

# Perizzite

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Per'izzite (Heb. *Perizzi'*, פֶּרִיזִי, always in the sing. and with the article; Sept. Φερεζαῖος, in Ezra Φερεσθει), a Canaanitish tribe, already known in the time of Abraham, inhabiting a mountainous region ([Ge 13:7](#); comp. [15:20](#)), which they eventually yielded to Ephraim and Judah ([Jos 11:3](#); [Jos 17:15](#); [Jg 1:4-5](#)). They were kindred to the Canaanites strictly so called ([Ex 23:23](#); [Jg 1:36](#)): sometimes Canaanites and Perizzites are put for all the other tribes of Canaan ([Ge 13:7](#); [Ge 34:30](#)); while in other places the Perizzites are enumerated with various other tribes of the same stock ([Ge 15:20](#); [Ex 3:8,17](#); [De 7:1](#), etc.). They are not named in the catalogue of Genesis 10; so that their origin, like that of other small tribes, such as the Avites, and the similarly named Gerizzites, is left in obscurity. They are continually mentioned in the formula so frequently occurring to express the Promised Land ([Ge 15:20](#); [Ex 3:8,17](#); [Ex 23:23](#); [Ex 33:2](#); [Ex 34:11](#); [De 7:1](#); [De 20:17](#); [Jos 3:10](#); [Jos 9:1](#); [Jos 24:11](#); [Jg 3:5](#); [Ezr 9:1](#); [Ne 9:8](#)). They appear, however, with somewhat greater distinctness on several occasions. On Abram's first entrance into the land it is said to have been occupied by "the Canaanite and the Perizzite" ([Ge 13:7](#)). As the separation of Abram and Lot, there recorded, took place at Bethel, we may infer that the Perizzites were then in that vicinity. Jacob also, after the massacre of the Shechemites, uses the same expression, complaining that his sons had "made him to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanite and the Perizzite" ([Ge 34:30](#)). This

seems to locate the Perizzites near Shechem. So also in the detailed records of the conquest given in the opening of the book of Judges (evidently from a distinct source from those in Joshua), Judah and Simeon are said to have found their territory occupied by "the Canaanite and the Perizzite" ([Jg 1:4-5](#)), with Bezek (a place not yet discovered, but apparently not far from Jerusalem, and hence probably on the south-western boundary of Ephraim) as their stronghold, and Adoni-bezek their most noted chief. Thus too a late tradition, preserved in 2 Esdras 1:21, mentions only "the Canaanites, the Pheresites, -and the Philistines," as the original ten ants of the country. The notice just cited from the. book of Judges locates them in the southern part of the Holy Land. Another independent and equally remarkable fragment of the history of the conquest seems to speak of them as occupying, with the Rephaim, or giants, the "forest country" on the western flanks of Mount Carmel ([Jos 17:15-18](#)). Here again the Canaanites only are named with them. As a tribe of mountaineers, they are enumerated in company with the Amorites, Hittites, and Jebusites in [Jos 11:3](#); [Jos 12:8](#); and they are catalogued among the remnants of the old population whom Solomon reduced to bondage, both in [1Ki 9:20](#) and [2Ch 8:7](#). Not only had they not been exterminated, but they even intermarried with the Israelites ([Jg 3:5-6](#); [Ezr 9:1](#)). By Josephus the Perizzites do not appear to be mentioned.

The signification of the name is not by any means clear. It possibly meant *rustics*, dwellers in open, unwalled villages, which are denoted by a similar word (פְּרִזִּי, [Eze 38:11](#); [Es 9:19](#)). So also *Copher hap-perazi*, A.V. "country villages" ([1Sa 6:18](#)); *Arey hap-perazi*, "unwalled towns" ([De 3:5](#)). In both these passages the Sept. understands the Perizzites to be alluded to, and translates accordingly. In [Jos 16:10](#) it adds the Perizzites to the

Canaanites as inhabitants of Gezer. Ewald (*Geschichte*, 1:317) inclines to believe that they were the same people with the Hittites. But against this there is the fact that both they and the Hittites appear in the same lists; and that not only in mere general formulas, but in the records of the conquest, as above. Redslob has examined the whole of these names with some care (in his *Attestam. Namen den Israeliten-Staaten*, Hamb. 1846), and his conclusion (p. 103) is that, while the *Chavvofh* were villages of tribes engaged in the care of cattle, the *Perazoth* were inhabited by peasants engaged in agriculture, like the *Fellahs* of the Arabs. This view, however, although acquiesced in by Gesenius, *Thesaur.* p. 1120; Hengstenberg, *Beitrdge*, p. 186; Keil, on *Joshua* 3:10; and Kalisch, on *Genesis* 13, appears to be opposed to the Biblical narrative, which everywhere classes them as a distinct branch of the Canaanites (see Reland, *Palaest.* p. 139; Kurtz, in Rudeloch's *Zeitschr.* 1845, 3:53; *Jour. Sac. Lit.* Oct. 1853, p. 166). *SEE CANAANITE.*