

Ancient Biblical Town Where Jesus Performed Miracles May Finally Have Been Found

Another piece of the biblical world has emerged from the ground of Israel, bringing fresh excitement to Christians and biblical scholars alike. Archaeologists now say the ancient town of Bethsaida, closely tied to the ministry of Jesus and several of His disciples, has likely been identified along the northeastern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Researchers announced this month that years of excavation at El-Araj have produced overwhelming evidence connecting the site to biblical Bethsaida, the village referenced multiple times throughout the New Testament.

Bethsaida was the hometown of the apostles Peter, Andrew and Philip. Scripture also records Jesus performing miracles in and around the city, including the healing of a blind man described in the Gospel of Mark and the feeding of thousands near the area with loaves and fish.

Excavation director Steven Notley said the growing body of discoveries has “essentially confirmed” El-Araj as biblical Bethsaida.



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Among the most significant findings are the remains of a Byzantine church believed to be the long-lost “Church of the Apostles,” ancient fishing tools, Roman-era ruins and a first-century structure uncovered beneath the church foundation.

“So, we have a first-century house wall under the apse,” Notley told EWTN News. “It doesn’t have a plaque on it that

says 'Peter slept here,' but from a perspective of archaeology, it doesn't get much better than that."

Archaeologists also uncovered a mosaic inscription referring to Peter as the "chief of the apostles and keeper of the keys of heaven," strengthening the connection between the site and the biblical accounts surrounding the disciples.

The discoveries closely match writings from eighth-century bishop Willibald, who described visiting a church built over the home of Peter and Andrew during a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Excavations first began at El-Araj in 2016 after researchers identified the site as a possible match for Bethsaida because of its location near the ancient shoreline and evidence of a thriving first-century fishing village.

Momentum continued to build as archaeologists uncovered fishing weights, Roman pottery and evidence of a Roman bathhouse. Then, in 2025, a wildfire unexpectedly revealed additional ruins hidden beneath dense vegetation, exposing more structural remains across the site.

The findings also align with historical descriptions from Flavius Josephus, who documented settlements and activity around the Sea of Galilee during the Roman era.

Bethsaida remains one of the most important locations connected to the earthly ministry of Jesus. The city witnessed miracles, discipleship and powerful moments recorded in Scripture that continue inspiring believers thousands of years later.

While faith in Christ has never depended on archaeology, discoveries like these continue bringing the pages of the Bible to life and reminding us that the Gospel unfolded in real places where people encountered Jesus face to face.

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