ON THE GALILEE

Sail, pray & walk where Jesus walked



PILGRIM GUIDE · SEA OF GALILEE

Capernaum

The Town of Jesus

The story, the Scriptures, a walking tour, archaeology, meditations and prayers for the place Jesus called home.

Cover: the synagogue of Capernaum. Photo: Berthold Werner, public domain.

CAPERNAUM

At a Glance

Gospel link	Jesus' home base in Galilee. He taught in its synagogue, healed in Peter's house and called disciples from its shore.
Hebrew name	*Kfar Nahum*, "the village of Nahum."
Time needed	1 to 1½ hours, plus 30 minutes for the Greek Orthodox church.
Best time	At opening, or the last hour before closing.
Good to know	A holy site: shoulders and knees covered. Water and a hat in summer.

THE STORY

The Town Jesus Chose

When Jesus left Nazareth to begin his ministry, he did not settle in Jerusalem or in one of the new Roman cities. He chose a fishing village on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Matthew tells us simply that he "came and lived in Capernaum, which is by the sea" (Matthew 4:13, WEB). Later the Gospels call it "his own city" (Matthew 9:1).

It was an ordinary place: a town of fishermen, farmers and small traders, built of the black volcanic basalt that still covers the fields around the lake. Here Jesus met Peter and Andrew, James and John, working with their nets by the water. Here Matthew sat at his tax booth when he heard the words "Follow me."

More of Jesus' miracles are recorded in and around Capernaum than almost anywhere else. He taught in its synagogue on the Sabbath. He healed Peter's mother-in-law, a paralyzed man let down through a roof, the servant of a

IN THE GOSPELS

Ten Gospel Moments

MARK 1:21–28 · LUKE 4:31–37

Teaching with Authority

> *"They were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as having authority, and not as the scribes."*
>
> MARK 1:22

On a Sabbath in the synagogue, Jesus teaches and frees a man from an unclean spirit. His fame spreads through all of Galilee.

Read here → the White Synagogue (Stop 2)

MARK 1:29–34

Healing in Peter's House

> *"He came and took her by the hand and raised her up. The fever left her immediately, and she served them."*
>
> MARK 1:31

By sunset the whole town is at the door, bringing the sick to be healed.

Read here → the House of Peter (Stop 5)

MARK 2:1–12

Through the Roof

> *"Four people came, carrying a paralytic to him. When they could not come near to him for the crowd, they removed the roof where he was."*
>
> MARK 2:3–4

Jesus, "seeing their faith," forgives the man's sins and tells him to take up his mat and walk.

Read here → the 1st-century houses (Stop 4)

PAUSE & PRAY

At the Door of Peter's House

Lord Jesus,
you made your home among ordinary people,
in a fisherman's house by the sea.
Come into my home as you came into Peter's.
Take my hand as you took his mother's,
and raise me up to serve.
Give me friends who carry me when I cannot walk,
and make me a friend who carries others.
Amen.

Reflect: Who are the "four friends" who carried you to Jesus? Who might you carry this week?

A PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO COULD NOT COME

Lord, I stand by your sea today, and I remember those who long to stand here and cannot: the sick, the elderly, the poor, those far away. Let the peace of this shore reach them where they are. Be at home in their houses, as you were at home in Capernaum. Amen.

FREE SAMPLE

Continue the journey

You have just read a few pages from our pilgrim guide to Capernaum. The full guide has 24 pages.

- ✓ The story of the place, in the days of Jesus and today
- ✓ All the Gospel readings, with the spot to read each one
- ✓ A walking tour, stop by stop
- ✓ Three meditations and a prayer for the place
- ✓ A ready-to-use service for groups
- ✓ Practical tips and a pilgrim journal

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