# CHAPTER 5

# SITES AND IN-SITU ARTIFACTS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

Archaeology is the study of the physical remains of past cultures. In the preceding sections the primary physical remains that related to the time period of this dissertation were identified and reviewed. Many of these physical remains were the small movable artifacts that are primarily located in museums, laboratories, and collections. The section on Architecture and Town Planning took into account the large in-situ results of human ingenuity and industry. Additionally, the general geography of the relevant lands has been surveyed.

The remaining need is to survey the actual sites from which the smaller artifacts have been extracted and the large in-situ physical remains at these sites. There are fascinating details of the excavations which help us to more fully understand the physical layout of these ancient sites and the geo-political and religious climate of these sites. See Figure. 5.1-1 excavated sites of Israel/Judah).

It is appropriate here to give an explanation why *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations In The Holy Land (*Stern 1993), was used in this dissertation. It is a accumulation of information that has been published in hundreds of books and articles on the subject, in addition to materials previously unpublished. The articles were written and evaluated by eminent scholars, past and present, to bring the best possible information on the

finds of archaeology in the Holy Land. After years of reading research from scores of books, journals and articles on this subject, this researcher and writer realized that it was necessary to focus the information into a concise and accurate report within a limited space. For this reason this valuable source was used by the writer.

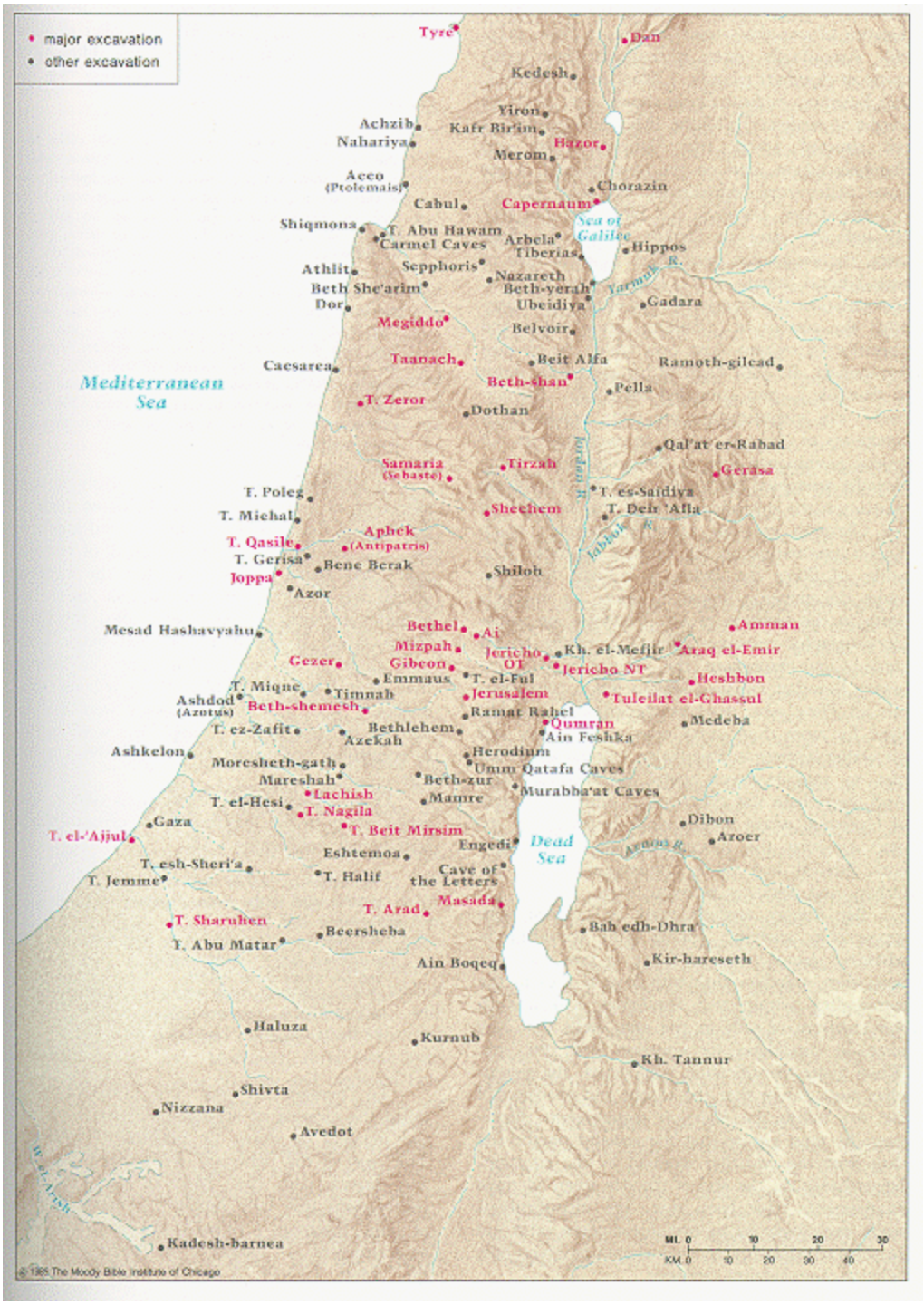


Fig. 5.1-1 Excavated sites of Israel/Judah.

## 5.2 ISRAEL

APHEK (Sharon Plain)

Tel Rosh ha'Ayin (Arabic, Tell Ras el'Ain) lies very near the source of the Yarkon River in the plains of Sharon. It is known as biblical Aphek (Joshua 12:18; 1 Kings 20:26 & 30; 2 Kings 13:17) and was an active city in the Iron II period as seen in the brief references in 1 and 2 Kings. The identification is based on the reference to the tower of Aphek by Josephus (Whiston 1978:513). The site was also mentioned in several ancient inscriptions. Two of them were the Egyptian Execration Texts of the nineteenth century BCE and the Zakir Stele. See Section 4.5.4.4 under Literacy and Inscriptions. The city was called Antipatris during the Roman period.

In 1923, Albright conducted a survey on the mound and collected Middle and Late Bronze pottery as well as Israelite Iron Age I shards. In his opinion, these confirmed the identification of the site with Aphek. From 1972-1985, thirteen seasons of excavations were conducted on behalf of Tel Aviv University and seven other entities. The main directors were M. Kochavi, P. Beck, and I. Finkelstein (Eitan 93:62-64).

Iron Age strata that have been identified are:

| Stratum | Period | Finds |
|---|---|---|
| X-6 | Iron II | Structures |
| X-7 | Iron I | Structures |
| X-8 | Iron I | Silos and structures |
| X-9 | Iron I | Ash layers in open area, Philistine Pottery |
| X-10 | Iron I | Structures and Philistine Pottery |

(Eitan 93:66)

Between 1975 and 1983, area X was excavated. This is the acropolis of Aphek, located in the courtyard of the

Ottoman fortress. Although the finds were identified with Iron I it appears to give evidence of the cultural life of the people of Aphek during this time and the following Iron Age II periods.

Two residential quarters were found on the acropolis, one to the north of the ruins of the governor's residence and the other to its east. Ruins still covered the area, and a large retaining wall was erected to prevent them from collapsing into the eastern residential quarter. In the northern quarter, there were three square buildings identical in size and plan. Each was divided into a back room, occupying about one-third of its area, and a paved front room, which may have served as a courtyard. These buildings closely resemble those found at Tell Abu Hawam, which also are above the remains of Late Bronze Age strata. In the eastern quarter, the remains of structures were found that contained fishhooks, lead weights from fishing nets, and a turtle shell. Strata X-10 contained large quantities of Philistine pottery. There were many pits characterized by an open area containing many layers of ash-remains of organic materials. In the finds there were also heads of Ashdoda-type statuettes.

Only a few remains from the Iron Age II were found in the area of the acropolis (Strata X-6 and X-7). Shreds from this period were in pits and next to installation in various excavated areas. In the Iron Age, settlement was concentrated on the northern part of the mound.

BETH-SHEAN

Beth-Shean is located at the junction of two important roads. One road is the transverse (west-east) road leading from the Jezreel and Harod valleys to Gilead. The other road goes the length of the Jordan Valley. The mound is situated on a high hill that slopes towards the northwest, on the southern bank of Nahal Harod.

Before the excavations changed the terrain, the southeastern side of the mound was higher. This citadel-like elevation remained in use during the Hellenistic-Roman periods, chiefly as a hilltop sacred area. At some time during Hellenistic-Roman period, the main part of the town moved down into the valley. It was named Scythopolis and at its peak size it was about 2.5 miles long, enclosing one third of a square mile.

Beth-Shean was mentioned for the first time in the nineteenth-century Egyptian Execration Texts. It appeared in the topographical list of Thutmose III in the Great Temple of Amon at Karnak (1468 BCE). It was mentioned in the el-Amarna letters and in inscriptions of Seti I and of his son Ramses II, as well as in the Papyrus Anastasi I (thirteenth century BCE), where it is referred to in an accurate geographical context. It figures as an Egyptian conquest in the Shishak lists at Karnak (925 BCE).

It is mentioned only a few times in the Bible. Joshua 17:11 and Judges 1:27 indicated that the Israelite tribes did not occupy Beth-Shean. The Philistines exposed the bodies of Saul and his sons on the walls of Beth-Shean (1 Samuel 31:12). David conquered Beth-Shean as it was on the list of towns comprising Solomon’s fifth administrative district (1 Kings 4:12) (Mazar 1993a:214).

The central mound was excavated from 1921 to 1933 by the University of Pennsylvania Museum. The work

concentrated on the Iron Age and Late Bronze levels. In the last two seasons, the excavators reached the Middle and Early Bronze Age. Hebrew University excavated under the direction of Y. Yadin and S. Geava in 1983 and in 1989 A. Mazar resumed excavations.

Level V revealed the Iron Age Period at Beth-Shean. Two temples were built with an east-west orientation which was a characteristic feature of Iron Age temples. The southern and larger temple is shaped like a basilica and contains two rows of columns along the length and a “broad room” type of Holy of Holies. The northern temple is similar in plan, but much smaller.

In it was found a stele dedicated to the goddess Anat, which may indicate that the southern temple was the temple of Dagon (1 Chronicles 10:10). The two temples were connected by a complex of rooms and storehouses. These temples and attached structure apparently continued in use without major changes throughout the existence of the Philistine city in the later phase of this level. In the Israelite period a monumental gate was built south of the temples.

There was a short break between levels V and IV. In most places the foundations of the walls of IV appear well above the stumps of the level V walls and totally ignore the earlier layout. In some places the walls of the northern Israelite storerooms were still standing 10 to 12 feet high so it would seem that some interval would have been necessary for the consolidation of the ground around these buildings.

The Iron Age cult vessels at Beth-Shean were varied. Stratum V produced elaborate shrine houses and cylinder shaped vessels that were decorated with serpents and doves.

The snakes on these objects are all spotted creatures with oval heads and a doughnut-shaped object on their foreheads. There were a total of 230 graves excavated during the University of Pennsylvania Museum's ten seasons at Beth-Shean. Most of them had been severely disturbed. Earthquakes, landslides, and collapses had added further confusion to the usual disturbances caused by robbing and reuse.

The Iron Age “Philistine” graves produced almost 26 clay coffins that had been thrown out of their original rock-hewn chambers. The lightly fired clay coffins are of two types: grotesqueries, of which no more than half a dozen are recorded; and what might be called normal faces. The pottery associated with the “Philistine” burials included quantities of lamps, pilgrim flasks, stirrup jars (some of Mycenaean ware that have not been published), and a number of white-burnished cups. Most of the ornaments had been stolen, but poppy-bud carnelian necklaces were found, as well as heavy, crescent-shaped gold earrings typical of the Early Iron Age. Other items from Iron Age II that were also discovered in five graves included pottery, glass, bronze vessels and silver jewelry (Mazar 1993a:214-215, 217-218). More details and photos of the material finds from Beth-Shean can be found in this dissertation in the following Chapters: Temples, Gods, and Cult Objects 4.6; Pottery 4.2; and Burial 4.14.

BETHEL

The site of ancient Bethel is generally identified with the modern village of Beitin, 17 kilometers (10.5

miles) north of Jerusalem. It was first identified in 1838 by E. Robinson, on the basis of geographical references in the Bible (Genesis 12:8, Judges 21:19), in Eusebius, and its similarity to the Arabic name. The modern town is located at the southeast corner of the ancient city. This left only about 4 acres of the ancient site available for excavation.

In 1927, W.F. Albright, in collaboration with H. M. Wiener, investigated the site. They sank a test pit, which came down upon a massive city wall, the results of Albright's findings indicated that Bethel had existed during the Canaanite and Israelite periods. The site had no natural defensive feature. It had copious springs and stood at the intersection of major highways, the mountain road and the main road leading from Jericho to the coastal plain. These features contributed to the development of a flourishing town.

Bethel was formerly called Luz. It was conquered by the House of Joseph (Judges 1:22-25) and resettled by the Israelites. It was included in the territory of Ephraim and became a sacred site and religious center associated with the events of the patriarchs. Jeroboam I built a royal sanctuary at Bethel as a rival to Jerusalem, but no trace of this sanctuary has been found. The city was destroyed by the Assyrians at about the same time as Samaria, 721 BCE, but the shrine was revived toward the close of the Assyrian period (2 Kings 17: 28-41).

Bethel escaped destruction by Nebuchadnezzar during the conquest of Jerusalem. It was razed in the transition period between Babylonian and Persian rule. The city was soon rebuilt and was a small town in Ezra’s day. It

prospered in the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine rule (Kelso 1993:192).

The Kyle Memorial Excavations at Bethel were conducted in 1934, 1954, 1957, and 1960 by the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Pittsburgh-Theological Seminary. The first campaign was directed by W.F. Albright assisted by J.L. Kelso. The other campaigns were directed by Kelso. The results showed evidence of occupation from the Chalcolithic to Early Roman Periods (Kelso 1993:193).

The Israelite (Iron Age I) Bethel was in striking contrast to those of the Canaanites (Late Bronze Age). The Israelite houses were built like huts and the pottery was poorly made and dominated by store jars and cooking pots. The Canaanite temple went out of use, and the Astarte plaques so common in the Canaanite period were very rare. A South Arabian clay seal was found and dated to the ninth century BCE. The seal indicates that trade relations existed between Bethel and South Arabia, which was the source of incense (Kelso 1993:194).

DAN

The city was first known as Laish in the second millennium BCE. Dan is located at the foot of Mt. Hermon at one of the main sources of the river Jordan about 17 miles NNE of Hazor at the NE edge of the Huleh Valley. It is a fairly large mound, of about 50 acres, in a rich and fertile valley. The abundant springs in and around the mound form one of the tributaries of the Jordan River.

No historical or biblical records are known up to the present which attest to the existence of a city earlier than the second millennium. However, archaeological

excavations have revealed a settlement of considerable importance already in the third millennium.

Bible references:

The name "Dan" first appears in Genesis 14:14. It was in this region that Abraham and his followers pursued the Elamite king, Chedorlaomer.

The original name of the city was Laish (variant, Leshem in Hebrew, as in Judges 18:29, Joshua 19:47). The name was probably derived from an old Semitic word for “lion,” (Isa.30.6). The Danite conquest of the city is reviewed in Judges 18 which indicates that they dwelt in security, after the manner of the Sidonians, quiet and unsuspecting, lacking nothing that is in the earth, and possessing wealth (v. 7).

Towards the end of the tenth century, Jeroboam established the kingdom of Israel and made Dan the main cult center in the north of the country. He set up a golden calf at Dan which apparently became a more important sacred site than Bethel (1 Kings 12: 29-30). It remained such a strong cult center that when the Baal worshipers were massacred by Jehu, the Baal worship was not stopped at Dan (2 Kings 10:28-31). It became one of the towns conquered by the Syrian king, Ben-hadad.

Dan was recaptured by Israel under Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25), but was again captured by the Assyrian Tiglath-Pileser III, (745-727 BCE). In accord with his usual policy often depicted on Assyrian reliefs of the period, he deported the inhabitants of captured towns. The Israelites were carried off to resettle the cities of the Medes (2 Kings 17:6). Some one hundred and fifty years

later the prophet Amos condemned the people who swore by the "god of Dan" (Amos 8:14) (Biran 1993b:323-324).

Excavation and material finds of the Iron Age Period at Dan: The archaeological work began under Avraham Biran in 1966 and was continued annually by the same excavator with sponsorship by the Israel Department of Antiquities. It was the longest uninterrupted archaeological project in Israel.

During the first season a trench was cut into the southern slopes of the mound from top to bottom. At the same time a number of squares were opened on the mound itself to examine the stratigraphic sequence. In subsequent years additional areas were excavated, and in 1971 another trench was cut into the eastern slopes of the mound.

Excavation results of Iron Age Levels:

Stratum V of the Iron Age was especially rich. A large quantity of vessels was found in it. The destruction of this stratum can be safely assigned to the middle of the eleventh century (Biran 1993b:326-327).

A relatively large number of pits, some stone-lined, in all the areas excavated indicates evidence of a new life-style. The pits or silos are reminiscent of similar constructions in the hill country of Judah and Benjamin, which are termed “settlement pits” and belong to the Israelite period. This level of occupation (Stratum VI) appears to represent a change in the pattern of settlement or of population. Now, for the first time at Dan, we also encounter a new type of storage jar, the “collar rim” jar. The distinctive collar-rim vessels were found in the final phase of this stratum as well as in its earlier stages. This level of occupation is ascribed to the conquest by the people of the tribe of Dan that may have taken place in the

middle of the twelfth century. Some Philistine pottery from this time was also found in the eastern section of the excavation in 1971.

The settlement at Tel Dan persisted throughout the Iron Age. A Phoenician inscription (lb;l plt, "Belonging to Ba'al Pelet") is evidence of the latest stratum of occupation at the beginning of the sixth century BCE. When Jeremiah (4:15, 8:16) referred to Dan, he spoke of it as an existing city.

There was discovered a complex of the Israelite period with an outer and an inner gate, a stone-paved square, a stone-paved road, and massive city walls. The main, inner gate, built of large basalt stones, measures 29.5 by 17.8 meters. It is composed of two towers and four guardrooms. A paved street, the royal processional route, led westward from the four-meter threshold, then turned northward on a 28 degree incline up the slope of the mound. Of the outer gate there were found the threshold (3.7 meters wide) with its doorstop, sockets, and right and left-hand piers.

Between the two gates, a paved rectangle 19.5 by 9.4 meters served as a gathering place. It may provide an illustration for the expression “rehov” often found in the Bible (e.g., Judges 19:15, II Chronicles 32:6).

Next to the eastern wall of the southern guardroom an unusual structure and bench were found. This structure, built of hewn limestone, may have supported a king's throne or a cult statue. Four decorated bases or capitals (one of which is missing) were probably for columns that supported a canopy. The bench, which runs some 5 meters to the city wall, may have been used by the elders of the community.

The entire city-gate complex was built on top of an earthen fill. The city wall, 3.6 meters thick, must have risen to a height of some 12 meters above the plain. The city gate and wall were probably built by Jeroboam I and destroyed during the attack of Ben-Hadad of Damascus (Biran 1993b:329).

The pottery found under the stone pavement and in the level of destruction on the floor dates the gate and wall to the end of the tenth century BCE and their destruction to the beginning of the ninth century BCE. Remains of a later building were found above the destroyed city gate. In one of the rooms some three hundred juglets belonging to the middle of the eighth century BCE were found. Among the finds was a Hebrew inscription that was translated as, “belonging to Amotz" or "Amatziah” (Biran 1993b:331).

At the northern side of the mound an almost square platform (18.7 by 18.2 meters) was excavated. It is built of fine masonry laid in headers and stretchers, characteristic of the classical masonry of the Israelite monarchy. This platform was probably erected by Jeroboam I and enlarged during the reigns of Ahab and Jeroboam II. The space enclosed by the four outer walls was filled with basalt stones laid closely one on top of the other in such a way that a wide platform was created. A flight of steps, 8 meters wide was built against the southern wall of the platform, providing access to it. The platform may thus have been an open-air acropolis, or bamah.

Potsherds collected from the stone steps point to a date in the middle of the ninth century. This open-air cult place was probably built on the site of an earlier one, which ceramic evidence suggests may have been in use during

the Middle Bronze Age II. The bamah was continuously enlarged by the addition of rows of large stones.

The material culture of the inhabitants of Laish at the end of the Late Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age (Stratum VII) is no different than the Canaanite settlement.

In the northern and southern parts of the mound, monumental structures of the Israelite period were uncovered. Living quarters were found in the center of the mound. There was a 4 meter thick wall and gate. A flagstone pavement widens into a square or piazza (19.5 x 9.4 m) which was protected on the north and south by the city walls. The square leads to the main city gate (29.5 m x 17.8 m) with its two towers, each having two guard rooms. The pavement continues through the 4 m wide passageway and on leaving the gate widens to 8 m and continues westward until it turns northward, rising on a 28 degree incline to the top of the mound. This magnificently built road probably served also as a royal processional and ceremonial way. A unique feature of the gate complex is the structure built of ashlars with four decorated bases, found at the entrance to the main gates next to the bench running along the outer face of the north eastern tower (Biran 1993b:330).

For more information on the material culture that relates to Tel Dan refer to Chapter 4 under the sections titled; Literacy and Inscriptions, Temples, Gods, and Cult Objects, Town Planning, and Architecture.

DOR

Dor is identified as Khirbet el-Burj, on the seacoast south of Kibbutz Nahsholim and north of Tantura.

In the Bible, Dor appears for the first time in connection with the Israelite Conquest. It was one of the cities that joined the coalition headed by Jabin, King of Hazor, in the war against Joshua (Joshua 11:1-2). King Jabin was defeated by the Israelites (Joshua 12:23). The Canaanite city of Dor, located in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh, was not conquered until the time of David. In the reign of Solomon, Dor became the center of his fourth administrative district; it was governed by Abinadab, the king's son-in-law (1 Kings 4:11). In 732 BCE, Tiglath-Pileser III conquered the city along with that section of the Coastal Plain which belonged to the kingdom of Israel. He turned it into the capital of the Assyrian province of Duru, extending from the Carmel to Jaffa. Dor was mentioned in an inscription of Ramses II (thirteenth century BCE) from West Amarah, Nubia.

The first excavations at Dor by the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem were carried out in the early 1920’s. Trenches cut in 1923-24 revealed that the first settlement was established at the beginning of the Late Bronze Age. It was destroyed in the thirteenth century BCE, as is evident by traces of a fire found between the remains of the earliest settlement and the next occupation stratum, in Iron Age I.

Because of the limited excavations in the lower strata of the mound, very meager architectural remains from these two periods came to light. The ceramic finds include Late Bronze Age Cypriote imported ware, along with local ware, and Philistine and other Iron Age I pottery. More extensive

excavations have been conducted in the 1950's and the work remained active in the 1980's and 1990's. Most of the material found has been Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine (Stern 1993a:357-359).

## DOTHAN

Tel Dothan is situated in a broad valley 22 kilometers (13.5 miles) north of Shechem. The mound rises some 60 meters above the valley. The area at the top of the mound is about 10 acres, and that of the slopes is 15 acres. The settled area consisted of some 25 acres. One of the most important highways leading from the hills to the Jezreel Valley passed along the foot of the mound.

Dothan is first mentioned in the Bible in relationship to the story of Joseph and his brothers who sold him to traders going to Egypt (Genesis 37:17). In the period of the Israelite Monarchy, Dothan is described in the Bible as a walled city. The king of Aram dispatched an army there to bring out the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 6:13-14).

Excavations were carried out at Dothan almost every year from 1953 to 1960. These were under the direction of J. P. Free of Wheaton College, Illinois. The material finds showed that Dothan had been occupied from Chalcolithic to Roman, and Mameluke. The most important areas of the Tel that were excavated were areas A, D, K, L, and T.

The primary finds of Dothan came from Iron Age II. Occupation levels of this period are reported to have been found on the slopes of the mound (areas D and K) and in areas L and A on the summit. In area A, there were several levels with remains of buildings. Streets were cleared between the buildings. One street was more than 30 meters

long. Inside the houses were storage rooms as well as ovens, pottery, and other common household articles. One of these settlements was destroyed by fire, apparently in the ninth century BCE. A Carbon-14 test of a piece of charred wood from this level dated its destruction to about 805 BCE.

Four Iron Age II levels were excavated in area L. In the lowest level (4) a large public building was found with thick, solid main walls, indicating it may have had several stories. Finds among its ruins and on the plaster and stone floors indicated that it was a public building, perhaps of an administrative character. Some rooms contained ovens, complete vessels, and charred grains of wheat. In one room, there were about one hundred storage bins identical in shape and volume. Scores of similar bins were discovered in other rooms. The building was apparently in use in the tenth/ninth centuries BCE (Cooley and Pratico 1993:372-374).

GILGAL

Gilgal was the first camp Israel had after they had crossed the Jordan (Josh. 4:19-20). While they were camped there, Joshua restored the Hebrew rite of circumcision in response to God’s promise to “rollaway the reproach of Egypt” (5:2-9). The town that grew up was near the northern border of Judah (15:7). Most authorities agree that this is the town included in the judicial circuit of Samuel (1 Sam. 7:16). The memorial altar of stones erected there became a pagan shrine of later years against which Hosea (4:15) and Amos (4:4) warned the people. According to Josephus, Gilgal was about ten miles (seventeen km) from the Jordan and two miles (three km.) or more from Jericho. Its location has

not been confirmed. A large pool has been located at modern Jijuliyeh, which may mark the site. The town from which Elijah ascended to heaven was not this Gilgal (2 Kings 2:1). (Nor 1993:517-518).

HAZOR

Hazor was a large Canaanite and Israelite city in Upper Galilee, which was identified by J. L. Porter in 1875 with Tell el-Qedah (also called Tell Waqqas) some 14 kilometers (8.5 miles) north of the Sea of Galilee and 8 kilometers (5 miles) southwest of Lake Huleh.

It was first mentioned in the Egyptian Execration Texts from the nineteenth or eighteen century BCE. It is the only Canaanite city mentioned (together with Laish-Dan) in the Mari documents of the eighteenth century BCE, which points to Hazor having been one of the major commercial centers in the Fertile Crescent. Hazor is also mentioned frequently in Egyptian documents of the New Kingdom, such as the city lists of Thutmose III's conquest, and the city lists of Amenhotep II and Seti I. The role of Hazor in the el-Amarna letters is of particular significance.

Hazor is first mentioned in the Bible in connection with the conquest of Joshua (Joshua 11: 10-13). Later, in 1 Kings 9:15, it is related that Hazor, together with Megiddo and Gezer, was rebuilt by Solomon. According to 2 Kings 15:29, Hazor, among other Galilean cities, were conquered in 732 BCE by Tiglath-Pileser III.

The site comprises two distinct areas. The first is the high mound proper, covering 30 acres (at the base) and rising about 40 meters above the surrounding plain. A lower large rectangular enclosure of about 700 acres is to the

north of the high mound. The excavations at Hazor go back to the third millennium BCE when the city was confined to the high mound. At the end of this period there was a gap in occupation until the Middle Bronze Age I, when the mound proper was resettled. Levels have been found for all periods of the Middle and Late Bronze (Yadin 1993a:594-595 and 606).

The Upper City: Three main areas were excavated in the Upper City in the 1955-58 seasons: area A in the center, area B on the western edge, and area G on the eastern edge.

Iron Age of Area A: After a certain gap, a small settlement rose at the beginning of the Iron Age on the ruins of stratum XIII. This settlement, which can hardly be called a city, consisted mostly of deep silos, hearths, and foundations for tents and huts. The pottery is typical of the twelfth century BCE and closely resembles that found in similar poor Israelite settlements in Upper Galilee (Yadin 1993a:599).

Stratum X of Area A represents Hazor rebuilt as a fortified city. Its main features are a casemate wall and a large gate with six chambers, three on either side, and two towers flanking the passageway. On the basis of stratigraphy, pottery, and biblical references, these fortifications are to be attributed to Solomon.

Stratum IX shows a certain decline in the quality of the building. This stratum is assigned to the period between Solomon and the rise of the Omrid dynasty. It was destroyed by fire.

Stratum VIII: The main discovery in this stratum, in which extensive building activity is evident, is a large store house with two rows of pillars along its center and two halls attached to the north side. The rooms of the

earlier casemate wall now served only as storerooms. The construction of this city was by the Omrid dynasty.

Stratum VII: The pillared storehouse continued in use in this level, although the floor was raised and laid over the debris of the fallen roof of stratum VIII. More basic changes occurred in the structures around the storehouse. This stratum was completely destroyed, and the pillared storehouse and other buildings were not reconstructed in the following strata.

Stratum VI: The public buildings of the previous level were not re-used, and the entire area became a residential quarter with workshops and stores.

There are clear signs that this city was destroyed by the earthquake in the days of Jeroboam II (793-753 BCE), which is mentioned by Amos. In one of the houses, a shred was found bearing an incised inscription “belonging to Makbiram” (Yadin 1993a:601).

Stratum V: In this level, most of the buildings of the previous stratum were reconstructed. The city was destroyed by a fire, traces of which were evident throughout the area. This destruction is ascribed to the conquests of Tiglath-Pileser III in 732 BCE (2 Kings 15:29) (Yadin 1993a: 601).

Area B: Stratum XII of Area B dated to the Iron Age. Remains were found of the first poor Israelite settlement built on the ruins of the last Canaanite occupation of the thirteenth century BCE. The pottery is homogeneous and identical with that found in the small Israelite settlements through the Upper Galilee.

Stratum XI was uncovered mainly in area B. The remains indicate that another unfortified settlement existed in several parts of the mound after the first

Israelite settlement. This was before Solomon established a city at Hazor (Stratum X). The most important find in this level is a sort of bamah, or “high place,” in which were found incense vessels and a jar containing a cache of bronze objects as a foundation deposit. Among these were a number of weapons and a statuette of a deity. The stratigraphy and pottery date this stratum to the eleventh century BCE.

Stratum X. The remains of the Solomonic city, in particular the casemate wall surrounding the mound, are also well preserved. At the western edge, the fortifications were expanded to form a sort of citadel, but because of the later citadel of Stratum VIII, built upon it, it was impossible to ascertain its exact plan (Yadin 1993a: 601).

Stratum VIII: Dates to the 9th century, the Omrid dynasty. The main feature of this stratum was a large citadel built in the first half of the ninth century that covered practically the entire excavated area. It is of a rectangular plan and measures 21 by 25 meters, with walls about 2 meters thick. Two long halls, running from west to east, are surrounded by a series of rooms on three sides (north, south, and east). It is probable that these remains represent the cellars of the citadel. Nearby were a number of buildings, which evidently were used in the administration of the citadel. Since this fortress occupied almost the entire mound, its walls also formed, in effect, the city wall at this spot. The city wall, which extended from the east, was the earlier casemate wall, which was now filled with earth and stones to form a solid construction typical of all the Palestinian city walls from the end of

the tenth or the beginning of the ninth century. This citadel continued in use throughout the Israelite period until (in stratum V) it was destroyed to its very foundation.

Area G, located on the northern edge of the eastern terrace of the mound, furnished important information regarding the extent of the Upper City in the various periods and the fortifications in this sector. All phases of the Israelite occupation are represented here. Especially noteworthy is a four-room building originating in stratum VIII, found to the west of the terrace and a huge silo whose walls were lined with stone, dug into the center of the terrace. A postern gate in the northern part of the wall led from the outer citadel to the fields on the north. Sometime during stratum V, this gate was apparently blocked in the course of strengthening the fortification against the Assyrians. Traces of the fire that destroyed the city in 732 BCE are also clearly visible in this area. Remains of an unfortified Iron Age settlement were built over the ruined fornications (Ben-Tor 1993a:603).

Area L. The most important discovery made in the 1968 season was the underground water system, constructed in stratum VIII. This system (area L) is located near the southern edge of the mound, where natural springs are still found 40 meters below. The water system comprises three elements: an entrance structure, a vertical shaft, and a sloping tunnel. The upper part of the shaft was cut through the strata of the mound, while its lower part was quarried out of the rock. The upper part measures about 19 meters from west to east and 15 meters from north to south, and was riveted by huge supporting walls. The total depth of the shaft is about 30 meters.

The sloping tunnel (some 4.5 meters high) beginning at the bottom of the shaft, extends for about 25 meters and descends for a further 10 meters. The tunnel ends in a sort of pool situated at the natural water level. This system, was the largest of its kind in the ninth century (Ben-Tor 1993a: 604-605).

IBLEAM

Ibleam is a town in the territory of Issachar, given to the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. 17:11). The inhabitants, however, were not driven out and continued to live in the land (Judg. 1:27). Ahaziah, king of Judah, was killed near there when he fled from Jehu (2 Kings 9:27). Zechariah, king of Israel also was killed there (2 Kings 15:10). It is generally identified with Ibleam. A water shaft and tunnel similar to the one found at Hazor were found at Ibleam which is dated to the ninth century BCE.
(Aharoni 1973:237).

JABESH GILEAD

It is located across the Jordan River from Beth-Shean (1 Sam 31:11-12). Jabesh Gilead was in the area given to the half-tribe of Manasseh (Num. 32:33). During Saul's reign over Israel, Nahash, king of Ammon, besieged the city. (1 Sam. 11: 1-15). Later Saul’s army defeated Nahash, the city was saved and the nation reunited (1 Sam. 11:1-15). Later, when Saul’s forces had been routed by the Philistines and he and his sons had been killed, men of Jabesh Gilead rescued their bodies, cremated them, and buried their remains in Jabesh (1 Sam. 31:1-13). The

stream Wadi Yabish probably received its name from the city. Tell abu-Kharaz, on the N side of the Wadi Yabish has been the site identified as ancient Jabesh Gilead (Glueck 1943:89, 91). This isolated tell, 3 km from the Jordan and 15 km from Beth-Shean, dominates the area and was heavily fortified in Israelite times as evident by the Iron Age.

JEZREEL

Jezreel lies at the western end of Mount Gilboa, where it slopes down on the north to the level of the Valley of Jezreel. The city overlooks the whole plain to the north and west. The city's name means "God sows." The surrounding valley, or plain, which bears the name of the city, is the largest in Israel. It was a fertile and fruitful area that attracted the Midianites in the period of the Judges. Its location on the road that linked the International Coastal Highway in the plain to Ramoth-Gilead on the Transjordanian Highway provided a strategic base for Ahab's wars with the Arameans (Syrians) of his time.

Jezreel was allotted to the tribe of Issachar (Josh. 19:18). Ahab built a summer palace at Jezreel. The neighbor of Ahab, Naboth, owned a fruitful vineyard nearby on land he had inherited from his ancestors. The king coveted that vineyard, craving it for his vegetable garden (1 Kings 21). His queen from Sidon, Jezebel, devised a conspiracy that led to Naboth's death and gave the vineyard to Ahab.

It was through the prophet, Elisha that Jehu, a captain in Israel's army was assigned to destroy the line of Ahab and eliminate Baal worship (2 Kings 9:1-10).

Elijah’s prophecy of God’s judgment on each of the royal pair was fulfilled in gruesome detail, dogs licking the king’s blood from his battle chariot and dogs crunching the bones of the queen (1 Kings 22:37-38; 2 Kings 9:30-37).

In 1990, the author of this dissertation had the privilege of participating in the first regular excavation at Tell Jezreel. The assigned square was in the south-east part of the tell, just one square north of the final south-east square. The 1990 excavation was the first after preliminary rescue work done a couple of years previously when a parking lot was being enlarged and some artifacts were found. The series of continuing excavations were a joint project of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University (represented by David Ussishkin) and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (represented by John Woodhead). Dr. Gabriel Barkay was the supervisor of the south-east sections. This author was privileged to learn from these three scholars.

The third report (Tel Aviv 24) gives the general findings to date. There was emphasis on the enclosure assigned to the Omride kings of Israel. Area H was opened in order to uncover parts of the northwest corner tower of the Iron Age enclosure, and the adjoining segment of the western casemate wall of the enclosure.

Excavation in Area A (Iron Age) concentrated on three places or ‘sub-areas’ on the fringes of the previously excavated area. This area included several squares between the moat and the front left corner of the gatehouse. Area A also included several squares near the inner right corner of the gatehouse. Excavations there were aimed at studying

the area immediately inside the gate, and in particular, exploring the possibility that the gate was larger than assumed and was a six-chambered gatehouse (Nadler 1997).

JOKNEAM (Tel Yoqne’am)

Jokneam is a large mound covering about 10 acres located in the Jezreel Valley. Jokneam was one of the three major cities located in the western Jezreel Valley; Jokneam, Shimron, and Megiddo. It was first mentioned in the record of Thutmose III’s campaign in Canaan in the form of nqn’m, meaning springs. There are two water sources close to Jokneam.

Excavations of the site were started in 1977 and continued for ten seasons until 1988, under the direction of A. Ben-Tor on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Stratigraphic sequence at Tel Jokneam have shown material finds starting at XVII (EBI) and continuous finds from all periods following this strata up to stratum I (Ottoman Period)(Ben-Tor 1993 b:805).

The principal remains excavated at Jokneam are dated to the Iron Age. In area A, most of the excavated area contains two Iron Age II fortification systems, the later of which, attributed to stratum XII, is well preserved. It consists of: a double city wall; an outer wall (2 m thick); an inner wall (l.5 m thick); and a space in between (1.5 m wide). The entrance leads into the inter-wall passage and is probably just one of a series of openings. This is a double wall, but not a casemate wall. The plan of this fortification is different from other Iron Age defense systems in Israel. A peripheral street separated it from

the residential structures, only one was uncovered. The double wall replaced an earlier fortification line attributed to stratum XIV. This one consisted of a casemate wall (Ben-Tov 1993b:807).

Two drainage systems for rainwater were found, one linked with the double wall and the other with the casemate wall. The pottery dates strata XII-XIV to the tenth through eighth centuries BCE (Ben-Tov 1993b:808).

There is a connection here with the coastal region which was determined by material objects. A faience head of a man was found that was Phoenician in style. Remains of dwellings and agricultural installation of stratum XV showed the city was unfortified at that time. Several walls of houses dated to the tenth century BCE were found.

Stratum XVI (Iron Age I-II) represents a short transitional period, when a poor settlement existed. Several segments of paving, installations, and tabuns (ovens) are attributed to it (Ben-Tov 1993b:809).

TEL KEDESH (JEZREEL VALLEY)

Tel Kedesh is situated almost midway between Taanach and Megiddo in the Jezreel Valley. It covers an area of about 2.5 acres. In 1968, excavations were carried out by E. Stern, on behalf of Tel Aviv University. `

Iron Age: Strata IV-VII belong to the Iron Age. Walls and floors from these four strata, lined with stones, clay, or ground chalk were well preserved. One large structure contained a long chamber with an entrance leading to a stone-flagged courtyard. Inside the chamber a number of jar bases were sunk in the floor; adjacent to them was a limestone incense altar with four horns. This gave evidence that the structure had been a cult center.

Ceramic remains showed that the earliest stratum (VII) belonged to the twelfth century. The other three strata fit within a relatively short time span (the tenth to the early eighth centuries BCE). This analysis revealed that the Iron Age occupations were destroyed at least twice in wars, with these destructions sealing off both the earliest (Stratum VII) and the latest (Stratum IV) occupations (Stern 1993b: 860).

## MEGIDDO

Tel Megiddo is one of the most important city mounds in Israel. It rises 40-60 meters above the surrounding plain and covers an area of about 15 acres. This area was enlarged in various periods by a lower city. The position of the mound at the point where the Aruna Brook enters the Jezreel Valley gave it strategic control in ancient times over the international Via Maris which crossed through a pass in Mt. Carmel from the Sharon Plain. This position made Megiddo the scene of major battles from earliest times. Because of the stratigraphic importance and the vast number of material finds, this has been one of the most thoroughly excavated sites in the Middle-East. The Megiddo Stratification has been evaluated from level XX (before 3300 BCE) to level I (Persian, 600-350 BCE). The excavations at Megiddo have been very large, extensive and continuous.

Yohanan Aharoni, Yigal Yadin, and Yigal Shiloh were key people in both the excavation of Megiddo and the written reports of the finds. The following is based on those reports.

Identification and biblical reference: Megiddo is mentioned in the city lists of Thutmose III and Seti I. Among the el-Amarna letters are six sent by King Biridiya of Megiddo to the Egyptian pharaoh.

These letters show that Megiddo was one of the strongest cities in the Jezreel Valley. In the Papyrus Anastasi I, dated to the reign of Ramses II, Megiddo is mentioned in a detailed description of the road from the city down to the coastal plain.

During the period of the Judges, Megiddo was a major Canaanite city (Jos.12:21 and Judges 5:19). It also was among the cities not conquered by the tribe of Manasseh (Jos.17:11). Solomon fortified Megiddo along with Hazor and Gezer. Pharaoh Shishak conquered the city during his campaign against Israel in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign (925 BCE). In 2 Kings 9:27, the city is mentioned in the story of the death of Ahaziah king of Judah, during Jehu's revolt. Tiglath-Pileser III, king of Assyria, conquered the northern part of Israel and made Megiddo the capital of the Assyrian province of "Magiddu." This province included the Jezreel Valley and the Galilee (Isaiah 9:1) (Aharoni 1993b: 1003-1004).

Stratum VII-A is the earliest level (Yadin 1993b:1012) that can be ascribed with any certainty to the Iron Age. The layer of debris and the clear signs of destruction separating the architectural remains of VII-B and VII-A, especially in the palace, indicate that these were two separate strata of occupation. It seems, however, that the same or at least very similar inhabitants occupied both levels, since some of the public buildings of VII-B (most notably the sanctuary) were re-used in VII-A.

Stratum VII-A: The date of stratum VII-A (1350-1150 BCE) was determined by cartouches of Ramses III and Ramses VI. The cartouche of Ramses III was found on one of the carved ivories discovered in the "treasury" and that of Ramses VI was discovered on a bronze pedestal of a statue from locus 1832 in area CC. (Yadin 1993b:1012).

The pedestal was discovered beneath a wall belonging to stratum VII-B; the excavators suggest that it was deliberately buried there by the inhabitants of VII-A (Yadin 1993b:1003-1004).

Stratum IV-B and IV-A 1,000-800 BCE and III (780-650 BCE) were the upper levels of Megiddo where the most extensively excavations took place. Large areas of the mound were laid bare, with layer after layer being removed during many seasons of excavations by different directors. As a result, not only were the general chronology of the later strata and the relative stratigraphy of the entire mound poorly understood, but it was difficult to attribute the various buildings to their proper levels. The studies of J. W. Crowfoot, W. F. Albright and G.E. Wright have contributed much to clarifying the situation. Y. Yadin's excavations in 1960 through 1971 were very valuable in identifying Solomon's level and establishing the correct stratigraphy of the stables and the water system.

Albright and Wright showed that the buildings of VA and IV-B belonged in fact to one and the same level, which they termed stratum VA-IVB. They also established that the buildings of IVA formed an entirely separate level.

The major buildings of VA-IVB were uncovered in the south end of the mound. These included a large building (1723, the palace) measuring 23 by 21 meters and consisting of a rectangular court (A) surrounded by rooms of different

sizes. At the southeast end of the structure was a room (M), which enclosed a staircase ascending either to a tower or a second story (Shiloh 1993b: 1020).

A raised rectangular platform, perhaps the base of the porch, was attached to the northeast corner of the building. The foundations of the building were built of large, irregularly hewn stones sunk deep into the ground.

The outer surfaces of the walls were largely of drafted ashlar masonry in alternating headers and stretchers. Drafted blocks also formed the upper foundations of the walls. These were not visible from the outside. In several places, especially at the corners, the stones were laid in headers extending the entire width of the wall.

The building was surrounded by a large court with a lime and plaster floor. Walls of the court were built of alternating piers of dressed stone and rubble. A large, well-built gate like structure stood at the northeast corner of the court. It consisted of two pairs of chambers, and its foundations were aligned with the axis of "palace" 1723. Nearby were uncovered two large proto-Aeolic capitals (2.4 meters long) (Shiloh 1993b:1021). The capitals were not found in situ. The gate-like structure showed clear signs that it had been blocked at a later stage of its existence. Some of the dressed stones in this structure bore mason's marks similar to those on stones from “palace” 1723.

After the destruction of "palace" 1723, an offset-inset wall was built over its southern end. The excavators assumed that both the offset-inset wall and the stables adjoining it were built by Solomon and belonged to stratum IV-A. They were then confronted with the remains of the

imposing public buildings of the earlier stratum IV-B. These were also clearly Israelite in origin.

As a result, the excavators had no choice but to assume that the “palace” (1723) was built by David as an isolated fort, and that this fort was completely destroyed by Solomon when he built his offset-inset wall and the stables. Another possibility suggested by the excavators was that Solomon built the “palace” himself before he finished planning the entire city, and tore it down when it became evident that it stood in the way of his projected city wall.

Another building (1482) was discovered west of the "palace" (1723). It consisted of two identical wings on the north and south sides of a rectangular court. The walls of this building were parallel to those of the “palace.” Because its west end lay directly beneath the stables, it too was ascribed to stratum IV-B. But it was noted by the excavators that part of the structure continued in use during IV-A as well (Shiloh 1993b:1021).

In stratum IV-A (1000-800 BCE), a number of large public buildings were uncovered. Among these were; two stable enclosures, one is the north stable (407) and one is the south stable (1576); and an offset-inset wall (325). According to the excavators, the great city gate of six chambers and two towers (gate 2156) belonged to the offset-inset wall. All these structures were ascribed to Solomon.

A large, well-built structure (338) was found near the southeast corner of the northern stable compound. It had a large courtyard (313) on its west side. All that has remained of this building today is a flat raised platform of regularly spaced piers of ashlar masonry, laid in

alternate courses of headers and stretchers with large unhewn stones between them.

The corners of the building are exceptionally well-constructed. The upper courses of one corner were made of stones dressed smooth with no bosses, and the lower course consisted of drafted stone with the upper margin the widest. This method of construction is one of the characteristics of the monarchy at Megiddo, Samaria, and Hazor. In the vicinity of the building were found five proto-Aeolic capitals (one was discovered by Schumacher and two by Fisher), similar to those found at Samaria. Fisher attributed the capitals to the “Astarte Temple” which Schumacher had discovered in a later level. Unfortunately nothing remains of this temple today. The excavators ascribed building 338, and its proto-Aeolic capitals, to the Solomonic period (Shiloh 1993b:1021).

Near building 338, Fisher uncovered three horned altars of limestone and a large number of objects of a cultic nature. Guy, who also excavated in the vicinity of the building, suggested that it was the residence of the officer commanding the eastern sector of Megiddo (not the official who lived in the western palace). The excavators were of the opinion that the cult objects found by Fisher belonged to a nearby building, which they assigned to stratum V. Although the connection between the building and the cult objects is not clear, the excavators were certainly correct in concluding that the building was contemporary with the offset-inset wall and the nearby tables (Yadin 1977:853).

Yadin’s excavations between 1960-1970 were started in the northeastern section, due east of Schumacher's trench.

Since the offset-inset wall was very well preserved in this part of the mound, it was possible to examine here Yadin's theory that this wall was not built by Solomon. This theory was based on the fact that at both Hazor and Gezer Solomon had built casemate walls, while at Megiddo the wall attributed to him was a solid offset-inset wall. In the section excavated, the offset-inset wall proved to have been built on top of the foundations of a fortress or palace constructed partly of ashlar blocks. This building (6000) also lay beneath the foundations of unit 407/1 of the north stable compound. Casemate walls were found in the east and west section of this palace and above them was built the offset-inset wall. It thus became apparent that the stable compounds (the supposed stables of Solomon), the offset-inset wall, and building 338 were all post-Solomonic, and could be assigned to stratum IVA, the period of the Omrid dynasty. The palace 6000, the casemate wall, and the "palace" 1723 to the south, all belong to stratum VA-IVB (the time of Solomon) (853-854).

Painstaking sections made under the palace and the casemate wall proved conclusively its attribution to stratum VA-IVB when the clear remains of strata VB and VIA were found under them. The plan of the palace 6000 closely resembles that of the Neo-Hittite-Phoenician Bit-Hilani (Yadin 1977:854).

Once this important stratigraphic distinction was established, it was possible to assign gate 2156 (the massive gate of six chambers and two towers) to the casemate fortifications built by Solomon (VA-IVB). This, in turn, solved the difficult problem of the two later Iron Age gates, 500-B and 500, the remains of which had been discovered above gate 2156. The earlier gate (550-B) was a

large structure of four chambers (two on each side). The later gate (500) had two chambers (one on each side). The excavators had assigned both of these gates to stratum III. The 2156 gate was ascribed to the offset-inset wall of stratum IV-A on the assumption that the construction of gate 500-B began in stratum III. Its plan was altered before its completion, and it was replaced by gate 500. The latter could not be assigned to stratum II since the settlement was unfortified at that time. With gate 2156 now securely attached to the Solomonic casemate wall of VA-IVB, gate 500-B can be assigned to the Omrid offset-inset wall of IV-A. The latest gate, 500, is now ascribed to stratum III (Yadin 1977:854).

Megiddo Water System

There are two springs adjacent to Megiddo: the northern spring, ‘Ain el-Qubi and the spring at the southwestern corner of the mound, to which the city's water system was connected. The investigation of another water installation (L. 2153) adjacent to the city gate began in 1967. The 1960-1967 excavations also clarified the problematic chronology of the city's water system. The two main elements in question were gallery 629 and the subterranean water system.

On the southwest side of the mound, the American expedition (Chicago Oriental Institute expedition) uncovered a curious structure which they called gallery 629. This gallery was a narrow passageway (slightly more than 1 meter wide) leading down the southwest slope of the mound to a spring flowing from a cave at the foot of the mound. The walls of the passageway were built of ashlars laid in courses of headers and stretchers. The American excavators correctly assumed that this passage was part of

the city's water system. Stratigraphically the passageway lay beneath the offset-inset wall, which the American excavators attributed to Solomon. Therefore, they assumed that this gallery was built before Solomon. They could not, however, attribute this imposing structure to the levels immediately beneath the offset-inset wall, because of the poor quality of the building remains. The excavators thus assigned the gallery to stratum VII-A, the time of Ramses III ((1184-1153) (Shiloh 1993b: 1022-1023).

The subterranean water system consists of a vertical shaft (925) and a nearly horizontal tunnel (1000) cut underground. The upper section of the shaft was dug through the debris of previous settlements and was faced with a stone wall. The lower section of the shaft was cut into bedrock. The tunnel was cut from the bottom of the shaft, through bedrock to the cave containing the spring at the foot of the mound (the same spring to which the Gallery descended from the outside). This huge engineering achievement served to convey water from the spring through the tunnel to the shaft inside the city wall. Thus in times of siege the inhabitants could safely draw water from inside the city. As a finishing touch to this great project, a stone wall was built to block the mouth of the cave. The water supply was thus accessible only from within the city, and a besieging enemy was prevented from poisoning or otherwise contaminating it. On the basis of the early dating of the gallery, the dates of the later strata through which the upper part of the shaft was dug, and some ceramic remains within the cave (the latest of which were shards ascribed to stratum VII-A), the American excavators reached the conclusion that the shaft could not have been dug before the thirteenth century BCE. After

finally dating the construction of the shaft and tunnel to the twelfth century BCE, the excavators then ascribed the gallery to a period prior to the completion of the subterranean system, on the assumption that the gallery was rendered obsolete once the tunnel began functioning.

The 1960 excavation however showed that the offset-inset wall (325) clearly dates to post-Solomonic times; the gallery could be attributed to the Solomonic period. And in fact, a sounding made during the 1966 excavation revealed the foundation trench of the gallery, was dug into the debris of the previous strata, which cut through houses of strata VI-A and V-B. One of the stones of the gallery bore a mason’s mark identical with those of the Solomonic buildings. The gallery can therefore be dated prior to the construction of the offset-inset wall , but following stratum VIA-VB, to Solomonic times (VA-IVB).

The construction of the subterranean system can be dated approximately to the period of the Israelite Monarchy, definitely post-Solomonic, but probably no later than the Omrid Dynasty (stratum IVA, the stables and the offset-inset wall). The subsequent discovery of a similar water system of Hazor from the time of Ahab is further support for this conclusion.

Stratum IV-A was thus built during the period of Omrid rule (the second quarter of the ninth century BCE).

The following is a summary of the stages of the water System of Megiddo as compiled by the investigators of the expeditions:

(1) The spring served in the ordinary manner as a source of water at the base of the mound beyond the fortified area.

(2) The earliest water system, Gallery 629, was constructed by fine ashlar masonry and was integrated into the city fortifications of Strata VA-IVB. From its passage through the defenses, it continued along a stairway to the spring. This system was unsatisfactory for securing the water source in time of war.

(3) The major change in the planning of the water system of Megiddo came about in Stratum IVA. Gallery 629 was blocked by the construction of the inset-and-offset wall (9325). A shaft protected by supporting walls was driven down to a total depth of 36 ft. below the level of the mound's surface. Steps were hewn around the walls of the shaft, leading to the opening of a stepped tunnel and in turn giving access to a horizontal tunnel running about 50 m to the spring. The natural, external opening to the spring was then blocked up with a massive wall.

(4) At this stage the water system was further improved, the level of the tunnel at its far end was lowered and the stepped section was removed up to the base of the shaft. Now the water could flow freely from the spring inward to the very base of the shaft where it could be drawn up directly by the inhabitants rather than having to be hauled up through the long tunnel, as in stage 3.

(5) This phase reverted to the original method of stage 3. Steps were built down to the base of the shift on a new fill.

(6) It can be assumed that the water system served the royal Israelite center at Megiddo up to the destruction of the Northern Kingdom by the Assyrians in the eighth century BCE. A large depression formed on its site after its neglect. This depression was partially filled with debris

and served as a reservoir for runoff, providing water for the city in its final stages.

Gallery 629 was well integrated into the new town plan of Strata VA-IVB. Like the other public structures (Palaces 6000 and 1729 and Gate 2156), Gallery 629 was built into the casemate wall of the city (which was located in the peripheral belt of the mound) and made of ashlar blocks (Shiloh 1993b: 1022-1023).

MT. CARMEL

No evidence of the Iron Age was found in this area.

RAMOTH GILEAD

Ramoth Gilead was subject to attack and occupation by Syria. Ahab attempted to assert Israel's claim to the city after the battle of Qarqar (853 BCE), but was killed there in battle. It was a decade before Ahab's son Joram captured and fortified Ramoth Gilead, but when a follower of Elisha anointed Jehu as king, the new ruler rode immediately to Jezreel and slew Joram, who had been recuperating there from battle wounds (2 Kings 8:28-9:28). Glueck and Albright located Ramoth Gilead with the North Excavations by P. Lapp at Tell er-Ramith in 1967. The site is 5 km (3 miles) S of Ramtha and 24 km (15 miles) E of Irbid. The area preserves part of the ancient name, while the elevated location of the tell on a hill above the nearby plain would be ideal for a defensive fortress(Blaiklock and Harrison 1983:384).

SAMARIA (SEBASTIA)

> In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, twelve years: six years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, Samaria (1 Kings 16: 23-24).

Even after the fall of the Kingdom of Israel, the Assyrians called it "the house of Khomry" after Omri, the founder of the dynasty and of Samaria. Omri succeeded in strengthening the kingdom until his death in 871 BCE. His son, Ahab followed him. His reign was from 871 to 852 BCE.

Ahab married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal, King of Tyre; this gave Ahab an alliance with Phoenicia. He built for her a sanctuary to Baal and Astarte and a temple in the city of Jezreel. 1 Kings 22:39 also tells us he built an ivory house. Towards the end of his reign Samaria was besieged by Ben-Hadad II, King of Aram, and his allies (1 Kings 20:1). Ahab struck back at Ben-Hadad II at the gates of Samaria, and later, following the decisive battle at Aphek, he obtained the return to Israel of the cities previously captured by the Aramean. He also acquired trade concession in the markets of Damascus. In the battle with the Assyrians at Qarqar (853 BCE), Ahab occupied an important position among the twelve members of the coalition (Avigad 1993a: 1300).

According to the Kurkh Stele of the Assyrian King, Shalmaneser III, his army consisted of 2,000 chariots and 10,000 foot soldiers. See Section 4.5.2.4 under Literacy and Inscriptions . In the last year of his reign, Ahab and his ally, the Judean King Jehoshaphat, waged war with the Aramaeans to recapture Ramoth-Gilead for Israel. Before setting out to battle, the two kings sat on the threshing

floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria and asked the prophets to inquire of God what lay before them (1 Kings 22:1-10). In the battle of Ramoth-Gilead, Ahab was fatally wounded.

The reign of Joram the son of Ahab witnessed a decline in the political and economic position of the Kingdom of Israel. Samaria was put under heavy siege by the Aramaean King Ben-Hadad and famine spread through the city (2 Kings 6:24-30). The Bible relates in connection with this great famine, that the “gate of Samaria” served as the marketplace for food.

When Joram renewed the war against Aram for Ramoth-Gilead, Jehu, the commander of his army, revolted against Joram. Jehu annihilated Ahab's family and put an end to the cult of Baal in Samaria. He paid tribute to the Assyrians (841 BCE). His submission is related on the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III. See Section 4.5.2.5 under Literacy and Inscriptions. Jeroboam II followed and Samaria reached its peak in prosperity and expansion. The death of Jeroboam II was followed by the beginning of the decline and disintegration of the Kingdom of Israel. The Kings of Israel (Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea) that followed were constantly at the mercy of the Assyrians (Tiglath-Pileser II, Shalmaneser V, and Sargon II) who marched and occupied Samaria. The Assyrian kings sent people to settled there from various countries (11 Kings 17:24) who mixed with the local Israelite population, thus causing an increasing cultural and religious blend (Avigad 1993a:1301).

Excavations of Samaria were started way back, 1908-1910, with the first expedition being conducted by Harvard University under the direction of G. Shumacher. This was followed more extensively under the direction of G.A.

Reisner and C.S. Fisher. This expedition unearthed the western part of the fortress of the Israelite kings (the acropolis) from the time of the dynasties of Omri and Jehu, including the casemate walls, the royal residence, and the storehouse within its precincts.

Samaria was found to consist of an upper city (acropolis), the royal quarter situated on the summit of the hill, and a lower city extending over the slopes and along the foot of the hill. Very little of the lower city was excavated, only scattered building remains were cleared.

The royal quarters(acropolis) was enclosed by walls. Two main systems of fortifications were distinguished. The first wall, which the excavators called the inner wall, encompassed an area on the summit of the hill measuring 178 meters from east to west and about 89 meters from north to south.

The wall was 1.6 meters thick and built of fine ashlar masonry laid in headers and stretchers carefully fitted together. (Avigad 1993a:1302). Inside the walled-up area were discovered remains of various buildings. One of these was built against the south wall to the west and consisted of a central courtyard surrounded by rooms (27 by 24 meters). This building is considered to be part of the palace of the Israelite kings. North of the northern wall on a lower level, the remains of another long wall (called the lower wall) were discovered.

The inner wall, the earliest wall of the city, was attributed by the Joint Expedition to Omri. Since the wall was not particularly strong and was probably incapable of defending the royal quarter, a new and much stronger fortification system was built. The summit plateau was

enlarged to the north by 16.5 meters and to the west by about 30 meters and surrounded by a casemate wall. Only part of this wall was preserved, but the rock-cut foundation trenches have survived so that the course of the wall could be traced. These trenches have also survived in the other structures. The total thickness of the northern casemate wall was 10 meters. The outer wall was about 1.8 meters thick, the inner wall about 1 meter and the space between them was about 7 meters. The cross walls inside the double wall formed long and narrow rooms. The western casemate wall was thinner (5 meters) and the casemates were smaller. The west part of the south wall was also of the casemate type but in its continuation toward the east, it was built as a single wall again the earlier inner wall, which was erected on the rock terrace. Together the two walls formed a thick and massive defense. The south wall contains several salients and recesses and near its west end there was built a solid square block (16 by 12 meters), which was probably a tower. It has been estimated that this may have defended the gate that stood there. In the space between the western casemate wall and the earlier inner wall stood a storehouse (25 by 18 meters), it was here that a number of ostrica were found which will be discussed in the following paragraph. A pool (10 by 5 meters) was built against the casemate wall in the northwest corner of the royal quarter (Avigad 1993a:1303).

There were sixty-three potsherds with legible Hebrew inscriptions written in black ink discovered in the northern storerooms of what became named the “Ostrica House.” Reisner dated them to the reign of Ahab (871-852 BCE); B. Mazar to Jehoahaz (814 to 800 BCE); Albright and others to Jeroboam (786-746 BCE). The shards of the

vessels on which the inscriptions were written belong to Samaria's stratum IV–V (eighth century BCE) (Avigad 1993a:1304). See section 4.5.7.6, under Literacy and Inscriptions.

The group of ivory objects found in Samaria is the most important collection of miniature art from the Iron Age discovered in Israel. The first ivories were found during the excavations of the Harvard Expedition in the floor of the Ahab courtyard north of the Ostraca House. The largest of these was found together with a fragment of an alabaster jar on which was incised the name of the Egyptian Pharaoh Osorkon II (914-874 BCE) which was very important in dating the ivories (Avigad 1993a:1304-1305).

SHECHEM

Ancient Shechem was one of the main cities of the north. It is located near the border of the tribal areas of Ephraim and Manasseh (Joshua 17:7). The mound, named Balatah, lies at the eastern opening of the Nablus pass, about 2.5 kilometers from the center of the city and 66 kilometers north of Jerusalem. Its southern slopes are covered by a modern village. The area within the walls of the ancient city is calculated as between 40 and 50 dunams. All roads in north central Canaan/Israel had to cross at Shechem (Campbell 1993:1345-1346).

Some Biblical references that give some background on Shechem around the time period of this dissertation are:

1 Kings 12:1, "Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king".

1 Kings 12:25; "Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and lived there".

Jeremiah 41:5 tells that eighty men [2 Kin 10:13, 14] came from Shechem, from Shiloh, and from Samaria with their beards shaved off and their clothes torn and their bodies gashed, having grain offerings and incense in their hands to bring to the house of the LORD.

Shechem was known from early Egyptian texts, these included: the Execration texts; Khu-Sebek inscription from the nineteenth century; and a number of the mid-fourteenth century BCE Amarna letters.

E. Sellin began a systematic excavation at Tell Balatah in the fall of 1913. He returned in the spring of 1914, and was able to spend some eight weeks in preliminary work under Austrian auspices. He focused on a fortified wall that had been noticed by a German man, Thiersch ten years earlier, tracing it northward to the northwest gate. He then found another circular wall inside the first and traced it to the gate. Sellin used long, 5 m wide trenches from the mound's edge toward its center, to test the overall stratigraphy. He calculated from the material finds that there were four major periods in the site's history, Hellenistic, Late Israelite, Early Israelite, and Canaanite (Early Bronze and Chalcolithic). He returned to the dig for four more campaigns from 1926 to 1927 which were under the German and Dutch auspices with financial assistance from the United States. The finds dated to Late Bronze and included a wall, palace, and a temple. Sellin continued his exploration in 1934, he returned to Berlin and most of his records were destroyed in the bombing of Berlin along with some artifacts in 1943. In 1956, Drew University and the McCormick Theological Seminary, together

with the American Schools of Oriental Research began to work at the site under the direction of G.E. Wright. Five seasons of excavation continued through 1964. In summary, a total of 24 strata were found from the Chalcolithic on down.

Stratum XI was Iron I A (1200-1150/1125 BCE). There was an abandonment of the site from 1150/1125-975 BCE. Stratum X A-B Iron Age II (975-920 BCE) showed Shishak's destruction. Stratums IXA-B (920-810 BCE) to VIA-B (724-600 BCE) showed: residential remains throughout; fortification on the MB II lines; rebuilding of wall E; and a granary (Campbell 1993:1347). Stratum VIII and VII dated to the eighth century BCE. Little remained of Stratum VIII. Stratum VII produced: a four-room house with a central room; a structure with a second story; a hearth in the central room that indicated that the family was possibly in the trade of lime production as a large fire was needed. Other finds included a vat and platter installation; and two rooms that separated adjoining rooms. An Assyrian seal was discovered in the debris (Campbell 1993: 1353).

## TAANACH

Biblical Taanach is located at Tell Ta'annek, in the Plain of Jezreel on the southwest shoulders of the 'Iron Hills, 8 kilometers (5 miles) southeast of Megiddo. Taanach was an Israelite administrative and religious center. The earliest reference to Taanach is in the fifteenth-century BCE Karnak inscription describing Thutmose III's first military campaign into Asia.

Bible references for Taanach are Judges 1:27; 5:19; 1 Kings 4:12; and 1 Chronicles 7:29 (Glock 1993:1428).

Tell Ta’annek was first excavated between 1902 and 1904 by E. Sellin of the University of Vienna. The second excavation was carried out by the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Graduate School of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, directed by P.W. Lapp. There were three major seasons of almost six months in 1963 - 1968 (Glock 1993: 1428-1429).

The Iron Age defenses were noted on the west side and were dated to the twelfth century BCE. From the tenth century BCE there were a number of material finds. These included: iron knife blades; 140 pig astragali; eighty vessels; fifty-eight loom weights; many querns; pestles; rubbing stones; three small stelae; and a figurine mold. One interesting item was an elaborate cult stand or incense altar. The stand was less than two feet high and was built up of four superimposed hollow clay squares topped by a ridged basin. Symbols of animals were shown representing demons that were to be protecting the singed sun disk on the top panel of the stand. Evidence for a later occupation was a tower dating to the ninth century BCE located on a terrace below the north end of the mound (Glock 1993: 1432).

TIRZAH (TELL EL-FAR’A, NORTH)

Tirzah is located 7 miles northeast of Shechem, on the Nablus-Tubas road. The mound stands near the source of the Far’a brook which flows down to the Jordan. It is situated on a rocky ridge sloping in a southwest-northeast direction. The French School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (Ecole Biblique) conducted nine seasons of excavations at

the site (1946-60), under the direction of Roland de Vaux. The identification of Tell el-Far'a with biblical Tirzah was based on the archaeological finds. Tirzah as the capital of the Kingdom of Israel corresponds to stratum III of Tell el-Far'a. This level was destroyed during the Omrid capture of the town subsequent to Zimri's seizure of power. 1 Kings 16:15-18 states that Zimri set the fortress on fire and died. Omri rebuild Tirzah and had his residence there initially when he became king. After ruling for four years he transferred his capital to Samaria (1 Kings 16:23-23). When the Northern Kingdom prospered under Joash and Jeroboam II, Tirzah also developed. It was from this town that Menahem launched his attack on Samaria (2 Kings 15:14). Stratum II represents this era with its magnificent structures and administrative head-quarters. During the Assyrian invasion of the Northern Kingdom, the town was captured.

Excavations have shown occupation from Neolithic to the Iron Age. Above the ruins of the Late Bronze Age town are the remains of a building complex, in which several walls of the preceding period were re-used. There were four-room houses; each one had entrances that lead to a rectangular courtyard. There were two long rooms on either side and a short one at the back. The walls had little foundation. A fortified gatehouse continued to be used from the previous Middle Bronze period. A stone basin and a square stone pedestal were found in front of the gate. On the pedestal was a pillar, apparently a massebah which was also used in a later period. There appear to be remnants of a gate temple giving evident of continued Canaanite ritual practices. The settlement in this stratum existed a long period of time. Houses were

repaired and restored without any alteration of plan. The shreds discovered in the private houses gave an established date of the tenth to the ninth century BCE. The date was also supported by the find of several conical seals typical of this period and by a small pottery model of a temple, similar to those found in Cyprus, Megiddo, and Transjordan. The town of Stratum III experience destruction (which was possible related to the time of Omri's conquest of Tirzah). Within the debris of this destruction several impressive foundations were found. These were discovered in only one section of the site. One of the structures contained a courtyard with the foundation of three rooms around it. Along one side of this building was an adjoining hall with a wide entrance and semi-attached pillars along the side walls. The masonry was better workmanship than in stratum III. Walls are wide and constructed of a gravel-filled core faced on both sides with masonry. The corners are well built and connected by occasional cross-stones set in the manner usual in the palace at Samaria. These walls are situated on top of the floors of the previous stratum so that their thresholds are very high and somewhat above the debris of the adjacent stratum III walls, which had not been cleared. The conclusion is that these are no more than foundations. No evidence of a living level was found which gives further confirmation that these levels were only foundations and could have been left as the result of Omri's transfer of his capital to Samaria. It appears that the town was left deserted after this.

In stratum II ($9^{th}$ - $8^{th}$ century BCE) a bench was built along the walls in the inner chamber of the citadel gate. In front of the gate, above the stone basin of stratum III, another basin, made of stone slabs, was installed. South

of the gate stood a large structure which abutted the wall and probable served as the residence of the local ruler and as the administrative headquarters. A long chamber was found filled with jars. Well built houses were uncovered, which were constructed according to a plan similar to that of stratum III, but somewhat larger and of superior construction. Walls are better placed and have carefully dressed facings on both sides with well-joined corners. These were the homes of the wealthy, which were once separated from the quarter of the poor by a long, straight wall. These dwellings were small, densely built, and poor construction. The pottery of stratum II is dated primarily to the eighth century BCE. The stratum also shows traces of complete devastation as the result of the Assyrian onslaught against the Israelite towns prior to the siege of Samaria (Chambon 1993:433-440).