

Ezra 2:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The children of Gibbar, ninety and five.

Analysis

The children of Gibbar, ninety and five. Gibbar's family (גִּבְרִי, Gibbar, 'mighty man' or 'warrior') numbered 95. The name derives from gibbor, used of military heroes like David's mighty men (2 Samuel 23:8). This martial imagery contrasts with the family's small size—true strength comes from God, not numerical advantage. Gideon's 300 defeated Midianite thousands; Jonathan and his armor-bearer routed Philistine garrisons (Judges 7, 1 Samuel 14).

The parallel passage Nehemiah 7:25 reads 'Gibeon' instead of Gibbar, likely indicating geographic rather than genealogical designation. Gibeon was Joshua's treaty city (Joshua 9), later Saul's hometown. This variation suggests some families identified by ancestral name, others by geographic origin—both legitimate organizational principles in tribal society.

The preservation of this small family testifies that God's remnant theology operates at multiple scales. Nations, tribes, families, and individuals all participate in covenant continuity. Every faithful family contributes to the thread connecting Abraham to Christ.

Historical Context

Gibeon played significant roles throughout Israel's history: site of the great deception (Joshua 9), location of the tabernacle in Saul's time (1 Chronicles 16:39), and place of Solomon's vision (1 Kings 3:4-15). Families identifying with Gibeon carried rich historical memory, though as non-Israelite treaty partners, Gibeonites

occupied ambiguous status in covenant community.

The Gibbar/Gibeon variation reflects the complex relationship between genealogical and geographical identity. Many families traced descent through both patronymic (ancestor's name) and toponymic (place name) markers. This dual identification grounded families in both kinship networks and land inheritance.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does God's use of small, 'weak' families subvert worldly calculations of power and success?
2. What does the Gibbar/Gibeon variation teach about the relationship between family identity and place?
3. How can believers cultivate 'warrior' mentality in spiritual warfare despite feeling outnumbered?

Interlinear Text

בְּנֵי י	גִבְר	תִּשְׁעֵי יָם	וְחִמְשָׁה:
The children	of Gibbar	ninety	and five
H1121	H1402	H8673	H2568
