

You will arrive in Tel Aviv, collect your luggage and outside of baggage claim will be a representative from the tour company holding a sign. Once everyone has gathered, you will board your transfer to your hotel in Tiberias. That night enjoy your dinner before retiring for the night.

After hopefully what has been a good night's sleep and breakfast, your first adventure will be to sail across the Sea of Galilee. Here is a little bit of information about the Sea of Galilee and some of the events that took place there.

The Sea of Galilee is a vast freshwater expanse located in the Jordan Valley about 60 miles north of Jerusalem. Approximately 13 miles long and 7.5 miles wide at its broadest point near Magdala, the sea resembles the shape of a harp. Situated below the headwaters of the Jordan River, the Sea of Galilee is fed with fresh water from snow-topped Mount Hermon and Mount Lebanon. The Jordan River continues out the south end of the Sea of Galilee, flowing downhill until it ends at the Dead Sea. The Jordan River, the Sea of Galilee, and the Dead Sea are all located in the Rift Valley, a geological fissure that forms the longest and deepest crack in the earth's crust.

The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would come from the region of Galilee ([Isaiah 9:1–2, 6](#)). Jesus, coming from His hometown of Nazareth fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy.

In New Testament times, the Sea of Galilee was an important commercial area surrounded by Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Magdala, and Tiberias. Being the only significant freshwater lake in the region, the Sea of Galilee supported a flourishing fishing industry. Capernaum, a dominant setting in the ministry of Jesus, was the center of that fishing industry ([Matthew 4:18–22](#); [Mark 1:16–20](#); [Luke 5:10, 11](#)).

By the first century, the Sea of Galilee had been renamed the "Lake of Gennesaret" or "Sea of Gennesaret" ([Luke 5:1](#)). In John's Gospel, the apostle calls it the "Sea of Tiberias" ([John 6:1; 21:1](#)). Many momentous events in the life of Jesus took place around the Sea of Galilee, including the calling of several disciples. Peter, Andrew, James, and John had all been working as fishermen earning a living on the Sea of Galilee ([Matthew 4:13–22](#)). Jesus also called Matthew the tax collector from the town of Capernaum on the northwest coast of the Sea of Galilee ([Mark 2:13–17](#)).

Due to geological features on either side of the Sea of Galilee, sudden and severe storms occur regularly on its waters. The Synoptic Gospels record one episode of Jesus calming a violent storm: "Then [Jesus] got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We're going to drown!' He replied, 'You of little faith, why are you so afraid?' Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, 'What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!'" ([Matthew 8:23–27](#); see also [Mark 4:35–41](#) and [Luke 8:22–25](#)). It was amazing to observe a boat found during a drought in the Sea of Galilee that has been dated to the time of Jesus.

In one of the most spectacular miracles of the Gospels, Jesus walks on the surface of the Sea of Galilee ([Mark 6:45–53](#); [John 6:16–21](#)). In Matthew's version of the story ([Matthew 14:22–33](#)), Jesus invites Peter to leave the boat and come toward Him, which Peter does and walks on water.

Jesus taught the crowds by the shore ([Mark 4:1–34](#)) and preached while standing in a boat on the Sea of Galilee ([Matthew 13:2](#)).

Jesus may have specifically targeted this area to minister and perform miraculous healings ([Matthew 9:2–8](#); [Mark 3:1–6](#)) because of the significant number of sick people who sought out the Sea of Galilee's restorative climate and medicinal springs of nearby Tiberias.

On the southeast banks of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus cast out demons from two men of Gadarenes and sent them into a herd of pigs that drowned in the sea ([Matthew 8:28–32](#)). Jesus raised Jairus's daughter from the dead near the Sea of Galilee ([Mark 5:21–43](#)) and healed a man with an unclean spirit ([Mark 1:21–28](#)).

Before His ascension, Jesus appeared in His resurrected body to seven of His disciples for a final miracle catch of fish by the Sea of Galilee ([John 21:1–14](#)). He cooked and ate breakfast with them and then restored Peter into His trust (verses 15–25).

After you sail, you will visit Capernaum and visit the synagogue built on the site where Jesus taught ([Matthew 4:13, 23](#)). On the Mount of Beatitudes, you'll contemplate the "Sermon on the Mount" ([Matthew 5-7](#)). You'll explore the Church of the Fish and the Loaves at Tabgha, the traditional site of the feeding of the 5,000 ([Luke 9:10-17](#)). You'll see the chapel of the primacy, where Peter professed his devotion three times to the risen Christ ([John 2](#)). In Magdala, once the home of Mary Magdalene, you'll visit a recently discovered first-century synagogue. The church in Magdala with the altar shaped like a boat and overlooking the Sea of Galilee is still fresh to me today.

And finally, you'll visit the River Jordan to recall Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. Several of you will want to have your baptism confirmed in the River Jordan. Because it was cold during our visit, Pastor Phil sprinkled most of us with water from the River Jordan with a hyssop branch and prayed over us. It was so very memorable.

Wow, that is a very busy first day. You'll arrive back to your hotel for our dinner, some fellowship and some well needed rest.