



VIEW EAST: “DUC IN ALTUM” APPEARS ABOVE THE MAGDALA CHURCH ENTRANCE. IT’S LATIN FOR “PUT OUT INTO THE DEEP.” JESUS SPOKE THESE WORDS TO SIMON PETER AFTER HE HAD FISHED ALL NIGHT WITHOUT SUCCESS (LUKE 5:4).

BELOW: THE WOMEN’S ATRIUM INSIDE THE CHURCH IS SURROUNDED BY EIGHT PILLARS—SEVEN WITH NAMES OF WOMEN MENTIONED IN THE GOSPELS AND ONE WITHOUT A NAME DEDICATED TO ALL WOMEN WHO VISIT THE CHURCH.



MARY MAGDALENE WAS ONE OF SEVEN WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS AND MINISTERED TO HIM (MARK 15:41). OTHER MARYS INCLUDED MARY, HIS MOTHER (LUKE 1:5, 2:26); MARY OF BETHANY (LUKE 10:38–42); MARY THE MOTHER OF JAMES THE YOUNGER, JOSES, AND SALOME (MATT. 27:56–28:1); MARY THE WIFE OF CLEOPHAS, AND MARY THE MOTHER OF JOHN MARK (JOHN 19:25). OTHER WOMEN WHO FOLLOWED JESUS INCLUDED “JOANNA THE WIFE OF CHUZA HEROD’S STEWARD, AND SUSANNA, AND MANY OTHERS, WHICH MINISTERED UNTO HIM OF THEIR SUBSTANCE” (LUKE 8:2–3).





VIEW EAST: MAGDALA FROM THE TRAIL DESCENDING THE EASTERN SIDE OF MT. ARBEL HIKING TOWARD TIBERIAS. YOU CAN SEE THE ROOF OVER THE SYNAGOGUE (BOTTOM CENTER), THE MAGDALA HOTEL (CENTER), THE SOUTHERN EXCAVATIONS OF MAGDALA, AND THE DUC IN ALTUM CHURCH (CENTER RIGHT).

MAGDALA

(SEE MAP ON PAGE 151)

Mary Magdalene was one of the women who followed and supported Jesus (Mark 15:41). As her name indicates, she was from Magdala on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee. We remember her as a key witness to the death (Matt. 27:57, Mark 15:40), burial (Matt. 27:61, Mark 15:47), and empty tomb of Christ (Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1–10). Mary Magdalene was also the first to meet the resurrected Lord outside the empty tomb (John 20:1–18).¹

Some misguided souls have identified Mary Magdalene as the “sinful woman” who anointed Jesus’s feet and was forgiven of her sins (Luke 7:36–50). Nothing in the Bible supports this interpretation, as her name is not mentioned in connection with the sinful but repentant woman. Elder Talmage provided the following insight into the life and character of Mary Magdalene:

Mary Magdalene became one of the closest friends Christ had among women; her devotion to Him as her Healer and as the One whom she adored as the Christ was unswerving; she stood close by the cross while other women tarried afar off in the time of His mortal agony; she was among the first at the sepulchre on the Resurrection morning, and was the first mortal to look upon and recognize a resurrected Being—the Lord whom she had loved with all the fervor of spiritual adoration. To say that this woman, chosen from among women as deserving of such distinctive honors, was once a fallen creature, her soul seared by the heat of unhallowed lust, is to contribute to the perpetuating of an error for which there is no excuse.²



VIEW SOUTH: MAGDALA CHURCH (CENTER LEFT) AND HOTEL (CENTER RIGHT). A SECOND FIRST-CENTURY AD SYNAGOGUE WAS DISCOVERED ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HOTEL (ORANGE AREA) AT THE FOOT OF MT. ARBEL (TOP RIGHT).

BELOW (VIEW SOUTHEAST): DOMESTIC HOUSING AREA OF MAGDALA. TWO STREETS SEPARATE THREE STRUCTURES MADE OF ROUGHLY HEWN BASALT STONES AND SOME LIMESTONE.





VIEW NORTHEAST: THE FIRST-CENTURY AD SYNAGOGUE OF MAGDALA. THE STRUCTURE ABOVE IT WAS BUILT TO PROTECT THE EXCAVATION (SEE THE PHOTO ON PAGE 211).

BELOW (VIEW EAST): THE PORT OF MAGDALA. FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS MENTIONED A LARGE FLEET OF SHIPS IN THE HARBOR OF MAGDALA. ARCHAEOLOGISTS WERE ABLE TO DISTINGUISH THE LAKE BED BY THE PEBBLES, SHELLS, AND LOAMY SOIL.





VIEW EAST: THE ALTAR AT THE END OF THE CHURCH'S MAIN HALL IS SHAPED LIKE A FIRST-CENTURY AD FISHING BOAT. IT IS SITUATED ON A RAISED APSE PAVED WITH GREEN MARBLE, MAKING IT APPEAR TO BE ON THE LAKE ITSELF.

BELOW: THE ENCOUNTER CHAPEL IS INSIDE THE CHURCH, BUILT AROUND A PAVED COURTYARD DATING TO THE FIRST CENTURY. THE FLOOR MAY BE FROM THE MAIN FISH MARKET LOCATED NEAR THE WHARF OF ANCIENT MAGDALA. THE PAINTING BEHIND THE CHAPEL'S ALTAR DEPICTS THE WOMAN "WITH AN ISSUE OF BLOOD" TOUCHING THE HEM OF JESUS'S GARMENT (MATT. 9:20-22).





VIEW NORTH: MAGDALA IS AT THE SOUTHERN END OF THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET (CENTER) ON THE SHORE OF THE SEA OF GALILEE BELOW MT. ARBEL. SAFED (TOP CENTER) IS ALSO VISIBLE (SEE "SAFED (ZEFAT)" ON PAGE 77).

ENDNOTES

1 About that meeting, Mark added the following: “Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, *out of whom he had cast seven devils*” (Mark 16:9, Luke 8:2; emphasis added).

2 James E. Talmage, “As One Having Authority,” in *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserve Inc., 2006), chap. 18, Gospel Library. Elder Talmage added the following: “We are not considering whether the mercy of Christ could have been extended to such a sinner as Mary of Magdala is wrongly reputed to have been; man cannot measure the bounds nor fathom the depths of divine forgiveness; and if it were so that this Mary and the repentant sinner who ministered to Jesus as He sat at the Pharisee’s table were one and the same, the question would stand affirmatively answered, for that woman who had been a sinner was forgiven. We are dealing with the scriptural record as a history, and nothing said therein warrants the really repellent though common imputation of unchastity to the devoted soul of Mary Magdalene.”

Elder McConkie added to what Elder Talmage wrote: “Mary called Magdalene [was] one of the most virtuous and righteous women ever to follow Jesus. So great was her faith and so extensive her good works that she was singled out to stand as the first mortal person to see our Lord after his resurrection (Mark 16:9; John 20:11–18). She is not to be confused with the unnamed though repentant sinner who anointed Jesus’ feet in the home of Simon (Luke 7:36-50). It is one of the basest slanders of all history to suppose that Mary of Magdala was a fallen woman and therefore to use the term Magdalene as an appellation descriptive of reformed prostitutes.” Bruce R. McConkie, “Jesus Travels without Purse or Script,” in *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1965), 1:239–40.