

Hammath Gader lies east of the Jordan River in the Plain of Gader on the right bank of the Yarmuk River. The name means "the hot springs of Gader." This was an important Jewish town in the Roman, Byzantine and Arab periods. Extensive ruins of a Roman bath have been excavated here. Other architectural finds include a Roman temple, a theater and a synagogue. This view of Hammath Gader shows the elaborate rebuilt bath, excavated by Yizhar Hirschfeld and Giora Solar on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities and Museums, the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University and the Israel Exploration Society, beginning in 1979. At lower right one sees the arched entryway to an area called the Hall of Pillars by the excavators. It was a bathing hall with a pool, which lay beyond the entryway. This hall was probably vaulted; its construction dates from about the third century C.E. At bottom center is the middle hall of this complex. This hall also contained a large pool and was also originally vaulted. To the far left stands the Hall of Niches, measuring about 56 feet by 90 feet. This hall may have been built as early as the first or second century C.E. It once contained a bathing pool about 30 feet by 75 feet and was surrounded by niches in the walls for smaller bathing areas. In the upper portion of the slide one can see the Oval Hall, the main bathing area of the complex in the third century C.E. Hammat-Gader may be the town of Emmata mentioned by the Christian author Eusebius in the fourth century (*Onomasticon* 22:26).