

~JABESH-GILEAD (222)

(Ja'bish-gil'e-ad) [possibly, Dried-Up Place of Gilead]

- An ancient town in the tribal territory of Gad, East of the Jordan. Its exact location is not certain, although most scholars believe that it was a little East of the Jordan in the vicinity of **Wadi Yabis**, **Jabesh**, about 35 kilometers (22 miles) South of the Sea of Galilee.
- The first mention of **Jabesh-gilead** was in the days of the Judges, in connection with the retribution dealt out to the neighboring tribe of Benjamin for its condoning of gross immorality.
- And they went on to say; Which one out of the tribes of Israel is it that has not come up to Yehowah at Mizpah? And, look! no one had come into the camp from **Jabesh-gilead** to the congregation. (**Judges 21:8**)
- On that occasion when the Israelites practically exterminated the entire tribe of Benjamin, only 600 males escaped, it was found that not a man of **Jabesh-gilead** had participated in meting out this justified punishment.
- It was therefore determined that every man, woman, and child of **Jabesh-gilead**, with the exception of the virgins, should be put to death. The 400 virgins that were thus spared were then given as wives to the fugitive Benjamites so as to prevent extinction of the tribe.
- Consequently all the sons of Israel went out and the assembly congregated themselves as one man, from Dan down to Beer-sheba along with the land of **Gilead**, to Yehowah at Mizpah. (**Judges 20:1**)
- Accordingly Benjamin came back at that time. Then they gave them the women that they had preserved alive from the women of **Jabesh-gilead**, but they did not find enough for them. (**Judges 21:14**)
- Some three centuries later, when all Israel was clamoring for a visible king like the other nations had, the Ammonites threatened to bore out the right eye of every male inhabitant of **Jabesh-gilead**, a threat that was removed only when Saul mustered a force of 330,000 and put the Ammonites to flight.

- **And Nahash the Ammonite proceeded to go up and camp against Jabesh in Gilead. At that all the men of Jabesh said to Nahash; Conclude a covenant with us that we may serve you. (1 Samuel 11:1)**
- **Then Nahash the Ammonite said to them; On this condition I shall conclude it with you, on the condition of boring out every right eye of yours, and I must put it as a reproach upon all Israel. (1 Samuel 11:2)**
- **In turn the older men of Jabesh said to him; Give us seven days time, and we will send messengers into all the territory of Israel and, if there is no savior of us, we must then go out to you. (1 Samuel 11:3)**
- **In time the messengers came to Gibeah of Saul and spoke the words in the ears of the people, and all the people began raising their voice and weeping. (1 Samuel 11:4)**
- **But here is Saul coming after the herd from the field, and Saul proceeded to say; What is the matter with the people, that they should weep? And they began relating to him the words of the men of Jabesh. (1 Samuel 11:5)**
- **And the spirit of God became operative upon Saul on his hearing these words, and his anger got very hot. (1 Samuel 11:6)**
- **So he took a pair of bulls and cut them in pieces and sent these into all the territory of Israel by the hand of the messengers, saying; Whoever of us is not going out as a follower of Saul and of Samuel, this is the way it will be done to his cattle! And the dread of Yehowah began to fall upon the people so that they came out as one man. (1 Samuel 11:7)**
- **Then he took the sum of them in Bezek, and the sons of Israel amounted to three hundred thousand, and the men of Judah thirty thousand. (1 Samuel 11:8)**
- **They now said to the messengers that had come; This is what you will say to the men of Jabesh in Gilead; Tomorrow salvation will take place for you when the sun gets hot. With that the messengers came and told the men of Jabesh, and they gave way to rejoicing. (1 Samuel 11:9)**

- Accordingly the men of Jabesh said; Tomorrow we shall come out to you people, and you must do to us in harmony with all that is good in your eyes. (**1 Samuel 11:10**)
- And it came about on the next day that Saul proceeded to put the people into three bands, and they made their way into the middle of the camp during the morning watch and went striking down the Ammonites till the day grew hot. When there proved to be some that were left over, then they were sent scattering and there were not left over among them two together. (**1 Samuel 11:11**)
- And the people began to say to Samuel; Who is it saying; Saul, is he to be king over us? Give the men over, that we may put them to death. (**1 Samuel 11:12**)
- However, Saul said; Not a man should be put to death on this day, because today Yehowah has performed salvation in Israel. (**1 Samuel 11:13**)
- Later Samuel said to the people; Come and let us go to Gilgal that we may there make the kingship anew. (**1 Samuel 11:14**)
- So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they proceeded to make Saul king before Yehowah in Gilgal. Then they rendered up communion sacrifices there before Yehowah, and there Saul and all the men of Israel continued rejoicing to a great degree. (**1 Samuel 11:15**)
- Forty years later the Philistines defeated the Israelites and hung the decapitated bodies of Saul and his three sons on the wall of the public square inside Beth-shan.
- Upon hearing of this disgrace, valiant men of **Jabesh-gilead** made a daring night raid in which they removed the corpses, brought them to **Jabesh-gilead**, burned the bodies, and gave the bones a respectful burial. They then fasted for seven days.
- And it came about the next day that, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they got to find Saul and his three sons fallen upon Mount Gilboa. (**1 Samuel 31:8**)
- And they proceeded to cut off his head and strip off his armor

and send into the land of the Philistines all around to inform the houses of their idols and the people. (1 Samuel 31:9)

- Finally they put his armor in the house of the Ashtoreth images, and his corpse they fastened on the wall of Beth-shan. (1 Samuel 31:10)
- And as regards him, the inhabitants of **Jabesh-gilead** got to hear what the Philistines had done to Saul. (1 Samuel 31:11)
- Immediately all the valiant men rose up and went all night long and took the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons off the wall of Beth-shan and came to **Jabesh** and burned them there. (1 Samuel 31:12)
- Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in **Jabesh**, and they went fasting for seven days. (1 Samuel 31:13)
- And it came about the next day that, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they got to find Saul and his sons fallen upon Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8)
- And they proceeded to strip him and take off his head and his armor and send into the land of the Philistines all around to inform their idols and the people. (1 Chronicles 10:9)
- Finally they put his armor in the house of their god, and his skull they fastened to the house of Dagon. (1 Chronicles 10:10)
- And all those of Jabesh in Gilead got to hear of all that the Philistines had done to Saul. (1 Chronicles 10:11)
- So all the valiant men rose up and carried off the corpse of Saul and the corpses of his sons and brought them to **Jabesh** and buried their bones under the big tree in **Jabesh**, and they went fasting for seven days. (1 Chronicles 10:12)
- David, as the newly anointed king of Judah, sent commendations and blessing to the citizens of **Jabesh-gilead** for having extended loving-kindness in this way toward the fallen anointed one of Israel.
- Then the men of Judah came and anointed David there as king over the house of Judah. And they came telling David, saying;

The men of **Jabesh-gilead** were the ones that buried Saul. (2 Samuel 2:4)

- Hence David sent messengers to the men of **Jabesh-gilead** and said to them; Blessed may you be of Yehowah, because you exercised this loving-kindness toward your lord, toward Saul, in that you buried him. (2 Samuel 2:5)
- And now may Yehowah exercise toward you loving-kindness and trustworthiness, and I too shall exercise to you this goodness because you have done this thing. (2 Samuel 2:6)
- And now let your hands strengthen themselves and prove yourselves valiant men, because your lord Saul is dead, and it is even I whom the house of Judah have anointed as king over them. (2 Samuel 2:7)
- Later, David had the bones of Saul and Jonathan brought from **Jabesh-gilead** and interred in Saul's family burial plot in Benjamite territory.
- So David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son from the landowners of **Jabesh-gilead**, who had stolen them from the public square of Beth-shan, where the Philistines had hanged them on the day that the Philistines struck down Saul on Gilboa. (2 Samuel 21:12)
- And he proceeded to bring up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan his son, furthermore, they gathered the bones of the men being exposed. (2 Samuel 21:13)
- Then they buried the bones of Saul and of Jonathan his son in the land of Benjamin in Zela in the burial place of Kish his father, that they might do everything that the king had commanded. So God let himself be entreated for the land after this. (2 Samuel 21:14)