

Girgashite

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(Hebrew invariably in the sing. and. with the art. *hag-Gisgashi'*, *הַגִּשָּׁשִׁי*, in a collective sense; dwelling in a clayay soil; Sept. *Γεργεσαῖοι* and *Γεργεσαῖος*, Vulg. *CaGerescei* and *Geryesceus*; A.V. "Girgashite" in [1 Chronicles 1:14](#); "Girgasite" in [Genesis 10:16](#); elsewhere "Girgashites"), a designation of one of the nations who were in possession of Canaan before the entrance thither of the children of Israel. In [Genesis 10:16](#), they are mentioned as the descendants of the fifth son of Canaan; in other passages the tribe is merely referred to, and that but occasionally, in time formula expressing the doomed country ([Genesis 15:22](#); [Deuteronomy 7:1](#) [and [20:17](#) in Saniarit. and Sept.]; [Joshua 3:10](#); [Joshua 24:11](#); [1 Chronicles 1:14](#); [Nehemiah 9:8](#)). Thee Girgashites are conjectured to have been a part of the large family of the Hivites, as them are omitted in nine out of ten places in which the nations or families of Canaan are mentioned, while in the tenth they are' mentioned, and the Hivites omitted. Josephus states; that nothing but the name of the Girgashites (*Γεργεσαῖοι*) remained in his time (Ant. 1:6, 2). In the Jewish commentaries of R. Nachman and elsewhere, the Girgashites are described as having retired into Africa, fearing the power of God; and Procopius, in bin History of the Vandals, mentions an ancient but doubtful inscription in Mauritania Tingitana, stating that the inhabitants had fled thither from the face of Joshua, the son of Nun. A city *Girgis* (גִּשִּׁי) existed among the Phoenician tribes in Northern Africa at the Syrtis Minor (Farst, Heb. Lex. page 298). The notion that the Girgashites did migrate seems to have been founded on the circumstance that, although they are included in the list of the seven devoted nationas either to be driven out or destroyed by the Israelites ([Genesis 15:20-21](#); [Deuteronomy 7:1](#); [Joshua 3:10](#); [Joshua 24:11](#); [Nehemiah](#)

9:8), yet they are omitted in the list of those to be utterly destroyed (Deuteronomy 20:17), and are mentioned among those with whom, contrary to the divine decree, the Israelites lived and intermarried (Judges 3:1-6). (See CANAAN).

The expression in Joshua 24:11 would seem to indicate that the district of the Gergesenes was on the west of Jordan. By most writers, however, they are supposed to have been settled in that part of the country which lay to the east of the lake of Gennesareth (Jour. Sac. Lit. October 1851, page 167). This conclusion is founded on the identity between the word Γεργεσαῖοι, which the Septuagint gives for Gergesenes, and that by which Matthew (8:28) indicates the land of the Gergesenes (Γεργεσηνοί). But as this last reading rests on a conjecture of Origen, on which little reliance is now placed, the conclusion drawn from it has no great weight, although the fact is possible on other grounds, especially the probability that some actual city of this name must have been the foundation of the reading in question. Indeed, the older reading, 6 Gerasenes," has sufficient resemblance to direct the attention to the country beyond the Jordan; where Eusebius also (Onom. s.v. Γεργασεί) affirms that the Gergesenes dwelt. (See GERASA).