**Jesus in Galilee**

Pastor Emeritus Joe Fuiten, October 17, 2018

**Day 4, Tuesday, April 30** we visit the Mount of Beatitudes, Capernaum, St. Peter’s Primacy, Magdala, the ancient boat, and take a boat on the Sea of Galilee before retiring to our hotel.

Our first two sessions in this series covered Caesarea, Carmel, and Megiddo which are the places we cover on the first full day of touring on our 2019 tour. This sessions covers portions of Galilee which we will visit on our second full day of touring.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem but grew up in Nazareth (other than his early stint in Egypt.) He lived in Nazareth until his ministry began. He was not well received in Nazareth. In fact the people he grew up with tried to kill him. That apparently was sufficient motivation for him to make his way to Capernaum which would become his new home base for the three years of his public ministry.

Matthew 4:13-16 has that transition. “*He went first to Nazareth, then left there and moved to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.14 This fulfilled what God said through the prophet Isaiah: 15 “In the land of Zebulun and of Naphtali, beside the sea, beyond the Jordan River, in Galilee where so many Gentiles live, 16 the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light. And for those who lived in the land where death casts its shadow, a light has shined.” 17 From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.”*

The text has a couple of points I want to note. First, this was the beginning of his preaching about the Kingdom of heaven. We will go into more detail when we read Mark’s Gospel. Jesus would continue that theme right up until the time he ascended into heaven. The presence of so many Gentiles mixed in with Jews would give his ministry a cosmopolitan potential right from the start.

**Gentiles--** Maybe the next two things to note about Capernaum tell the same story. There was a tax collector there. The Roman road, as indicated by a Roman milestone, passed through Capernaum making it a good place to collect a toll. Governments apparently figured out a long time ago that another way to get money from people is to make them pay for the roads again. We know the name of the tax collector collecting tolls from the traffic of goods on the main road. His name was Levi, son of Alphaeus (Matthew), whom Jesus called to be his disciple.

The other Gentile evidence was the presence of a Centurion with the hundred soldiers with him. They were stationed permanently at Capernaum. The presence of a toll or tax collector and a military force suggested Capernaum was a city of some influence.

The city, with an estimated population of 10,000, was the site of many miracles of Jesus. They included Jesus healing Peter’s mother-in-law, recorded in Matthew 8:14-15, which would indicate Peter also lived there. It would also indicate the marital status of Peter!

Among the other miracles that Jesus did here was the healing of a demoniac (Mark 1:21-28), the man sick with palsy who was let down through the roof by his four friends (Mark 2:1-13), the healing of the nobleman’s son (John 4:46-54), and a number of other sick people (Matthew 8, Mark 1, and Luke 4).

In 1968 a probe beneath a fifth century octagonal church revealed the traces of a fisherman’s quarter. Pilgrim’s graffiti led some to say it was the house of Peter. A pilgrim named Egeria, who visited around 381-384 wrote, “In Capernaum out of the house of the first of the apostles a church was made, the walls of which stand until today as they once were.” The recently built church on the site is over the octagonal structure that was the home of Jesus and Peter. To me, the archaeological evidence is quite strong that this was the actual place.

Just as Jesus once came to Galilee it appears Galilee may have something to do with his return. The “Sea of Galilee” is not really a sea but is roughly the same size as Lake Washington. It is the main water source for the country with its water being piped all the way to the southern end of the country. In various years the water level drops because of a lack of rain or snow in the mountains. There was an article in Israel Today on September 8, 2016 which offers an interesting commentary on the low levels. Here is how they ended the article: “*And while this danger is lost on no one, some are pointing out that the drying up of the Sea of Galilee was foretold millennia ago, and could be connected to the coming of Messiah. According to ancient Talmudic sage Rabbi Yehuda, “in the generation when the Son of David comes, the house of assembly will be for harlots, Galilee in ruins, Gablan [the rivers of the Golan] lie desolate.” (Sanhedrin 97a) This prediction is tied to Isaiah 19:5, which reads: “And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be drained dry.” In* [*remarks to Breaking Israel News*](http://www.breakingisraelnews.com/75299/island-appearing-sea-galilee-presage-messiah-son-david/#XZhu2Fqjv6ix8QPe.99)*, Rabbi Yosef Berger, the rabbi of David’s Tomb in Jerusalem, explained that “the Talmud is full of signs that indicate the coming of the Messiah, and every single one of them is undeniably coming true.*”

Here is a completely random fact. Note the 666 text of Psalms

*“He turned the sea into dry land; they went through the river on foot; there let us rejoice in Him!”* [*Psalms 66:6 (The Israel Bible™)*](http://theisraelbible.com/bible/psalms/chapter-66/#verse-6)

Island Reappearing in Rapidly Depleting Sea of Galilee Could Signal Beginning of Messianic Prophecy

By [Adam Eliyahu Berkowitz](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/author/adam_berkowitz/) [September 7, 2016 , 12:30 pm](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/75299/island-appearing-sea-galilee-presage-messiah-son-david/)

Rabbi Yehuda, a Talmudic sage, states that one of the signs presaging the Messiah will be that the Sea of Galilee and Gablan, the upper Jordan River in the Golan, will become desolate and destroyed (“*khorban*” in Hebrew).

This Talmudic prophecy is consistent with the verse in Isaiah, which uses the same word, *khorban*, to describe rivers drying up in the days of the Messiah.

*And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be drained dry.* [*Isaiah 19:5*](http://theisraelbible.com/bible/isaiah/chapter-19#verse-5)

The year began with the sea at the lowest level since 1926. As it stands today, 38 feet shy of being full, the Sea of Galilee has never before been so close to fulfilling this prophecy.

The [*Zohar*](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/62890/prominent-rabbi-confirms-nibiru-possible-jewish-world/), the foundational work of Jewish mysticism, cites the Galilee as the place in which the beginnings of the Messiah can first be seen.

*The Messiah… will arise in the land of Galilee… the Messiah shall reveal himself in the land of Galilee because in this part of the Holy Land the desolation (Babylonian exile) first began, therefore he will manifest himself there first. [Zohar III, Shemoth 7b, 8b, 220a; Otzar Midrashim, 466]*

When considered alongside a prophecy in Zechariah which states that in the times of the Messiah water will flow from Jerusalem, it is clear that great changes are coming. *And it shall come to pass in that day that living waters shall go out from* [*Yerushalayim*](http://theisraelbible.com/glossary/yerushalayim/)*: half of them toward the eastern sea and half of them toward the western sea; in summer and in winter shall it be.* [*Zechariah 14:8*](http://theisraelbible.com/bible/zechariah/chapter-14#verse-8)

The big picture created by these different prophecies demonstrate how drastically the Messianic process will alter the land. Jerusalem, a dry mountaintop city, will become a source of flowing water while the Galilee and Jordan, perennial sources of Israel’s water, will become desolate and dry. In yet another turnaround, the [Dead Sea](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/72711/fulfillment-dead-sea-prophecy-begun/#iFB5DtSPgh7poAFS.97) will fill up with life in the days of the Messiah.

Rabbi [Yosef Berger](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/64082/special-torah-scroll-written-messiah-completed-photos-jewish-world/#wcriJhWbyyReWit1.97), the rabbi of David’s Tomb in Jerusalem, explained that we should understand the destruction of the Galilee as the drought that is occurring right now.

Rabbi Yosef Berger. (Courtesy David’s Tomb)

“That [section](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/60354/doomsday-clock-set-three-minutes-midnight-but-what-does-bible-say-jewish-world/#t7HCRjlzmyjSxKWu.97) of the Talmud is full of signs that indicate the coming of the Messiah, and every single one of them is undeniably coming true,” Rabbi Berger explained.

“The simple reading of the prophecy in the Talmud is that the cities in the [Galilee](https://www.breakingisraelnews.com/71210/ezekiel-368-coming-fruition-galilee-olive-grove/#AhP1m4KglmJc9ZLq.97) will be destroyed,

For sure Jesus called people to himself from Galilee. “*16 As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. 17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." 18 At once they left their nets and followed him. 19 When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. 20 Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.* There were four disciples on the team with a fifth to follow shortly.

*21 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the* ***synagogue*** *and began to teach. 22 The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. 23 Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, 24 "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are — the Holy One of God!" 25 "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly. "Come out of him!" 26 The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. 27 The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, "What is this? A new teaching — and with authority! He even gives orders to evil spirits and they obey him." 28 News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.*

*29 As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. 30 Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. 31 So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.* If the ancient pilgrims and modern day archaeology has it right, we know the short trip from synagogue to home. These two places figure prominently in the present day site as we know it.

*32 That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. 33 The whole town gathered at the door, 34 and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.*

*35 Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to* ***a solitary place, where he prayed****. 36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, 37 and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!"*  We don’t know for sure the place where Jesus went to pray but we have some clues. In a later account of Jesus praying in the darkness he could look out over the lake and see his disciples struggling to cross the lake. This suggests his place of prayer was up the hillside. Today, one of those higher points in the Mount of Beatitudes.

*38 Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else — to the nearby villages — so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." 39 So he traveled* ***throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues*** *and driving out demons.* If he turned to the right, he would quickly come to Magdala. Maybe it was there that he met Mary Magdalene out of whom he cast the demons.

*40 A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." 41 Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" 42 Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.*

*43 Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: 44 "See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." 45 Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.* It is hard not to share good news.

*2 A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. 2 So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. 3 Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. 4 Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. 5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." 6 Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 7 "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" 8 Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? 9 Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? 10 But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins . . . ." He said to the paralytic, 11 "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 12 He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"*

This incident is a very important moment in understanding Jesus and his mission. We are most concerned with our health. Jesus was most concerned with our eternity yet one provided teaching about the other. The things to note are that Jesus has the authority to forgive sins. That matters to us. He also uses healing as a testimony to salvation. Hebrews 2:3-4 says as much: *“This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.”*

*13 Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. 14 As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector's booth. "Follow me," Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him. 15 While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and "sinners" were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. 16 When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the "sinners" and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: "Why does he eat with tax collectors and 'sinners'?" 17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

The message recorded in John 6 was preached in the synagogue of Capernaum. In spite of the miracles and teaching of Jesus here, the people did not repent and Jesus predicted the utter ruin of the place in Matthew 11:23, “*And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the Day of Judgment than for thee*.”

John 6:14-59 “*After the people saw the miraculous sign that Jesus did, they began to say, "Surely this is the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 Jesus, knowing that they intended to come and make him king by force, withdrew again to a mountain by himself. 16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the lake, 17 where they got into a boat and set off across the lake for Capernaum. By now it was dark, and Jesus had not yet joined them. 18 A strong wind was blowing and the waters grew rough. 19 When they had rowed three or three and a half miles, they saw Jesus approaching the boat, walking on the water; and they were terrified. 20 But he said to them, "It is I; don't be afraid." 21 Then they were willing to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the shore where they were heading.*

*22 The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there, and that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. 23 Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."*

*28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent." 30 So they asked him, "What miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? 31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" 32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 "Sir," they said, "from now on give us this bread."*

*35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. 36 But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. 40 For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

*41 At this the Jews began to grumble about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, 'I came down from heaven'?" 43 "Stop grumbling among yourselves," Jesus answered. 44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me. 46 No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father. 47 I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."*

*52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.”*