

# Diamonds in the Dust 12 – Exploring the Gospel Triangle: Capernaum, Bethsaida, Chorazin

*But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.*

*2 The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.*

*3 You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.*

*4 For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.*

*5 For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.*

*6 For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named*

*Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*

*7 His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.*

*He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onwards and for evermore.*

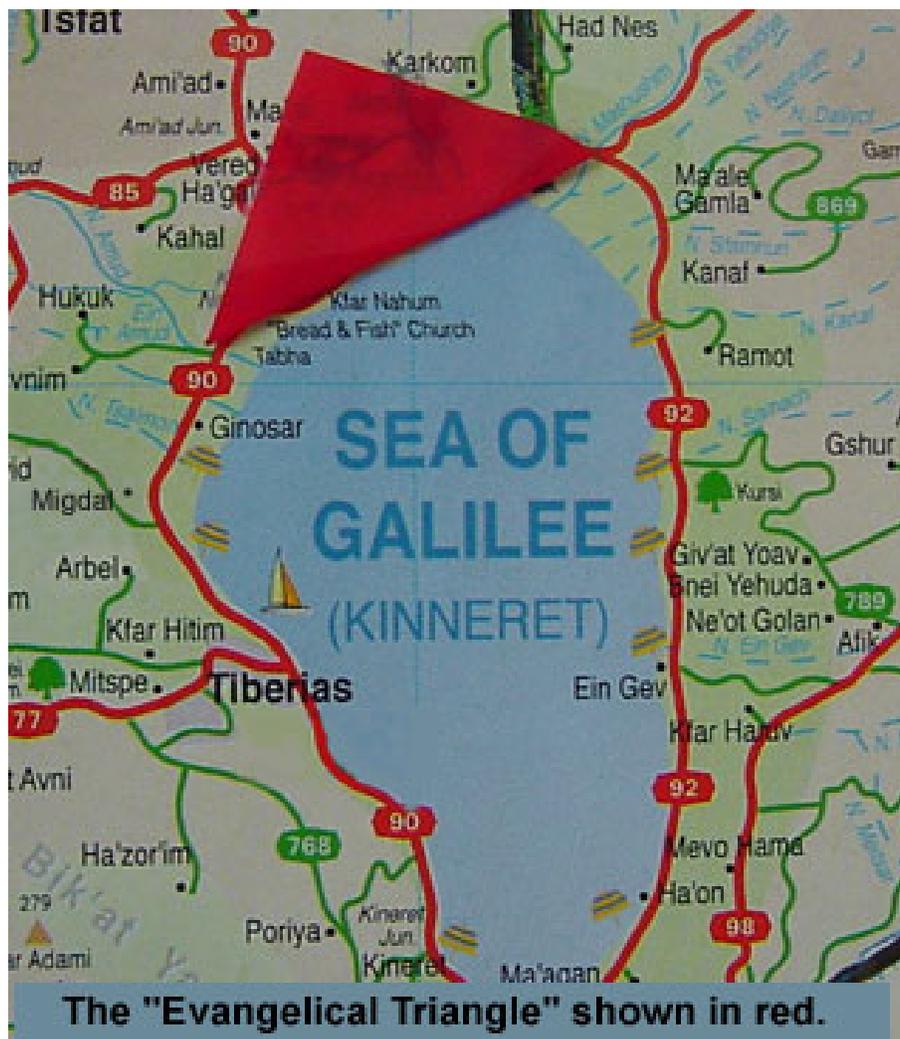
*The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.      Isaiah 9:1-7*

Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the lake, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled

Mathew 4:12-14

Tribal Territories – Can you find Zebulun and Naphtali?





Gospel or Evangelical Triangle: Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorizin

Disproportionate amount of Jesus' ministerial activity took place here

- twenty-five of thirty-three miracles were performed in the general Galilee area.
  - eighteen in the Gospel Triangle
- 1. A disproportionate number of disciples are from these three villages.
  - 11 of 12 came from the Galilee
    - Judas came from Judea
  - Capernaum: James, John and Matthew

- Bethsaida: Phillip, Andrew, Simon Peter
2. These villages had a disproportionately weak response to Jesus' ministry
  3. Known for being proximate to Gentiles, "the Nations," esp. through the Decapolis.
    - Instead of making them more cosmopolitan and tolerant it seems to have made them self-consciously Jewish: dietary laws, Sabbath, etc.

**Capernaum** – "His own city" – Mt 9:1



- On the *Via Maris* connecting Damascus in the north and Egypt in the south
  - Many travelers, caravans, and traders
  - Via Maris highway mile stone in Capernaum today
- Source of Basalt – hard, dark volcanic rock. Good for millstones
- Fishing Village
  - Lake was once closer to the village; water has receded.

- James, John – Sons of Zebedee and Matthew (the tax collector)



Population in Jesus' day? -- Up to 1500 likely larger than other two villages (based on being on the Via Maris)

Had a synagogue, like Chorazin; Jesus taught in it:

**Luke 4:31 – Man with Unclean Spirit --** *He went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee, and was teaching them on the sabbath. 32They were astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority. 33In the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, 34‘Let us alone! What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.’ 35But Jesus rebuked him, saying, ‘Be silent, and come out of him!’ When the demon had thrown him down before them, he came out of him without having done him any harm.*

**Luke 7:1-10 -- Jesus Heals a Centurion’s Servant in Capernaum --** *After Jesus had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. 2A centurion there had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. 3When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave. 4When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, ‘He is worthy of having you do this for him, 5for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.’ 6And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, ‘Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; 7therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. 8For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, “Go”, and he goes, and to another, “Come”, and he comes, and to my slave, “Do this”, and the slave does it.’ 9When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, ‘I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.’ 10When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health.*



Good example of Insula style housing



- John 14:
  - *“In my father’s house are many rooms,”*
  - *“I go and prepare a place for you”*
  - *“I will come again and take you to myself”*
  - *“That where I am you may be also.”*
  
- *Peter’s Mother in Law lived in Capernaum, too.*

*Octagonal Church was built on traditional location of Peter’s house.*

*Modern Church was built above that.*



**Luke 4:38-41** *38 After leaving the synagogue he entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked him about her. <sup>39</sup>Then he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. Immediately she got up and began to serve them.*

**Luke 5: Jesus Heals a Paralytic** -- 17 One day, while he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting nearby (they had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem); and the power of the Lord was with him to heal. 18 Just then some men came, carrying a paralysed man on a bed. They were trying to bring him in and lay him before Jesus; 19 but finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. 20 When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you.' 21 Then the scribes and the Pharisees began to question, 'Who is this who is speaking blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?' 22 When Jesus perceived their questionings, he answered them, 'Why do you raise such questions in your hearts? 23 Which is easier, to say, "Your sins are forgiven you", or to say, "Stand up and walk"? 24 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins'—he said to the one who was paralysed—'I say to you, stand up and take your bed and go to your home.' 25 Immediately he stood up before them, took what he had been lying on, and went to his home, glorifying God. 26 Amazement seized all of them, and they glorified God and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.'

**Jesus Calls Levi (Matthew)** -- Luke 5: 27 After this he went out and saw a tax-collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' 28 And he got up, left everything, and followed him.

29 Then Levi gave a great banquet for him in his house; and there was a large crowd of tax-collectors and others sitting at the table with them. 30 The Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax-collectors and sinners?' 31 Jesus answered, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; 32 I have come to call not the righteous but sinners to repentance.'

## **Bethsaida – The Lost City of the Apostles**

Dr. Steven Notley -- "A lot of times, people ask the question: how do you lose a city? That is not as difficult or unique as one might imagine," he said. "If you go to Israel, you get off the bus and go to various places and visit biblical sites. You see a sign there [that says] Capernaum, Caesarea and various locations, and you assume that people have always known [where it is] and that's just not true.

"Most of our biblical sites in Israel were lost in time. Some, the memory remains there, communities remain there, and so their identification was not in question. "But other places like Bethsaida were destroyed, abandoned and forgotten, and it's only been in the last 150 years that there's been a process of rediscovery of these places as travel became easier."





Also a fishing village

- Shoreline used to be closer
- John 1:44, Bethsaida was the birthplace of the apostles Peter, Andrew, and Philip.



used to make lead fishing weights

A limestone mold

- Mark 8:22–26 -- Jesus restored a blind man's sight just outside Bethsaida.
- Luke 9:10-11 -- Jesus feeds five thousand near Bethsaida.

## Chorazin



- Not a fishing village; off the shore
- Had synagogue





## Moses' Seat in Synagogue

*"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat" (Mt. 23.2)*



Found in 1926 -- used in some synagogues, even today, on certain occasions, usually located near the most important wall, that which faces Jerusalem.



### Basalt Quarry and Manufacturing

**Matt 18:6** -- 6 'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea.



*Chorazin Olive Press Stone*



*Capernaum Grinding Stones*

### **Woe to the Gospel Triangle**

**Matthew 11:21** -- *Then Jesus began to criticize openly the cities in which he had done many of his miracles, because they did not repent. "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you! And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown down to Hades! For if the miracles done among you had been done in Sodom, it would have continued to this day. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for the region of Sodom on the day of judgment than for you!" (Matthew 11:20–24)*

From those to whom much is given, much is required. Luke 12:48

All three villages in the Gospel Triangle are ruined and uninhabited today.