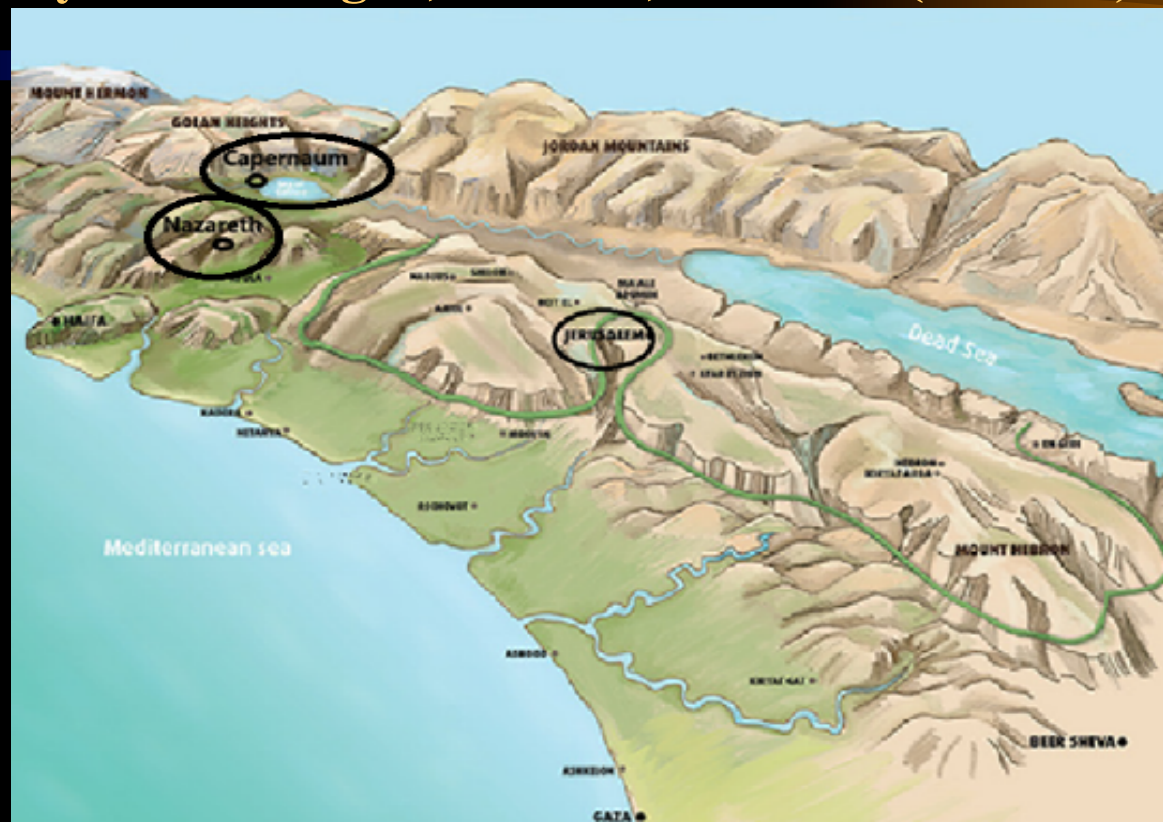


# CHRIST'S PROPHETIC GALILEAN MENTORSHIP

by Mario Seigle, June 20, 2026 (PART 2)

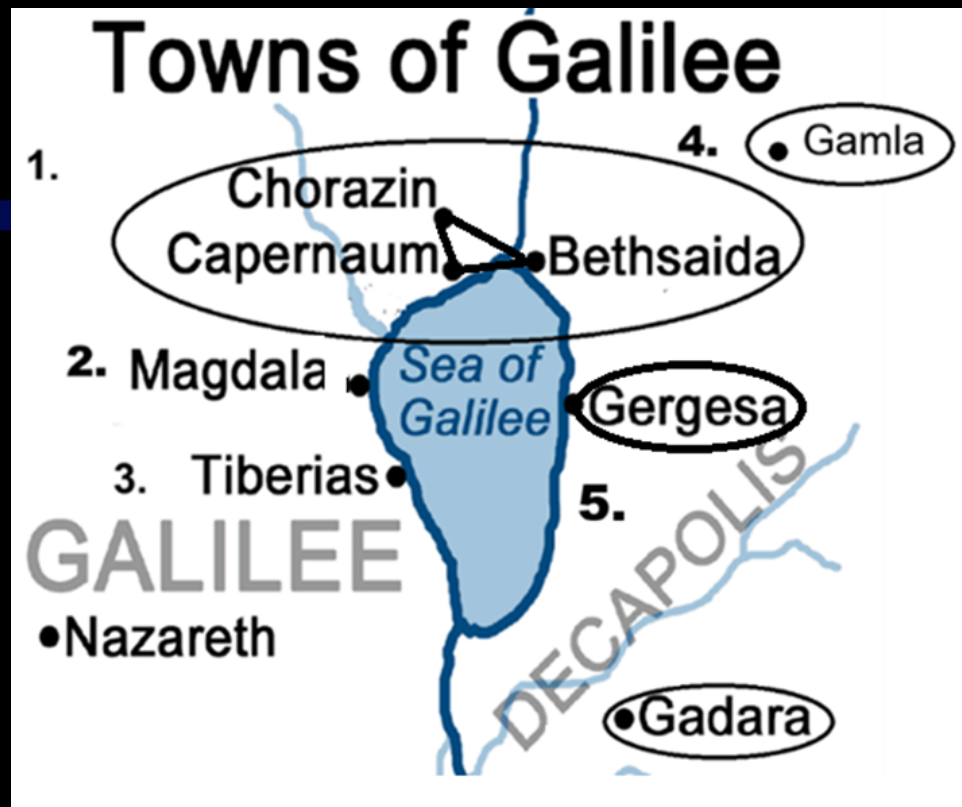


**In this second part, we will cover the three remaining main groups around the Lake of Galilee. All these groups served Christ to broadly train His disciples in dealing with the different populations in the world where they would be sent to preach.**

**As the *Lexham Geographic Commentary of the Gospels* notes, “Jesus’ ministry base in Galilee prepared his disciples to take the Gospel into all the earth. The training ground Jesus chose for his disciples was a politically, culturally, and economically diverse region. A wide array of people lived in Galilee...Jesus’ travels and encounters with various population groups prepared the disciples to be sent out into the world to share the Gospel with all nations” (Emily J. Thomassen, 2017, p. 256).**

**This is vital for us since Christ is now preparing us to be kings & priests in His kingdom (Rev. 20:6), by exposing us to different people groups & many trials & circumstances to build godly character & empathize with others, as they learned to do!**





**There were five basic people groups in Galilee, representative of much of the world. 1. The strongly religious triangle 2. The financial support group in Magdala 3. The politically compromised group of the Herodians with Tiberias as the northern capital. 4. The fanatical zealots of Gamla. 5. The alluring Gentile world of the Decapolis.**



**Here we see the five main groups of people and their different beliefs. We have covered the first two and now will focus on the final three.**

**Review of lessons in part 1 of *first two people groups*:**

**1. The religious triangle of Capernaum, Bethsaida and Chorazin.** They had a lot going for them, being at the headquarters of Jesus Christ, the preexistent Word – God in the flesh! Yet, their set ways, influenced by Rabbinism, did not allow them to have an open mind. The parable of the wineskins also applied to them (Lk. 5:36-39). They were not like the Bereans, with an open mind, like we should be (Acts 17:10-12).

**2. The financial supporters at Magdala.** Here, mostly women took up the challenge and found their role in Christ's ministry—and we can too for God's Work still needs us! (Pr. 31:20; Mt. 8:20; Lk. 12:20-21).

**(Source material: *Lexam Geographic Commentary of the Gospels* (2017); archaeologist Brad Gray lectures).**

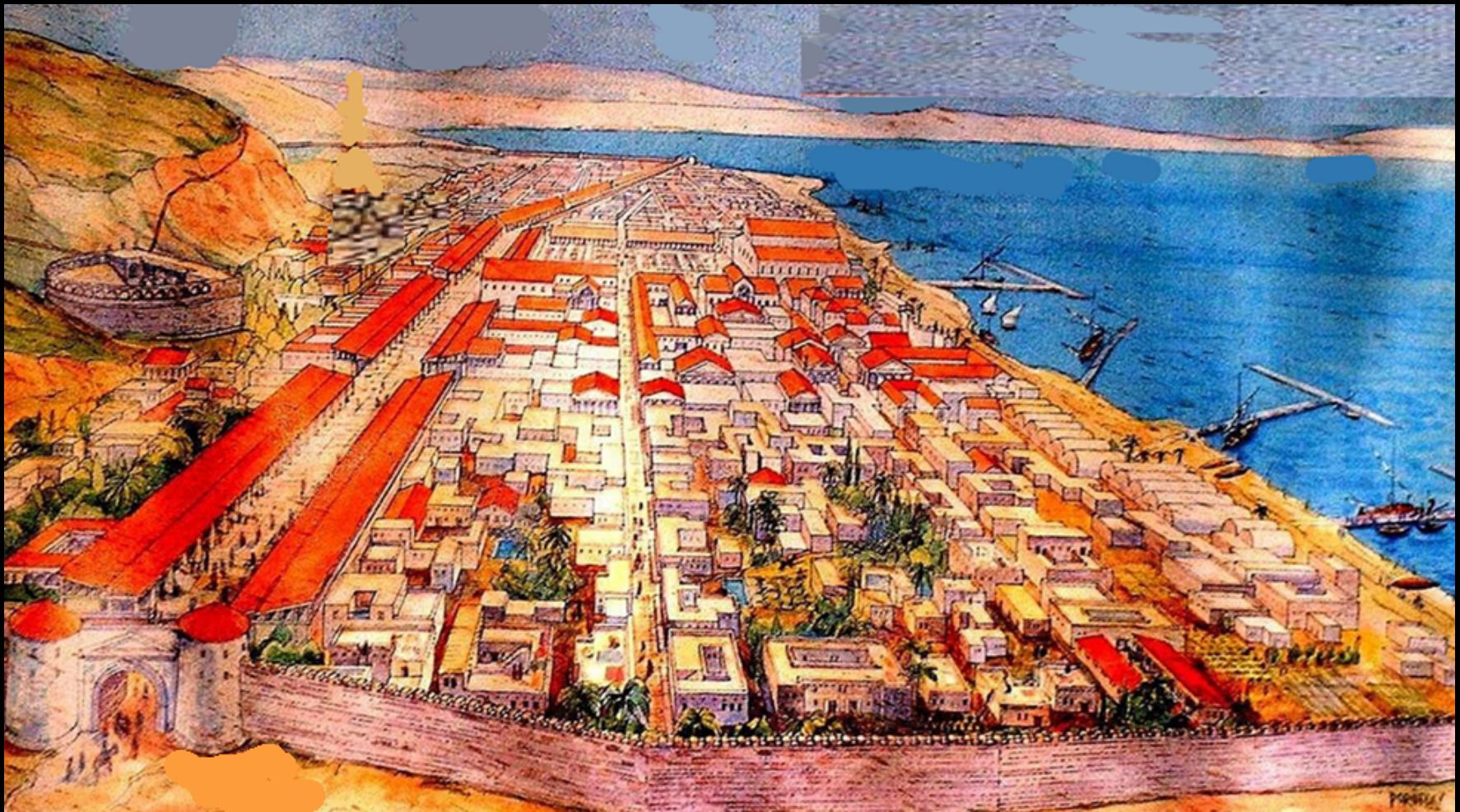
A satellite map of the region around Tiberias, showing a large body of water on the right and a city area on the left. The text is overlaid on the map.

# TIBERIAS ●

## 3. HERODIANS - RELIGIOUSLY COMPROMISED

37°21'25" Coor

**3. The Herodians, with their northern capital in Tiberias of about 15,000 inhabitants, were the religiously compromised – for they put first their politics, riches and prestige instead of God.**



**Drawing of ancient Tiberias. It had a long street with colonnades covered by a red roof. It had an amphitheater and Herod Antipas' palace. It was a city dominated by the Herodians, who were fierce political supporters of Herod's dynasty.**



**Another view of Tiberias, named after the reigning emperor, Tiberius. It was built over a Jewish cemetery, so some Jews would not visit it because they viewed it as ritually unclean. It reflected Greco-Roman culture. Christ directly avoided it, and yet, exposed His disciples to the Herodian's viewpoint so they would know how to deal with them and their type in the future.**

**Christ faced the Herodians and Pharisees in Mt. 22:15-22. “Taxes” meant here a census tax paid every year and required by the Jews since A.D. 6, when Judea became a Roman province. The tax was unpopular because it showed the Jews were under Roman rule & being financially exploited. Christ also confronted the Herodians in Mr. 3:1, 5-6 when He healed a man on the Sabbath.**

**Lesson #3 His disciples learned the balance about being faithful to God while being a good citizen & paying taxes (Rom. 13:6-7).**

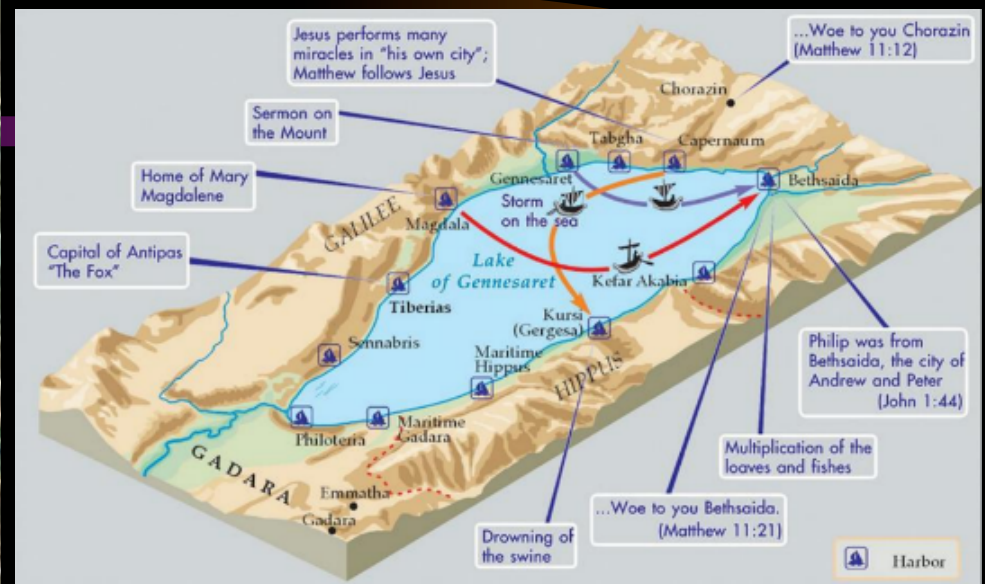
**Lesson #4 When having to choose between obeying God or man, be it a ruler or not, we have to obey God first (Acts 5:29).**



**The ruling emperor from A.D. 14 to 37 was Tiberius (Luke 3:1)**



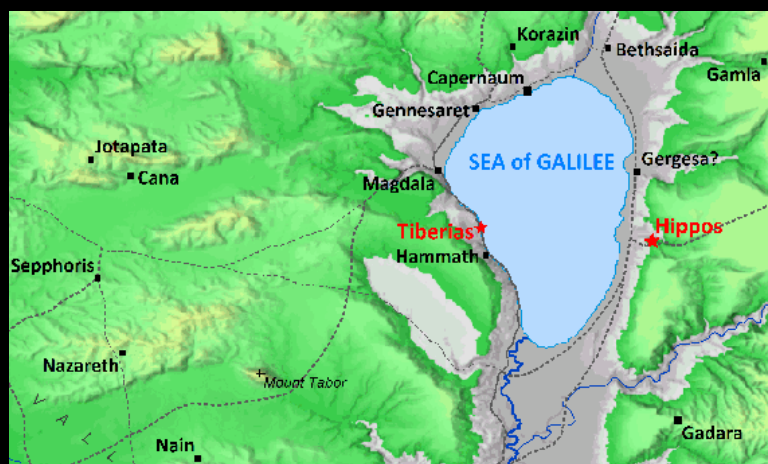
The fourth group was the fanatical Jews known as *the Zealots*. These “*sicari*” or assassins, resorted to murder to undermine Roman rule. Gamla, with its caves, was their base. One of these, *Judas of Galilee* (from Gamla) is named in Acts 5:37. Yet Christ called one of them to be an apostle, *Simon the Zealot* (Lk. 6:15). Jesus showed His disciples how to deal with a fanatical people group & had some converts. Lesson #5 -- God can use people from extreme viewpoints—if they repent & change (see example).



**The fifth and last people group was the Decapolis (it means “10 cities” in Gk., founded in 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. as a Greek colony). This was the “Las Vegas” of the Gentile region. From Capernaum you could see on the opposite shore the white limestone and night lights of Hippos. Christ visited the area but not their cities. His ministry includes people from the area of the Decapolis (Mt. 4:23-25).**

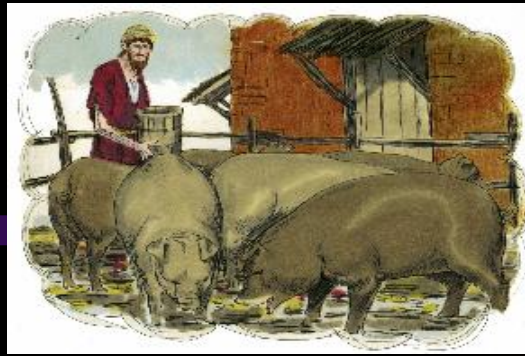


**Gergesa was in one of the cities of the Decapolis, where Jesus healed a possessed man and cast the demons into a herd of swine that ran off the cliff and perished (Mark 5:14, 20). That man later went to the rest of the Decapolis and witnessed about Jesus and “they all marveled” (Mark 5:20).**



Later, in the border region of the Decapolis (Mark 7:31), he healed a deaf & mute man and next, He was with the multitudes where he fed 4,000 men, not counting the women or children (Mr. 8:1, 6-7, 8-9).

As the *Lexam Geographic Commentary of the Gospels* says, “The feeding of the 4,000 took place in the Decapolis...a chain of Greco-Roman cities like Hippos” (p. 262).



Lastly, the Parable of the Prodigal Son is a story of a young man who goes to a Gentile region where he could splurge his inheritance.

As *Archaeology Study Bible* says, “Jesus’ listeners likely would have imagined the younger son traveling to the Decapolis...and easily fallen into debt and reckless living” (pp. 1512-1513).

The *Lexam Commentary* adds, “When Jesus referred to the ‘distant/country/region/district’ [*chora* in Gk.] in the parable of the prodigal son, it is possible that he is referring to the Decapolis. It was outside the predominant Jewish settlement,

**“most certainly seeming far away to a Galilean villager in Lower Galilee. Swine were present... This ‘distant *chora* [region] area was socially and metaphorically distant: one far away from the love and grace of the Father” (p. 148).**

**Lesson #6 – There is always a “Decapolis” waiting to trap us as it did the prodigal son (Rev. 18:4). So, don’t become one, or a Demas who Paul said “has forsaken me, *having loved the present world*” (2 Tim. 4:10). These are the 5 groups & 6 lessons we have now learned by using biblical geography.**



**Remains of the gleaming white marble and limestone city of Hippos**