



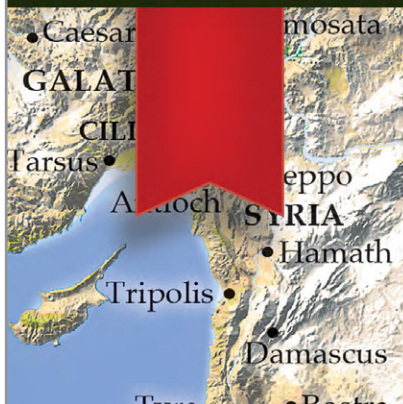
CHRISTOPHER D. HUDSON

# SELF-GUIDED TOUR OF THE BIBLE

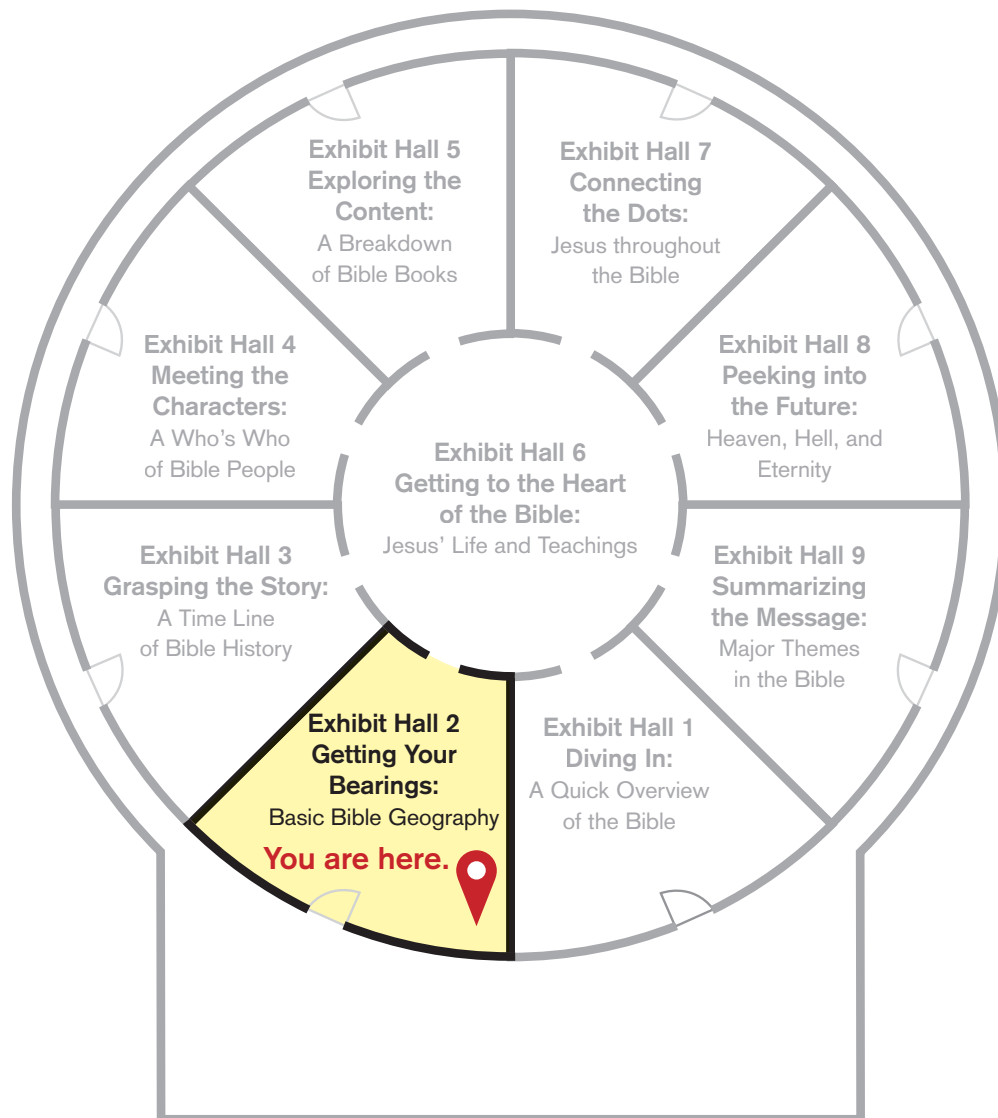
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# GETTING YOUR BEARINGS: BASIC BIBLE GEOGRAPHY



## Bodies of Water

### About

Though certain locations in the Middle East are lush and green, much of this part of the world is dry. Little rainfall means a shortage of waterways and large lakes. Wadis (dry ravines) that dot the landscape contain water only during the brief rainy seasons.

Body of Water	Description	Key Events
<b>Tigris River</b>	From the Taurus Mountains in Turkey, the Tigris flows 1,150 miles (1,851 km) southeast through Syria and Iraq, past Baghdad to the Persian Gulf.	Abraham followed God's call via the Fertile Crescent, the region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers (Genesis 12).
<b>Euphrates River</b>	This river flows through the same countries as the Tigris for 1,740 miles (2,800 km), merging with the Tigris just northwest of the Persian Gulf.	The ancient cities of Ur and Babylon were located along the Euphrates River (Jeremiah 51:63–64).
<b>Nile River</b>	The longest river in the world (4,258 miles; 6,853 km), the Nile flows north, refreshing almost a dozen countries.	As a baby, Moses was placed in a basket in the Nile and the Nile figured prominently in God's judgments on Egypt (Exodus 2, 7–8).
<b>Red Sea</b>	Roughly 1,400 miles long (2,253 km) by 200 miles wide (322 km) at its widest point, the Red Sea forms the eastern border of Egypt.	God delivered his people out of Egypt through the miraculous parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 13–15).
<b>Sea of Galilee</b>	The lowest freshwater lake on earth (about 700 feet, or 213 m, below sea level), this lake is roughly 68 square miles in area (176 sq km)—about the same size as Washington, DC.	It is the site of many events from the life of Jesus, including where he walked on water (Matthew 14). It is also called the Lake of Gennesaret or Sea of Tiberias (Luke 5:1; John 6:1).
<b>Jordan River</b>	Meandering from the Sea of Galilee some 220 miles (354 km) to the Dead Sea, the Jordan River forms the eastern boundary of Israel.	The twelve tribes entered the Promised Land through the miraculously parted Jordan River (Joshua 3). John baptized Jesus here (Matthew 3:13–17).

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Body of Water	Description	Key Events
<b>Dead Sea (Salt Sea)</b>	This lake is 31 miles long by 9 miles wide (50 km by 14 km) and has no life—other than microorganisms—found in it. It is almost ten times as salty as the ocean, leading to it also being called the Salt Sea. Its surface is over 1,400 feet (427 m) below sea level.	David sought refuge here (1 Samuel 23:29). A Jewish religious sect from before and around the time of Jesus hid the now-famous Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran, a settlement overlooking the water.
<b>Mediterranean Sea</b>	Also known as the Great Sea, the Mediterranean is bordered on the north by Europe; the east by Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Israel; and on the south by Africa.	Jonah fled from the call of God by sailing on this sea. Paul's missionary journeys meant he spent time sailing on these waters.

Exhibit Hall

### Biblical Significance

- Jesus' demonstrations of his power over nature—like when he calmed a raging storm on the Sea of Galilee—served as signs to confirm that he was truly the Son of God (Mark 4:35–41).
- *Thirst* is a great (and frequent) metaphor in Scripture, because of the scarcity of water in the Middle East (Psalm 42:2; John 4:13–14). Just as physically we cannot live without water, spiritually we cannot live without the living water that Christ offers (John 7:37).

### Factoid

The Jordan River is only about 90 to 100 feet (27 to 30 m) across and rarely more than 10 feet (3 m) in depth.



Sea of Galilee

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## Northern Israel

### About

Israel is bound on the west by the Mediterranean Sea and roughly on the east by three bodies of water: the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River, and the Dead Sea.

The northern part of Israel is about the geographical size of New Jersey. This region (which includes Galilee and Samaria) offers a diverse climate and varied landscape. The landscape is lush with vegetation, far different from the arid and hostile regions to the south.

### What Happened Here

- In the Old Testament, the prophet Elijah confronted 850 false prophets at Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:16–40).
- Hosea the prophet warned the inhabitants of northern Israel to turn back to God. This was around 750 BC, the same time as the founding of Rome, some 1,300 miles (2,092 km) west.
- The northern kingdom of Israel fell to the invading Assyrian army in 722 BC. When the Assyrians resettled foreigners in this conquered area, the Jews still residing there intermarried with them, producing the people known as the Samaritans.

### Names for Israel

In the Bible and in history, the land of Israel (in part and/or in whole) has been referred to by many names:

- Canaan (Exodus 6:4)
- The Promised Land (Deuteronomy 6:3)
- Judah (southern part) and Israel (northern part)
- The Holy Land (Psalm 78:54)
- Palestine

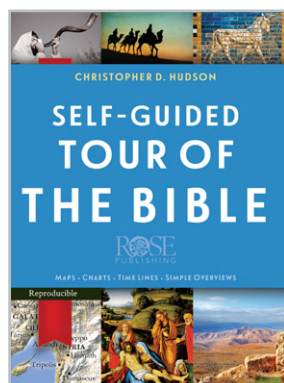
- Jesus grew up in Nazareth, a town in northern Israel.
- Jesus ministered in Galilee, exactly where the prophet Isaiah said the Messiah would be “a great light” to the people there (Isaiah 9:1–2; Matthew 4:13–16). Jesus taught the masses in this region and miraculously fed over 5,000 people with a boy’s lunch (Mark 6:33–44). He calmed a storm on the Sea of Galilee (Mark 4:35–41) and walked on its waves (Mark 6:45–52).

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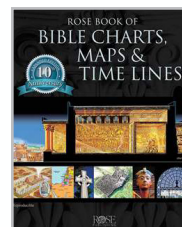


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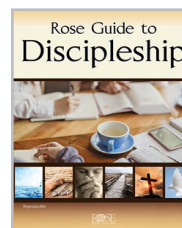
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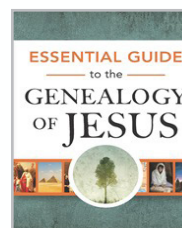
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