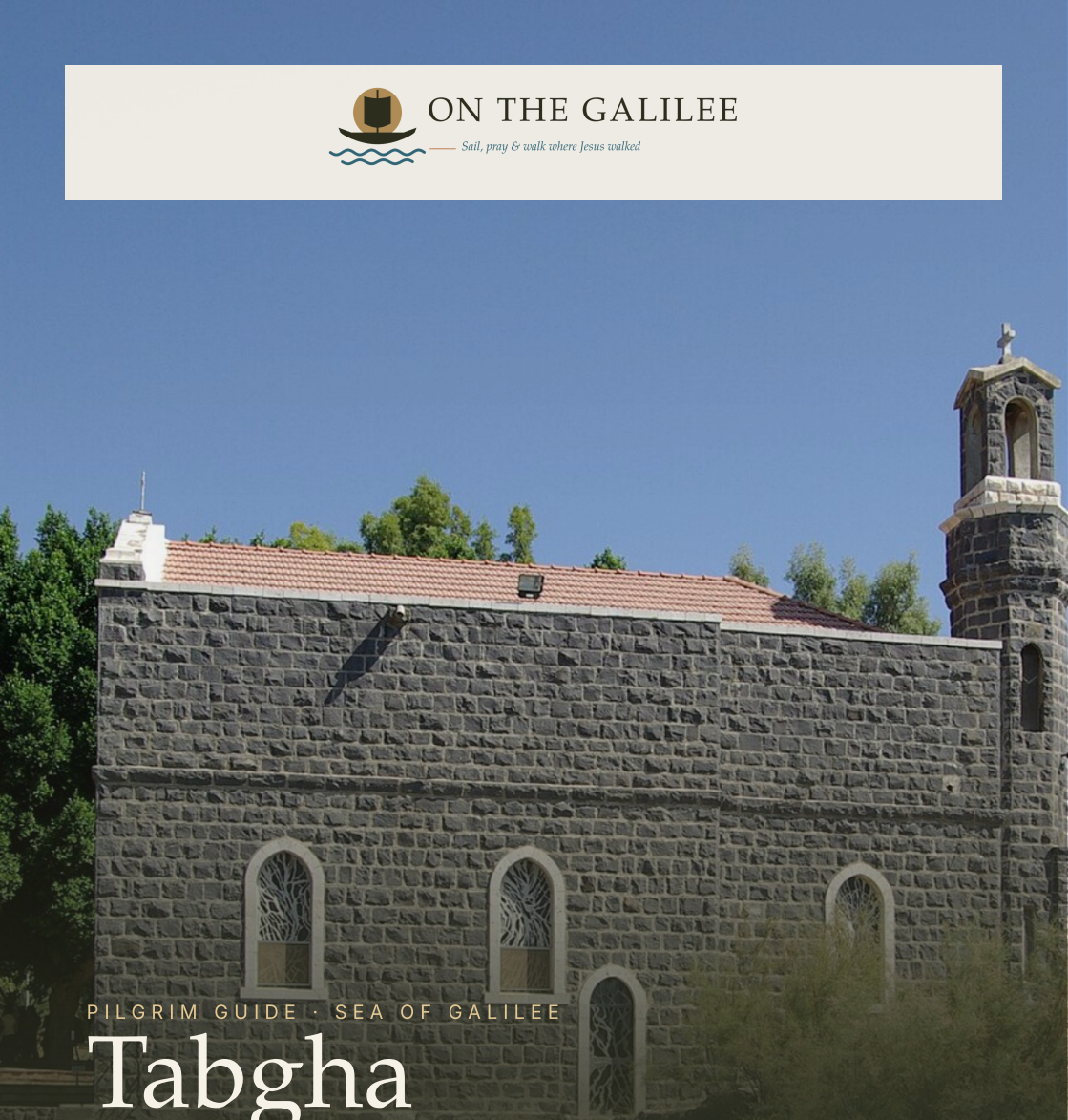
ON THE GALILEE

Sail, pray & walk where Jesus walked



PILGRIM GUIDE · SEA OF GALILEE

Tabgha

Loaves, Fishes & a Breakfast by the Shore

The story, the Scriptures, a walking tour of both churches, history, meditations and prayers for the place where Jesus fed the multitude and restored Peter.

Cover: the Church of the Primacy of St. Peter. Photo: Berthold Werner, public domain.

TABGHA

At a Glance

Gospel link	The multiplication of the loaves and fishes, and Jesus' breakfast with the disciples after the Resurrection (John 21).
Name	From the Greek *Heptapegon*, "Seven Springs." In Arabic it became *Tabgha*.
Time needed	About 1½ hours for both churches and the shore.
Best time	Early morning, when the light is soft and the beach at the Primacy is quiet.
Good to know	Two separate sites with separate gates. Modest dress for both.

THE STORY

Where the Hungry Were Fed

Just west of Capernaum, warm springs flow into the Sea of Galilee. In winter the fish gather in the warm water, and for thousands of years fishermen have come here with their nets. The Greeks called the place *Heptapegon*, "Seven Springs," and the name survives today as Tabgha.

Christian tradition remembers two great Gospel moments on this shore. The first is the feeding of the multitude. Jesus had been teaching all day in a quiet place when the crowd grew hungry. "You give them something to eat," he told his disciples (Mark 6:37, WEB). All they had were five loaves and two fish. Jesus blessed them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to share, and "they all ate and were filled" (Mark 6:42).

The second moment came after the Resurrection. Seven disciples had gone fishing at night and caught nothing. At dawn a stranger on the shore told them

IN THE SCRIPTURES

Gospel Moments at Tabgha

MARK 6:30–44 · MATTHEW 14:13–21 · LUKE 9:10–17 · JOHN 6:1–15

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

> *"He took the five loaves and the two fish; and looking up to heaven, he blessed and broke the loaves, and he gave to his disciples to set before them."*
>
> MARK 6:41

The only miracle, apart from the Resurrection, recorded in all four Gospels. Twelve baskets of leftovers were gathered afterwards.

Read here → the mosaic in front of the altar (Stop 3)

MARK 6:34

Compassion before Bread

> *"He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things."*
>
> MARK 6:34

Before Jesus fed the crowd's hunger for food, he fed their hunger for meaning. Teaching came first, then the meal.

Read here → the slope above the shore (Stop 6)

JOHN 6:9

Five Barley Loaves

> *"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these among so many?"*
>
> JOHN 6:9

John alone tells us about the boy and his barley bread. What seemed too small was enough in Jesus' hands.

PAUSE & PRAY

By the Fire on the Shore

Lord Jesus,
you took five small loaves
and fed a hungry crowd.
Take what little I have,
bless it, break it, and share it.
When I have worked all night and caught nothing,
call me to your fire on the shore.
When I have failed you,
ask me again if I love you,
and send me to feed your sheep.
Amen.

Reflect: Who in your life is hungry, for bread, for company, or for hope? What could you share with them this week?

A TABLE PRAYER FROM TABGHA

Blessed are you, Lord, who gives bread to the hungry and a place at your table to all. As you fed the crowds by this sea, feed us now, and make us generous with what we have received. Amen.

FREE SAMPLE

Continue the journey

You have just read a few pages from our pilgrim guide to Tabgha. The full guide has 23 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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PILGRIM GUIDES TO THE SEA OF GALILEE