Misrephoth-maim is a toponym delineating the border of the land still to be conquered by the Israelites in Josh 13:6. The name may be related to a root s-r-p, "burn," which might indicate the presence of hot springs.

A coalition of foreign kings was chased into the territory of Great Sidon in the west and the valley of Mizpeh in the east, with Misrephoth-maim in between these two points (Josh 11:8). However, mayim could be vocalized miyim, "on the west," placing the term in opposition to mizrah, “eastward.” This would indicate that Misrephoth is located near Sidon in the west and on the sea. If so, Josh 11:8 mentions three different cardinal directions: Sidon (north), Misrephoth (west), and the valley of Mizpeh (east). However, this textual correction does not fit Josh 13:6, in which mayim constitutes part of the place name.

Misrephoth-maim is sometimes considered to be the ancient name of the river mouth of the Litani river. This is improbable since this landmark is mentioned as n-t-n in Papyrus Anastasi 1.21.1, testifying to the considerable age of the name "Litani.” A site near the Litani called Serife (1873.2984) might preserve the biblical name, though the archaeological context there is unknown.

Misrephoth-maim is also identified with Khirbet el-Museref (1611.2764), located south of Ras en-Naqura, due to the preservation of the biblical name in the modern toponym. However, the lack of archaeological evidence dating to the early Iron Age complicates this identification. Furthermore, the biblical place Mahalab, north of Khirbet el-Museref, is part of the tribal inheritance of Asher (Josh 19:29). Since Misrephoth-maim lies north of Mahalab and beyond the already conquered territory, Khirbet el-Museref can hardly be identified with the biblical place.

Eusebius simply gives two LXX transcriptions of Misrephoth-maim: "waters" or "sea" of Mοσρωμόθ (Onom. 128.7–8). Jerome translates the first part of this toponym with "firestorm or from trouble of beaks," the first being a nominal plural form of the root š-r-f, the latter being an arbitrary connection of min + šar + pah in supposed plural (Jerome, Nom. Hebr. 28:28). In the Middle Ages, a place called Meserefe – perhaps the biblical Misrephoth-maim – was a fief of John d’Ibelin of Beirut.


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