

Uncovered Underground Fresco Shows 'Jesus Rising to the Sky'

Turkish archaeologists have found a fifth-century underground church with artwork showing scenes of Jesus rising into the sky.

"This place is even bigger than the other historical churches in Cappadocia. It was built underground and has original frescoes that have survived to this day," mayor of Nevsehir, Hasan Unver, told *Hurriyet Daily News*.

Click here to see the frescoes.

"There are exciting depictions like fish falling from the hand of Jesus Christ, Him rising up into the sky, and the bad souls being killed. When the church is completely revealed, Cappadocia could become an even bigger pilgrimage center of Orthodoxy," Unver said.

The church was discovered as archaeologists are excavating the world's largest known underground city. The city was found in December 2014 and consists of about 3.5 miles of tunnels, churches and escape galleries dating back around 5,000 years.

The newly discovered church is estimated to have been built in the fifth century A.D.

"We have stopped work in order to protect the wall paintings and the church. When the weather gets warmer in the spring, we will wait for humidity to evaporate and then we will start removing the earth," archaeologist Ali Aydin was quoted as saying.

Aydin said they hope to discover even more original paintings as the earth is removed.

Five other churches have previously been discovered in the same underground city. It is believed that early Christians used the city to hide during the persecution of Christians after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.