

Nibshan

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Nibshan (MT *Nibšān*, “level, soft [soil]”; LXX Να-φλαζων) is a town in the Judean desert near En-gedi (Josh 15:61). Most identifications of towns from the twelfth district of Judah with archaeologically attested Iron Age sites are hypothetical, since the biblical name form is not preserved in modern toponyms, in most cases. Nibshan is usually identified with one of several Iron Age fortresses in the Buqē’a Valley. Therefore, Nibshan might be found at Khirbet el-Maḡārī (1862.1231), south of Qumran, if the list is orientated from north to south. Nibshan is sometimes located on the Dead Sea in ‘Ēn el-Ġuwēr (1890.1147) or ‘Ēn et-Turābe (1887.1129). However, both sites might form only one place, since there are archaeological remains of a settlement between both sites. Furthermore, Nibshan could be found in Khirbet Māzīn (1920.1211), if the town list is given in linear order, beginning with Bet-Araba in the north and ending in En-gedi in the south. Since Khirbet Māzīn might be etymologically related to Middin/Madon, and having itself no Arabic etymology, this identification is problematic. Ruḡm el-Baḥr (1984.1311), on the north end of the Dead Sea, would be another candidate for Nibshan, but does not fit in a logical order since Ruḡm el-Baḥr is located too far north. According to Eusebius, Nibshan belongs to the tribe of Judah without further indications of its location (*Onom.* 136.23). The Vg. transcribes Nibshan as *Anepsan* and, therefore, includes the article.

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