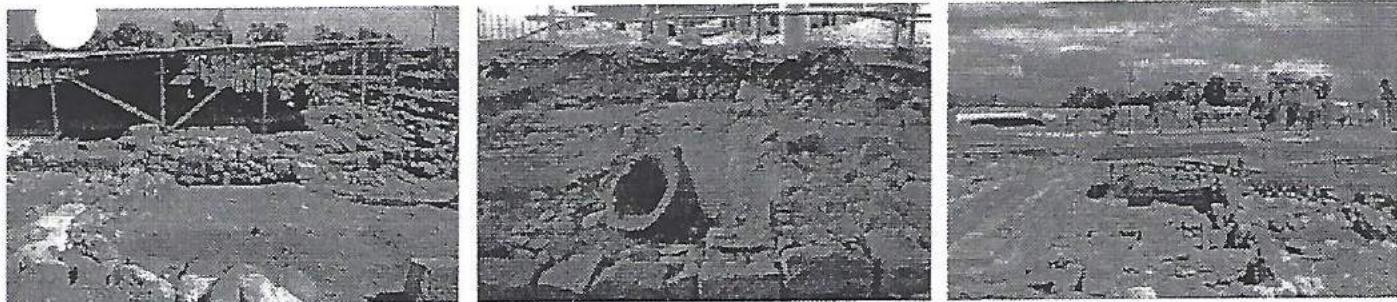
Part of the insulating foam coating used to float and rescue the boat

Dating the boat

The boat has been dated to 40 BC (plus or minus 80 years) based on **radiocarbon dating**,^[2] and 50 BC to AD 50 based on **pottery** (including a cooking pot and lamp) and nails found in the boat, as well as hull construction techniques. The evidence of repeated repairs shows the boat was used for several decades, perhaps nearly a century. When its fishermen owners thought it was beyond repair, they removed all useful wooden parts and the hull eventually sank to the bottom of the lake. There it was covered with mud which prevented bacterial decomposition.

Historical importance

The Galilee Boat is historically important to Jews as an example of the type of boat used by their ancestors in the 1st century for both fishing and transportation across the lake. Previously only references made by Roman authors, the Bible and mosaics had provided archeologists insight into the construction of these types of vessels.^[3] The boat is also important to Christians because this was the sort of boat used by Jesus and his **disciples**, several of whom were fishermen.^[4] Boats such as this played a large role in Jesus' life and ministry, and are mentioned 50 times in the **Gospels**, though there is no evidence connecting the Sea of Galilee Boat itself directly to Jesus or his disciples.



Next: The Magdala Stone (<http://www.magdala.org/visit/archeological-park/the-magdala-stone/>)

In the synagogue, archeologists discovered the sculpted "Magdala Stone," considered by many experts to be one of the most outstanding discoveries of the last 50 years. Carved into the Stone is the oldest Menorah found to date, as well as the only Chariot of Fire found in Israeli archeology. All of the symbols on the Stone are related to the Second Temple. Fr. Kelly says there are currently many theories about the Stone's purpose and meaning and speculation will continue for a long time.

Not only did archeologists find the synagogue, they unearthed an entire town—the ancient town of Magdala, believed to be the home town of Mary Magdalene. So far, the dig has uncovered three ritual purification baths, supplied by fresh spring water (the highest of the six possible gradations of water quality for a ritual purification bath, according to experts), market places, residential areas, thousands of first century coins (including numerous "widow's mites"), lots of period pottery, and even a Roman sword in its sheath. In addition, the infrastructure for fish processing has been discovered. A similar one exists in Spain, but it's not nearly as complex and well developed, according to Fr. Kelly.

"Flavius Josephus reported that fish processed in Magdala was sold in the markets in Rome and that has now been validated," he said.

Another significant finding is the market place of the first century port. It was here that fishermen brought their catch to sell for export. It is a significant place for Christians as it is likely where the disciples who were fishermen sold their fish. (Flavius Josephus also wrote that 240 boats sailed away with women and children from this port before the Romans crushed the Jewish rebellion in 67-68.) Wharf structures of the port area have also been uncovered, and much more needs to be excavated.

Pages: 1 [2](#)

WANT MORE STORIES LIKE THIS?
SIGN UP FOR OUR DAILY NEWSLETTER

Email Address

SIGN ME UP!

Tags: [CHURCH HISTORY](#)

(Corbo 1976; 1978). This monumental thoroughfare may be a local urban segment of the famous *Via Maris* highway that continued north connecting Palestine with Syria. Although Magdala was never proclaimed a *Polis*, these Roman-period remains demonstrate a high-level of urban sophistication and economic prosperity.

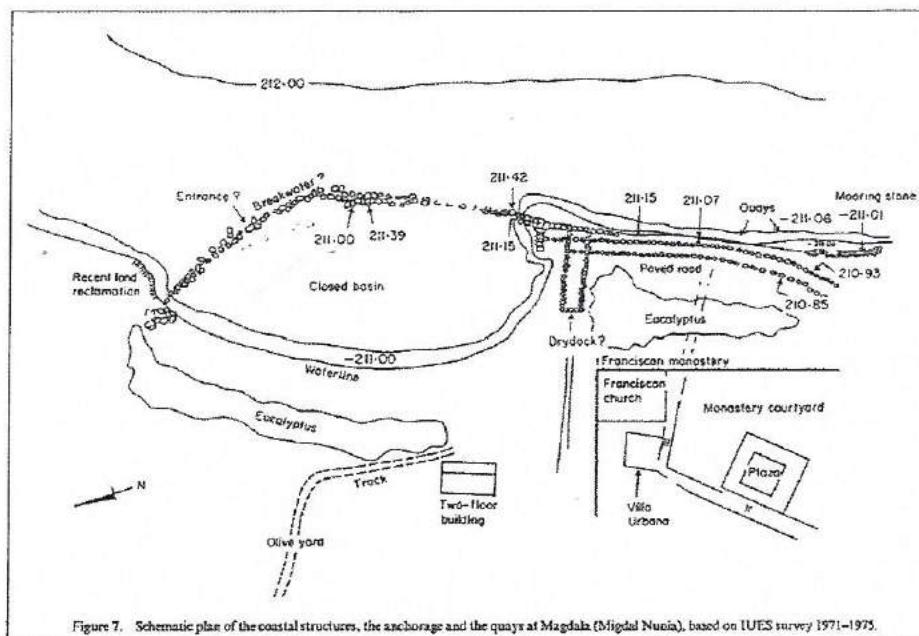
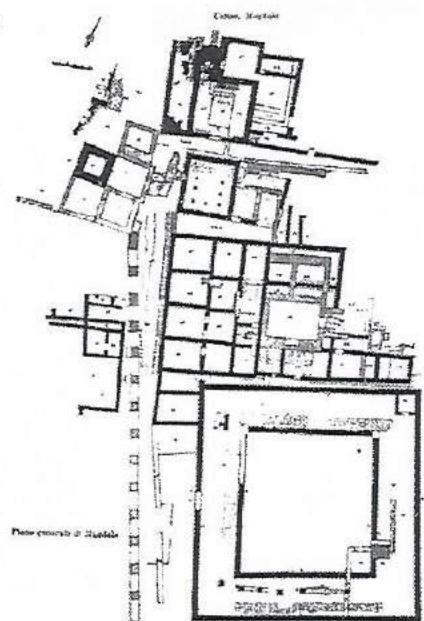


Figure 7. Schematic plan of the coastal structures, the anchorage and the quays at Magdala (Magdal Nunia), based on IUES survey 1971-1975.



Other main Roman-period elements in Magdala include the as-yet unexcavated remains of a large anchorage and shore-facilities complex on the shore opposite the Roman-period center of the town (Raban 1988: 322-323; Nun 1992: 34-35), and fragmentary remains of private and public buildings and stone-pavements uncovered in several salvage and trial excavations undertaken during the last 25 years to the north, west and south of the Franciscan compound (e.g. Stepansky 1986; Abu 'Uqsa 2001; Avshalom-Gorni, forthcoming). Today (2007) all remains discovered in the salvage excavations outside the Franciscan compound are covered over, while the anchorage is concealed either under high-tide water or under-tide vegetation and silt.

Substantial 1st century C.E. remains of the town center, most of which can still be seen today, are a unique witness to an affluent Jewish community at Magdala in eastern Galilee during the time of Jesus. These include impressive private and public buildings and installations: a mosaic-paved villa, a 'nymphaeum', a colonnaded *piazza*, a large multi-roomed water-canalled structure, a monumental road and a well-built promenade and harbor complex whose remains are exposed in low tide. The latter's 1st century date (Raban 1988: 322) has been strengthened by similarly-dated underwater finds found in different locations on the floor bed of the lake (Fritsch and Ben-Dor 1961: 57-59) and by the discovery of a 1st century C.E. fishing boat that was embedded in the mud on the shore of the lake 1.5 km north-east of Magdala (Wachsmann 1990; 1995; see also below, the anchorages of the Sea of Galilee).

Moreover, the recent 2005 excavations along the route of the salt-water canal (Avshalom-Gorni, forthcoming) have proven that 1st century Magdala was in fact a large town, extending hundreds of meters from north to south along the shores of the lake.

From the Byzantine period, during which Magdala witnessed a decline in settlement intensity and even may not have been an inhabited town per say (Liebner 2004: 317-318; 2006a: 117-118), remains of a large (33 X 104 m²) mosaic-paved monastery were found overlying the southern part of the Roman town, extending beyond and south of the Franciscan compound 87 where a bathhouse was also excavated in the 1990's (Corbo 1974: 7-18; Abu 'Uqsa 2001:321).

A continuation of presence at the site was also recorded from the Early Islamic period, from which parts of an 8th-9th centuries large building, probably a church, were discovered overlying the bathhouse, while above those remains flimsy Mamluke period (13th-15th centuries) remnants were recorded (Abu 'Uqsa 2001: 321). Close to ground-level remains of a Moslem cemetery were found, of which the white-domed tomb of Sheikh Muhammad er Razlan adjacent to the modern Tiberias – Migdal road is the only still-visible remnant.

[0 Comment](#)



Cone-shaped structure was apparently built on dry land some 6,000 years ago, resembles early European burial sites. A team of researchers from Tel Aviv University discovered an underwater monument in the Sea of Galilee that they believe may have been a Bronze Age burial site. Jun 11, 2013

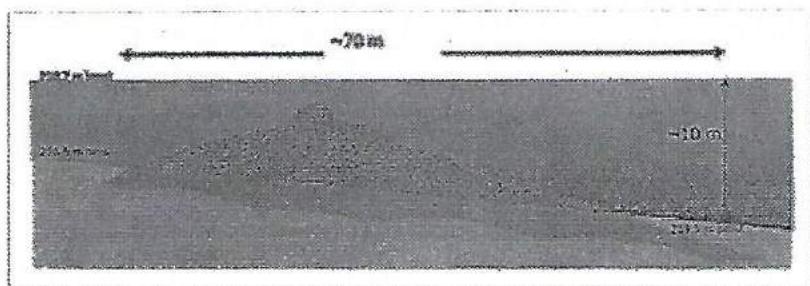
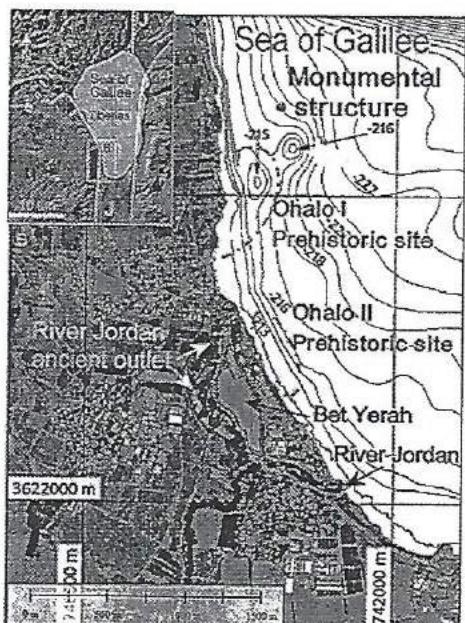
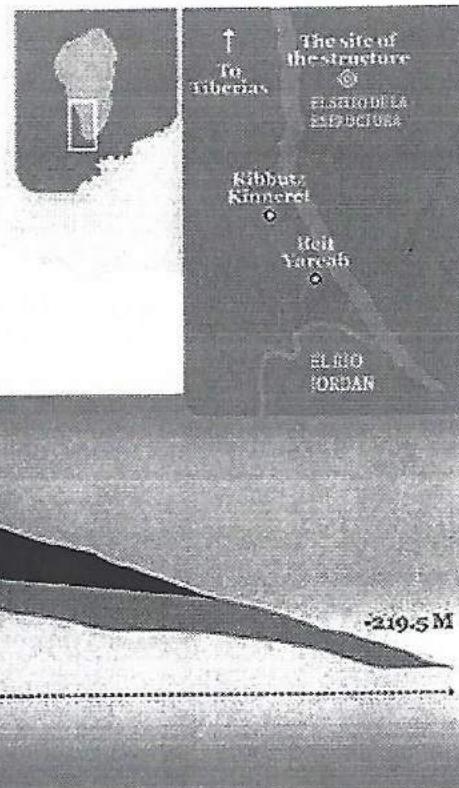


Diagram courtesy of Shmuel Marco

Putting all the data together researchers found that the structure is cone shaped, about 230 feet (70 meters) in diameter and nearly 32 feet (10 meters) tall. It weighs an estimated 80,000 tons.



Archaeology in Israel: Bethsaida

Bethsaida is known as the birthplace of three of the Apostles – Peter, Andrew and Philip. Jesus himself visited Bethsaida and performed several miracles there. (Mark 8:22-26; Luke 9:10)

Et-Tel, the mound identified as ancient Bethsaida, is located on a basaltic spur north of the Sea of Galilee, near the inflow of the Jordan River into the Sea of Galilee. The tel covers some 20 acres and rises 30 meters above a fertile valley. Geological and geomorphological studies show that in the past this valley was part of the Sea of Galilee. A series of earthquakes caused silt to accumulate, thus creating the valley and causing the north shore of the Sea of Galilee to recede. The result of this process, which continued until the Hellenistic period, was that Bethsaida, which had originally been built on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, came to be situated some 1.5 km. north of the shore.

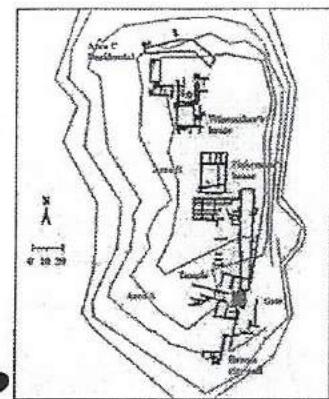
The name Bethsaida means "house of the hunt" in Hebrew. Identification of Et-Tel with the site mentioned in the New Testament was proposed as early as 1838 by Robinson, but was not accepted by most contemporary researchers; yet excavations conducted since 1987 have confirmed the identification.

Biblical Period

The excavations revealed that the settlement at Bethsaida was founded in the 10th century BCE, in the biblical period. By that time the areas north and east of the Sea of Galilee were part of the Aramaean kingdom of Geshur. Its royal family, which ruled for several generations, was connected by marriage to the Davidic dynasty. King David married Ma'acha, daughter of the King of Geshur; she was the mother of Absalom, who later found refuge in the Land of Geshur. (II Samuel 3:3; 14:32) Archeological excavations conducted at the site revealed impressive structures and fortifications, and the excavator therefore surmises that during this period Bethsaida was the capital city of the Kingdom of Geshur and the seat of its monarchs.

The city was divided into two parts: a lower city, extending over most of the mound; and an upper city – the acropolis – on the higher, northeastern part of the mound. During the 9th century BCE, the acropolis was surrounded by a massive, fortified wall with a gate, constructed of large basalt stones. The 6-m.-wide wall, together with buttresses projecting from both sides, reached a width of 8 m.

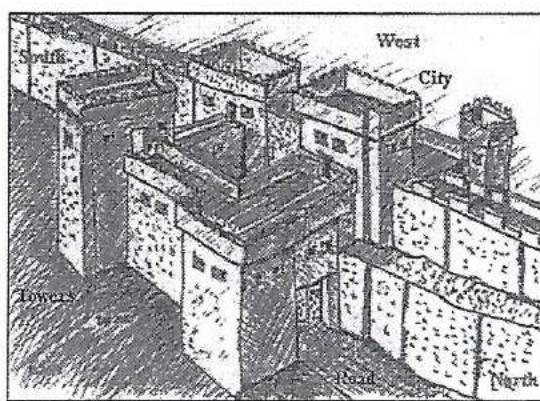
The city gate complex discovered on the eastern side of the tel consisted of an outer and an inner gateway. The outer gateway included a passageway between two massive towers; thus far, only the western tower, measuring 10 x 8 m., has been excavated. In the outer gateway, a 30-m.-long walkway paved with flat basalt stones led to the "four-room" inner gatehouse, typical of this period and measuring 35 x 17.5 m. It is preserved to an impressive height of 3 m. This is the largest city gate of the biblical period excavated in Israel. It is constructed of large basalt stones, some slightly trimmed, laid in courses. Above the stone structure stood a brick superstructure, both entirely coated with light plaster. Two huge projecting towers, 10 x 6 m. each, protected the entrance to the gate. The threshold of the gate consisted of large basalt stones with depressions that served as door-hinge sockets.



An illustration of the Iron-age city gate and walls - viewed from the external (eastern) side - is illustrated on the right. The width of the city walls was a massive 6M, with additional 2M for the supporting walls (buttresses).

The gate complex was composed of four towers, measuring between 6M x 6M to 8M x 10M. The two eastern towers were thoroughly destroyed in the Assyrian (8th C BC) assault, and were not in use in the later Roman period walls.

A paved road followed the outer side of the eastern walls, and entered through an outer gateway between the two northern towers, entering a courtyard between the four towers. It then turned west into an inner gateway, passing between a four-room inner gatehouse measuring 35 x 17.5M.



Inner Gate section

The photo below shows a south-western view of the inner side of the gate. The room on the right was a large storage room, adjacent to the two southern chambers.

