

## Canaanites and Perizzites

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The Canaanites and Perizzites appear side by side with other groups in the lists of the six/seven pre-Israelite nations. The structure of these lists and their historical significance were amply discussed by ISHIDA (1979; see ANBAR 1982:53-54). MENDENHALL (1974:142-145) convincingly suggested that only two of these names (Canaanites and Amorites) refer to autochthonous elements of the population of Canaan. The other five reached the country only at the beginning of Iron Age I due to the outcome of large scale migration that followed the destruction of the Hittite empire (see MAZAR 1981: 76-80). Biblical Hittites is a general term for people coming from Anatolia; Hivites arrived from *Huwe* = Que (Cilicia) (GÖRG 1976); Gurgashites probably migrated from Karkisha in western Anatolia (Del MONTE and TISCHLER 1978:182-183). The origin of the Jebusites is not clear (for tentative suggestions, see MENDENHALL 1974:145; MAZAR 1975:25-26, note 19). The Name Perizzites was sometimes equated with the personal name Pirizzi, the messenger of Tushratta, king of Mitanni, and was thus regarded as Hurrian (GINSBERG and MAISLER 1934: 259, with earlier literature). Its place of origin remains unknown, though it must have been somewhere in the Hittite provinces of Anatolia or Syria.

In addition to the stereotyped lists of six/seven nations there are also two-name lists: Canaanites and Perizzites (Gen 13,7; 34,30; Jos 16,10 [LXX]; Ri 1,4-5), Perizzites and Rephaim (Jos 17,15) and Amorites and Canaanites (Jos 5,1). They all refer to a broader division of population groups than the above lists of many nations (ISHIDA 1979:479). On the basis of the adjective *przy* (Dtn 3,5; 1 Sam 6,18; Est 9,19) and the adverb *przwt* (Ez 38,11; Sach 2,8; Est 9,19), "rural country" "open country", it was suggested that the pair, Canaanite and Perizzites, refers to "those living in the fortified cities" and "those living in unwalled towns or hamlets" (SCHNELL 1962:735; previously in MEYER 1906:331, note 1; GUNKEL 1917:174). Other solutions for the pair of names (e.g., SPEISER 1962:237,241) are less likely. Thus, the



relations of the Perizzites as an ethnic name and as a designation of the rural population remains obscure (see HERTZBERG 1926:217-218; ISHIDA 1979: 479-480)<sup>1</sup>.

The key for the problem is the place of the pair of names in its present context. In both Gen 13,7 and 34,30 they were interpolated into the text in a later stage of the transmission (GUNKEL 1917:174, 378). They were likewise interpolated into the Vorlage of the LXX of Jos 16,10, regardless of whether the entire passage is an insertion from 1 Kön 9,16 or is original in an earlier Hebrew text of Joshua (For the problem, see HOLMES 1914:63-64). The Perizzites are paired once with the Rephaim (Jos 17,15): "And Joshua said to them: If you are a numerous people, go up to the forest, and there clear ground for yourselves in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim, since the hill country of Ephraim is too narrow for you". The words *šm b'rs hprzy whrp'ym* are omitted in the LXX (HOLMES 1914:65). Furthermore, the pair is exceptional since in all references the Perizzites are located in the cis-jordanian hill country, whereas the Rephaim are usually located in the Bashan area (Gen 14,5; Dtn 3,11.13-14; Jos 12,4-5; 13,12) (NOTH 1953:107; SOGGIN 1972:182-183; pace SCHMITT 1970:92-93; SEEBASS 1982:72-73). The phrase "there in the land of the Perizzites and the Rephaim" was probably interpolated due to an endeavour to localise the new, would be cleared territory in the inheritances of Joseph's son (Ephraim and Manasseh) on both sides of the Jordan (HOLMES 1914:65). The land of the Perizzites represents the areas of Mount Ephraim and the land of Hopher (see NA'AMAN 1986:158-166) and the land of Rephaim stands for the area of Bashan<sup>2</sup>.

We may conclude that the pair, Canaanite and Perizzites (and the pair Perizzites and Rephaim as well), should be assigned to a very late stratum in the biblical tradition. It seems reasonable to assume that the concept

- 1 Of the seven pre-Israelite nations, only the Perizzites are missing from the list of Gen 10,15-17. Their absence is either accidental, or is the result of the interpretation of the name to mean "rural population", so that it was not regarded by the author of the list as an ethnic name.
- 2 A list of the seven pre-Israelite nations in which the Rephaim took the place of the Hivites appears in Gen 15,20-21. The latter group is mentioned in almost every six/seven list of nations and is missing only here and in the two post-exilic texts of Esra 9,1 and Neh 9,8 (ANBAR 1982:53-54). Would one dare to suggest that a later editor, under the influence of Jos 17,15, replaced the original Hivites by the name of Rephaim in order to add more archaic flavour to the list of Gen 15,19-21?



of the Perizzites as a name for the rural population of the country, emerged due to a popular etymologization of the ethnic name Perizzites in conjunction with the adjective *przy*. Of all the six traditional pre-Israelite nations of Canaan (the Girgashites appear only rarely in the lists) the Perizzites are the only group whose actual seat is never mentioned, and it was only natural for the scribes to wonder where in fact their place was. It was, possibly, as an answer to this question that the etymologization of the ethnic name has emerged; the newly conceived pair of town and country dwellers was subsequently interpolated into several biblical traditions in an effort to clarify and expand their original content<sup>3</sup>.

A somewhat similar procedure of an etymologization of an ancient ethnic name that deeply affected its presentation in the Bible, is that of the Hurrians. The latter were a distinct, ethnic group in the ancient Near East who entered the land of Canaan during the 18th-17th centuries B.C. (ANBAR and NA'AMAN 1986/87) and became one of the most important ethnic groups in Palestine in the 16th-14th centuries B.C. (de VAUX 1967; 1978:83-89; ASTOUR 1978, with earlier literature). The Hurrians were gradually assimilated within the Semitic population of Palestine to the extent that no clear Hurrian name appears among the many Israelite names in the Bible (ZADOK 1985: 397). The biblical Horites (Hurrians), on the other hand, are exclusively connected to the territory of Edom. There is no evidence that Hurrians reached this remote and uninhabited area at any moment in the second millennium B.C., and it is logical to assume that the attachment of the name to this region was due to the etymologization of the noun *h̄r* means "cave". The biblical scribes apparently selected an old and respected name of one of the population groups that lived in the remote past in the land of Canaan and by way of etymology have identified it with the autochthonous population of the land of Edom, who were thus regarded as some sort of "cave dwellers" (de VAUX 1967:497-505; 1978:136-137).

This analysis of the pair, Canaanites and Perizzites, is an important clue for the elucidation of the original story of Adoni-bezek (Judg 1,4-7). The entire passage of Judg 1,1-2,5 was interpolated into the book of Judges at a relatively late date (SMEND 1971:506-509; SOGGIN 1981:26-27, 31, 40-41,

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3 For the "fright from anonymity" in the post-Old Testament period and the filling in of many "missing" details, see HELLER 1939.



with earlier literature). Chapter 1 is built of individual episodes that were sometimes reworked and arranged in a well conceived plan by a relatively late author (de GEUS 1966; AULD 1975). The episode of Adoni-bezek must be examined in isolation in order to try to clarify its underlying story.

The preface to Judg 1 (vv. 1-3) was evidently written by the later author and has nothing to do with the original story. The beginning of v. 4 "Then Judah went up (w<sup>o</sup>lh)" is later as well, since all other verbal forms in the passage appear in the plural. The original subject of these verbs remains unknown.

As was emphasized by MOORE (1895:13), v. 4 is altogether superfluous: "except the ten thousand slain - a round number for which we need hardly seek an historical source - it tells us nothing which we do not read in the context". The author probably abridged his source by omitting the beginning of the story of Adoni-bezek and filled its place with these phrases borrowed from the context (MOORE 1895:14; see BURNEY 1918:4). The late date of the pair, Canaanites and Perizzites, as was suggested above, tallies well with MOORE's analysis indicating that vv. 4, 5b were both written by the later author of the chapter.

Of the original story, only vv. 5a, 6-7a were left to us. Its message was the retribution to Adoni-bezek expressed by his own words (v. 7a) "as I have done, so God has requited me". (compare Lev 24,19.) The end of the present story does not accord well with this motif and was apparently added by the later author (for his motivation, see below) (RÖSEL 1982:19).

It seems that the author obtained an old story of a battle conducted near Bezek against a ruler whose name was probably forgotten and was thus called by the name of the battlefield: "the Lord of Bezek" (see SOGGIN 1981: 21). He was an important king of the entire area treating his defeated enemies in a cruel and humiliating manner. After his defeat in battle he was recompensed in exactly the same manner. Bezek (today Khirbet Izbīq) is located northeast of Shechem (1 Sam 11,8) and the old story probably emerged in this area. Was the anonymous ruler, called Adoni-bezek in the story, the ruler of Shechem? (see WELTEN 1965:145; pace WEIPPERT 1971:54, 146, note 5). Was it an old Canaanite story adopted by the Israelite settlers in the hill country of Manasseh from their predecessors in this area? Did it originally belong (like the story of Judg 1,22-26) to the stock of conquest stories of the sons of Joseph? There is no clear answer to these questions since the



original opening to the story cannot be reconstructed.

The attachment of this episode to the conquest stories of Judah in Judges 1 was due to the similarity of the names Adoni-bezek and Adoni-zedek, with the latter heading the coalition of kingdoms that fought Joshua north of Jerusalem according to Jos 10. In the light of the coalescence of the personal names, the author of Judges 1 identified Jerusalem as Adoni-bezek's capital city. He thus composed two new elements in which he described the death of Adoni-bezek (v. 7b) and the capture of his ostensible city (v. 8) and tucked them in at the end of the story (WELTEN 1965:145-146; de VAUX 1978:541-542).

We may conclude that the story in its final form (vv. 1-8) is not only fairly late, but is also non-historical and that only a relatively small part of it (vv. 5a, 6-7a) belonged to the original old story. One should certainly dismiss the claim of scholars (e.g., HERTZBERG 1926:216-221; AHARONI 1967: 197; MAZAR 1971: - ) that the tribe of Judah wandered from the northern area of Manasseh across Mount Ephraim before he entered his inheritance from the northern border. The new settlers in the Judean hill country migrated from the southern margins of Mount Ephraim (NA'AMAN 1984), from across the Jordan and the Arabah and from the Beer-sheba Valley and the Wilderness of Beer-sheba, occupying the territory only slowly and gradually (de VAUX 1978:523-550). The assumed Judean conquest of Canaanite Jerusalem at an early stage of Iron Age I (AHARONI 1967:197; MAZAR 1981:78) is likewise non-historical and is contradicted by the statement in Jos 15,63 and the dependent statement in Ri 1,21 (AULD 1975:274-275; de VAUX 1978:541). The city was probably conquered and destroyed by the migrating group of Jebusites who subsequently settled in the place and lived there until it was captured by David. It is clear that the episodes described in Judges 1 should carefully be analysed before any statement about their historical authenticity can be affirmed.

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