

*Onom.* 132.3–5). He also refers to the Benjaminite location Beth-aven, opposite Michmash (Eusebius, *Onom.* 50.24). Jerome translates Machemas as “humility or handled things” (Jerome, *Nom. Hebr.* 36.6).

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## Michmash

Michmash (Heb. *Mikmās* or *Mikmās* [Gk. Μαχμας or Μαχημας] “hidden place”) is a Benjaminite town situated on the border to Ephraim. The place name Michmash appears in two variant forms, with *Mikmās* used only in postexilic texts that mention “the people of Michmash” returning from Babylonian exile (Ezra 2:27; Neh 7:31). The Philistines were mustered and encamped at Michmash (1 Sam 13:5, 11, 16), posing a serious threat to the emerging Israelites under Saul. Jonathan led an attack against Michmash after he had defeated a Philistine deputy at Geba (1 Sam 13–14). Between Michmash and Geba was the “Pass (of Michmash)” (1 Sam 13:23; Isa 10:28–29) which crossed the Wādī eṣ-Ṣwēnīt. This pass was flanked by two rock columns named Bozez and Seneh (1 Sam 14:4–5). Hence, Michmash lies on the north side of the Wādī eṣ-Ṣwēnīt. It is likely that the attacking Assyrian army traveled across the Wādī eṣ-Ṣwēnīt, leaving behind the baggage at Michmash (Isa 10:28–29). After the exile, Michmash was settled by Benjaminites (Neh 11:31).

Michmash has been identified with Muhmās (1763.1422) since the Hebrew *k* could be changed easily to *h*. Since the archaeological evidence is ambiguous, nearby Ḥirbet al-Ḥāra al-Fōqa (1762.1425) – where ceramics dating to the Iron Age I and II have been found – is identified with the biblical site. Later on, Michmash was the seat of the Hasmonean Jonathan (1 Macc 9:73 and Josephus, *Ant.* 13.34). It is also mentioned in rabbinic sources (*mMen* 8:1) and by Cyril of Skythopolis (*Vita Sabae* 16). Eusebius describes Michmash as a very large village nine miles away from Jerusalem, near Ramah (Eusebius,