

The Greek city of Hippos was known as Susita in Aramaic. Both names mean horse. It is situated 1,500 feet above the southeast shore of the Sea of Galilee on a butte called today Kalat el-Husn, which forms a natural fortification. The name Hippos comes from the shape of that formation, which is said to have reminded the ancients of a horse. The city's coins bore the figure of a horse or a pegasus, a winged horse.

Hippos was founded in the Hellenistic period. It was eventually conquered by Alexander Jannaeus of Israel (103-76 B.C.E.). When Rome came to power, Hippos was made a free city and joined the Decapolis, a league of ten Roman cities. Hippos came under the authority of Herod the Great and was deeply involved in the First Jewish Revolt on the side of Rome.