

It is impossible to ascertain the site of Bethsaida of Galilee, the city of Andrew and Peter and Philip, much less of Chorazin; although it is reasonable to suppose that they were both situated on the shore of the lake, in the land of Gennesaret. They were fishing towns, and that precise part of the shore was the most accessible and the most convenient for that employment. The word Bethsaida—of Syriac origin—signifies the house or home of the fisherman, and the two component parts of the word are invariably written separately in the Syriac Testament. A recent writer, who is wont to surprise us with the lofty creations of his genius, called it "*the robbers' den.*"

There were some places occasionally visited by our Lord on the eastern side of the lake, where the cities were few and far between, and the face of the country lying in a wilderness condition; that is, uncultivated. There was one city of some celebrity on the extreme south, and another on the extreme north. The former was Gadara, a city of Decapolis, and lying about five miles south-east from the lake. It was in this secluded place where our Lord met with the poor maniac, who dwelt in solitude, shunning the abodes of living men, and whom he mercifully delivered from his dire affliction.—This was one of the most terrible instances of demoniacal possessions of which the Scriptures give any record. The man was frantic and desperate, and withal endowed with supernatural strength, for a whole legion of devils had taken possession of him. No sooner were the evil spirits expelled, by the divine power which our Lord exercised over the dominion of Satan, than they rushed, by his permission, into a herd of swine feeding in the place; and the mighty power which the Devil had been permitted to obtain over poor human nature was immediately and strikingly displayed: the swine, to the number of two thousand, ran violently down over the steep eastern cliff of the sea, several hundred feet high, and perished in the flood beneath.—The poor man was instantly restored to the right exercise of all his powers, and filled with adoring gratitude to his illustrious benefactor: "he was found sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind."

Matthew has Gergesenes. Manuscript authority is greatly scattered.—Tischendorf and others expunge Gergesenes and write Gadarenes. There is no need. Both cities lay in the same direction, though Gergesa was more remote.

The other city on the east side of the lake occasionally visited by our Lord was Bethsaida Julias, so called to distinguish it from the other city of the same name in Galilee. Jesus was frequently here. It was here where he opened a blind man's eyes, as recorded by Mark. This miracle was wrought, like many others, most unostentatiously, but with all the Saviour's kindness and compassion for the afflicted. He took the blind man by the hand, led him out of the town, cured his blindness, and strictly charged him to go to his own house and not to publish it in the town.

It was near this city where Jesus fed the 5,000 with five loaves and two fishes. With the compassionate design of affording his wearied disciples some repose he proposed to withdraw from the incessant throng in the land of Gennesaret, and to retire by ship across the north end of the lake, to the remote and secluded region lying in the vicinity of Bethsaida Julias. But the people perceived the movement, and from their strong attachment to the Saviour and their eager desire to hear his discourses they followed him on foot along shore, and joined the little band on the east side of the lake. It is the more necessary to define with precision the scene of this remarkable miracle, because it has been assigned to different places. A writer, above alluded to, supposes that it took place at Bethsaida of Galilee, and supports