

# Historical Content

## Judges 20



# People

## **Benjamites (The Tribe of Benjamin)**

- The descendants of the patriarch Benjamin during the time of the Judges.
- “Descendants of Benjamin, son of Jacob. Israel’s first king, Saul, belonged to Benjamin (1 Sam 9:1–2), as did the Apostle Paul (Phil 3:5). The territory allotted to the tribe of Benjamin was between Ephraim, the Jordan River, Judah, and Dan... After Benjaminites in the town of Gibeah rape a Levite’s concubine, the tribe is nearly wiped out by the 11 other tribes.”<sup>1</sup>

## **The Levite**

- A descendant of the tribe of Levi who was traveling in Gibeah from the mountains of Ephraim (Jg 19; 20:4-7)
- Husband of the concubine woman who was murdered

## **Abused Concubine**

- A woman who married a Levite and was abused and killed by the men of Gibeah (Jg 19; 20:4-7)

## **Men of Gibeah**

- A group of perverted men in Gibeah who abused the Levite’s concubine so harshly that she died (Jg 19; 20:4-7)

# Places

## Dan

- Formerly the city of Laish which was a Canaanite city where the people had a reputation for dwelling “safely... quiet and secure” (like the Sidonians) until the Danites spied out and conquered it as a place to settle and live. After being conquered by the Danites, Laish was rebuilt and inhabited by the Danites who renamed the city “Dan” (Jg 18:27–29).
- “Ancient city in northern Israel, located at the foot of Mount Hermon. An inscription found at the site in 1993 may provide archaeological evidence of the existence of King David. Tel Dan was inhabited from the Neolithic age until about AD 500 and forgotten until the 19th century. Excavation at Dan did not begin until 1966.”<sup>2</sup>

## Beersheba

- “Principal city of the Negev region of the Levant. Beer-Sheba was founded by the patriarch Abraham and became the capital of the region. In the Old Testament, Beer-Sheba is often mentioned as the southern extent of the Israelite kingdom.”<sup>3</sup>

## Gilead

- “Gilead extends from the Sea of Galilee in the north to the Dead Sea in the south. After the Israelite conquest it was divided between the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh (Deut. 3:12–13).”<sup>4</sup>



# Places

## Mizpah

- “Mizpah of Benjamin, a town on the border of Judah and Israel. It was the assembly point for the Israelite tribes going against Gibeah of Benjamin (Judg. 20:1–48). Mizpah was also on the circuit made annually by Samuel when he was judging Israel (1 Sam. 7:16–17). King Asa made Mizpah a fortified city after the heavy fighting between Israel and Judah (1 Kings 15:17–22). After the fall of Jerusalem at the exile (587 BCE), Mizpah became the Babylonian provincial capital. Gedaliah was made provincial governor, but was assassinated at Mizpah by Ishmael and a band of zealots.”<sup>5</sup>

## Gibeah of Benjamin

- Town in the southern territory of Benjamin, not to be confused with “Gibeah of Judah” or “Gibeah of Ephraim”<sup>6</sup>
- Hometown of King Saul and where he reigned from (1 Sa 9:1–11:15)

## Bethel

- “Part of the territory allotted to the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim (Josh 16:1). The phrase “hill country of Bethel” is used only once in the Old Testament (1 Sam 13:2), but Bethel is also generally mentioned as being located in a hilly region, likely part of the hill country of Ephraim. The town of Bethel was a major worship site for the northern kingdom of Israel.”<sup>7</sup>

# Places

## Baal Tamar

- Meaning “Baal of the palm tree... Evidently a seat of heathen worship (Jgs 20:33) between Bethel and Gibeah (cf vs 18, 31). The place was known to Eusebius (Onom s.v.), but all trace of the name is now lost. Conder suggests that it may be connected with the palm tree of Deborah (Jgs 4:5) which was between Bethel and Ramah (HDB, s.v.).”<sup>8</sup>

## Plain of Geba

- “A region that may have been located west of Geba, based on some Septuagint manuscripts. Most of Israel gathered here to massacre the men of Benjamin (Judg 20:33).”<sup>9</sup>

## Rock of Rimmon

- “A rock to which six hundred Benjaminites fled to escape from the Israelites (Judg. 20:45–47; 21:13); it is identified with a limestone hill about three miles east of Bethel, on which is the modern village of Ramun.”<sup>10</sup>

## Gidom

- “Place-name meaning “cleared land.” Place where tribes of Israel punished tribe of Benjamin by killing 2,000 of Benjamin’s soldiers (Judg. 20:45) for grossly mistreating a traveling Levite and his concubine. REB follows some scholars in omitting Gidom. No one knows its exact location between Gibeah and Bethel.”<sup>11</sup>



# Key Dates / Timelines

- **1446 B.C.** The Exodus: Israelites are Delivered from Egypt
- **1250 B.C.** Beginning of the Conquest of Canaan
- **1220-1051 B.C.** The period of the Judges over Israel
- **1051 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel Anoints Saul to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **1051–1011 B.C.** The reign of King Saul
- **1020 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel anoints David to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **1011–971 B.C.** The reign of King David
- **971 B.C.** The Prophet Samuel anoints Solomon to be King of Israel (United Kingdom)
- **971–931 B.C.** The reign of King Solomon
- **922 B.C.** The United Kingdom of Israel divides into two Kingdoms: Israel (north) and Juda (south)
- **722 B.C.** The Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians
- **605 B.C.** Battle of Carchemish (Nebuchadnezzar defeats the Egyptians on the Euphrates River)
- **605 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar invades Jerusalem and takes exiles to Babylon (including Daniel and his companions)
- **597 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar besieges Jerusalem and takes King Jeconiah (Jehoiachin) as prisoner
- **588 B.C.** Nebuchadnezzar begins his final siege of Jerusalem
- **586 B.C.** Fall of Jerusalem to Babylon; Judah in exile in Babylon

911 - 609 B.C. Assyrian Empire | 626 – 539 B.C. Babylonian Empire | 539 – 358 B.C. Persian Empire

# Cross References

## Key References:

- **Joshua 8:4** | “And he commanded them, saying: ‘Behold, you shall lie in ambush against the city, behind the city. Do not go very far from the city, but all of you be ready.’”
- **Joshua 8:15** | “And Joshua and all Israel made as if they were beaten before them, and fled by the way of the wilderness.”
- **Joshua 8:19-20** | “So those in ambush arose quickly out of their place; they ran as soon as he had stretched out his hand, and they entered the city and took it, and hurried to set the city on fire. And when the men of Ai looked behind them, they saw, and behold, the smoke of the city ascended to heaven. So they had no power to flee this way or that way, and the people who had fled to the wilderness turned back on the pursuers.”
- **Judges 19:22** | “As they were enjoying themselves, suddenly certain men of the city, perverted men, surrounded the house and beat on the door. They spoke to the master of the house, the old man, saying, ‘Bring out the man who came to your house, that we may know him carnally!’”



# Cross References

## Full List:

- **Genesis** 21:14; 22:19; 24:23; 34:7; 49:10, 27
- **Exodus** 32:6
- **Leviticus** 1:3; 16:8; 18:17; 19:29
- **Numbers** 1:36–37, 46; 2:23; 10:33; 14:1; 25:7, 11, 13; 26:41, 51; 27:21; 31:6
- **Deuteronomy** 10:8; 13:5, 12–15; 17:2, 7, 12; 18:5, 7; 19:19; 21:21; 22:21–24; 24:7, 21; 29:10
- **Joshua** 2:24; 7:6–7, 14–15; 8:2, 4–8, 14–16, 19–21, 24, 31; 10:24, 37, 39; 11:3, 12, 14; 12:9; 14:2; 15:32, 57; 16:1; 18:1, 26; 19:2; 22:12–13, 16; 24:11, 33
- **Judges** 1:1–3, 8, 25; 3:15; 7:9; 8:10; 9:33, 44; 10:17; 11:11; 18:5, 27, 29, 31; 19:15, 22–23, 25–26, 29–30; 21:1–2, 4–5, 8, 13, 19, 23; 1 Sa 1:3; 2:12; 3:3, 20; 4:3–4; 7:5–16; 9:21; 10:17, 20–21, 26–27; 11:7–8, 15; 14:37–38, 41–42; 17:19; 22:19; 25:17
- **2 Samuel** 1:12; 3:10; 12:21; 13:12; 15:14, 24; 16:18; 17:11, 14, 24; 19:41; 20:2; 24:2, 15
- **1 Kings** 4:25; 8:2; 21:10, 13
- **2 Kings** 10:25
- **1 Chronicles** 6:77; 10:7; 12:2; 14:10; 16:6
- **2 Chronicles** 5:3; 13:7; 30:5
- **Nehemiah** 11:1
- **Job** 21:13
- **Psalms** 22:12; 76:5; 78:9
- **Proverbs** 5:22; 11:5–6; 16:33; 29:6
- **Isaiah** 19:13; 47:11
- **Jeremiah** 13:27; 21:7
- **Ezekiel** 5:2; 16:27, 43
- **Hosea** 9:9; 10:9
- **Jonah** 1:7
- **Zechariah** 14:10
- **Acts** 1:26
- **1 Corinthians** 5:13
- **2 Corinthians** 6:15



Images / Maps / Graphs

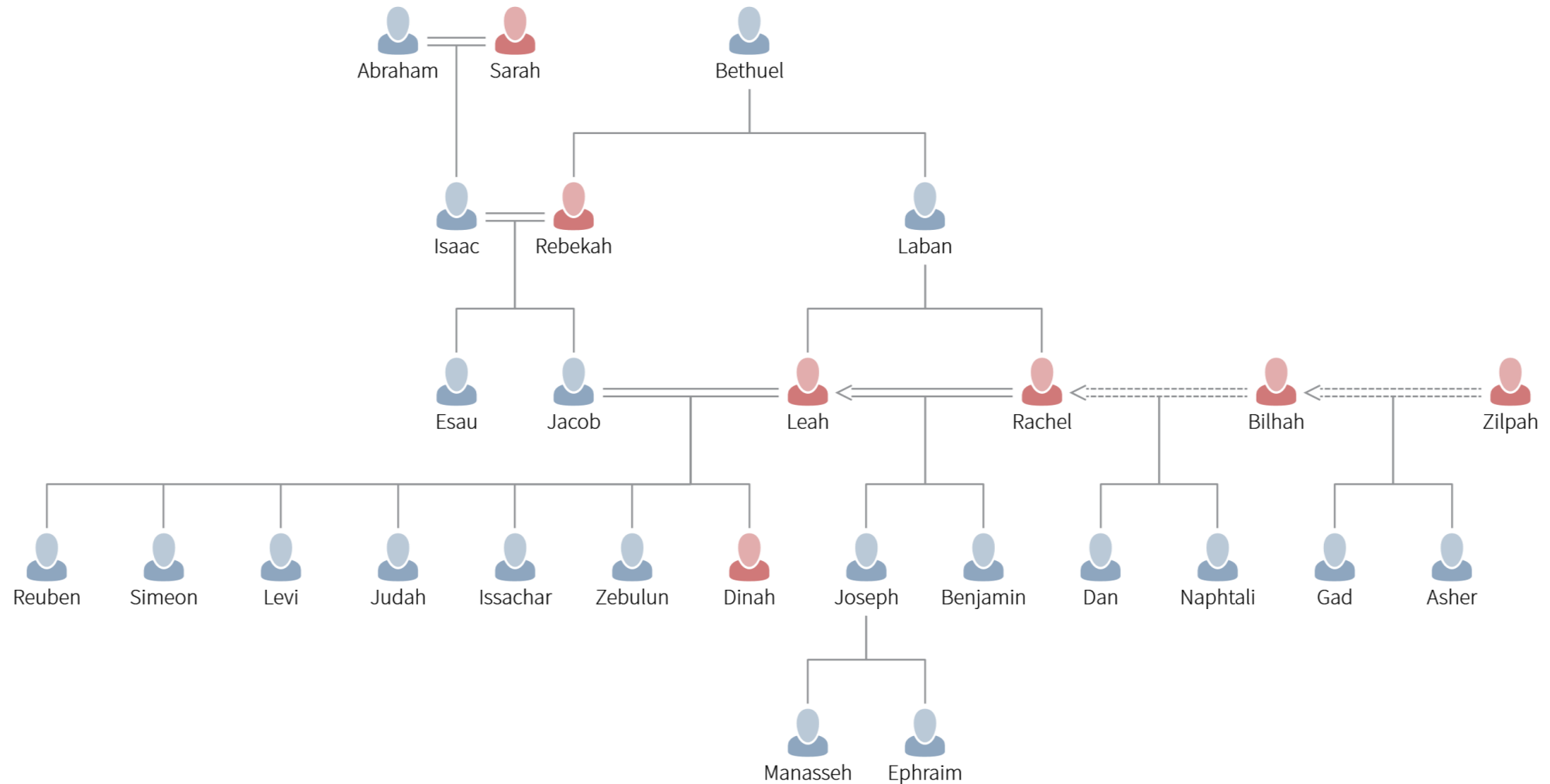


# The Hill Country of Ephraim





# The Family Tree of Jacob



**THE TRIBAL ALLOTMENTS OF ISRAEL**  
 JOSH 13:8-19:49

- City
- City (uncertain location)
- ▲ Mountain peak



# The Tribal Allotments of Israel

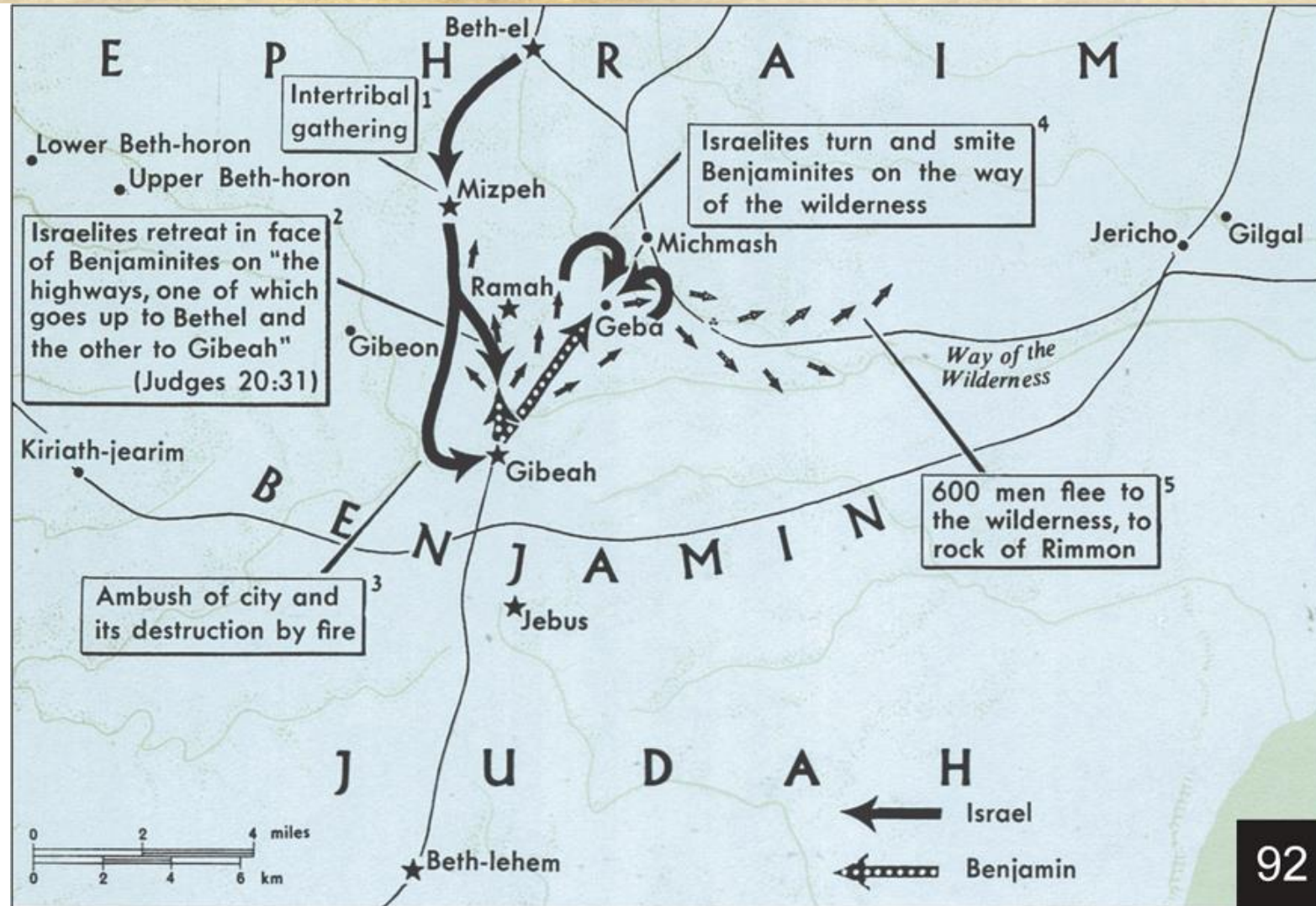




# Judges According to Their Tribes



# The Story of the Concubine in Gibeah (Judges 19-20)





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