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By: Dan Talpalariu, Science Editor



Father de Luca with a reconstructed perfume amphora
G. Caffulli / Terrasanta

[Perfume Vials from Christ's Time Found in Israel](#)

Mary Magdalene may have used such perfumes when anointing Jesus' feet

A group of Franciscan researchers claim they have discovered some perfume vials which resemble the ones used by the woman that the Bible mentions to have washed Jesus Christ's feet. The archaeologists stumbled upon the amphoras while performing dig works in the biblical town of Magdala, now occupied by Israeli people who called it Migdal. The well-preserved ointments were found in a swimming pool, along with other items of great archaeological importance.

The ancient city of Magdala once stood tall in the northern part of modern-day Israel, on the coast of the Galilean Sea, and, until quite recently, it was home to the Palestinian Arab people. But the conflict during Israel's establishment 60 years ago changed all that, and now the town, called Migdal, is occupied by Israeli. This is the site where the group named Studium Biblicum Franciscanum (which gives support to Bible-related studies, especially digs on Middle Eastern sites associated to the New Testament and early Christianity) conducted the excavation that led to the finding. The amphoras holding the intact ointments were uncovered from the bottom of an ancient swimming pool and the mud that filled it through the ages helped preserve its stored content. Besides the perfumed ointments, some other objects were found, such as hair remains and a series of make-up items, according to Father Stefano de Luca, the lead archaeologist of the team who performed the dig. "If chemical analyses confirm it, these could be perfumes and creams similar to those that Mary Magdalene or the sinner cited in the Gospel used to anoint Christ's feet," explained Father de Luca to a religious site, [Terrasanta](#), cited by [Reuters](#). "It's very likely that the woman who anointed Christ's feet used these ointments, or products that were similar in composition and quality." But "The discovery of the ointments in Magdala at any rate is of great importance. Even if Mary Magdalene was not the woman who washed Christ's feet, we have in our hands 'cosmetic products' from Christ's time," he added. The New Testament mentions Mary Magdalene as an abiding disciple of Christ, a former sinner who repented and anointed his feet.