

Naphoth-Dor

Erasmus Gaß

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Naphoth-Dor (MT *Nāpōt Dōr*, “cliffs/coast/sand dunes/district/mountain range/yoke of Dor”; LXX *Ναφεδδωρ*) is an area belonging to the city state of Dor in the northern part of the Sharon plain. A variant of the plural form Naphoth-Dor (Josh 11:2) is the singular Naphath-Dor (MT *Nāpat Dōr* [Josh 12:23]; MT *Nāpat Dōr* [1 Kgs 4:11] with some manuscripts and Targumim also writing Naphoth-Dor). The Sea Peoples might have called the coastal plain Naphoth-Dor, since an archaic Greek cognate *νάπη* means “forest in the plain,” a perfect equivalent of Hebrew Sharon, so that Naphoth-Dor might mean “forest [belonging to] Dor.” However, there is a king of Sharon next to a king of Naphoth-Dor (Josh 12:18, 23), which suggests that Sharon and Naphoth-Dor are different terms. Since Naphoth could denote “mountain range,” this toponym could also be interpreted as the Carmel mountain range. The relation to the sea port Dor, however, indicates close proximity. Thus, the geographic area might be the coastal strip from Mount Carmel to the Yarkon River. The king of Naphoth-Dor is said to belong to the northern Canaanite coalition defeated by Joshua (Josh 11:2). Later, this region was attributed to the tribal inheritance of Manasseh (Josh 17:10–11). However, Manasseh failed to conquer Dor and its villages (Judg 1:27). This region is said to be one of the Solomonic districts (1 Kgs 4:11). Tiglath-Pileser III captured the coastal plain in 732 BC, but there is no evidence for establishing a new province *Du'ru*. The early translations either transliterate the Hebrew toponym as *Ναφεδδωρ* (LXX) or translate it as “region, province” (Vg.). Josephus refers Naphoth-Dor to Canaanites living in the plains (*Ant.* 5.63), though Josh 11:2 does not classify them as Canaanites. Eusebius translates the Hebrew toponym “on the coast of Dor” and locates the place Dor nine miles away from Caesarea (*Onom.* 136.16–17). Jerome translates the name Naffedor as “conversion of the generation” (*Nom. hebr.* 29.12). Naphoth-Dor is also mentioned in rabbinic sources, as one of the places with the worst quality soil in the land of Israel (BerR 58:4).

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