

TIBERIAS, now called Tubaria, was formerly one of the chief towns of Galilee; and received its original name from its founder, Herod, the tetrarch, who so named it in honor of his patron, the Roman emperor Tiberius. There is great reason however, for supposing that there was long before the time of Herod a considerable town on, or nearly on, this site: for we are told that important privileges were granted as inducements to people to settle there, a strong prejudice having at first existed against the place on account of its having been built on ground thickly studded with ancient sepulchres. It is even supposed by some, that Herod built his new city upon the site of the ancient Cinneroth. The Herodian family seem to have taken a great interest in the city of Tiberias, for Josephus—Antiquities, book xix. chap. 7—mentions that Herod Agrippa chose it as the scene of a magnificent entertainment which he gave to the kings of Comange, Emesa, the lesser Armenia, Pontus, and Colchis.

Subsequently to the fall of Jerusalem, Tiberias was the favorite abode of the rabbis and other learned Jews, chiefly, perhaps, because it was also the residence of the patriarch, who was supreme judge among the Jews. This important office became hereditary, and subsisted until the year 429, when it was suppressed.

Though its walls were rebuilt and strengthened by Justinian, in the sixth century, Tiberias was taken in the year 640, and during the reign of the Emperor Heraclius, by the Saracen Caliph Omar. The city has the lake of Gennesareth, or Sea of Galilee, on one of its sides, and on the other sides it has high though rudely built walls, flanked with circular towers, which remind the beholder of the Moorish fortresses of Spain. It is situated a little to the northward of some very massive and extensive remains of a former fortress. The builder of the modern edifice was the Sheikh Daker, himself a native of Tiberias, and he successfully defended the place against the Pasha of Sidon, though his mode of defence was an extremely primitive one. He had but six iron guns of small calibre in the way of artillery; but high and con-