wanderings. (The LXX translates both terms with Gk. ἐξωτικός.)

Even though the full phrase occurs only in Exod. 2:28, its meaning as relating to “mixing” and “foreigners” is well attested. Heb. יָדַע alone is used in Neh. 11:3; Jer. 25:20, 24; 50:37 to describe foreigners of various types (cf. Dan. 2:41, 43). Ps. 106:35-37; Ezra 9:2 use a verbal (hithpael) form of this root for mixing with foreigners (וכָּבוֹד), which leads to idolatry and human sacrifice.

ROBIN J. DEWITT KNAUTH

MIZAR (Heb. מִזָּר) The “little mountain” of Ps. 42:6(MT 7). Mizar may refer to one of the foothills of Mt. Hermon, or possibly the lowest of the three peaks of Mt. Hermon itself. The term may be a veiled reference to Mt. Zion, standing in contrast to the high mountain, Mt. Hermon. Another possibility is to render “the mountains at the rim,” a reference to the Canaanite underworld, attributing the Psalmist’s downcast soul to the nearness of death.

THOMAS W. DAVIS

MIZPAH (Heb. מִזְפָּה), MIZPA (מִזְפֶּה)

1. Mizpah of Gilead. The name given by Jacob as a sign of his covenant with Laban (Gen. 31:49). The so-called Mizpah benediction invokes Yahweh to monitor the parties’ compliance with the covenant stipulations. Later, Israel’s forces assembled here in preparation for war against Ammon (Judg. 10:17), enlisting Jephthah to head the war effort (11:11, 29, 34).

2. The “land” (Josh. 11:3) or “valley of Mizpah” (v. 8), an area N of the Sea of Galilee (Chinnereth) near Mt. Hermon. The area was inhabited by Hivites, and here King Jabin of Hazor fled from Joshua.

3. Mizpah of Judah (Josh. 15:38), a city in the Shephelah.

4. Mizpah of Moab. Here David met with the king of Moab during his flight from Saul and requested that his parents be granted refuge there (1 Sam. 22:3). The city’s location is uncertain, although some identify it with Rujum el-Masfeh, a prominent height SW of Medeba.

JOHN T. STRONG

5. Mizpah of Benjamin (Josh. 18:26). There the Israelites mustered their army to avenge the rape and murder of the Levite’s concubine (Judg. 20:1, 3; 21:1, 5, 8). Later they gathered there under Samuel and defeated the Philistines in battle (1 Sam. 7:5-11). Samuel performed cultic acts at Mizpah, including burnt offerings (1 Sam. 7:6, 9). There he selected and anointed Saul as king (1 Sam. 10:17-25), and along with Bethel and Gilgal it was on the yearly circuit he traveled when judging Israel (7:16). King Asa of Judah fortified Mizpah and Geba of Benjamin in the early 9th century after the Israelite king Baasha’s encroachment on Judah’s northern border was aborted (1 Kgs. 15:22 = 2 Chr. 16:6). After Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 586, Mizpah served as the capital of the Babylonian province of Judah under Gedaliah (2 Kgs. 25:23-25; Jer. 40:6-41:16). It was still an important administrative center after the exiles returned from Babylon. ( Neh. 3:7, 15, 19). Mizpah is last mentioned as the gathering point for the Hasmonaeans as they prepared to battle a Seleucid army (1 Macc. 3:46).

Mizpah is almost certainly to be identified with...
modern Tell en-Nasbeh (1706.1436), 12 km. (3 mi.) NW of Jerusalem. The only other possible candidate, Nebi Samwil, has not yielded archaeological remains matching an identification with Mizraḥ.

Tell en-Nasbeh was excavated by W. F. Badè between 1926 and 1935. He cleared approximately two-thirds of this 260 x 130 m. (855 x 425 ft.) site (2.25 ha. [9 acres]), making it the most broadly excavated tell in Israel. One cave contains remains from the Chalcolithic period (4500-3300), more extensive burial remains in caves and remnants of remains on the tell from the Early Bronze I period (stratum VII, 3300-5000 B.C.E.) point to a modest settlement at that time.

Examination of typical Iron Age I (stratum IV, 1200-1000) looking pots, collar-rim pithoi and Philistine bichrome wares indicate the presence of a settlement at that time. However, the only architectural elements to survive from that period are scores of rock-cut silos, cisterns, and a wine press.

Remains from the Iron Age II (stratum III, 1000-586) are extensive. The town was laid out to follow the natural slopes of the hill on which it was built; the narrow roads follow the oval outline of the hill. Houses are typically small three- or four-room structures which share walls. The initial town defenses were formed by linking together the broad back rooms of the houses along the periphery of the site into a casemate-like system. Asa's massive offset-inset wall (no less than 4.5 m. [15 ft.] in thickness) and inner-outter gate complex completely enclosed the earlier town. A seal belonging to "Ja'azaniah, the servant of the King" was found in one of the tombs and likely belongs to the man of the same name mentioned as a royal officer in 2 Kgs. 25:23,Jer. 40:8. This settlement was leveled ca. 586 in order to provide construction space for the buildings of the next stratum.

Remains from the Babylonian into Persian periods (stratum II, 586-400) consist of large, well-built four-room houses and even larger administrative structures. Asa's wall continued in use, but only the outer gate still functioned. Mesopotamian-style bath-tub shaped ceramic coffins and a fragment of a bronze circle bearing a dedicatory inscription are examples of the Babylonian influence at the site. The reason for the destruction of the town ca. 400 is unknown.

Remains from the Hellenistic into Roman periods (stratum I) are fragmentary, but the remains of three kilns and two grape presses suggest that the mound was nothing more than an agricultural estate. The tell was not occupied in the Byzantine or later periods, though a church and tombs were found in the vicinity.

The archaeological materials from Tell en-Nasbeh match perfectly the historical documentation relating to Mizraḥ and provide important data on ancient town planning. Tell en-Nasbeh provides the only certain material remains in ancient Israel belonging to the Babylonian period.


JEFFREY R. ZORN