



# THE BOOK OF MARK

## *Introduction*





- Sea of Galilee is lowest fresh water lake in the world, fluctuating between 705 and 686 ft below sea level. It is about 13 miles long and 8 miles wide.
- The lake is fed partly by underground springs, but its main source is the Jordan River, which flows through it from north to south.
- The Sea of Galilee is situated in northeast Israel, between the Golan Heights and the Galilee region.



- Numbers 34:11— . . . and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward:
- Joshua 12:3—And from the plain to the sea of Chinneroth on the east, and unto the sea of the plain, *even* the salt sea on the east . . .
- Luke 5:1—And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret
- John 6:1; 21:1—After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.
- John 6:16—And when even was *now* come, his disciples went down unto the sea



- **Tiberias** was one of the two largest cities (Sepphoris is the other) in Galilee during the time of Jesus. Founded by Herod Antipas and named in honor of the Roman Emperor Tiberius, it was of political and administrative importance and likely supported a large population.
- **Sepphoris** was a major city in lower Galilee, four miles northwest of Nazareth. Herod Antipas rebuilt Sepphoris as his capital. The city was on a hill midway between the Mediterranean Sea and the Sea of Galilee, near trade routes and springs, with farmlands in the valleys below. The Bible never mentions Sepphoris.
- **Gennesaret** was the name of a plain on the Sea of Galilee and possibly a smaller town within that area. While it was a region Jesus visited and where he performed miracles, it's not described as a major city in the same way as Tiberias.
- **Capernaum**: Was a significant village but smallest of the three.



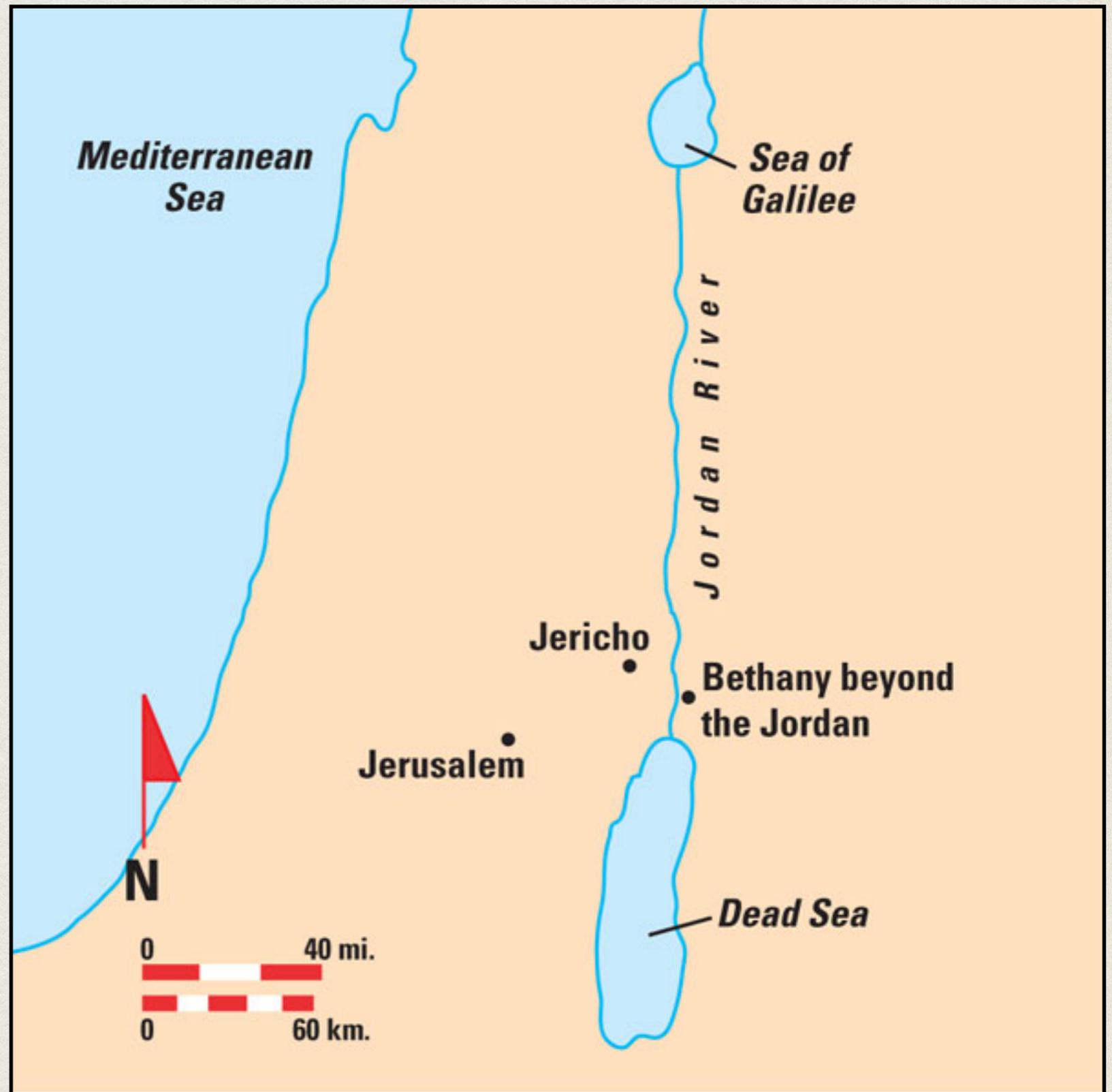
Cana \_\_\_\_\_ Capernaum \_\_\_\_\_ Chorazin \_\_\_\_\_  
 Nain \_\_\_\_\_ Tiberius \_\_\_\_\_ Gennesaret \_\_\_\_\_  
 Gergesa \_\_\_\_\_ Gadara \_\_\_\_\_

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! (John 1:43-47)

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) mention Jesus' baptism, but none of them indicates whether it occurred on the western or eastern shore of the Jordan. However, it seems likely that it would have been on the eastern shore. Jesus was coming from Galilee (again, explicit in Matthew and Mark). The normal route through the Decapolis (a group of ten Roman cities in the region) from Galilee would bypass a hostile Samaria by crossing the Jordan and proceeding south on the eastern side of the river.

(Biblical Archaeological Society)

These things  
were done in  
Bethabara  
beyond Jordan,  
where John  
was baptizing.  
(John 1:28)



- Cana—
- Capernaum—his own city (Matthew 9:1)
- Chorazin—Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. (Matthew 11:21)
- **Chorazin.** Mentioned only in Matthew and in the parallel passage of Luke 10:13. It is not included in Josephus' list of Galilean cities and towns. Probably near Capernaum and the Lake of Galilee. Aside from the miracle recorded in Mark 8:22–26, no miracles are recorded for either Chorazin or Bethsaida.
- **Bethsaida.** Bethsaida was at the northern end of the Lake Galilee, a little to the east of the place where the Jordan River enters the lake. Philip the Tetrarch rebuilt the city and named it Bethsaida Julia, in honor of Julia, daughter of the emperor Augustus. The only recorded miracle in this vicinity is that of restoring sight to a blind man (Mark 8:22–26).

- Gergasa—Mark 5:1
- Gadara—Mark 5:1—Gadarenes
- Textual evidence favors the reading Gerasenes, though important evidence may also be cited for Gergesenes and Gadarenes. In Matt. 8:28 evidence favors Gadarenes, but may also be cited for Gergesenes and Gerasenes. In Luke 8:26 evidence favors Gerasenes . . .  
(*SDA BC*)
- This concerns the casting out the demons and they went into a herd of pigs.

MARK 1:1-20

MATTHEW 4:17-22

LUKE 4:14-15

# BARNABAS, JOHN MARK

- Acts 4:36, Colossians 4:10 (Greek for “sister’s son” means cousin)
- Acts 9:23–27, Acts 11:27–30, Acts 12:1–12
- Acts 12:25
- Acts 13:13, Acts 15:37–40
- 2 Timothy 4:11, Philemon 14, 1 Peter 5:13

Mark's mother was a convert to the Christian religion, and her home at Jerusalem was an asylum for the disciples. There they were always sure of a welcome and a season of rest. It was during one of these visits of the apostles to his mother's home, that Mark proposed to Paul and Barnabas that he should accompany them on their missionary tour. He felt the favor of God in his heart and longed to devote himself entirely to the work of the gospel ministry. (AA 166.3)

The translation “sister’s son” may come from the Latin Vulgate rendering. Or, the translators may have concluded that *anepsios* meant the same as the English word “nephew,” which is derived from *anepsios* through the Latin *nepos*.

A difference of opinion over John Mark once caused Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36–40) to be separated. After the split, Barnabas, Mark’s cousin, took the lad under his care. “Under the blessing of God, and the wise training of Barnabas, he developed into a valuable worker” (AA 170). Paul happily acknowledged the great change and now accepted Mark as one of his “fellowlabourers” (Philemon 24; cf. 2 Tim. 4:11). (*SDA BC*)

Mary was related to Barnabas (see Col. 4:10, where Mark is designated “sister’s son to Barnabas,” though the expression in Greek means rather “cousin to Barnabas”). As Mark’s father is not mentioned, Mary may have been a widow. Like Barnabas (see Acts 4:36, 37), she apparently possessed means, for she was able to have a house which was large enough to serve the church as a meeting place for prayer. (*SDA BC*)

The apostle made his way at once to the house where his brethren were assembled and where they were at that moment engaged in earnest prayer for him. “As Peter knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how Peter stood before the gate. And they said unto her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed that it was even so. Then said they, It is his angel. (AA 148.2)

Their way was toilsome; they encountered hardships and privations, and were beset with dangers on every side.... But Paul and Barnabas had learned to trust God's power to deliver. Their hearts were filled with fervent love for perishing souls. As faithful shepherds in search of the lost sheep, they gave no thought to their own ease and convenience. Forgetful of self, they faltered not when weary, hungry, and cold. They had in view but one object—the salvation of those who had wandered far from the fold.... (CC 348.3, ellipses in original)

Mark, overwhelmed with fear and discouragement, wavered for a time in his purpose to give himself wholeheartedly to the Lord's work. Unused to hardships, he was disheartened by the perils and privations of the way.... He had yet to learn to face danger and persecution and adversity with a brave heart. As the apostles advanced, and still greater difficulties were apprehended, Mark was intimidated and, losing all courage, refused to go farther and returned to Jerusalem. (CC 348.4, ellipsis in original)

This desertion caused Paul to judge Mark unfavorably, and even severely, for a time. Barnabas, on the other hand, was inclined to excuse him because of his inexperience. He felt anxious that Mark should not abandon the ministry, for he saw in him qualifications that would fit him to be a useful worker for Christ. In after years his solicitude in Mark's behalf was richly rewarded, for the young man gave himself unreservedly to the Lord and to the work of proclaiming the gospel message in difficult fields. Under the blessing of God, and the wise training of Barnabas, he developed into a valuable worker. Paul was afterward reconciled to Mark and received him as a fellow laborer. (CC 348.5)

If we only knew what is before us we would not be so dilatory in the work of the Lord. We are in the shaking time, the time when everything that can be shaken will be shaken. The Lord will not excuse those who know the truth if they do not in word and deed obey His commands. If we make no effort to win souls to Christ *we shall be held responsible* for the work we might have done, but did not do because of our spiritual indolence. Those who belong to the Lord's kingdom must work earnestly for the saving of souls. They must do their part to bind up the law and seal it among the disciples. (6T 331.2)