

Chinese Translation of the Qurʾān

→ Qurʾān

Chinnereth

- I. Archaeology
- II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

I. Archaeology

Tel Kinrot (Arab. *Tell el-ʿOrēme*), unanimously identified with ancient Chinnereth (Fritz/Münger 2002: 2–4), is covering an area of ca. 10 ha on the north-western shore of the Sea of Galilee (map ref. 201000/252775 [OIG], 251000/752775 [NIG]). The strategically well-positioned site is located on a small pass along the Via Maris. It features material remains dating from the Chalcolithic to the late Ottoman period with significant gaps in the settlement sequence especially during the Early Bronze Age III, the Late Bronze Age II and the later Iron Age IIA (Fritz 2003, 2008; Pakkala/Münger/Zanzenberg 2004).

The earliest architectural units thus far exposed date to the Early Bronze Age II (ca. 3000–2700 BCE) during which the settlement was possibly already walled (Winn/Yakar 1984; Fritz 1999: 95). At the close of the Middle Bronze Age IIB and throughout the Late Bronze Age I (ca. 1600–1400 BCE), Chinnereth was heavily fortified by a two-phased defence system; unfortunately only little undisturbed architecture along with finds *in situ* from these periods could be unearthed (Fritz/Münger 2002: 8–11). This is in distinct contrast to the Early Iron Age remains, which are extraordinarily well preserved on the lower mound. They not only attest a high degree of city planning and the use of a strong fortification wall which is both atypical for this period, but also shed light on a highly diversified society with economic ties spanning from Egypt to Northern Syria that amalgamated into a multitude of cultural footprints (e.g., Münger/Zanzenberg/Zwickel 2006; Münger 2007, 2009; Nissinen/Münger 2009). The last significant settlement at Tel Kinrot was a small fortress town – 0.8 ha in size – that was founded sometime during the 8th century BCE on the acropolis, possibly during the reign of Jeroboam II (Fritz 1990). This settlement, which also featured a two-chambered gate and tripartite pillared-buildings that served as *entrepôts* (Zwickel 2008), was annihilated by Tiglat-pileser III during the Assyrian conquest in 734/733 BCE. After this devastating event the site was only sparsely resettled again and henceforth mainly used for agricultural purposes.

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II. Hebrew Bible/Old Testament

The toponym Chinnereth (also spelled Kinneret) refers in the HB/OT usually either to the Sea of Galilee as (*yām*) *kinneret* (Num 34: 11, Josh 13: 27 and Deut 3: 17) or (*yām*) *kinārôt/kinrôt* (Josh 11: 2 and 12: 3) or to the wider region surrounding the lake as *kol kinrôt* (1 Kgs 15: 20). It may well be that the particular shape of the lake actually inspired its own name. If viewed from an elevated position (like, e.g., from nearby Mount Arbel), it resembles the outlines of a lyre (Heb. *kinnôr*; contra Fritz: 42–43).

Only Josh 19: 35 knows of an actual settlement named after the lake, where Chinnereth is mentioned in a list of fortified cities of the tribe of Naphtali; a document which likely dates to the later days of the Israelite kingdom (Knauf: 221–23). However, a place name *k-n-n-t* is already attested in Egyptian sources of the 18th Egyptian dynasty where it is mentioned in a topographical list of Thutmose III (1479–1425 BCE) and in Papyrus Petersburg 1116A, which refers to an envoy from Chinnereth to the Egyptian court, possibly during the reign of Amenhotep II (1428–1397 BCE; cf. Ahituv: 126). The name does not appear in the later el-Amarna correspondence of the 14th century BCE and other contemporary documents of the Late Bronze Age II period.

The topographical and chronological framework of the available literary sources leaves no doubt that ancient Chinnereth should be located at the site of Tel Kinrot/Tell el-ʿOreme (Arab.). Contrary to the marginal importance of a place called Chinnereth in HB/OT literature (see however Dietrich, who attributes Early Iron Age Chinnereth – within

the historical context of 1 Sam 13 – to the kingdom of Geshur; cf. already Knauf: 228, with different arguments), its Greek derivative Γεννησαοῦ/ Γεννησαοῦετ (Gennesaret) plays a prominent role in the Gospels although it could never be located with certainty and possibly designates the boundaries of the modern plain of Ginnosar south of Tel Kinrot only (Zangenberg).

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Stefan Mürger