

Helbah

Helbah (MT *Helbá*, “site of fat/milk” or “woodland”) is a Canaanite town not conquered by the tribe of Asher (Judg 1:31). It is probably a variant spelling of Mahalab (Josh 19:29 = Maḥalliba of Sennacherib) or a dittographic error for Ahlab mentioned earlier in Judg 1:31. These three places are identified with Ḥirbet el-Maḥalīb (LG 1040.1540; remains from the Iron Age), sometimes with Rās el-Abyad (LG 0970.1360), perhaps Pliny’s Promunturium Album. Jerome translates the place name with “milk(y)” (*Nom. hebr.* 98.12) and mentions the non-expulsion of the population (*Onom.* 175.15).

Bibliography: ■ Abel, F.-M., *Géographie de la Palestine*, vol. 2 (Paris 1938). ■ Gaß, E., *Die Ortsnamen des Richterbuches in historischer und redaktioneller Perspektive* (ADPV 35; Wiesbaden 2005). ■ “Helbah,” *NIDB* 2 (Nashville, Tenn. 2007) 790. ■ Hunt, M., “Helbah,” *ABD* 3 (New York 1992) 117.

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