

Rephaim and Valley Of

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[many Reph'aim] (Heb. usually with the art. ha-Rephaim', מִרְפָּאִים [see below]), a name which frequently occurs, and in some remarkable passages, as that of a race of unusual stature, who originally dwelt in the country east of the Jordan. The earliest mention of them is the record of their defeat by Chedorlaomer and some allied kings at Ashteroth Karnaim; [Genesis 14:5](#)). They are again mentioned (15:20); their dispersion recorded ([Deuteronomy 2:10](#); [Deuteronomy 2:20](#)), and Og the giant king of Bashan said to be "the only remnant of them" (3:11; [Joshua 12:4](#); [Joshua 13:12](#); [Joshua 17:15](#)). Extirpated, however, from the east of Palestine, they long found a home in the West; and in connection with the Philistines, under whose protection the small remnant of them may have lived, they still employed their arms against the Hebrews ([2 Samuel 21:18](#) sq.; [1 Chronicles 20:4](#)). In the latter passage there seems, however, to be some confusion between the Rephaim and the sons of a particular giant of Gath, named Rapha. Such a name may have been conjectured as that of a founder of the race, like the names Ion, Dorus, Teut, etc. (Bottcher, De Inferis, p. 96, note); Rapha occurs also as a proper name ([1 Chronicles 7:25](#); [1 Chronicles 8:2](#); [1 Chronicles 8:37](#)). It is probable that they had possessed districts west of the Jordan in early times, since the "valley of Rephaim" (κοιλὰς τῶν Τιτάνων, [2 Samuel 5:18](#); [1 Chronicles 11:15](#); [Isaiah 17:5](#); κ . τῶν γιγάντων, Joseph. Ant. 7:4, 1), a rich valley south-west of Jerusalem, derived its name from them. That they were not Canaanites is clear from there being no allusion to them in [Genesis 10:15-19](#). They were probably one of those aboriginal peoples to whose existence the traditions of many nations testify, and of whose genealogy the Bible gives us no information. The few names recorded have, as Ewald remarks, a Shemitic aspect (Gesch. des Volkes Isr. i, 311); but from the hatred existing between them and both

the Canaanites and Hebrews, some suppose them to be Japhethites, "who comprised especially the inhabitants of the coasts and islands" (Kalisch, on Genesis p. 351). (See CANAANITE).

רִפְאִים is rendered by the Greek versions very variously (Sept. Ραφαείμ, γίγαντες, γηγενεῖς, θεόμαχοι, Τιτᾶνες, and ιατροί [Psalm 87:10; **Isaiah 26:14**, where it is confused with רִפְאִים; comp. Genesis 1, 2], and sometimes νεκροί, τεθνηκότες, especially in the later versions). In the A.V. the words used for it are "Rephaim," "giants," and "the dead." That it has the latter meaning in many passages is certain (Psalms 88:10; **Proverbs 2:18**; **Proverbs 9:18**; **Proverbs 21:16**; **Isaiah 26:14**; **Isaiah 26:19**). The question arises, how are these meanings to be reconciled? Gesenius gives no derivation for the national name, and derives רִפְאִים=mortui, from רִפְאָה, sanavit, and the proper name Rapha from an Arabic root signifying "tall," thus seeming to sever all connection between the meanings of the word, which is surely most unlikely. Masius, Simon, etc., suppose the second meaning to come from the fact that both spectres and giants strike terror (accepting the derivation from רִפְאָה, remisit, "unstrung with fear," R. Bechai, on Deuteronomy 2); Vitrunga and Hiller from the notion of length involved in stretching out a corpse, or from the fancy that spirits appear in more than human size (Hiller, Syntagn. Hermen. p. 205; Virg. AEn. ii, 772, etc.). J. D. Michaelis (ad Lowth S. Poes. p. 466) endeavored to prove that the Rephaim, etc., were troglodytes, and that hence they came to be identified with the dead. Passing over other conjectures, Bottcher sees in רִפְאָה and רִפְאִים a double root, and thinks that the giants were called רִפְאִים (languefacti) by a euphemism; and that the dead were so called by a title which will thus exactly parallel the Greek καμόντες, κεκμηκότες (comp. Buttmann, Lexil. ii, 237 sq.). An attentive consideration seems to leave little room for doubt that the dead were called Rephaim (as Gesenius also hints) from some notion of Sheol being the residence of the fallen spirits or buried giants. The passages which seem most strongly to prove this are **Proverbs 21:16** (where obviously something more than mere physical death is meant, since that is the common lot of all), **Isaiah 26:14**; **Isaiah 26:19**, which are difficult to explain without some such supposition, **Isaiah 14:9**, where the word עֲתֹדִים (Sept. οἱ ἄρξαντες

τῆς γῆς), if taken in its literal meaning of goats, may mean evil spirits represented in that form (comp. [Leviticus 17:7](#)), and especially [Job 26:5-6](#). "Behold the gyantes (A.V. "dead things") grown under the waters" (Douay version), where there seems to be clear allusion to some subaqueous prison of rebellious spirits like that in which (according to the Hindui legend) Vishnu the water-god confines a race of giants (comp. πυλάρχος, as a title of Neptune, Hesiod, Theog. 732; Nork, Brammin. und Rabb. p. 319 sq.). (See [GIANT](#)). Branches of this great unknown people were the following

1. EMIM (אֵימִים; Septt. Ο'μειν, Ι'μμαῖοι), smitten by Chedorlaomer at Shaveh Kiriathaim ([Genesis 14:5](#)), and occupying the country afterwards held by the Moabites ([Deuteronomy 2:10](#)), who gave them the name אֵימִים, "terrors." The word rendered "tall" may perhaps be merely "haughty" (ἰσχύοντες). (See [EMIM](#)).
2. ANAKIM (עֲנָקִים). The imbecile terror of the spies exaggerated their proportions into something superhuman ([Numbers 13:28](#); [Numbers 13:33](#)), and their name became proverbial ([Deuteronomy 2:10](#); [Deuteronomy 9:2](#)). (See [ANAKIM](#)).
3. ZUZIM (זָזִים), whose principal town was Ham ([Genesis 14:5](#)), and who lived between the Arnon and the Jabbok, being a northern tribe of Rephaim. The Ammonites who defeated them called them Zamzunzim, זָזְזִים ([Deuteronomy 2:20](#) sq., which is, however, probably an early gloss). — See Jour. Sac. Lit. Oct. 1851, p. 151 sq.; Jan. 1852, p. 363 sq.; April, 1852, p. 55 sq.; July, 1852, p. 302 sq.; Oct. 1852, p. 87 sq.; Jan. 1853, p. 279 sq. (See [ZUZIM](#)).

VALLEY OF

(Heb. E'mek Rephaim', רְפָאִים עַמְקָה; Sept. ἡ κοιλὰς τῶν Τιτάνων or Γιγάντων in Joshua γῆ or Ε'μὲκ 'Ραφαῖ ν ν ; in Isaiah φάραγξ στερεά; Vulg. vallis Raphaimrn or gigantun; A.V. "valley of the giants" in [Joshua 15:8](#); [Joshua 18:16](#)), a valley beginning adjacent to the valley of Hinnom, south-west of Jerusalem, and stretching away south-west on the right of the road to Bethlehem ([Joshua 15:8](#); [Joshua 17:5](#); [Joshua 18:6](#); [2 Samuel 5:18](#); [2 Samuel 5:22](#)). The valley appears to derive its name from the ancient nation of the Rephaim. It

may be a trace of an early settlement of theirs, possibly after they were driven from their original seats east of the Jordan by Chedorlaomer ([Genesis 14:5](#)), and before they again migrated northward to the more secure wooded districts in which we find them at the date of the partition of the country among the tribes ([Joshua 17:15](#); A.V. "giants"). In this case it is a parallel to the "mount of the Amalekites" in the centre of Palestine, and to the towns bearing the name of the Zemaraim, the Avim, the Ophnites, etc., which occur so frequently in Benjamin.

The valley of Rephaim is first mentioned in the description given by Joshua of the northern border of Juldah. The passage is important: "The border went up by the valley of the son of Hinnom unto the south side of the Jebusite: the same is Jerusalem; and the border went up to the top of the mountain that lieth before the valley of Hinnom westward, which is at the end of the valley of the giants northward" ([Joshua 15:8](#)). The last clause in the Hebrew is not quite clear (עמק ארכאים צפונה בקצתה). It may mean that the boundary line was north of the valley, or that the valley was north of the boundary. The latter construction is possible; but the former is unquestionably the more natural, and is supported by the Sept. and the Vulgate, and also by most commentators. If this interpretation be admitted, the situation of the valley is certain: it lay on the south of the hill which enclosed Hinnom on the west. This view is further strengthened by the notice in [Joshua 18:16](#). When David was hiding from Saul in the cave of Adullam, we are told that the Philistines, no doubt taking advantage of intestine troubles, invaded the mountain fastnesses of Israel. A band of them pitched in the valley of Rephaim, and at the same time seized and garrisoned Bethlehem, David's native place ([2 Samuel 23:13-14](#)). It was then that three of his warriors, to gratify a wish of their chief, broke through the enemies' lines and drew water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem.

The narrative shows clearly that the valley of Rephaim could not have been far distant from Bethlehem ([1 Chronicles 11:15-19](#)). The "hold" ([1 Chronicles 11:14](#)) in which David found himself seems (though it is not clear) to have been the cave of Adullam, the scene of the commencement of his freebooting life; but, wherever situated, we

need not doubt that it was the same fastness as that mentioned in **2 Samuel 5:17**, since in both cases the same word (הַמִּצְדָּה, with the definite article), and that not a usual one, is employed. The story shows very clearly the predatory nature of these incursions of the Philistines. It was in "harvest time" (**2 Samuel 5:13**). They had come to carry off the ripe crops, for which the valley was proverbial (**Isaiah 17:5**), just as at Pas-dammum (**1 Chronicles 11:13**) we find them in the parcel of ground full of barley, at Lehi in the field of lentiles (**2 Samuel 23:11**), or at Keilah in the threshing-floors (**1 Samuel 23:1**). Their animals (תַּיִם) were scattered among the ripe corn receiving their load of plunder. The "garrison," or the officer in charge of the expedition, was on the watch in the village of Bethlehem. On two other occasions, soon after David was proclaimed king, the Philistines invaded the mountains and drew up their armies on the same plain; they were at once attacked by David's veterans and routed with great slaughter (**2 Samuel 5:18**; **2 Samuel 5:22**; **1 Chronicles 14:9-13**). The destruction inflicted on them and on their idols was so signal that it gave the place a new name, and impressed itself on the popular mind of Israel with such distinctness that the prophet Isaiah could employ it, centuries after, as a symbol of a tremendous impending judgment of God — nothing less than the desolation and destruction of the whole earth (**Isaiah 28:21-22**). (See **PERAZIM**, **MOUNT**).

But from none of these notices do we learn anything of the position of the valley. Josephus in one place (Ant. 7:4, 1) says that the valley of the giants was near Jerusalem; and in another place (7:12, 4), when narrating the story of the drawing of water from the well at Bethlehem, in which he makes a strange blunder, he says the valley extended from Jerusalem "to the city of Bethlehem." Eusebius and Jerome, on the other hand, place it on the north of Jerusalem (Onomast. s.v. "Raphaim"), and in the territory of Benjamin (ibid. s.v. "Emec Raphaim"). Their notices, however, are brief and unsatisfactory (see Onomast. s.v. "Coelas Titanorum," and the excellent note by Bonfrere). A position north-west of the city is adopted by Furst (Handw. ii, 383 b), apparently on the ground of the terms of **Joshua 15:8**; **Joshua 18:16**, which certainly do leave it doubtful whether the valley is on the north of the boundary or the boundary on the north of

the valley; and Tobler, in his last investigations (Dritte Wanderung, p. 202), conclusively adopts the Wady-Der Jasin (W. Makhrior, on Van de Velde's map), one of the side valleys of the great Wady Beit Hanina, as the valley of Rephaim. This position is open to the obvious objection of too great distance from both Bethlehem and the cave of Adullam (according to any position assignable to the latter) to meet the requirements of [2 Samuel 23:13](#). Since the latter part of the 16th century the name has been attached to the upland plain which stretches south of Jerusalem, and is crossed by the road to Bethlehem the Buik'ah of the modern Arabs (Tobler, Jerusalem, ii, 401). Dr. Robinson says, "As we advanced (towards the holy city) we had on the right low hills, and on the left the cultivated valley or plain of Rephaim, or the 'giants,' with gentle hills beyond. This plain is broad, and descends gradually towards the south-west until it contracts in that direction into a deeper and narrower valley, called Wady el- Werd, which unites farther on with Wady Ahmed, and finds its way to the Mediterranean. The plain of Rephaim extends nearly to the city, which, as seen from it, appears to be almost on the same level. As we advanced, the plain was terminated by a slight rocky ridge, forming the brow of the valley of Hinnom" (Researches, i, 219). It is true that this tract has more of the nature of a plateau or plain considerably elevated than a valley in the ordinary sense. But on the south-west it does partake more of this character (see Bonar, Land of Promise, p. 177), and possibly in designating so wide and open a tract by the name of the Rephaim valley there was a sort of play on the giant race with which it was associated, as if it, like them, must set at naught ordinary dimensions. South of Mount Zion — the most southern part of the valley of Gihon — is called Wady Rafaath by the Arabs, which corresponds to Rephaim in Hebrew. Hence Schwarz infers that this is the true valley of Rephaim, though usually taken for that of the son of Hinnom (Palest. p. 240). (See JERUSALEM).