

# Small Group Facilitator Support Materials

## Mark 6

### “Transformation Supernaturalness”

**The purpose of these materials is to:**

1. Provide you with additional *information* about the scripture
2. Provide you with resources that will *help your small group members “see” what took place* in Mark 6
3. Provide you and your group members with a *geographical context* for the story.

## What's inside?

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3	Information on the Sea of Galilee
5	Picture Gallery
11	What makes the Sea of Galilee storm?
12	Question and Answer: Sea of Galilee

## How do I use this document in small group?

- Consider printing one or multiple copies to have available for your small group members to read through before, during, or after group.
- Use your computer monitor or print color copies of the pictures to show during the Bible study
- Use the following extension questions:
  1. Using the map of the lake in the Q & A section as well as Mark 6:45,53 and John 6:22-24 identify where around the lake Jesus and his disciples began, where the disciples were headed, and where arrived the next morning.
  2. Using the information & pictures to consider the magnitude of the disciples fear:
    - The size of the lake
    - The unpredictable nature of the lake
    - The size/type of boat
  3. Gather information about the geography, towns, culture, the people, etc.. Is there a place in San Diego that you think may be comparable to life on the Sea of Galilee?

# Sea of Galilee

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

The **Sea of Galilee** is Israel's largest freshwater lake, approximately 53 kilometers (33 miles) in circumference, about 21 km (13 miles) long, and 13 km (8 miles) wide; it has a total area of 166 sq km, and a maximum depth of approximately 48 meters. At 213 meters below sea level, it is the lowest freshwater lake on Earth and the second-lowest point in the world after the Dead Sea. It is not a sea by any normal definition; it is called a sea just because of tradition.

The lake is also known on modern maps as **Lake Galilee** or **Lake Tiberias**. The name Galilee refers to the region of Galilee in which it is located. In modern Hebrew it is known as **Yam Kinneret**. The name may originate from the Hebrew word *kinnor* ("harp" or "lyre") - which the lake's shape resembles. It has also been called the **Lake of Gennesaret** or the **Sea of Gennesaret** (Luke 5:1) after the name of a small fruitful plain which lies on its western side. The Arabic name for the lake is **Buhairat Tabariyya** meaning *Lake Tiberias*. Other names of the Sea of Galilee: Ginnosar, Lake of Gennesar, Sea of Chinnereth (Numbers 34:11; Joshua 13:27), Sea of Chinneroth, Sea of Kinnereth, Sea of Tiberias (Roman), and Waters of Gennesaret.

The Kinneret is fed by underground springs, but its main source is the Jordan River, which flows through it from north to south. The lake is situated deep in the Jordan Great Rift Valley, the valley caused by the separation of the African and Arabian Plates. Consequently the area is subject to earthquakes and, in the past, volcanic activity. This is evidenced by the abundant basalt and other igneous rock that define the geology of the Sea of Galilee region.

Due to its low-lying position in the rift valley, surrounded by hills, the sea is prone to sudden violent storms; hence the New Testament story about Jesus calming the storm. Indeed, the main feature of the lake seems to be its ever-changing character. It is still noted, as in New Testament times, for its rich fish stocks, and in today's restaurants, "St. Peter's Fish" (tilapia) is very popular.

## Antiquity

The Sea of Galilee lies on the ancient Via Maris which linked Egypt with the northern empires. The Greeks, Hasmoneans, Herodians, and Romans founded flourishing towns and settlements here: Gadara, Hippos, Tiberias, and others. The first-century historian Flavius Josephus was so impressed by the area that he wrote, "One may call this place the ambition of Nature." Josephus also reported a thriving fishing industry at this time, with 230 boats regularly working in the lake.

Much of the ministry of Jesus occurred on the shores of Lake Galilee. In those days, there was a continuous ribbon development of settlements and villages around the lake and plenty of trade and ferrying by boat. The gospels of Mark (1:14-20) and Matthew (4:18-



22) describe how Jesus recruited four of his apostles from the shores of Lake Galilee; the fishermen Peter and his brother Andrew, and the brothers John and James. One of Jesus' famous teaching episodes, the Sermon on the Mount, was given on a hill overlooking the lake. Many of his miracles were also recorded to occur here: his walking on water, calming a storm, feeding five thousand people (in Tabgha), and many others.

<http://www.bible-history.com/geography/ancient-israel/sea-of-galilee.html>

The lake is about 60 miles from Jerusalem and at one time was 13 miles long and 8 miles wide at its greatest extent, although recent changes have reduced its length. Its surface is about 700 feet below sea level, and it is about 150 feet deep at its lowest point. The Jordan River flows through it, providing much of its water supply, there are springs in the lake floor. The fresh waters of the lake are clean, and they have always been well stocked with a variety of fish.

Several towns dotted its shores in NT times, but almost all of them (Bethsaida, Capernaum, Tiberias, etc.) stood on its northern and western shores because the eastern slopes rise more precipitously from the water. The sea was the highway for considerable traffic between Damascus and the Mediterranean, and the customhouse duties from which Christ took Matthew brought huge revenue. Hot springs along the western shore, especially at Tiberias, brought multitudes to be cured. The high hills surrounding the below sea-level water combined with abrupt temperature changes contributed to sudden and violent storms on the lake, as various NT passages indicate (Mark 4:35-41; 6:45-52; John 6:16-21).

It was on or around this lake that Jesus did many of His wonderful miracles. 18 of the 33 recorded miracles of Christ were probably done in the immediate neighborhood of the Sea of Galilee. In the city of Capernaum alone He performed 10 of these.

## Sea of Galilee

Also known as Bahr Tubariya, Ginnosar, Lake of Galilee, Lake of Gennesaret, Lake of Gennesar, Sea of Chinnereth, Sea of Chinneroth, Sea of Kinnereth, Sea of Tiberias, Lake of Tiberias, Waters of Gennesaret, Yam Kinneret



### View from Arbel

The Plain of Gennesaret spreads out below the Arbel cliffs. About five miles long and two miles wide, this stretch of land alongside Galilee's northwest shore was renowned for its fertility. Josephus wrote that it was "wonderful in its characteristics and in its beauty. Thanks to the rich soil there is not a plant that does not flourish there, and the inhabitants grow everything: the air is so temperate that it suits the most diverse species."

## From Northwest

The Sea of Galilee is fed by the Jordan River, rainfall and springs on the northern side. More properly designated a lake, the Kinneret (the OT and modern name) is 13 miles wide and 7 miles long. At its deepest point the lake is only 150 feet deep. The rabbis said of it, "Although God has created seven seas, yet He has chosen this one as His special delight."





## Hippos and Harbors

Hippos (Susita) was a major city of the Decapolis located on a round hill overlooking the shore. The modern harbor of Kibbutz En Gev is visible below it. In the first century, at least 16 harbors were located on the lake. All the lake's settlements had their own harbor, even if it was very small. The largest one belonged to Gadara had a 200 meter breakwater.

## Wooden Boat

In 1986 a wooden vessel from the first century was discovered near Nof Ginnosaur on the lake's northwestern shore. Studies have determined the type of wood was used (mainly cedar and oak), the style of construction (mortise and tenon joints), the date (on the basis of construction techniques, pottery and Carbon 14 tests) and the size (26 by 7 feet - big enough for 15 men). A reconstruction of what the boat might have looked like is on display at En Gev.







## St. Peter's Fish

Three types of fish were primarily sought by fishermen in antiquity in these waters. Sardines like were the "two small fish" that the boy brought to the feeding of the 5000. Sardines and bread were the staple product of the locals. Barbels are so known because of the barbels at the corners of their mouths. The third type is called musht but is more popularly known today as "St. Peter's Fish". This fish has a long dorsal fin which looks like a comb and can be up to 1.5 feet long and 3.3 lbs in weight.

## Sunset

The peaceful calm of the Sea of Galilee can quickly become transformed by a violent storm. Winds funnel through the east-west aligned Galilee hill country and stir up the waters quickly. More violent are the winds that come off the hills of the Golan Heights to the east. Trapped in the basin, the winds can be deadly to fishermen. A storm in March 1992 sent waves 10 feet high crashing into downtown Tiberias and causing significant damage.



## What Makes the Sea of Galilee Storm?

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-eden/ednk-seaofgalilee.html>

A storm on the Sea of Galilee is described in Mark 4:37: A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped.

Luke 8 describes the wind and raging waves during this storm. Matthew calls it a furious storm without warning.

Such storms result from differences in temperatures between the seacoast and the mountains beyond. The Sea of Galilee lies 680 feet below sea level. It is bounded by hills, especially on the east side where they reach 2000 feet high. These heights are a source of cool, dry air.

In contrast, directly around the sea, the climate is semi-tropical with warm, moist air. The large difference in height between surrounding land and the sea causes large temperature and pressure changes. This results in strong winds dropping to the sea, funneling through the hills.

The Sea of Galilee is small, and these winds may descend directly to the center of the lake with violent results. When the contrasting air masses meet, a storm can arise quickly and without warning. Small boats caught out on the sea are in immediate danger.

The Sea of Galilee is relatively shallow, just 200 feet at its greatest depth. A shallow lake is "whipped up" by wind more rapidly than deep water, where energy is more readily absorbed.

Lake Erie [in the United States] provides somewhat similar to the Sea of Galilee. Erie is more than a hundred times larger, but it has the same 200 feet maximum depth, the shallowest of the Great Lakes. Lake Erie is especially well known as the stormy, moody member of the Great Lake system. It is easily stirred up by west winds to produce violent waves and even the largest fishing boats are put at risk.

## Q & A: Sea of Galilee

### How does the Sea of Galilee Compare to other well known lakes?

	Size	Shoreline	Maximum Depth	Width	Length
<b>Sea of Galilee</b>	64 Sq. Miles	53 Miles	157 Feet	7.5 miles	12.5 miles
<b>Lake Tahoe</b>	193 Sq. Miles	72 Miles	1,695 Feet	12 Miles	22 Miles
<b>Arrowhead</b>	782 Acres	14 Miles	185 Feet	1.5 Miles	2.2 Miles

### What are other names for The Sea of Galilee?

- Bahr Tubariya,
- Ginnosar,
- Lake of Galilee,
- Lake of Gennesaret,
- Lake of Gennesar,
- Sea of Chinnereth,
- Sea of Chinneroth,
- Sea of Kinnereth,
- Sea of Tiberias,
- Lake of Tiberias,
- Waters of Gennesaret,
- Yam Kinneret

### What waters feed the Sea of Galilee?

The Sea of Galilee is fed by underground springs but its' main source is the Jordan River.



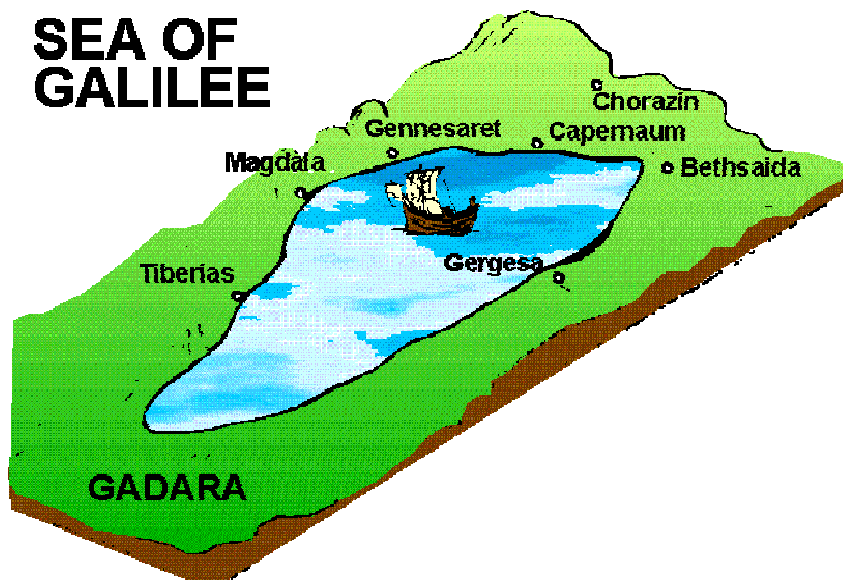
This picture shows the Jordan River emptying into the Sea of Galilee.

## How did the Sea of Galilee get its name?

<http://atheism.about.com/od/bibleplacescities/p/GalileeSea.htm>

Technically it is a lake, but the Hebrew *yam* can mean either a freshwater lake or a proper sea. The Hebrew name is Kinneret, from the Hebrew word for harp (*kinnor*), a reference to its harp shape.

## What cities surround the Sea of Galilee?



## What happened at the Sea of Galilee?

<http://www.jerusalemerspective.com/Default.aspx?tabid=27&ArticleID=1852>

The significance of the Sea of Galilee in Jesus' ministry is indicated by the fact that some of the first and some of the last events in his ministry occurred here. Shortly after the temptation, Jesus traveled to Capernaum with his family (Jn. 2:12). Later Jesus would live in Capernaum and call four of his disciples from among the fishermen in the area (Mt. 4). While he performed many miracles at points along the lakeshore, two of his most dramatic miracles were done on the water itself when he stilled the storm (Lk. 8:22-25) and walked on the water (Mk. 6:47-52). Following his resurrection, Jesus cooked breakfast on the shore for seven of the disciples (Jn. 21).