

83 Magdala

Names (also known as)

Magadan (Matt.15:39 RV), Migdal Nunaya (Josephus), Taricheae (Josephus), Dalmanutha (Mk. 8:10), al-Majdal (Arab village), Migdal (current city).

Etymology

Magdala (Magadan, Migdal) means a tower. Archeologists have found the foundations of a large tower from which the city may have gotten its name. While Migdal Nunaya means the tower of the fishermen and Taricheae means the place where the fish are prepared. It was named for its tower overlooking the sea and its vocation as a fishing village.

Location/Description



A small fishing village located on the northwest side of Galilee, 5 km north of Tiberias.

Scriptural references

New Testament

Matt.15:39, Mark 8:10

It was here Christ came after the feeding of the 4,000, but he did not stay long due to the reception he was given by the Pharisees and the people desiring a sign. It seems Mary Magdalene was either from here or born here as her name means Mary from Magdala.

Famous characters

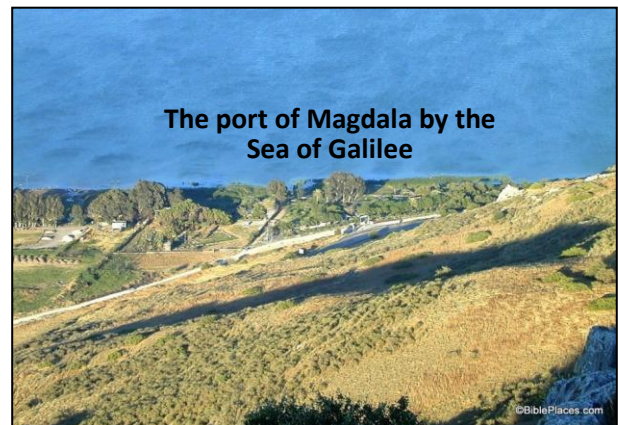
Jesus Christ
Mary Magdalene

Brief history

Magdala was a prosperous fishing community during the time of Christ. It was the only city

along that coast of Galilee until Tiberias was built in AD 19. According to Josephus there was some 40,000 people living there with a fleet of 250 boats at his time.

During the Jewish revolt in AD 66 the city engaged in a naval battle against the Romans and was subsequently decimated. In the 4th century a church was built on the supposed remains of Mary Magdalene's home which has since been destroyed. Ruins of an ancient Jewish synagogue have been found with beautiful mosaics and carvings, one of which depicts a menorah. This synagogue is thought to be one of the oldest found in Israel and may very well have been a place where Jesus spoke to the people, teaching them the Gospel.



The city had a large port that was used to support its industry and a building with 4 pools has been found that is thought to be where they stored and then salted the fish for transport. It was near the port that a boat now referred to as the Jesus boat was found. When Christ visited this city after the feeding of the 4,000 he left shortly after because even though he preached the gospel message to them and healed them they still desired a further sign (Matt.15:39-6:4). They were given many signs that fulfilled the scriptures just as we too are given the same. We need to be careful not to behave in the same manner, but take hope in the signs that God has provided and use them to see His purpose unfold before us so that unlike the city of Magdala, Christ will not leave, but take us unto himself in marriage and in the joy of salvation.

Sources:

Josephus; Wikipedia; Biblewalks.com; Frommers travel guide; Smith's Bible Dictionary; Hastings Bible Dictionary; Seetheholylan.net

(Compiler – Dan Leadbetter)