

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| <p>NOTHING RECORDED</p> | <p>NOTHING RECORDED</p> | <p>NOTHING RECORDED</p> | <p>CHAPTER 2, VERSES 12</p> <p>2:12 - After this₁, he went down₂ to Capernaum₃, he, and his mother₄, and his brethren₅, and his disciples₆; and they continued there₇ not many days₈.</p> |
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CHRONOLOGY: Departed from Cana on or about 23 March 27CE and Arrived in Capernaum on or about 25 March 27CE, tarried in Capernaum to at the latest 4 April 27CE (This resulted in a stay in Capernaum of about 11 days, or less depending on when Jesus left for Jerusalem for the Passover. Typically, people arrived early in Jerusalem to make arrangement. Jerusalem would be inundated with pilgrims for the feast and arriving late might make it difficult to find lodging or procure the items for the Passover meal, including the Pascal Lamb. Jesus may very well have left Capernaum prior to 4 April 27CE).

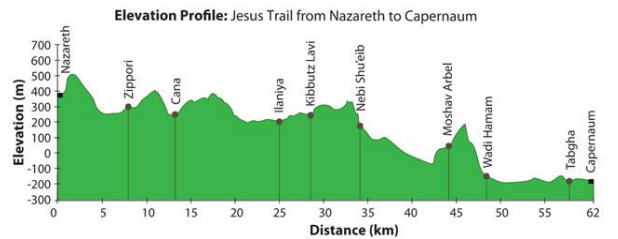
LOCATION: From the village of Cana of Galilee to the city of Capernaum on the North shore of the Sea of Galilee

COMMENTARY: The wedding at Cana has ended. Mary and her children, including Jesus, take a nearly 20 mile trek to the city of Capernaum. Capernaum is located on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee. The disciples that accompanied Jesus to the wedding follow Him back to Capernaum. The journey was for the most part downhill, as Capernaum is located below sea level. It is suspected that Jesus established the home of His ministry in Capernaum. We suppose that He assumed the role of patriarch in the family as Joseph appears to have passed away. This means that Jesus had the responsibility of caring for His mother and any underage siblings or unwed sisters. They remained in Capernaum for no more than 11 day, before Jesus and the disciples left to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast.

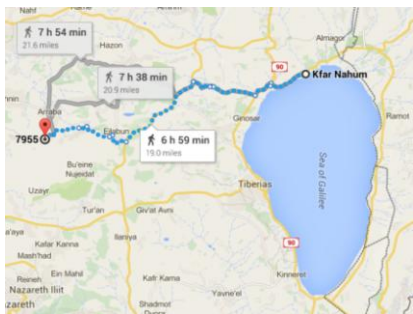
FOOTNOTES:

1- **After this** – The word "after" is translated from the Greek word "μετά" or "meta". It means with, after or behind. The word "this" is translated from the Greek word "τοῦτο" or "touto". It means this thing or that thing. This is referring to the marriage that Jesus just attended in Cana.

2- **went down** – The phrase "went down" is translated from the Greek word "καταβῆναι" or "katabainō". It means to go down, come down or descend. Jesus left the marriage at Cana and "went down" to Capernaum. Whether He left directly from Cana or from His childhood home of Nazareth is not known. We do know that He attended the marriage and then traveled to



Capernaum. The scriptures say that he descended to Capernaum, and indeed He did. The village of Capernaum lies on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, and it's elevation is 757 feet or 231 meters below sea level. Cana, or Kana el-Jelil, sits at 984 feet or 300 meters above sea level. That means that the trip from Cana to Capernaum has a drop in elevation of 1,741 feet or 531 meters. Truly, Jesus went down to Capernaum.

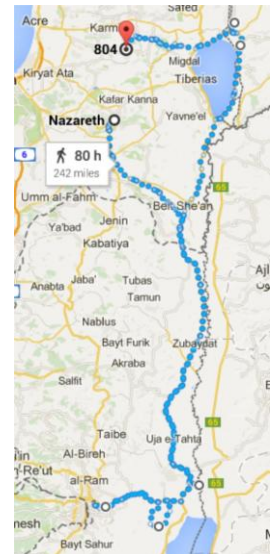


The trip to Capernaum could be made in a long day, but was likely made in two days. A great travel rate by foot is 18 miles per day. Jesus was traveling with his mother and brethren. It doesn't say this, but it makes you wonder if they were moving to Capernaum. Were they traveling with all their belongings? This would have slowed the trip. Since we have no scriptural insight as to why they all traveled together to Capernaum, we are left with pure speculation.

The Savior has done a lot of walking in this chapter alone. Since the Gospel records are limited and somewhat fragmented, we have only a glimpse into the extent of Jesus' travels. Nevertheless, we will summarize the amount of travel we have recorded in the 11 chapters of this book;

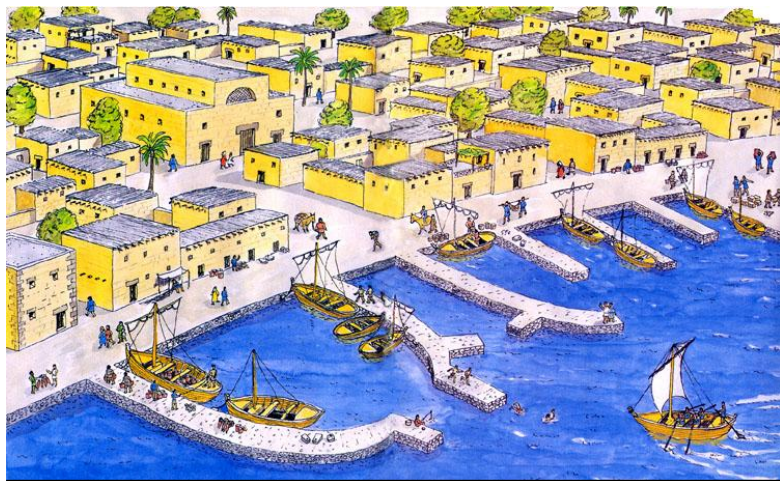
| | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Chapter 1: No recorded Travel by Jesus | - | 0 miles |
| Chapter 2: No recorded Travel by Jesus | - | 0 miles |
| Chapter 3: No recorded Travel by Jesus | - | 0 miles |
| Chapter 4: No recorded Travel by Jesus | - | 0 miles |
| Chapter 5: Jesus travels from Nazareth to Bethabara | - | 77 miles |
| Chapter 6: Jesus is tempted in the Judean Wilderness | - | 16 miles to 50+ miles |
| Chapter 7: Jesus returns to Bethabara | - | 16 miles |
| Chapter 8: No recorded Travel by Jesus | - | 0 miles |
| Chapter 9: Jesus travels from Bethabara to Bethsaida | - | 88 miles |
| Chapter 10: Jesus travels from Bethsaida to Cana | - | 26 miles |
| Chapter 11: Jesus travels from Cana to Capernaum | - | 19 miles |

Jesus traveled at least 242 miles by foot during the time period contained in this book, which represents about 5½ months.



3- **Capernaum** – The name "Capernaum" is translated from the Greek word "Καφαρναούμ" or "Kapharnaoum". It means "village of Comfort". The Hebrew form of the word is translated from two separate words "כפר" or "Kaphar", which means "village", and "נחום" or "Nachuum", which means "comfort". The word "Nachuum" is the Hebrew form of the prophet Nahum's name (a name of the prophet from the old testament). The Hebrew word could be "village of comfort" or "village of Nahum". Interestingly enough, there seems to be no connection to the Hebrew prophet Nahum and the village of Capernaum. Capernaum was originally a fishing village inhabited continuously from in the 300's BCE until it was abandoned in the 1,300's CE. It was a small town or village with archeological estimates of a population of 1,500 at the time of Jesus. The site is located at the north corner of the Sea of Galilee, on the side of the ancient road from Tiberius to the east of the sea of Galilee: Golan, Gamla and Jordan. As the first town encountered by travelers on the other side of the Jordan, it was equipped with a customs office and a small garrison overseen by a centurion. Capernaum was a Jewish village in the time of the Christ. It was apparently poor, since it was a Gentile centurion that built the community's synagogue (Luke 7:5). The houses were humble and built of the local black basalt stone.

The village of Capernaum is also known as Tell Hum, Khirbet Karazeh, Capharnaum, Chorazin, Kefar Nahum, Kafarnaum, Kefar Tanhum, Talhum, and Tanhum. More importantly, Capernaum become known as the town of Jesus. It is suspected that He lived there. Maybe Mary had a home there. Capernaum and that he had a fishing business based out of the town.



Artist rendition of the harbor of Capernaum based upon archaeological findings. The synagogue is the large two-story building on the left side of the picture with the half moon window. (Biblical Archaeology Review, July/Aug 1999)

Possible the Savior Himself had a residence in Capernaum. We know that Peter had a house in



The archeological remains of Capernaum seen from the north, looking south

The large structure in the center with no roof is the remains of the Synagogue that Jesus would have taught in.

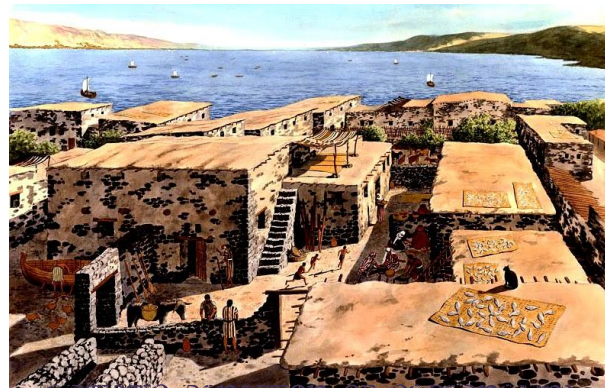


The archeological remains of Capernaum seen from the south, looking northeast

The dome structure is a modern covering over what is believed to be the Apostle Peter's home

4- **his mother** – The word "mother" is translated from the Greek word "μήτηρ" or "mētēr". It means mother. Mary, the wife of Joseph (and at this point probably the widow of Joseph), accompanied Jesus to Capernaum. Capernaum became a central hub for Jesus. He was always returning to Capernaum, and therefore many have theorized that it was his adulthood home. I would further speculate here. Jesus was the first born son of Mary. According to Jewish tradition and law, the oldest son had responsibility to care for his mother should the father pass away. We assume that Joseph is deceased at this point. If Jesus moved to Capernaum, it would be expected that his mother and her household would move with Him. He was expected to be their support. I would theorize that what we are seeing in this verse is the entire household of Mary moving.

5- **his brethren** – The word "brethren" is translated from the Greek word "ἀδελφός" or "adelphos". The word means a brother, whether of the same two parents or only of the same father or mother. "Are these *adelphos* blood-brothers of Jesus? Greek *adelphos* normally refers to a real brother. Hebrew 'ah covers masculine relatives of varying degrees (brother, half-brother, cousin, brother-in-law), and the Septuagint uses *adelphos* to render all these shades of meaning. Christians who accept the early tradition that Mary remained a virgin consider these *adelphoi* to have been putative half-brothers (sons of Joseph by a previous marriage - theory of Epiphanius) or cousins (sons of Joseph's brother - or of Mary's sister: theory of Jerome)...It is difficult to understand how the doctrine of the Virginity of Mary could have grown up early in the second century if her four acknowledged sons were predominant Christians, and one of them bishop of Jerusalem." (The Gospel According to John (i-xii), The Anchor/Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 112). Furthermore, there is no biblical precedent for rendering the Greek word *adelphos* (brother) or its feminine form *adelphae* (sister) as cousin. If the New Testament writers had wanted to designate Jesus' siblings as cousins, they would have used the word *anepsios*. In point of fact, this is precisely what Paul does in referring to Mark as the "cousin [anepsios] of Barnabas" (Colossians 4:10). The Bible explicitly tells us that Jesus Christ had brothers and sisters. They



ARTISTIC RENDERING OF CAPERNAUM

were blood brothers and sisters through Mary, but not through Joseph, making them half-brothers. It should be remembered that Jesus was the only begotten of God the Father in the flesh. He had no mortal siblings through His Father. In this sense, Jesus had only half brothers and sisters through Mary who had children with Joseph after the birth of Jesus.

The people of Nazareth knew Jesus from His youth. He was raised there. When He returned, He did so in His role as Messiah. They found it difficult to accept His new role, as they had a different vision of the Messiah, and their Messiah surely didn't have siblings. Matthew records, **"And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?"** (Matthew 13:54–56). From this scripture, we surmise that Jesus had at least 4 brothers and 2 sisters.

Jesus' brothers are mentioned as accompanying Jesus and his mother to Capernaum after the marriage at Cana (John 2:12). Later, Mary and these brothers are recorded as seeking an audience with Jesus (Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35; Luke 8:19-21). Toward the end of Jesus' ministry, His brethren are mentioned as urging Jesus to prove His Messiahship, which they themselves doubted (John 7:3-5). That they were later converted is clear, for they are described in Acts as uniting with the disciples and others in "prayer and supplication" prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:13-14). Paul implies that they were all married (1 Corinthians 9:5).

Many commentators hold that the author of the epistle of Jude, who identifies himself as the "brother of James," was one of these brothers (Jude 1). It is also generally believed that the leader of the church at Jerusalem was James, the Jesus' brother (see Acts 12:17; 15:13). This seems to be confirmed by Paul's reference to his visit to Jerusalem, in which he states that he saw only Peter, and "James, the Lord's brother" (Galatians 1:18-19).



6 - his disciples – The word "disciple" is translated from the Greek word "μαθητής" or "mathētēs". The word means a learner, pupil, or disciple. **"This phrase is omitted in Codex Sinaiticus and the early versions. Some have suggested that the 'brothers' originally referred to the disciples, and that the copyist, misunderstanding it to refer to the relatives of Jesus, added the disciples as a third party."** (The Gospel According to John (i-xii), The Anchor/Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 112). To me this seems somewhat nonsensical. We know from earlier verses that at least five disciples, from the Bethsaida/Capernaum area, followed Jesus to the marriage in Cana. They were Andrew, John, Nathanael, Philip, and Simon. It is only logical that they would follow Jesus back to their home towns.



7 - they continued there – The phrase "continued there" is translated from the Greek word "μένω" or "menō". It means to remain or abide. It can be used in reference to a place or a time. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "continued" with "remained", (The Codex Sinaiticus, John 2:12, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 166). The trip back to Capernaum took place on or about 23 March 27CE. It would have take 2 days to make the journey, especially if they were moving their possessions. I would place them in Capernaum on or about 25 March 27CE.

8 - not many days – The word "days" is translated from the Greek word "ἡμέρα" or "hēmera". The word means the day, used of the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night. The Jewish Passover is always the 14th of Nisan. In the year 27CE, Passover fell on our equivalent of 7 April 27CE. Given the travel time it would take to get to Jerusalem, Jesus could not have stayed in Capernaum "many days". I would estimate that He stayed there at most 11 days, and probably less, prior to His departure for the Passover in Jerusalem.

The End