

~MIZPAH 3 (522)

(Miz'pah)[Mizpeh, Miz'peh, meaning Watchtower]

- A city in the territory of Benjamin.
- And **Mizpeh** and Chephirah and Mozah. (**Joshua 18:26**)
- And Zelah, Ha-eleph and Jebusi, that is to say; Jerusalem, Gibeah and Kiriath, fourteen cities and their settlements. This was the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin by their families. (**Joshua 18:28**)
- Although some suggest **Nebi Samwil**, 8 kilometers (5 miles) Northwest of Jerusalem as a possible identification, most favor Tell en-Nasbeh, 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) North of Jerusalem for the ancient site.
- An interpretation of certain archaeological findings seems to favor **Tell en-Nasbeh**. For example, jar handles have been found bearing what some scholars consider to be the three **Hebrew** letters for **m-s-p**, possibly a shortened form of **Mizpah**.
- It was at **Mizpah** that all the fighting men of Israel assembled and decided to take action against those involved in a mass sex crime committed at Gibeah of Benjamin.
- When the Benjamites refused to hand over the guilty men of that city, full-scale war erupted. Finally, the tribe of Benjamin was almost annihilated, only 600 able-bodied men escaped.
- 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**)
- So the keymen of all the people and all the tribes of Israel took their station in the congregation of the people of the true God, four hundred thousand men on foot who drew the sword. (**Judges 20:2**)
- And the sons of Benjamin got to hear that the sons of Israel had gone up to **Mizpah**. Then the sons of Israel said; Speak! How

has this bad thing been brought about? (**Judges 20:3**)

- At this the man, the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, answered and said; It was to Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, that I came, I and my concubine, to stay overnight. (**Judges 20:4**)
- And the landowners of Gibeah proceeded to rise up against me and to surround the house against me by night. It was I that they figured on killing, but it was my concubine that they raped, and she gradually died. (**Judges 20:5**)
- Hence I grasped my concubine and cut her up and sent her into every field of Israel's inheritance, because they had carried on loose conduct and disgraceful folly in Israel. (**Judges 20:6**)
- Look! All you sons of Israel, give your word and counsel here. (**Judges 20:7**)
- So all the people rose up as one man, saying; We shall not go any of us to his tent, nor shall we turn aside any of us to his house. (**Judges 20:8**)
- And now this is the thing that we shall do to Gibeah. Let us go up by lot against it. (**Judges 20:9**)
- And we must take ten men out of a hundred of all the tribes of Israel, and a hundred out of a thousand, and a thousand out of ten thousand, to procure provisions for the people, that they may take action by going against Gibeah of Benjamin, in view of all the disgraceful folly that they did in Israel. (**Judges 20:10**)
- Thus all the men of Israel were gathered against the city as one man, as allies. (**Judges 20:11**)
- Accordingly the tribes of Israel sent men to all the tribesmen of Benjamin, saying; What is this bad thing that has been brought about among you? (**Judges 20:12**)
- And now give over the men, the good-for-nothing men, that are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and let us clear out what is bad from Israel. And the sons of Benjamin did not want to listen to the voice of their brothers, the sons of Israel. (**Judges 20:13**)

- **Then the sons of Benjamin went gathering together out of the cities to Gibeah to go out to battle against the sons of Israel. (Judges 20:14)**
- **So the sons of Benjamin got to be mustered on that day from the cities, twenty-six thousand men drawing sword, apart from the inhabitants of Gibeah, of whom seven hundred chosen men were mustered. (Judges 20:15)**
- **Out of all this people there were seven hundred chosen men left-handed. Every one of these was a slinger of stones to a hairbreadth and would not miss. (Judges 20:16)**
- **And the men of Israel were mustered apart from Benjamin, four hundred thousand men drawing sword. Every one of these was a man of war. (Judges 20:17)**
- **And they proceeded to rise up and go on up to Bethel and to inquire of God. Then the sons of Israel said; Who of us should go up in the lead to the battle against the sons of Benjamin? To this Yehowah said; Judah in the lead. (Judges 20:18)**
- **After that the sons of Israel rose up in the morning and camped against Gibeah. (Judges 20:19)**
- **The men of Israel now went out to battle against Benjamin, and the men of Israel proceeded to draw up in battle formation against them at Gibeah. (Judges 20:20)**
- **So the sons of Benjamin came on out from Gibeah and brought twenty-two thousand men in Israel down to ruin to the earth on that day. (Judges 20:21)**
- **However, the people, the men of Israel, showed themselves courageous and again went drawing up in battle formation in the place where they had drawn up in formation on the first day. (Judges 20:22)**
- **Then the sons of Israel went up and wept before Yehowah until the evening and inquired of Yehowah, saying; Shall I again approach for battle against the sons of Benjamin my brother? To this Yehowah said; Go up against him. (Judges 20:23)**

- Accordingly the sons of Israel drew near to the sons of Benjamin on the second day. ([Judges 20:24](#))
- In turn Benjamin came on out from Gibeah to meet them on the second day and brought a further eighteen thousand men among the sons of Israel down to ruin to the earth, all of these drawing sword. ([Judges 20:25](#))
- At that all the sons of Israel, even all the people, went on up and came to Bethel and wept and sat there before Yehowah and fasted on that day until the evening and offered up burnt offerings and communion offerings before Yehowah. ([Judges 20:26](#))
- After that the sons of Israel inquired of Yehowah, as it was there that the ark of the covenant of the true God was in those days. ([Judges 20:27](#))
- Now Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, was standing before it in those days, saying; Shall I go out yet again to battle against the sons of Benjamin my brother or shall I cease to? To this Yehowah said; Go up, because tomorrow I shall give him into your hand. ([Judges 20:28](#))
- Then Israel set men in ambush against Gibeah all around. ([Judges 20:29](#))
- And the sons of Israel proceeded to go up against the sons of Benjamin on the third day, and to draw up in formation against Gibeah the same as at the other times. ([Judges 20:30](#))
- When the sons of Benjamin went on out to meet the people, they were drawn away from the city. Then, the same as at the other times, they started to strike down some of the people mortally wounded on the highways, one of which goes up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, in the field, about thirty men in Israel. ([Judges 20:31](#))
- So the sons of Benjamin began to say; They are suffering defeat before us the same as at the first. As for the sons of Israel, they said; Let us flee, and we shall certainly draw them away from the city onto the highways. ([Judges 20:32](#))
- And all the men of Israel rose up from their places and went

drawing up in formation at Baal-tamar, while those of Israel in ambush were making a charge out of their places in the vicinity of Gibeah. ([Judges 20:33](#))

- Thus ten thousand chosen men out of all Israel came in front of Gibeah, and the fighting was heavy, and the Benjamites did not know that calamity was impending over them. ([Judges 20:34](#))
- And Yehowah proceeded to defeat Benjamin before Israel, so that the sons of Israel on that day brought down to ruin in Benjamin twenty-five thousand one hundred men, all of these drawing sword. ([Judges 20:35](#))
- However, the sons of Benjamin imagined that the men of Israel faced defeat when they kept giving ground to Benjamin because they trusted in the ambush that they had set against Gibeah. ([Judges 20:36](#))
- As for the ambush, they acted quickly and went dashing toward Gibeah. Then the ambush spread out and struck all the city with the edge of the sword. ([Judges 20:37](#))
- Now the men of Israel had come to the arrangement with the ambush for them to make a smoke signal go up from the city. ([Judges 20:38](#))
- When the sons of Israel turned around in the battle, Benjamin started to strike down about thirty men mortally wounded among the men of Israel, for they said; They are unquestionably suffering nothing but defeat before us just as in the first battle. ([Judges 20:39](#))
- And the signal started to go up from the city as a pillar of smoke. So when Benjamin turned his face back, look! The whole city went up heavenward. ([Judges 20:40](#))
- And the men of Israel made an about-face, and the men of Benjamin were disturbed, for they saw that calamity had reached them. ([Judges 20:41](#))
- Hence they turned before the men of Israel in the direction of the wilderness, and the battle followed them up closely, while the men from out of the cities were bringing them down to ruin in their midst. ([Judges 20:4](#))

- They surrounded Benjamin. They pursued him without a place to rest. They trampled him down directly in front of Gibeah toward the rising of the sun. (**Judges 20:43**)
- Finally there fell eighteen thousand men of Benjamin, all of these being valiant men. (**Judges 20:44**)
- Thus they turned and went fleeing to the wilderness to the crag of Rimmon. And they made a gleanings of five thousand men of them on the highways, and they kept following closely after them as far as Gidom and so struck down two thousand more men of them. (**Judges 20:45**)
- And all those of Benjamin that fell on that day amounted at last to twenty-five thousand men drawing sword, all these being valiant men. (**Judges 20:46**)
- But six hundred men turned and went fleeing to the wilderness to the crag of Rimmon, and they continued to dwell on the crag of Rimmon four months. (**Judges 20:47**)
- And the men of Israel came back against the sons of Benjamin and went striking with the edge of the sword those of the city, from men to domestic animal up to all that were found. Also, all the cities that were found they consigned to the fire. (**Judges 20:48**)
- Earlier, at **Mizpah**, the Israelites had sworn that they would not give their daughters in marriage to Benjamites.
- Now the men of Israel had sworn in **Mizpah**, saying; Not a man of us will give his daughter to Benjamin as a wife. (**Judges 21:1**)
- After the battle, therefore, measures had to be taken to preserve the tribe of Benjamin.
- One of these was the giving of 400 virgin girls from Jabesh-gilead to the Benjamites. The rest of the population of that city had been destroyed, because none of its inhabitants had come to Mizpah and supported the fight against Benjamin.
- Then the sons of Israel said; Who is there out of all the tribes of Israel that has not come up in the congregation to Yehowah, for

there is a great oath that has taken place respecting the one that has not come up to Yehowah at Mizpah, saying; Let him be put to death without fail. (**Judges 21:5**)

- And the sons of Israel began to feel regret over Benjamin their brother. So they said; Today one tribe has been chopped off from Israel. (**Judges 21:6**)
- What shall we do to those who are left over as to wives, now that we ourselves have sworn by Yehowah not to give them any of our daughters as wives? (**Judges 21:7**)
- 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**)
- When the people were counted, well, look! There was not a man there from the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead. (**Judges 21:9**)
- Hence the assembly proceeded to send twelve thousand of the most valiant men there and to command them, saying; Go, and you must strike the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead with the edge of the sword, even the women and the little ones. (**Judges 21:10**)
- And this is the thing that you should do. Every male and every woman that has experienced lying with a male you should devote to destruction. (**Judges 21:11**)
- However, they found out of the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead four hundred girls, virgins, that had not had intercourse with a man by lying with a male. So they brought them to the camp at Shiloh, which is in the land of Canaan. (**Judges 21:12**)
- At a later period the prophet Samuel congregated all Israel and prayed for them. On that occasion the Israelites fasted and confessed their sins.
- When word about their assembly at **Mizpah** reached the Philistines, they took advantage of the situation to launch an attack. But Yehowah threw the enemy into confusion, enabling the Israelites to subdue the foe.

- Apparently to commemorate this God-given victory, Samuel erected a stone between **Mizpah** and Jeshanah, calling it Ebenezer, meaning, **Stone of Help**. Thereafter Samuel continued judging Israel and, as he did so, made a yearly circuit of Bethel, Gilgal, and **Mizpah**.
- Then Samuel said; Collect all Israel together at **Mizpah**, that I may pray in your behalf to Yehowah. (**1 Samuel 7:5**)
- So they were collected together at **Mizpah**, and they went drawing water and pouring it out before Yehowah and kept a fast on that day. And they began saying there; We have sinned against Yehowah. And Samuel took up judging the sons of Israel in **Mizpah**. (**1 Samuel 7:6**)
- And the Philistines came to hear that the sons of Israel had collected themselves together at **Mizpah**, and the axis lords of the Philistines got on their way up against Israel. When the sons of Israel heard of it, they began to be afraid on account of the Philistines. (**1 Samuel 7:7**)
- So the sons of Israel said to Samuel; Do not keep silent for our sakes from calling to Yehowah our God for aid, that he may save us from the hand of the Philistines. (**1 Samuel 7:8**)
- Then Samuel took a sucking lamb and offered it up as a burnt offering, a whole offering, to Yehowah, and Samuel began calling to Yehowah for aid in behalf of Israel, and Yehowah proceeded to answer him. (**1 Samuel 7:9**)
- And it came about that while Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines themselves drew near for battle against Israel. And Yehowah now caused it to thunder with a loud noise on that day against the Philistines, that he might throw them into confusion, and they got defeated before Israel. (**1 Samuel 7:10**)
- At that the men of Israel sallied forth from **Mizpah** and went in pursuit of the Philistines and kept striking them down as far as south of Beth-car. (**1 Samuel 7:11**)
- Then Samuel took a stone and set it between **Mizpah** and Jeshanah and began to call its name Ebenezer. Accordingly he said; Till now Yehowah has helped us. (**1 Samuel 7:12**)

- Thus the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel, and the hand of Yehowah continued to be against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. (**1 Samuel 7:13**)
- And the cities that the Philistines had taken from Israel kept coming back to Israel from Ekron to Gath, and the territory of them Israel delivered from the hand of the Philistines. And there came to be peace between Israel and the Amorites. (**1 Samuel 7:14**)
- And Samuel kept on judging Israel all the days of his life. (**1 Samuel 7:15**)
- And he traveled from year to year and made the circuit of Bethel and Gilgal and **Mizpah** and judged Israel at all these places. (**1 Samuel 7:16**)
- Later, in **1117 B.C.E.**, another assembly at **Mizpah** witnessed Samuel's introducing Saul as Israel's first king.
- And Samuel proceeded to call the people together to Yehowah at **Mizpah** (**1 Samuel 10:17**)
- And to say to the sons of Israel; This is what Yehowah the God of Israel has said; It was I who brought Israel up out of Egypt and who went delivering you from the hand of Egypt and from the hand of all the kingdoms that were oppressing you. (**1 Samuel 10:18**)
- But you, today you have rejected your God who was a savior to you out of all your evils and your distresses, and you went on to say; No, but a king is what you should put over us. And now take your stand before Yehowah by your tribes and by your thousands. (**1 Samuel 10:19**)
- Accordingly Samuel had all the tribes of Israel draw near, and the tribe of Benjamin came to be picked. (**1 Samuel 10:20**)
- Then he had the tribe of Benjamin draw near by its families, and the family of the Matrites came to be picked. Finally Saul the son of Kish came to be picked. And they went looking for him, and he was not to be found. (**1 Samuel 10:21**)

- Hence they inquired further of Yehowah; Has the man come here as yet? To this Yehowah said; Here he is, hidden among the luggage. (**1 Samuel 10:22**)
- So they went running and took him from there. When he took his stand in the middle of the people, he was taller than all the other people from his shoulders upward. (**1 Samuel 10:23**)
- Then Samuel said to all the people; Have you seen the one whom Yehowah has chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people began to shout and say; Let the king live! (**1 Samuel 10:24**)
- Upon that Samuel spoke to the people about the rightful due of the kingship and wrote it in a book and deposited it before Yehowah. Then Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his house. (**1 Samuel 10:25**)
- In the **Tenth Century B.C.E**, **Mizpah** was built up by Judean King Asa with materials from Ramah, a city that Israelite King Baasha had been forced to desert.
- Accordingly Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the chiefs of the military forces that were his against the cities of Israel and went striking down Ijon and Dan and Abel-beth-maacah and all Chinnereth, as far as all the land of Naphtali. (**1 Kings 15:20**)
- And it came about that as soon as Baasha heard of it, he immediately quit building Ramah and continued dwelling in Tirzah. (**1 Kings 15:21**)
- And King Asa, for his part, summoned all Judah, there was none exempt, and they proceeded to carry the stones of Ramah and the timbers of it, with which Baasha had been building, and King Asa began to build with them Geba in Benjamin, and **Mizpah**. (**1 Kings 15:22**)
- So Ben-hadad listened to King Asa and sent the chiefs of the military forces that were his against the cities of Israel, so that they struck Ijon and Dan and Abel-maim and all the storage places of the cities of Naphtali. (**2 Chronicles 16:4**)
- And it came about that as soon as Baasha heard of it, he immediately quit building Ramah and stopped his work. (**2**

Chronicles 16:5)

- As for Asa the king, he took all Judah, and they proceeded to carry away the stones of Ramah and its timbers with which Baasha had built, and he began to build with them Geba and **Mizpah**. (**2 Chronicles 16:6**)
- Some three centuries later, in **607 B.C.E**, the victorious Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah as governor over the Jews remaining in the land of Judah. Gedaliah administered affairs from **Mizpah**.
- There the prophet Jeremiah took up residence. Also, surviving army chiefs and other Jews who had been scattered came to **Mizpah**. Governor Gedaliah, although having been forewarned, failed to exercise caution and was assassinated at **Mizpah**.
- Chaldeans and Jews with him there were likewise slaughtered. Thereafter 70 visiting men also met their death. The band of assassins, led by Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, took the rest of the people captive. Overtaken by Johanan the son of Kareah, Ishmael escaped with eight men, but the captives were rescued, later to be taken to Egypt.
- When all the chiefs of the military forces, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah, they immediately came to Gedaliah at **Mizpah**, that is, Ishmael the son of Nethaniah and Johanan the son of Kareah and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men. (**2 Kings 25:23**)
- Then Gedaliah swore to them and their men and said to them; Do not be afraid of being servants to the Chaldeans. Dwell in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you. (**2 Kings 25:24**)
- And it came about in the seventh month that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah the son of Elishama of the royal offspring came, and also ten men with him, and they got to strike down Gedaliah, so that he died, and also the Jews and the Chaldeans that happened to be with him in **Mizpah**. (**2 Kings 25:25**)
- After that all the people, from small to great, and the chiefs of the military forces rose up and came into Egypt, for they had

become afraid because of the Chaldeans. (2 Kings 25:26)

- After that all the people, from small to great, and the chiefs of the military forces rose up and came into Egypt, for they had become afraid because of the Chaldeans. (2 Kings 25:26)
- Following the Babylonian exile, men of **Mizpah** and the princes Shallun and Ezer shared in repairing the wall of Jerusalem.
- And at their side Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, did repair work, men of Gibeon and **Mizpah**, belonging to the throne of the governor beyond the River. (Nehemiah 3:7)
- And the Fountain Gate was what Shallun the son of Colhozeh, a prince of the district of **Mizpah**, repaired, he himself proceeded to build it and to roof it over and to set up its doors, its bolts and its bars, and also the wall of the Pool of the Canal to the Kings Garden and as far as the Stairway that goes down from the City of David. (Nehemiah 3:15)
- And Ezer the son of Jeshua, a prince of **Mizpah**, proceeded at his side to repair another measured section in front of the going up to the Armory at the Buttress. (Nehemiah 3:19)