

5.4 PHILISTIA

ASHDOD

Tel Ashdod is located about 6 km south (3.5 mi) of the modern city of Ashdod. It was difficult for the archaeologist to determine the full extent of the occupation levels because ancient site had been destroyed by the cultivation of its fields. The two main parts of the mound can be clearly distinguished: the acropolis, with an area of approximately 20 acres, and the lower city of at least 7 acres. The mound is about 50 meters above sea level and rises about 15 meters above the surrounding area. Ashdod was a major city mainly in the Late Bronze and the Iron Ages. Its name has been preserved in the name of the Arab village of Isdud. The mound of ancient Ashdod rises in the center of the village.

The city and its inhabitants are first mentioned in several written sources of the Late Bronze II at Ugarit. An Akkadian text relates that a merchant, Sukuna, received six garments and other merchandise, including two thousand shekels (about 44 lbs) of purple wool from Ashdod.

Among the long list of Ashdodites mentioned in Ugaritic texts, most seem to be West Semitic, while a few may be Hurrian. The Ashdodites never appear as a separate legal entity in the documents; perhaps indicating that they were merely maritime traders who happened to operate in Ugarit.

Ashdod is included in the list of the cities of Judah (Joshua 15:47). It is listed as one of the five cities of the "lords of the Philistines" (Joshua 11:22; 13:3). The

Ark of the Covenant was brought to the Temple of Dagon at Ashdod (1 Samuel 5). Uzziah, King of Judah, "broke down . . . the wall of Ashdod, and built cities about Ashdod and among the Philistines" (2 Chronicles 26:6).

The judgment of Amos on Ashdod (Amos 1:8) probably relates to the same period. Isaiah (20:1) states that Sargon, the Assyrian king, sent Tartan (the commander in chief) against Ashdod and conquered the city. This episode and the relations between Assyria and Ashdod are described in detail in the Assyrian Prism Inscription of the Annals and in the display Inscription of Sargon II.

According to Assyrian sources, Ashdod revolted against the king of Assyria various times. Eventually the town was conquered and sacked, and the territory of Ashdod was annexed by the Assyrians. Later Ashdod was destroyed. Eventually in the Roman periods it was known as Azotus.

Seven seasons of excavations were carried out between 1962 - 1972 by Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and the Israel Department of Antiquities.

Altogether more than 1.5 acres (6,500 square meters) were excavated. Occupation was noted from Late Bronze to Byzantine (Dothan 1993:93-95).

Philistine remains clearly begin in stratum XIII-A and in area H, where stratum XIV is separated by a destruction layer from stratum XIII. Parts of the fortifications in area G were destroyed, and some structures had been erected in their places. The entire city of Ashdod was not destroyed at the end of the Late Bronze Age. However, the discovery at Ashdod of a number of stratified Mycenaean III-C-1 sherds (starting in stratum XIII-B), usually dated to circa 1200 BCE, may indicate that a wave of Sea Peoples preceded their great invasion and subsequent settlement

associated with the eighth year of Ramses III (Dothan 1993: 96).

Later, the inhabitants reused the remains of the Canaanite fortified building and adapted it to their defense line, creating a casemate wall with a group of rooms and courts beyond it, which served mainly as workshops. Two building complexes divided by a street were found. There were a row of rooms and a large hall with two stone bases, which probably originally supported columns. In addition to the Philistine pottery, many small objects, including jewelry, were found in these rooms. The single most significant object of the Philistine strata in area H was a figurine of a seated woman, which forms part of a throne (Dothan 1993:97).

Two seals were found engraved with signs similar to the Cypro-Minoan script of the thirteenth and early twelfth centuries BCE. On one of the seals were representations of men and animals in the Aegean style. The seals may be regarded as the earliest written evidence found in a Philistine context.

In the eleventh century BCE, the city spread outside the acropolis, first as a small settlement in the lower city where it is evidenced mainly by the presence of several kilns. Two solid towers stand at the entrance to the gate in the east, while two compartments are joined to each tower in the west. Most of the walls were built of sun-dried bricks, but in several places the walls were strengthened with stone. The gate is 13.7 meters long, 16.2 meters wide, and the passageway 4.2 meters wide. A wall 5 meters wide was attached to the southern tower of the gate. Pottery finds indicate that the gate was destroyed in the

first half of the tenth century, perhaps at the end of the reign of David (about 960 BCE).

Three superimposed ovens were in use during a transitional stage between the gate of stratum X and a later gate built in stratum IX. No building remains related to the transitional stage have yet been found. The fortifications in area M probably lay in ruins, and the area was an unfortified settlement for some time during the tenth century BCE. The next fortified lower city belongs to the Iron Age II.

In area A some of the walls of the Philistine fortress were reused in Iron II. In area G, a fragment of a brick wall was found which probably encircled the acropolis. A section of a well planned city from the tenth century was uncovered in area K. The consecutive strata (X-VI) had a central street and drainage channel. The houses facing onto the street were built on stone foundations.

The most significant areas of this period, however, were uncovered in the lower city. A large gate in area M (stratum IX) is located south of the earlier (stratum X) gate. Built of unbaked brick on a stone foundation, this gate consisted of two towers with three rooms each. Some hewn, as well as some dressed stones, were used in the corners of the gate. A gateway 5 meters wide passes between the two towers of the gate and continues into the city. The gate measures 20.5 by 18.25 meters.

It seems that the rooms of the first level of the towers were sealed off from the passageway, at least in its earliest stage, and the entrance to them was from within the city. A wall 8.7 meters wide north of the gate continues for at least 40 meters and becomes narrower (5 meters) in its continuation to the south of the gate. The

gate is similar in plan and measurements to those found at Gezer, Megiddo, and Hazor, which are linked with the building activities of Solomon. Those gates, however, have an additional compartment in front of the three divisions of the gate which is lacking in the Ashdod gate (Dothan, 1993:98).

The additional width of the Ashdod walls may be due to solid brick walls rather than casemate walls on stone foundations, as in the other three cities. The first phase of the Ashdod gate probably dates to the last third of the tenth century. It may have been destroyed by King Uzziah of Judah.

The Iron Age II city was also well represented in area D (in strata IX-VI). The three uppermost strata were surrounded by a brick wall circa 3 meters thick, which probably served as an inner wall of the lower city in this area. The remains of stratum IX included brick foundations of a large building and some additional floors on which pottery, now called Ashdod ware, was found. This distinctive ware, re-burnished vessels decorated with black bands, began in other areas in stratum X immediately after the extinction of the typical Philistine pottery. The richest strata in this area were VIII-VII (Dothan 1993:99-100).

In stratum VIII, a small temple, consisting of several rooms, was discovered. Attached to one of the long sides of the main room was a rectangular brick structure that may have served as an altar. Near it, and in the adjacent rooms, a large quantity of cult objects, such as pottery figurines of domestic animals, were found, most of them

used for libation in the temple (kernoi). The many male and female figurines that were uncovered probably belonged to miniature clay offering tables. Figurines of the plaque type especially female ones were also found. Part of the finds of stratum VIII was discovered in pits containing refuse and ashes in stratum VII, as well as on the surface near the temple, mainly because deep plowing had turned up part of stratum VIII. There is no doubt, however, that the finds belong to stratum VIII, dating to the eighth century BCE, which was destroyed at the end of that century. Groups of skeletons and bones in secondary burials with some funeral offerings were found in several places. The remains belong to some three thousand individuals who probably died during the conquest of the city by Sargon II.

Besides the evidence from biblical and Assyrian sources, fragments of a basalt stele found in the area of the acropolis bear witness to this destruction. The inscription on the stele in Assyrian cuneiform shows it to be a duplicate of the type of victory stele at the Assyrian capital, Dur Sharrukin (Khorsabad). Although the names of Ashdod and its ruler were not found on these fragments, it may be assumed that they were indeed mentioned on the stele found at Ashdod, as it was the practice of the Assyrian kings to inscribe the names of conquered towns and their rulers on their victory stelae.

In area D, stratum VII (first half of the seventh century BCE), the potters quarter was preserved, with its street, houses, and courtyards used as workshops. Its main feature was pottery kilns, mostly of the elongated type. Some were preserved with their air vents. Hole-mouth jars were found in one of these. Stratum VII was probably destroyed by Psamtik I (664-610 BCE) of Egypt.

There were a number of inscriptions in the Hebrew script of the Iron Age II found at Ashdod that indicates there was trade between Ashdod and Judah during the seventh-eighth century BCE. Some of the important ones were: a fragment of an eighth-century BCE jar inscribed with "(h)phr" for "[the]potter"; a "nsf" weight; a possible "beqa'" weight; a "pym" weight; and a jar handle stamped with a lamelekh inscription and the royal symbol (the first such stamp found outside the kingdom of Judah) (Dothan 1993:100).

ASHDOD-YAM

The site of Ashdod-Yam(ocean) is 3 miles northwest of Ashdod on the Mediterranean Sea. It was one of the five cities of the Philistine Pentapolis.

Several excavations were conducted at the site from 1965 to 1968 on behalf of the Tel Aviv-Jaffa Museum of Antiquities. Ten cuts were made in the rampart-like structure and at its foot. In three of these cuts, the city wall was revealed. It was retained on the inner and outer sides by two earthen glacis. The wall, 3.1 meters thick, was built of reddish sun-dried brick. The outer glacis was made of varieties of earth common to the region, mainly sand and kurkar. The outer glacis was evidently intended to resist assaults by the siege engines and battering rams of the besiegers, whereas the inner glacis served to counter the pressure of the outer glacis.

On the basis of the pottery, two periods of occupation are distinguished at the site. The earlier which includes the period of the construction of the fortifications dates

to the second half of the eighth century BCE. The later one dates to the seventh century BCE, when the fortifications were no longer used.

Ashdod-Yam is mentioned only in documents from the time of Sargon II (742-705 BCE), in connection with his campaign against the kingdom of Ashdod in 713 BCE for the purpose of deposing the usurper who had seized rule in Ashdod. This usurper, called Iamani by Sargon, rebelled against him and according to the documents; Iamani in great haste fortified three cities in the kingdom of Ashdod: Ashdod itself, Gath and Ashdod-Yam. The last was evidently intended to serve as a rear base for the main city in times of danger. Since neither earlier nor later fortifications were discovered at the site, the uncovered wall and glacis are most certainly those erected by Iamani (Dothan 1993:101-102).

ASHKELON

Ashkelon is the only city in the southern coastal plain situated directly on the seaboard. The ruins of Ashkelon cover a semicircular area of 12 acres. The outline of the city is marked by a wall and towers. On the shore itself the line of the wall has been obliterated by the action of the waves.

In the middle of the semicircle area, near the seaboard, stands an artificial mound (el Khadra). It is the site of Bronze and Iron Age Ashkelon. The total height of the accumulation is 13 meters. The Hellenistic level is reached at 5.5 meters and the Philistine level was at 7.5 meters. South of the mound is the site of the ancient inner port which formed a landlocked bay. Because the strata of

the later periods are considerable, extensive excavation of the Philistine city was difficult.

Ashkelon was economically important in various periods, both because of its port and its location on the Philistine section of the "Via Maris."

The site of Ashkelon is mentioned for the first time in the two groups of nineteenth-century BCE Egyptian Execration Texts. Ashkelon became one of the cities of the Philistine Pentapolis following their settlement in the southern coastal plain dating to the twelfth century BCE.

Ashkelon was a party in the league of the five Philistine cities, each ruled by a lord (Joshua 13:3, 1 Samuel 6:4, 17) supported by a military aristocracy. There are no written sources on the history of Ashkelon from the end of the eleventh century until the middle of the eighth century BCE. When Tiglath-pileser III invaded Philistia for the first time in 734 BCE, the king of Ashkelon acknowledged his suzerainty, but revolted shortly after. Following the defeat of Rezin, king of Damascus, by the Assyrian army, the regime in Ashkelon was overthrown (733 or 732 BCE) in order to stave off a punitive action by the Assyrians. The leader of the upheaval, Rukibtu, was enthroned and received the approval of Tiglath-pileser III.

Ashkelon refrained from taking part in the rebellious activities of the other Philistine cities during the years 732 to 705 BCE, and was left alone.

In 1920-22, J. Garstand and W.J. Phythian-Adams began the excavation of Ashkelon. From the 1930's to the present various finds have been uncovered at Ashkelon that indicated occupation levels from Neolithic all the way to the Crusader Period.

This work has been done by various groups and directors. One that has been doing a large-scale work since 1985 is the Leon Levy Expedition. This has been sponsored by the Harvard Semitic Museum and directed by L.E. Stager (Stager 1993:103-105).

From about 1180 to 604 BCE, the Philistines dominated the city. By the late twelfth century Ashkelon had expanded to urban proportions. There were fortifications on the north slope, such as the mud-brick tower (5.5 by 10.5 m) protected by a mud-brick-lined glacis and occupational layers. The fortifications continued in use throughout the Iron Age II and protected the Philistine seaport. The rich material finds of Iron I discovered have been: a large quantity of Mycenaean and bichrome Philistine pottery; a large public building; over 150 unbaked cylinders; and loom weights.

Iron Age II produced an eighth century BCE house with a grain silo. This silo contained imported Phoenician pottery and a large collection of fish bones of which twelve different types of fish were distinguished. The Phoenician ware include: red-polished bowls, cream-polished bowls, and thin bowls of Samaria ware (Stager 1993:107).

The excavators were generally able to distinguish between Canaanite and Philistine finds. The excavation at Ashkelon formed the principal basis for establishing the pottery chronology of the Bronze and Iron ages, following the finds at Gezer.

Dr. Robert Ballard contacted Professor Lawrence Stager to determine if he would be interested in collaborating on the Ashkelon Deep Water Project. Dr. Ballard was convinced that archaeology in deep water conforms to the ethical standards of the profession and Professor Stager agreed to participate in the Ashkelon 1999 offshore project.

The site where the project was to take place was to be north of Alexandria, Egypt and west of Ashkelon. The wrecks were discovered in 1997 by the US Navy submarine NR-1 during its search for a sunken Israeli submarine, the Dakar.

Dr. Ballard invited the Harvard team to review video tapes of the wrecks. The team's initial impression was that the wrecks contained 8th century BCE material. There was a type of Byzantine amphora that resembles the torpedo shape of 8th century BCE Phoenician jars. Professor Stager felt that if the wrecks were Byzantine, it was not worthwhile to launch the expedition. After further review he and his team concluded that the wrecks probably were 8th century BCE.

During the summer of 1999, the team found an 8th century BCE ship wreck. They named the vessel Tanit, after a Phoenician protective deity for seafarers.

The wreck site was about 16 m long and 4 m wide, carrying an amphora type known from 750-700 BCE. The jars had a capacity of 18-19 liters, and were uniform in size and shape. The total estimated weight of the amphorae was 11 tons. At one end of the site was a stone anchor. Professor Stager noted that this is the first occasion of an anchor found in context on an Iron Age wreck. The amphorae found on the wreck had small "earlike" handles unsuitable for lift points. The handles were probably tie-

down points, allowing them to be roped together. This type of amphora is known from Tyre. Petrographic analysis may tell more precisely where they originated.

Eventually the ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle) encountered a second Iron Age wreck, dubbed "Elissa" by the archaeology team. It is larger than Tanit, carrying at least the 350 amphorae evident on the surface. It is likely that more amphorae lie under the pile. The amphorae were identical to those on Tanit, and this wreck has two stone anchors located on both the port and starboard. The site is 18 m long and 6 m wide. Ballast stones are evident on one end.

A photograph of some of the amphora on the sea bottom is in this dissertation in Figure 4.9-4 in the Chapter on Material Culture in the section on Weights and Measures.

Overall, visible from above using the ROV were 385 amphorae on the Tanit and 396 on the Elissa. There may be more which were not visible by "flying" over the wreckage sites.

The items which were recovered and removed for study from the Tanit (Shipwreck A, the smaller of the two) included:

- 16 amphorae
- 2 cooking pots
- 1 bowl

The items which were recovered and removed for study from the Elissa (Shipwreck B, the larger of the two) included:

- 7 amphorae
- 3 cooking pots
- 1 bowl (broken)
- 1 mortarium (deep bowl)

- 1 decanter
- 1 incense stand
- 6 ballast stones

The type of amphorae which were found in the two shipwrecks is of a type which is well known from excavations in Israel and Lebanon. They were often found in the contexts with other materials of the 8th century at Megiddo III, Hazor VI-V, and Tyre III-II. This type seems to be used mostly along the coast for shipping. There has been speculation that the destination for these ships might have been the new Phoenician colony at Carthage (Ballard 2002:151-168).

BETH-DAGON

Dagon was a major Philistine deity worshiped in Gaza (Judges 16:23, 30), Ashdod (1 Sam. 5:2-7), and Beth-Shean (1 Sa.5:2-7; 1 Ch. 10:10 with 1 Sam. 31:10).

The true origin of this god's name is lost in antiquity and his precise function is uncertain. The common idea that he was a fish-deity appears to have no foundation. The common Hebrew word "dogan" means grain, corn; may be derived from the name of the god Dagon or Dagan. It is possible that he was a vegetation or grain god.

From 2500 BCE, Dagon was worshiped throughout Mesopotamia, especially in the Middle-Euphrates region. At Mari, a temple (18th century) was found adorned with bronze lions. Temples dedicated to Dagon existed in Mesopotamia, Syria, and northern Phoenicia. At Beth-Shean, one temple discovered to Dagon may be the one mentioned in 1 Chron. 10:10. Other Palestinian shrines were probably located at

two different sites each called Beth Dagon (Josh. 15:41; 19:27) in the territories of Judah and Asher. Rameses II (1270 BCE) mentions a B(e)th D(a)g(0) in his Palestinian lists and Sennacherib mentioned Bit-Dagannu in 701 BCE (Albright 1953:74 and 220).

No official excavation has been done to uncover the sites named Beth Dagon in the Bible.

JAFFA (Joppa)

Ancient Jaffa was built on a high promontory jutting into the sea. In Arabic was called Yafa el Atiqa ("ancient Jaffa") or el Qal'a ("fortress").

The name "Jaffa" is derived from the word "beautiful." It is a seaport located 56 km (35 miles) west-northwest of Jerusalem. The city is south of modern Tel Aviv and surrounded by the modern metropolis.

Ancient Joppa's strategic importance was enhanced by its proximity to the Via Maris, the coastal highway between Egypt and points North, and by the fact that it was the closest port to Jerusalem.

Joppa was assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:46), which later migrated North due to pressure by the Philistines. Joppa fell to the Israelites in the time of David. In the days of Solomon (2 Chron. 2:16) and in the days of Ezra (Ezra 3:7), cedar logs were floated from Lebanon to the vicinity of Joppa, perhaps to the Yarkon River port of Tell Qasile. It was at Joppa that Jonah embarked on a ship toward Tarshish (Jonah 1:3) to flee from the Lord.

Jaffa is first mentioned in Egyptian sources as one of the cities conquered by Thutmose III (1490-1435 BCE). This encounter was documented in the Harris Papyrus 500

(Pritchard 1973b:22-23). It appears twice in the fourteenth-century Amarna letters and the Papyrus Anastasi I which dates to the thirteenth century BCE. See in this dissertation section 4.5.9.5 and 4.5.9.8 under Literacy and Inscriptions. Jaffa and the surrounding towns, Azor, Bene-Berak, and Beth-Dagon, are mentioned later in the "Prism Stele" of Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, who conquered them in his campaign of 701 BCE (Kaplan 1993:655).

In 1948-50, P. Guy carried out the first exploratory excavations in Jaffa on behalf of the Israel Department of Antiquities.

In 1952, Guy's excavations were continued down to virgin soil by J. Bowman and B. S. J. Isserlin, on behalf of the University of Leeds. The excavators established that the earliest remains at that spot were sherds dating from the fifth century BCE. In 1955, J. Kaplan undertook a systematic excavation of ancient Jaffa on behalf of the Museum of Antiquities of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. The spread over ten seasons. Occupation levels have revealed remains from the the Middle Bronze II-C to the Ottoman period (1993 Kaplan: 655-56).

The Iron Age II is represented by layers of earth mixed with ashes, but no building remains. At the bottom of this stratum were found two cattle burials dug into the Iron Age I stratum with stone markers standing by them. The burial of the cattle in complete form clearly points to some religious ritual. Indeed, this was a sacred site hundreds of years earlier. A different picture emerged under the ashlar blocks of the Persian stratum in squares 1-2 and 1-3. There an Iron Age II stratum was found and underneath that a stratum from Iron Age I. In depressions

and pits belonging to this last level was found Philistine pottery of the eleventh century BCE. The pits and depressions were partly dug into a layer of rubble and clay bricks fallen from a nearby structure. Under these strata were cleared the foundations of a long hall. A citadel with mud-brick walls was attached to it on the south side. The hall measured 4.4 by 5.8 meters and was entered from the north. The floor was covered with a coat of white plaster. On the floor were two round stone bases of wooden columns which had supported the beams of the roof. The pottery finds were meager, two bowls and some fragments of other vessels. On the floor, however, was found the skull of a lion. This find suggests that the building was a temple where a lion cult was practiced.

Area B: Excavations in this area were concentrated on premises of the Hammam building adjoining the Jaffa Museum and on the slope to the west of it. In the Hammam building, a sandwich-built glacis was uncovered sloping from west to east. The external revetment was made of thin stone slabs which rested on layers of sandy soil. Beneath them were courses of mud bricks laid in a layer of gray soil. The potsherds unearthed in this layer indicated that the glacis is not later than the eighth century BCE (Kaplan 1993a:656 - 658).

BENE-BERAK

The modern city of Bene-Berak has the same name of the settlements in the territory of the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:45). It is identified at present with the Arab village Ibn-Ibraq (also known as Hiriyyeh) which is located about 2.5 miles south of the modern city.

The Annals of Sennacherib indicate that Bene-Berak was located near Jaffa, Beth-Dagon and Azor. No organized excavation has been done at Hiriyyeh, but surface potsherds dating from the Iron Age substantiate its identification with ancient Bene-Berak (Kaplan 1993b:186-187).

AZOR

Tel Azor is situated some 6 kilometers from Jaffa, on the main road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Sennacherib mentioned Azor as one of the cities he captured. Some of the main archaeologists were J. Ory, J. Kaplan, Y. Shapira, J. Perrot and M. Dothan. This extensive excavation produced remains dating from the Chalcolithic period down to medieval times (Perrot 1993:125).

In 1958 to 1960, M. Dothan excavated in the north area and discovered a large cemetery in which there were forty - five tombs that dated to the early Iron Age. The pottery found in them was primarily Cypriot. This excavation produced invaluable information about five methods of burial that were practiced at Azor from the beginning of the Iron Age down to the ninth century BCE.

These methods of burial were:

1. The bodies were placed in pits with their backs in an east-west position and their heads were facing south. The tombs contained primarily Philistine ware, including spiral-decorated bowls with horizontal handles attached to the wall and pyxidoform vessels. Found in addition to pottery in one of the Philistine burials were: a scarab from the Nineteenth or Twentieth Egyptian Dynasty depicting Hapi the god of the Nile; an iron bracelet; and a bronze mirror.

2. In some of the tombs, burials dating to the eleventh to tenth century BCE, the bodies were placed in large pottery jars joined at their upper parts.

3. Coffins were also found in burials that were in the shape of rectangular troughs made of unfired bricks laid on their side and covered with larger bricks. The Philistine pottery found in these burials was dated to the eleventh-tenth centuries BCE.

4. In a square stone construction about 1 meter high, a large store jar was found containing charred bones of one or two skeletons. Above and below the jars were offerings, including pottery and metal objects that dated the burial to the eleventh century BCE. Similar jars were also found in stratum X at Tell Qasile. Cremation was very rare and this method of burial seems to show a new ethnic way of burial.

5. Another burial was communal. The tombs were surrounded by a stone fence (circa 2 by 3 meters and 1 meter high). These tombs served for the burials of several generations of the same family. The bodies and offerings were placed in successive layers and the material finds were dated to the tenth-ninth centuries BCE. The pottery was Cypro-Phoenician ware which was black on red, white-painted, and bichrome type. Among other finds were conical seals, scarabs, and an Egyptian amulet.

There were also some other finds that were very interesting as related to the Iron Age Period, but not discovered inside the tombs. These included thick bowls with pinched rims, used in copper smelting, a scaraboid in the shape of a Negroid head, with a prancing horse on its

obverse side, and dating to the Twenty-sixth Egyptian Dynasty (1993b Dothan:127-129).

TELL QASILE

Tell Qasile is an important Philistine settlement discovered on the outskirts of Tel Aviv. The tell is located a short distance from the mouth of the Yarkon River in an area of kurkar sandstone, a material used for its buildings. The economic life of the settlement on the site was based to a great extent on the river. Its waters were used for irrigation, allowing the development of a diversified agriculture. It is very likely that in various periods the settlement served as an inland port, and ships sailed upstream through the estuary of the Yarkon River and anchored near the mound. This is also confirmed by the discovery of imported pottery at the tell. The role of this settlement as an inland port is also reflected in the biblical account of the shipment of cedar trees sent for the building of the temples in the days of Solomon (2 Chronicles 2:16) and of Zerubbabel (Ezra 3:7). Floats of trees were sent up the Yarkon and unloaded at one of the settlements on its banks, probably Tell Qasile. It provided the best stratified evidence for Philistine pottery.

Three seasons of excavation were conducted by B. Mazar from 1948 to 1950 on behalf of the Israel Exploration Society. He was assisted by Trude Dothan, I. Dunayevsky, and J. Kaplan. The excavations were concentrated in the southern part of the mound over an area of about 1,200 square meters. In 1949 and 1950, excavations on a smaller scale were also conducted on the north-west slope of the mound. The boundaries of the mound were traced, and its

area was established as 150 meters long from north to south and 100 to 110 meters wide from east to west. The overall area of the ancient settlement was about 4 acres. In 1972, an area in the northern part of the mound was opened up by T. Dothan and A. Mazar. Evidence was found of continuous occupation from the twelfth to the eighth centuries BCE and from the Persian to the Arabic periods. The buildings on the boundaries of the settlement on the south and west slopes of the mound were destroyed by erosion. Scanty remains have survived of the fortifications dating from the end of the twelfth to the beginning of the tenth century BCE. The foundations of these strata were washed away by erosion (Mazar 1993b:1204).

With the exception of a few shreds from a short-lived settlement in the Middle Bronze I, the earliest remains on the mound date from the beginning of the Iron Age.

Large sections of the southern part of the mound were cleared down to virgin soil and twelve main strata were distinguished. The chronology of Iron Age strata is as follows: VII-Iron Age, II-C (eighth century BCE to 732 BCE); VIII Iron Age II-B (ninth century BCE); IX Iron Age II-A (tenth century BCE); X Iron Age I-B (pre-Israelite period at Tell Qasile, second half of the eleventh and beginning of the tenth centuries BCE); XI Iron Age I-B (Philistine period, second half of the twelfth century); XII Iron Age (first half of the eleventh century BCE)(Mazar 1993b:1212).

Due to the fact that a number of the buildings continued to be used from the early Iron Age on to the later period it is significant to look at the remains uncovered of these levels and see how they relate.

In Stratum XII (eleventh century), the buildings of this period were constructed on the kurkar rock and few remains of them have survived. The best preserved building was found in the southern sector of the excavation. It was built of mud brick and consisted of two adjoining structures. The length of their entrance was 12 meters. Depressions and pits cut into the kurkar in this stratum were encountered all over the excavations. In the center of the area were remains of brick walls. In the area of the fortifications, there was a pavement running beneath the brick wall of stratum XI. The pavement was destroyed at its western end by erosion. The architectural remains in stratum XII appear to belong to large buildings which were ruined when the city was destroyed by fire (Mazar 1993b: 1207).

Stratum XI (Iron Age I-B Philistine period, second half of the twelfth and the first half of the eleventh century BCE) was completely cleared in the southern part of the mound where a large building, built mostly of kurkar stones, was found. The plan of the structure was not fully traced.

East of it was a large square, and nearby were two clay crucibles containing remains of smelted copper. In the northern sector of the mound, the buildings of this stratum were destroyed down to their foundations when the buildings of stratum X were erected. The nature of the ruins indicates that the settlement was destroyed by an earthquake.

The fortifications on the west include a massive brick wall. No architectural continuity was noted between strata XII and XI. The latter was laid out on a different plan and a new wall was added.

The pottery assemblages of strata XII-X made it possible to clearly identify the strata of Iron Age I. Changes and developments can be traced in the ordinary local pottery in which the Canaanite pottery tradition continues, as well as in the Philistine ware.

The Philistine pottery of stratum XII contains several distinctive features which date it to the early phase of its appearance in Israel. These features included a thick white slip and bi-chrome decoration that were identified on some vessels by narrow, close-set lines, similar to the Mycenaean "close style." The ceramic assemblage of stratum XI is similar to that of stratum XII, although a change is discernible in the Philistine pottery, where there is deterioration in the ornamentation and monochrome decorations become more frequent.

Other finds in this stratum include: bronze arrowheads; a bone graver; spindle whorls; flint sickle; numerous loom weights and various stone objects, such as grindstones and mortars. Iron objects were not found in strata XII and XI. The ceramic finds of these strata parallel those of Megiddo VIIA-VIB and Beth-Shemesh III.

Since Buildings of Stratum X were encountered throughout the excavated area, it was possible to establish both the plans of the individual buildings and of an entire quarter. The houses of this stratum were built on an almost uniform plan, consisting of a square court situated in one corner and two adjoining long and narrow rooms meeting at an angle.

This plan may possibly be the archetype of the four-room house, widespread in the Iron Age II. Some of the houses had a narrow paved strip along the outer wall of the court and a row of pillars bounding it on the inner side,

indicating that the court was roofed. Of special interest is a house in the northwest corner of the excavation. It contained a large court with two wide doorways opening onto the street. Some of the rooms of the buildings were used as storerooms. From the numerous finds in other rooms it was apparent that they served as dwelling rooms and workshops. The buildings in the north part of the excavated area formed a complete residential quarter. They were surrounded on three sides by streets and comprised two rows of attached houses accessible only from the street (Mazar 1993b:1209).

To the south of this quarter, part of a second block of buildings was cleared, which differed from the first. The western building, consisting of a large room with two common bases along its length, which was not an ordinary dwelling house, but was probably used for industrial purposes, like the building in stratum XI.

These quarters were planned anew in stratum X and only in a very few places (in the southern area) is there a continuity between the buildings of strata XI and X. The city was destroyed by a fire, and a great many finds were uncovered in the ruins, especially in the storerooms, which shed light on the rich material culture of this stratum.

The city wall of stratum XI was reconstructed by the inhabitants of the city of stratum X and the wall continued in use until the final destruction of this city.

A large amount of pottery and other objects were discovered in the buildings of the stratum, mostly in the storerooms. The change in the character of the settlement can also be seen in the material culture. New forms and styles are added to the pottery repertoire and Phoenician-type pottery and Egyptian imported ware appear here for the

first time. The most striking change, however, occurs in the forms and decoration of the Philistine pottery. The white slip and bichrome ornamentation disappear and are now replaced by a red slip, usually with irregular burnish, and brown painted decoration. Some of the Philistine types of vessels vanish, and new types appear, which were created through a fusion of Philistine and Canaanite elements and new traits which become common in Israelite pottery.

The blending of these three elements is especially evident in a group of craters. See in Chapter 4 on Material Culture the Section 4.2 titled Philistine pottery. The Philistine elements are represented in the horizontal handles and the degenerated spiral patterns, the local tradition is seen in the shape of the craters and in some of the decorations, and the new feature is the burnished red slip. Parallels to the ceramic finds of stratum X are found in stratum VI-A at Megiddo. In stratum X, iron objects such as knives and the blade of a sword, appear for the first time together with various bronze implements.

Strata IX 2 - IX 1 (Iron Age tenth century) contained important finds. On the ruins of the city of stratum X begin the Israelite settlement IX 2. The changes in the organization of the new city are evident mainly in the fortifications. It appears that the strong brick wall of the Philistine city (strata X-XI) went out of use with the destruction of stratum X. In the area of the fortifications was discovered a row of attached buildings of the Israelite period, the outer face of which was destroyed by erosion. Also in the center of the mound major changes took place in the transition from stratum X to stratum IX 2, with only the interior of the buildings undergoing alterations. The major change was the addition of a wall dividing the court

and creating a dwelling that became known as the four-room house. Another innovation was the change of direction of the row of houses. The entrance was now from the north, from the area of the silos.

Stratum IX 1 was located in the eastern part of the excavated area and here a public building (14 by 12 meters) was found. In the northeast part of the building was an entrance hall containing the lower part of a flight of stairs leading to an upper story. South of the entrance hall was a row of four long narrow rooms, one of which was divided into two parts. These rooms were probably accessible from the upper story through openings in the ceiling. Evidently a public building, this structure indicates that the site was an administrative center in this period. This stratum was poor in ceramic and small finds. In addition to the local pottery, which had a red slip and irregular burnish, there is also Cypriot ware of the Cypriot-Phoenician types.

In Strata VIII-VII (The Period of the Israelite Kingdom), the public building continued in use. The block of buildings continued to exist as well, undergoing a certain change of plan with the disappearance of the rows of columns of stratum IX 1.

In Stratum VII, the large public buildings of stratum VIII cease to exist and are replaced by ordinary houses. Few building remains can be attributed to stratum VII, most of them having been destroyed by building activity in the Persian period (stratum VI). The Israelite town was probably destroyed in 732 BCE when Tiglath-Pileser III invaded the Israelite kingdom and burned numerous towns. This destruction brought the settlement at Tell Qasile to

an end, and the site was not again occupied until the Persian period.

In the pottery found in strata VIII-VII, the red slip with regular burnish is predominant. The bowls and deep bowls show wheel-made concentric burnishing for the first time. Some bowls of Samarian ware were also found, in both ivory and red. Cooking pots of the shallow type occur as well as those with narrow grooved mouths from which two handles extend to the shoulder. One large jar resembles Cypriot-Phoenician ware in both shape and workmanship. It has a slip in various shades of red and is well burnished. The front of the jar is decorated with the drawing of a galloping horse. Other finds include an Astarte figurine of the Pillar type, two scarab seals, stone weights, and copper and iron implements.

The pottery of strata VIII-VII belongs on the whole to ninth and eighth century BCE types common in the Israelite kingdom.

Before the beginning of the excavations, two ostraca were found on the surface of the mound. The paleographic and pottery type date them to the late stage of the Iron Age.

Ostrakon No. 1 had an inscription which was deeply carved on the inside of the ring base of a vessel with reddish slip. The script is the cursive Hebrew common in Israel and Judah in the eighth century BCE. The ostrakon was damaged only on the edges. It reads: "For the king, one thousand and one hundred [log of] oil..Hiyahu." This was apparently a receipt or a record of a quantity of oil sent by an official, whose name was Hiyahu, through the port of Tell Qasile. The liquid measure is not mentioned in the inscription, but the "log" was probably intended.

Ostrakon No.2 is a shred from a large vessel that had points separating the words of its inscription. The inscription reads: "Gold of Ophir to Beth-Horon thirty shekels." The term "gold of Ophir" in the Bible refers to gold of a special, superior quality, named after its country of origin, Ophir. The measure of the gold is given by the single letter "shin" which is an abbreviation for the word "shekel." The Phoenician system of writing numerals used three parallel horizontal lines to represent the number of shekels (thirty). This was evidently an official document certifying the dispatch of a consignment of thirty shekels (half a talent) of gold of Ophir to Beth Horon (1993b Mazar:1206).

From 1971 to 1974 excavations at Tell Qasile were resumed under the direction of A. Mazar. They were sponsored by the Israel Exploration Society, the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University, and the Museum Ha'arezt. In the last two seasons, a new area, area C, was opened in the northeast sector of the site (Stratum XII). In this area was discovered the cultic center of the city during the Iron Age.

There were a number of temple buildings, but one was very unique and labeled building 319. The external dimensions of that building which turned out to be a temple were 6.4 by 6.6 meters. Its brick walls, which lacked stone foundations, varied in thickness from 0.5 to 1 meter. The entrance of the building was in the east wall where a large stone slab served as a threshold. The temple consisted of a single room with plastered brick benches along the walls and a beaten lime floor. A raised platform, also of plastered brick, with a frontal projection which probably originally contained steps, was located at the west end of

the room. Although the platform was preserved only to a height of 0.5 meter, it had undoubtedly been higher during its existence. It is possible that the area along the rear of the temple served as a storeroom, as in the later temples of strata XI and X. In a layer of brick debris on the floor was found a group of pottery vessels, including a unique Philistine jug with a convex-shaped body, its upper section in the shape of a flask and decorated with a stylized lotus motif and geometric patterns. A spacious open courtyard stretches east of the temple up to the north and east edges of the excavations. Its lime floor was repaired several times. Between the floors were alternate layers of gray and black ashes which suggest that organic materials had been gathered together in the courtyard area and set on fire. The ashes contained sherds and numerous animal bones as well as several unusual objects: an anthropomorphic juglet; a scarab engraved with a chariot scene and an ivory knife handle with remains of the iron blade still held in place by bronze rivets. On the north side of the courtyard was a long narrow room belonging to the temple complex.

South of the temple and the courtyard, a wall, 25 meters long, bisected the excavation from east to west. It enclosed a series of buildings that continued southward. The wall was repaired during strata XI-IX.

Building 200 represents the stratum XI temple erected directly above that of stratum XII. The walls of the new building closely follow the lines of those of the earlier temple, with the exception of the north and east sides where the building was enlarged. It now measured 7.75 by 8.5 meters. The walls, approximately 1 meter in width, were constructed of kurkar stones. The entrance, 1.4 meters

wide, was located near the north end of the east wall. Like the earlier temple, this one also consisted of a single room surrounded by brick benches, but it differed in its interior arrangement. In the southwest corner of the room, two brick walls, each consisting of two courses only, were built at right angles to one another, enclosing a space 1.5 by 2.8 meters. It is believed that they were the foundations of a raised platform which served as the holy of holies.

Inside the corner space created by the partitions was a rich assemblage of cult vessels including: an anthropomorphic mask; an ivory bird-shaped cosmetic bowl; a seashell that served as a horn; several clay figurines; numerous beads and pottery vessels that included a group of small votive bowls. In the temple area itself, a bronze dagger and arrowhead were found together with Philistine vessels. It is possible that the corner space may have been used as a hidden storeroom beneath the brick-built platform.

There was evidence that the floor of the courtyard east of the temple had been repaired and raised three times. On the north side of the court an interesting assemblage was discovered in a depository pit which dug through the accumulations of stratum XII down to bedrock and sealed by the stratum X floor. The assemblage included an anthropomorphic vessel of a female figure, a pottery rhyton in the shape of a lion's head, decorated with Philistine motifs and a rich collection of pottery including a horn-shaped vessel and decorated bell-shaped bowls. On the north side of the court were two rooms which belonged to the temple complex. Beyond them was a street running to the west. A miniature shrine (building 300) was

attached to the west wall of the temple. It was first built in stratum XI and continued to exist unchanged during stratum X. The shrine consisted of a single brick-built room (3.5 by 5.6 meters) with an entrance at the east end of the north wall and plastered benches along the walls.

In the southwest corner the benches extended up to a raised platform formed by two steps. Thus the shrine is a "bent axia" building like the stratum X temple. Next to the raised platform were three fenestrated cylindrical cult stands decorated with geometric designs. Near them lay two bowls with projections on their bases.

South of the temple were the remains of a large building which was apparently founded in stratum XII and continued to exist with a number of alterations in stratum XI and finally went out of use in stratum X.

From the abundance of finds made in stratum XI, several aspects in the development of the pottery could be noted. The white slip common in stratum XII disappeared, and in stratum XI a red slip is found on a large number of the vessels. Hand burnishing is rare. Many of the vessels are decorated with Philistine motifs, including the distinctive bird design.

The temple of stratum X (building 131) was based on the previous temple, although it was enlarged on the east and measured 8 by 14.5 meters. The north, west, and south walls of stratum XI continued in use, but the east wall was canceled and now served as the foundation for a bench. A new antechamber was added on the east side of the temple. The entrance, 2.9 meters, was situated in the north wall of the ante-chamber. There were two rows of benches along its walls. An opening in the west wall of the room led to the cella whose internal measurements were 5.65 by 7.2 meters.

An artificial fill raised the floor 0.6 meter above that of the earlier temple. Two round stone column bases were set into the fill on the long east-west axis. They served as supports for columns of cedar wood, as was shown by the analysis of charred wood remains found next to the bases. Around the walls were tiered benches similar to those in the antechamber. On the west side of the cella was a brick partition forming a long, narrow cell. A brick platform, raised 0.9 meter above the floor, was built against the east face of the partition. The benches along the north wall of the cella extended up to the platform. Those on the south were reached by two plastered steps. One of which was built around the western column (the circular imprint of the wooden column was preserved in the steps). The floor of the temple had a thick, light-brown plaster coating. The building is of the bent-axis type, and it was impossible to look directly into the cella from the outside (Mazar 1993b:1207-1209).

The temple was destroyed by a fire and a large number of objects were discovered on its floor. Among the cult artifacts were the following: a pottery plaque in the form of an architectural facade in Egyptian style, with either two goddesses or a god and goddess; a cylindrical cult stand with two lionesses attached to the rim; a cylindrical cult stand decorated with human figures walking to the side; a bowl decorated with the head and wings of a bird; a large conical jar decorated with floral designs and a bird; a bowl decorated with heads of bulls; pomegranate-shaped vessels, etc.

The pottery in the temple included types typical of stratum X, including Phoenician bichrome ware. In the rear cell of the temple were found stirrup jars and bell-shaped

bowls decorated with Philistine geometric motifs. Two metal objects were also discovered, a bronze double axe and an iron bracelet.

To the north and east of the temple was a large courtyard enclosed by strong stone walls with a rectangular room built of brick on the north side. A square stone foundation, 1.2 by 2 meters, apparently the base of a sacrificial altar, was discovered in the courtyard.

Another courtyard lay northwest and west of the temple. It was entered from the street on the north through a well-built entrance. In the east side of the court was a stone-built service room which contained various installations and pottery vessels. In the south, the court incorporates the miniature temple (300), which was erected during the previous level and continued unchanged also in stratum X.

South of the temple complex was a row of buildings bordered by the east-west wall of stratum XII, mentioned before. One of the houses (building 225), which was completely cleared, measured 8.5 by 13.5 meters and included two square rooms on the east and a courtyard divided by a row of columns into roofed and open areas.

This building was also destroyed by fire, and on its floor laid scores of vessels including numerous storage jars, Egyptian imported vessels, and some richly decorated Philistine ware.

South of the building was a street running east-west. The line of the walls and streets in area C run parallel to each other, and their orientation is similar to that of area A, indicating that the Philistine city was well planned with parallel streets intersecting one another at right angles.

Above the thick destruction level of the Philistine temple of stratum X, the excavators found a section of a lime floor which they attributed to stratum IX. In this stratum, the north wall of the temple was rebuilt with bricks and the east wall continued unaltered. The other walls, however, were so badly damaged in later periods that it was impossible to trace their plan in strata IX-VIII. In the courtyard a new lime floor was laid during stratum IX, sealing the square foundation of the stratum X altar, which was apparently replaced by a round stone instead slightly to the east. The rooms south of the temple were also reconstructed and their floors raised. In a later phase, probably in stratum VIII the east wall of the temple was rebuilt of massive stones and the north wall was strengthened by a row of large stones. New walls were constructed north of the temple. The finds from this level are scanty, as it lay directly below the surface and was considerably damaged by erosion and later disturbances. However, it is clear that during strata IX-VIII the temple continued to be in use.

A revised study of the pottery shows that stratum VIII dates to the late tenth century BCE. After its destruction, probably during the campaign of Shishak to Palestine, the site was abandoned for a long time.

No architectural remains in area C could be attributed to stratum VII, but typical eighth-seventh century BCE pottery was found in eroded layers of earth above the temple ruins. Two cuttings in the west side of the mound contained pottery typical of the end of the Iron Age, and it is possible that they represent the remains of a short-lived settlement on the mound at the end of the seventh century BCE (Mazar 1993b:1211-1212).

EKRON(Tel Migne; Khirbet el-Muqanna)

Ekron was one of the five principal Philistine cities and a place of importance having villages dependent upon it (Jos. 15:45-46). Recent surveys suggest that it is to be identified with Khirbet al-Muqanna. Khirbet el-Muqanna was surveyed by J. Naveh in 1957 and it seems to be the most likely candidate for Ekron. The site is located 13 miles due east of Ashdod and 25 miles west of Jerusalem. It is in a position to command the Valley of Sorek. Although it is a low-lying tell, its area of 16 ha. (40 acres) is larger than that of any other Iron Age site known. The tell has a projection at the NE corner which perhaps represents the acropolis. The South slopes contained a double wall with gates and towers. These indicated that the fortification of the city was strong (Dothan 1993:1051).

From the surface sherds it appears that Philistines founded the Early Iron Age II city on an abandoned Early Bronze site. After enjoying considerable prosperity during the tenth-sixth centuries BCE, the city seems to have declined after the Neo-Babylonian invasion of Nebuchadnezzar (Dothan 1993:1056).

Ekron was first assigned to the tribe of Dan (Josh. 19:43). The Israelites evidently did not effectively capture it (Judg. 1:18). The border of Judah passed along the ridge north of Ekron (Josh. 15:11). In the ninth century BCE, Ahaziah was rebuked for consulting the god of Ekron, Baal-Zebul "Lord of the High Place." Amos (1:8) pronounced judgment upon Ekron and the other Philistine cities.

Ekron is quite prominent in Assyrian inscriptions which describe the conquest of Philistia. A letter from Calah (Nimrud) refers to Ekronites bearing tribute to Sargon II. Sargon's forces besieged Ekron in his campaign of 712 BCE. The siege is depicted in a relief in Hall V at Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad). Ekron is spelled "Amqaa" in Akkadian. When Sargon died in 705 BCE, the local nobility of Ekron rebelled against the Assyrian yoke. Hezekiah intervened and imprisoned the pro-Assyrian ruler of Ekron, Padi.

In his invasion of Palestine in 701 BCE, Sennacherib assaulted Ekron and killed the rebellious leaders. Padi was liberated from Hezekiah, and again made the ruler. Territory taken from Judah was given to Ekron (Pritchard 1973a: 287-88).

Ikausu, king of Ekron, was called to Nineveh by Esarhaddon (Pritchard 1973a: 291). Unlike the names of most Philistine rulers known to us which are Semitic, this seems to be an originally Philistine name. Ikausu also paid tribute to Ashurbanipal as the latter marched toward Egypt in 663 BCE (Pritchard 1973a:294).

Two other locations were proposed for Ekron. These were:(1) Aqir, an Arab village located 5 miles southwest of Ramle. Although Edward Robinson in the nineteenth century thought this would be the place, there was no ancient remains found. (2) Qatra, located 3 miles southwest of Aqir was proposed as Ekron in 1923 by Albright. Again no archaeological material was found to confirm this. The features of Khirbet el-Muqanna have convinced most scholars that it should be identified with Ekron.

Remains from the Iron Age II were uncovered in the upper city (northeast acropolis), fields I and VII and in

the lower city, fields II, III, IV, and V (Dothan 1993: 1053-1056).

A mud-brick city wall was built at the bottom of the slope of the acropolis. Attached to the wall was a 7 m wide mud-brick tower faced with large ashlar blocks in a header-and-stretcher construction. On top of the acropolis was a stratified sequence of buildings. The ceramic finds indicated that the occupation of these structures had been from the tenth to the eighth centuries BCE. The main ceramic forms were coastal, with some typical Judean types such as the late shallow cooking pot, an everted-rim bowl, and the plain-rim hole-mouth jar. A citadel tower built with boulder-sized stones was uncovered that dated to the second half of the eighth century BCE. Two lamelekh-stamped jar handles were found, one with an inscription that read, "belonging to the king of Hebron." The date of this is related to the time period during which Hezekiah was king of Judah, he would have had control of Hebron (Dothan 1993: 1056).

It is only near the end of the eighth century BCE, when Philistia came under the control of the Neo-Assyrian empire, that Ekron experienced new physical growth and again became an important city-state (Dothan 1993:1056).

ELTEKEH (Eltake)

Eltekeh was a city of Dan's inheritance, later a Levitical city (Josh. 19:44; 21:23). Sennacherib in his Annals of 701-702 BCE, mentions the place (as Altaku) along with Timnah, among his conquests. These are mentioned in the Chicago Cylinder and Taylor Cylinder. See Section 4.5.2.9 in this dissertation under Inscription references.

In 701 BCE, there was a significant confrontation there between Sennacherib and the allied forces of Ethiopia and Egypt. Although W.F. Albright proposed Khirbet el Muqannah (Ekron) as the possible site, the final identification of Eltekeh remains undiscovered.

GIBBETHON(TELL EL-MELAT)

Tell el-Melat (modern city), west of Gezer in the territory of Dan (Josh.19:44), was allotted to the Kohathite Levites (21:23). Baasha killed King Nadab at Gibbethon while Israel was besieging the city, which was then in the hands of the Philistine (1 Kings 15:27). A quarter century later, Israel again besieged Gibbethon, and Omri was made king there by the army, when they received the news that Zimri had killed King Baasha (1 Kings 16:15-17). The army then abandoned the siege. Gibbethon remains unexcavated (Tenney 1987).

TIMNAH

Timnah is a valley area north of the Gulf of Aqabah enclosed by the mountain range known as Zuge Timnah. It is some 30 km (18.5 miles) north of the Gulf of Elath.

J. Petrick, the region's first explorer (1860) noted the traces of metalworking in the archaeological debris. F. Frank in 1934 marked seven copper-smelting sites dating from the tenth to the sixth century. The Tel Aviv University Arabah Expedition of 1959 discovered large ancient copper workings at the foot of the range. Rich copper ore was mined during the years of transition between the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age on several sites.

West of Mount Timnah, close to modern Timnah's copper mines, the archaeologists discovered an early Iron Age camp. The pottery remains dated the camp to the twelfth century BCE. It was rich in antiquities of metallurgy including the discovery of a stone built furnace used for copper smelting. The furnace and other metallurgic remains allowed the archaeologists to trace and reconstruct the process of metal production. A Semitic sanctuary was associated with this site, together with a "high place" (Beno 1993:1475-1476).

In the center of Timnah's copper industrial area, a temple of the Egyptian goddess Hathor was discovered by B. Rothenberg in 1969. The niche for the image was identifiable, while the standing stones known as "masseboth" and the masses of offerings reveal the nature of the copper-miner cult.

Of immense historical usefulness were hieroglyphic inscriptions from the first two strata of the temple ruins which relate to the Nineteenth and Twentieth dynasties. Inscriptions run from Seti I (1318-1304 BCE) down to Ramses V (1160-1156 BCE). There were large pottery finds characteristic of the region (Negev-type pottery) and a beautiful copper serpent with a gilded head was found in the last and fourth stratum of the temple.

The temple was significant in that it took the beginnings of copper mining in the area back four centuries earlier than the activities of Solomon and the kings of Israel and Judah. Material finds also included workshops and dwellings. Another interesting feature was the food remains, skeletons of goats, donkeys, camels, and fish bones. Textiles, baskets and ropes were also found (Beno 1993: 1482 and 1485) (Yamauchi 1993:252-254).

GAZA (TELL HARUBE)

Tell Harube is the site of ancient Gaza. It is situated about 5 km (3 miles) from the seashore in the northeastern part of the present city of Gaza. Gaza was the southernmost town of the Philistine Pentapolis (five cities). Biblical and other literary references are numerous. Twenty references occur in the Bible alone. The rest of the evidence is from archaeological sources. The Annals of Thutmose III imply Egyptian possession of the town in 1468 BCE. The pharaoh used the city as his first staging area on his campaign of that year. See Section 4.5.9.5 under Literacy and Inscription in this dissertation. The Amarna Letters mention the danger to the town at the time of the Habiru invasion. See Section 4.5.9.9 under Literacy and Inscription in this dissertation. Philistine control became established and resisted the extension of Solomon's power. Amos (1:6-7) condemned Gaza for its slave trade with Edom. Slave trade was part of the commerce in Gaza because of its geographic location on the Fertile Crescent trade routes. Slave trade was confirmed by a southern Arabian inscription concerning a female slave. This would have occurred in the middle of the eighth century BCE. Over the next century, the city appears in the Assyrian royal records (Tiglath-pileser III; Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon; and Assyria's last strong king, Ashurbanipal). These records documented the undulations of the fortunes of the people of Gaza because of the Assyrian military. See Section 4.5.2 under Literacy and Inscription in this dissertation. The denunciation of Gaza by Zephaniah (2:4-7, 13-14) may reflect a period

during which a Philistine puppet of Assyria held Judean border areas.

Tell Gaza was partly excavated by W. J. Phythian-Adams on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1922. Three trenches (Main Cut, Cross Trench, and Ravine Cut) were dug without any connection between them. In the trenches, Phythian-Adams found various ceramic types, including pottery from the Late Bronze Age which included: Cypriot base ring ware; white slip wishbone-handle bowls and part of a pointed juglet.

Also found was Early Iron Age (Philistine) and Iron Age II pottery (pebble-burnished ware). The upper debris consisted of: a mixture of glazed Arab fragments; masses of Roman and Byzantine sherds; some Hellenistic sherds and numerous fragments of glass from those periods. In 1965, a mosaic pavement was discovered on the seashore of Gaza, about 300 meters south of the present harbor. The mosaic pavement was the only part of an ancient synagogue that survived (Ovadia 1993:465-467) (Ovidiah 1969:193-98).

TELL EL-HESI (Eglon)

Tell el-Hesi (Tell el-Hesi) stands on the west bank of Wadi Hesi (Shiqmah Brook), 25 km (15.5 mi) northeast of Gaza. It lies 11.3 km (7 miles) southwest of Lachish (Tell ed Duweir). It is strategically located in a valley situated in the hill country which juts out into the coastal plain of Palestine, west of Hebron. The area of the acropolis mound is about 11 acres. The remains of the lower city covered about 22 acres. It was an occupied site from about 2600 to 400 BCE, a period interrupted several times by incidents of destruction. C. R. Conder first identified

the stronghold as Lachish, a mistake accepted by the first excavators, Petrie and Bliss. The Wellcome-Marston expeditions of 1932 to 1938 directed by J. L. Starkey, established, however, the correct location of Lachish. It was W. F. Albright who eventually identified the tell with Eglon, an identification now generally accepted.

Joshua 10:3, 5, 23 refers to the King of Eglon who joined four other kings to fight against Gibeon because this city had made a covenant with Joshua.

Gibeon appealed to Joshua, who came with the Israelites and defeated and destroyed the five kings. Later Joshua captured the city (10:36-37; 12:12). It was assigned to Judah (15:39). Judges 3:15 -30, tells how Ehud, a left-handed judge of the Israelite saved the Israelites from the Moabite King of Eglon by defeating him. Archaeologists have ascertained that Eglon was destroyed by fire in the thirteenth century BCE, thus confirming Joshua's conquest of it.

Tell el-Hesi has major importance in the history of archaeology in Palestine. It was here that the stratigraphic method was first applied in the course of Petrie's six weeks of work on the site in 1890. Petrie's datings of pottery were later considerably modified, but he and his successor on the site, F. J. Bliss, had successfully established a principle now accepted in archaeology. In 1891-93, F. J. Bliss continued Petrie's work and conducted excavations on the site for another four seasons. In 1970, a long-term American team project of excavation, survey, and a series of scientific investigations was begun on the site under the direction of J. E. Worrell and a team of specialists.

A structure was uncovered that contained six rows of stone bases with brick walls between them and covered an area that measured 15 by 37 meters. Two bowls found in the building dated it to the tenth or the beginning of the ninth century BC. A massive fortification system was discovered at the southern base of the acropolis that had a wall and tower which dated to the tenth - ninth centuries BCE and it continued to be used until it was restructured early in the Persian period.

During the Iron Age II period (ninth century BCE), construction was done on the acropolis of Tell El-Hesi. This construction produced a double wall system around the acropolis on all sides and a platform (6 m x 7 m). There was an outer wall, at the base of the acropolis, which formed the foundation for the wall system. A series of four terraces consolidated the slope between the lower and upper walls. The slope was filled with pebbles and covered with lime-plaster glacis. The first structure built on the platform was a ninth-century BCE courtyard building (stratum VII-c). Above it were several smaller residential structures dating to the eighth to sixth centuries BCE (strata VII-b and VII-a). Stratum VII-a was covered with a thick layer of ash and destruction debris, probably the result of the Babylonian - Edomite destruction of the site. Iron Age II pottery was found in a large enclosure at the top of the mound (Fargo 1993:630-634).

TELL NAGILA

Tell Nagila is located 19 miles east of Gaza. Prior to excavation, it was assumed that the site should be identified with Gath of the Philistines, but because no

Iron Age I remains were found, this identification had to be abandoned.

Tell Nagila was excavated under R. Amiran and A. Eitan in four areas on top of the mound in 1962-63 and on the south slopes. Fourteen strata from the Chalcolithic to the Mameluke (1500 CE) were discovered. The only extensive period of settlement was the Middle Bronze II (1750-1550 BCE) of the Hyksos who fortified the city with a large glacis. Among the few Late Bronze finds was a bichrome crater with figures of a bull, a bird, and an ibex. There was a gap in settlement during the Iron I period.

Iron Age IIB-C was identified by the uncovering of several buildings that contained numerous pottery vessels of the period. Fragments of walls and floors were also abundant. The site was abandoned at the end of the seventh century BCE and not reoccupied until the Hellenistic period (Amiran 1993:1079-1081).

EL-'AJJUL

El-'Ajjul is also known as Beth Eglayim and located 4 miles southwest of the present city of Gaza on the north bank of the Besor Valley (Wadi Ghazze).

Tell el-'Ajjul was the third site excavated by the British School of Egyptian Archaeology after Tell Jemma and Tel Sharuhen (el-Far'a). Work continued there under the direction of Petrie from 1930 to 1934. There was a short season in 1938. Tell el-'Ajjul showed some, but very little material finds of the Iron Age Period, however some was found. The importance of this site cannot be ignored as it gave such rich evidence for the Middle and Late Bronze period which was very significant to the archaeology of Israel.

The site of Tell el-'Ajjul was chosen not for reasons of defense but because it was situated at the junction between important trade routes, with access to the sea.

The pottery was found throughout the site, dating to the Middle-Late Bronze period. Included in the finds were Gray-burnished and decorated juglets and some interesting bichrome pottery, painted in black and red with bands containing bulls, birds, and fish.

No other site in Israel has produced so many inscribed seals as el-'Ajjul.

The Iron Age was identified on the site by a few iron arrowhead and some graves that contained Cypro-Phoenician black-on-red III juglets and pottery of Philistine derivation (Kempinski 1993:49-53).

TELL JEMMEH

Tell Jemmeh is located 6 miles south of Gaza, on the southern bank of the Nahal Besor. It was the site of a flourishing city during the MB II, Late Bronze and Iron Age, Persian and Hellenistic periods. There was a large Byzantine city in the fields directly south of the mound. B. Mazar thought the site was ancient Yurza, a Canaanite city-state mentioned in the Egyptian topographical lists of the New Kingdom and in the el-Amarna letters. This has been accepted by most scholars (Van Beek 1993:667). Thutmose III describes Yurza as the southernmost city to revolt against Egypt, which responds well to the location of Tell Jemmeh. Jemmeh is almost certainly the "Arsa (border city) near "the Brook of Egypt" mentioned in the lists of Esarhaddon. The site was very important in the time of Assyrian domination.

In 1922, W.J. Phythian-Adams dug a trial step trench. During 1926-27, Petrie spent six months excavating a large area along the western sector of the site. This was the first of three mounds excavated by Petrie in the 1920's and 1930's. In 1970, a Smithsonian Institution expedition, directed by G. Van Beek, resumed the excavation of the site.

The northern side of the mound was partially cut off by about 15 m (45 ft) due to erosion. Petrie excavated the west side to a depth of about 11 meters, reaching virgin soil in two places. He distinguished five strata, in addition to granaries which were sunk into the top stratum and represented separate occupation (Van Beek 1993:667-668).

Iron Age I was identified in stratum "JK" as the earliest Philistine occupation. Parts of three buildings were discovered along with a considerable quantity of Philistine sherds and a kiln.

Strata "GH" (tenth to ninth centuries BCE) and "EF" (eighth century BCE) were assigned to Iron Age II.

In Stratum "GH," the largest of four furnaces was found. Petrie believed they were used for smelting iron, however no iron traces were found in the furnace. Several fragmented buildings were uncovered. Two were four-room houses.

During Van Beek's excavation of the tenth to ninth centuries BCE, there were walls made of brown brick with foundation trenches. The ninth century BCE, uncovered a large room with a lime-plastered floor and walls and an adjacent room were found. The adjacent room also contained a storage jar and a jug, both finished with a vertically burnished, red slip with black and white painted bands

around the shoulders and neck. Imported Cypriot pottery included a black-on-red barrel jug and a bichrome jug, both with handle ridges. A number of clay figurines of animals and humans from this period were recovered, including one found by Petrie showing a man sitting in a wheeled vehicle, resembling a chariot.

The eighth century BCE is represented by a series of three building phases. This area was known for casemate fortifications found on a northwest slope, it consists of an outer wall at least 2 m thick, erect 2 m from the inner wall with narrow connecting cross walls. Objects that were among the interesting finds included a small solid bronze bull head and a bronze chisel.

Tell Jemmeh produced one of the most interesting finds of the Assyrian culture dating to Esarhaddon (about 680-669 BCE). Uncovered structures showed they were built using the Assyrian style of building and roof vaulting. A great quantity of Assyrian ware was found. (Van Beek 1993:670-671).

TEL HAROR

Tel Haror is located in the western Negev desert. It is approximately 20 km (12.5 miles) west of Beersheba and 7 km (4.5 miles) from Tel Sear', on the main road from Gaza to the Beersheba Valley. Surface surveys were done by D. Alon and Y. Aharoni in the 1950's. They concluded that Tel Haror had been inhabited continuously in the Bronze and Iron ages, which enhanced its identification with Canaanite and Philistine Gerar, the city of Abimelech (2 Chr.14:39-41). E. D. Oren, conducted six seasons of excavations at

Tel Haror between 1982 and 1990 on behalf of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev.

Early Iron Age I was represented in area B. Results included a large building with a paved stone courtyard, and Philistine pottery.

The finds of the Late Iron Age I (1000 BCE) included: Philistine and Cypro-Phoenician wares; a series of well-constructed stone buildings; a mud-brick wall with remnants of a citadel; refuse pits; domestic installations; ash pits and agricultural tools (Oren 1993a:582-583).

The Late Iron Age II was found in areas D, E, and G. Excavations of area D uncovered an elaborate defense system and carefully designed public architecture. The fortification system included a rampart, defense wall and glacis, watchtowers, and a small corner fort. The defense wall was traced and about 60 m was exposed. It was 4 m wide and coated with a thick layer of plaster and was about 4 m high. A section of the inner face of the wall had courses of well-dress ashlar laid in the headers and stretchers technique. A mud-brick tower was found in area D, dimensions were about 9 m by 7 m. Excavations within the wall have revealed a series of gravel floors with various cooking and storage installations. A thick deposit of ash and burn brick indicated the destruction by fire (Oren 1993a:583).

Area E revealed more details about the building of the defense system. An impressive glacis was faced with flat kurkar stones and coated with gray clay, all of which showed major repairs. Excavations within the walled section of this area revealed two courtyard houses. One of the houses had cobbled floors and cooking facilities. An interesting feature of the second courtyard house was the

uncovering of stone bases that were used for wooden pillars. This area was destroyed by fire in the seventh century and restored with new floors and cooking facilities.

Excavation of area G uncovered a storehouse (6.5m by 3 m) built against the defense wall and placed on mud-brick platforms. The walls were covered with plaster. Destruction was also noted by broken bricks, remnants of charred beams and large quantities of pottery vessels left standing or broken against the wall of the building. The wares were typical of the southern coast and the western Negev toward the end of the Iron Age which was Phoenician-type jugs. The storage jars were often incised with the potter's mark. One room by the wall contained almost thirty loom weights, a pillar figurine, Edomite sherds and a broken clay weight with the word "pym" on it. Destruction of this area was due to fire and dated to the middle or second half of the seventh century BCE (Oren 1993a: 583-584).

TEL SERA' (ESH-SHARI'A) (ZIKLAG)

Tell esh-Shari'a is situated in the northwestern Negev midway between Gaza and Beersheba and some 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) northwest of Beersheba. The mound lies on a low natural hill overlooking the north bank of Nahal Gerar (Wadi esh-Shari'a), a tributary of the dominant feature of the northern Negev, the Besor River (Wadi Ghazze). Tell esh-Shari'a has been in dispute by scholars. After careful evaluation of the historical and geographical data, the site was identified as biblical Ziklag by noted archaeologists, B. Mazar, Y. Aharoni and Z. Kalai. There

have been other places considered for Ziklag, but this site is definitely the most probable.

Ziglag is mentioned in Joshua 15:31 as a city of Judah and in 1 Chronicles 4:30 as a city in the territory of Simeon. Ziglag is named as a town in the "country of the Philistines" (1 Samuel 27:6-7) or the "south of the Cherethites" (1 Samuel 30). In Saul's time it was under political patronage of Philistine king of Gath and was given to David by Achish, the king of Gath, as a refuge during his flight from Saul (1 Samuel 27:6). There-after Ziklag became crown property and served as David's headquarters until he went to Hebron to become king over the United Monarchy. Ziklag is last listed among the Judean cities during the period of the return from Babylonian Exile (Nehemiah 11:28).

The mound is shaped in the form of a horseshoe with very steep slopes on all but the western side. Five seasons of excavations have been carried out at Shari'a from 1972 to 1976 under the direction of E. D. Oren sponsored by Ben Gurion University of the Negev, with the assistance of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, and the Israel Exploration Society.

The summit of the mound was occupied by a Muslim cemetery, of which over 150 stone-lined and other individual graves have been found. A total of twelve strata were beneath the graves. The finds included materials from Chalcolithic to Mameluke (Oren 1993:1329).

Stratum VII at Shari'a revealed Iron Age II finds dating to the tenth-ninth centuries BCE. The most intensive building activity of the Iron Age at Shari'a was found in stratum VII, which is represented by four to five phases of rebuilding, and an accumulation of debris some 3 meters

thick. The sun dried, mud-brick walls of this stratum are preserved to a considerable height usually on kurkar foundations. The bricks are of consistently high quality and uniform size. The latest phase (in the early ninth century BCE) came to an abrupt end, apparently as a result of an earthquake. Stores of intact vessels were found scattered on the floors together with considerable heaps of fallen bricks, as well as high walls, which had collapsed onto the floors in their entirety.

The architecture of stratum VII, especially in area A, is represented by well-planned public and private structures. One such building, uncovered in the southeastern corner of the mound, consists of long narrow halls surrounded by a massive wall. Bricks were laid in two rows, in a fashion somewhat similar to the header-and-stretcher technique characteristic of Israelite architecture. The floors were of beaten earth with a pebbled surface. The plan and contents of this building suggest that it served as a public storehouse (Oren 1993: 1331-1332).

Two four-room houses were found in area A. One of them, labeled building 149, measured 13 by 11 meters, and its walls have survived to a height of some 2 meters. Remains of white plaster are still visible on the walls. The building consists of a rectangular courtyard (6 by 8 meters) surrounded by narrow rooms on its southern and eastern sides, and very thick walls on the northern and western sides. The entrance was from the north. The west wing of the courtyard was apparently covered by a roof. The floor of the west wing was paved with large pebbles and crushed chalk. The floor of the eastern wing was made of crushed bricks. A brick bench ran along the east wall. This

wing must have served for cooking for it contained: clay tabouns full of ash; small depressions sunk into the floor and lined with seashells and cooking pots still resting on ashes. Around these installations were: many complete or restorable storage jars; cooking pots; hand-burnished bowls and jugs; footed chalices; a "foot-bath;" painted "Ashdod" sherds and a sizeable heap of unbaked clay balls that were used as jar stoppers or clay heaters. Scattered among the vessels were: stone grinders; mortars; pottery palettes and ivory kohl sticks for mixing cosmetics. Two small rooms were on the east, no materials were in these rooms. This building 149 had a second story which was evident by the accumulation of fallen bricks with complete vessels on top of them in the area of the courtyard, and by the unusually thick walls on the courtyard's northern and western sides. A wall that collapsed in an earthquake fell intact into the long hall bordering the courtyard on the south. A dump was found just south of building 149 which contained material finds, primarily pottery fragments from Iron Age I-II. Among these finds was Philistine ware (Oren 1993b:1332).

TEL EL-FAR'AH SOUTH (TEL SHARUHEN)

Tel el-Far'a South is located approximately 24 km (15 miles) south of Gaza and 20 km west of Beersheba. In the Bible, Sharuhén is mentioned only in Joshua 19:6 and in a parallel verse, Joshua 15:32, as Shilhim. In Shishack's roster the name is also written as SRHM.

Excavations were carried out at the site in 1928-29 by the British School of Archaeology. Published reports by E. MacDonald, J. Starkey and G. Harding came out in 1930 and

1932. Material finds were uncovered from Middle Bronze IIB to Roman times.

Iron Age II A (tenth to the ninth century BCE) was found in cemetery 200 where a number of tombs were cut deep into the ground and lined with stone. They were usually covered with large stone slabs on which vessels had been placed after the tomb was sealed. Most of the tombs contained large quantities of jewelry such as armlets, necklaces and rings. Tomb 201 (3.8m x 1.2m x 1.7m) contained the remains of at least 116 adults. Burials were also found in pottery vessels. The jars, were similar to Phoenician vessels, and closed at the top with stones or inverted bowls, inside were charred bones and small offering bowls (Yisraeli 1993:444).

Five farm settlements dating to the Iron Age IIA were found in the vicinity of Tell el-Far'ah South by R. Gophan during a survey and sounding expedition he did from 1960-63. The settlements range in size from 0.5 to 2.5 acres. The archaeological finds confirmed the occupational time-period. They included pottery, huts, grain pits, millstones and an oven (Yisraeli 1993:444).

5.5 COUNTRIES NEIGHBORING ISRAEL, ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS

5.5.1 ASSYRIA

Details about Assyria and the excavations are covered in Chapter 4.4.2 titled Assyrian Architecture in this dissertation. The following is a brief overview of the primary sites.

NIMRUD (CALAH)

The city of ancient Kalhu, is known as modern Nimrud. In the Bible it is referred to as Calah. It is situated south of Nineveh and Mosul on the eastern side of the Tigris River. After over 150 years of excavation and study, this site is one of the best-known Assyrian sites in northern Iraq. Its walls enclose an area of some 360 hectares (890 acres). Several prominent findings all dating to the period of the Assyrian Empire include: the citadel; remains of four major palaces; three smaller palatial buildings; five temples; three gates; six townhouses and a ziggurat or temple tower of Ninurta (the patron god of the city). These main royal buildings and palaces cover a space of about 20 hectares (50 acre).

NINEVEH

Nineveh, the capital of ancient Assyria, lies on the southern bank of the Tigris River opposite present-day Mosul, Iraq. The remains of the palaces found at Nineveh include: Sargon II (721-705 BCE); Sennacherib (705-681 BCE) and Esarhaddon (681-668 BCE) which lies under the hill called "Nabi Yunis," and Ashur-bani-pal (681-626 BCE) under the mound which is known locally as "Tell al-'Armushiyah," i.e., "The Hill of 'Armush," and "Kuyunjik."

More detailed information on Nineveh can be found in this dissertation in Chapter 4, in Section, 4.4.2.4.

OTHER SOURCES IN THIS DISSERTATION RELATED TO THE MATERIAL FINDS OF ASSYRIA AND ITS RULERS:

More detailed information about the Assyrian kings and material uncovered from their palaces can be found in:

Chapter 4.5 Literacy and Inscriptions, under Assyrian Inscriptions 4.5.2.

Details about Sennacherib's attack on Lachish and his campaign against King Hezekiah in Jerusalem, in addition to campaigns by other Assyrian kings are found in Chapter 4.3 Town Planning and Chapter 4.8. titled Weapons and Warfare.

More information about Assyria can be found in Chapter 4.11 titled Food under the Section 4.11.7 titled "Ashurnasirpal II's Banquet Inscription." Another source of information is in Chapter 4.6 titled Temples, Gods, and Cult Objects under Section 4.6.2.6. titled Assyrian Gods. Some biblical references are given as they apply to these specific categories. Also see the Illustrations under these categories.

5.5.2 TRANSJORDAN

Gilead and Northern Moab were under Israel's direct control during the monarchy of David and Solomon. Ammon, Moab (the region south of the Arnon River) and Edom were vassal states of Israel. These three regions regained their independence with the division of the kingdom. Mesha, king of Moab, freed northern Moab from Israelite control until the death of Ahab. Gilead (the plateau north of the Jabbok River), remained Israelite until the Assyrian invasion in the eighth century BCE.

After his conquest in 732 BCE, Tiglath-Pileser III annexed northern Transjordan to the Assyrian empire and Ammon, Moab, and Edom again became vassal states. After the Assyrians the areas were controlled by the Babylonians.

The kingdoms experienced prosperity and economic growth under these empires because they protected the main road through Transjordan to Arabia, and their master's economic and political interest in Arabia and the Red Sea.

Archaeology of this region has been somewhat limited and the following is a brief summary of some of the primary finds at the sites during the Iron Age.

RABBATH-AMMON

The ancient city is identified with the modern city of Amman in Jordan. It is mentioned in several places in the Bible including: Deut. 3:11 when Og king of Bashan fought the Ammonites; 2 Sam. 12:26-31 referring to when David took the city and Ezek. 25:4-5 speaking of its destruction. Excavations took place during the 1920's and 1930's by the Italian Mission. After World War II, more work was done. Among the groups were the Jordan Department of Antiquities and the British School of Archaeology. The excavation revealed that there was a continuous occupation of the city from the Chalcolithic to the Arab period. Included were early tombs dating to the Bronze Ages, a Late Bronze Age temple, a citadel and palace dating to the Iron Age.

In the 1960's, a gray-black basalt stele containing an inscription in the Ammonite script was found. It dated to the late 9th century BCE. The text contains a number of references to parts of buildings and the translation appeared to indicate it contained a curse. For details on this Ammon Citadel Stele inscription refer to Chapter 4, Section 4.5.6.1 in this dissertation. Other material finds

of this period included pottery, figurines, weapons, and jewelry (Burdajewicz 1993:1243-1247).

RAMOTH-GILEAD (TELL ER-RUMEITH)

Tell Er-Rumeith is located in northern Transjordan, near the town of Ramtha. Biblical references include Jos. 20:8 where Ramoth - Gilead was assigned to the tribe of Gad. Joram, Ahab's son, was wounded here and Jehu was anointed to be the next king of Israel (2 Kings 8:28-9:10). In 1967, an effort was made to investigate four Iron Age strata (VIII-V). This involved: clearing a quarter or more of the fortress, recovering coherent plans of the strata and collecting ceramic groups to add precision to the pottery typology of the period. In Stratum VIII, a fort was uncovered that measured roughly 37 m by 32 m. One room was found and from the debris it was evident that destruction was due to fire. The material finds included: stone grinding implements; beehive ovens; bins; and a small amount of pottery which dated the room to the tenth century BCE.

Stratum VII revealed reconstruction of the fort, casemate walls and gateways. Pottery remains in rooms and the gateways dated it to the ninth century BCE. Stratum VI and V were dated to about 800 BCE as reflected in the ceramic remains (Lapp, Nancy 1993:1291-1293).

TELL ES-SA'IDIYEH

This ancient site is located 1.8 km (1.1 miles) east of the Jordan River, about halfway between the Dead Sea and Tiberias. Excavations extended intermittently from 1964 - 1991. The University of Pennsylvania did the first work

under F. B. Pritchard and the most recent work was done by the British Museum under J. Tubb. Occupation levels included Early and Late Bronze, Iron Age, Persian, Hellenistic and Roman. The material finds from Stratum VII (northwest side of the mound) revealed a number of dwellings. One dwelling was a 3-room house that contained an altar, shallow basin, and a tripod incense burner that dates to 825-790 BCE. Stratum VI dated to 790-750 BCE and it consisted of houses and streets. Other finds included grain storage bins, ceramics and part of a wall. Stratum V, dated to about 730-600 BCE and contained twelve houses, some with large rooms. This Stratum showed the destruction of the settlement due to fire.

See the following Sections in this dissertation for Illustrations about Tell Sa'idiyeh: 4.1-8 Black Juglet and 4.4-3 Pillared Houses.

TELL DEIR' ALLA

Tell Deir' Alla is located in the eastern Jordan Valley. It is 5 km (3 miles) from the Jordan River. The region of Tell Deir' Alla is mentioned in Shishak I's victory stele at Karnak. There was some difficulty in identifying the Tell with a specific biblical location. There were several proposals. A. Lemaire believes it is Penuel because a large sanctuary from Late Bronze was located there. S. Merrill suggested Succoth, based on the Jerusalem Talmud which identifies Succoth with Tar'ala or Dar'ala.

Excavations were conducted irregularly between 1960-1987. The primary expeditions were done by the University of Leiden, Netherlands and the Department of Antiquities of

Jordan. Occupation levels were found from Middle and Late Bronze and Iron Age I and II.

Iron Age II (800-760 BCE) was found in the northeastern quarter of the site (Area B), near the summit. Dwellings were small rooms, many were roofed and some were unroofed. Several of the rooms had clay bins and some contained grain. There were groups of 15 to 30 loom weights in some of the rooms.

Most of the rooms had a large amount and variety of pottery which identified the period. Many of the jars, bowls, and kraters had carbonized remains of their original contents: barley, wheat, lentils, grapes, olives, black cumin, sesame and garden cress. Animal dung was found. There were five antlers from Mesopotamian fallow deer. Inscriptions were found on fragments of plaster that came off the walls. One is on display in the Amman Museum in Jordan. The translated text (it was written in a local Aramaic dialect) mentions the "seer of the gods, Balaam, son of Beor". Balaam is mentioned in Numbers 22 to 24 (Van Der Kooij 1993:341). Inscriptions were found in other rooms including an inscribed goblet and jar. Other material finds included: Phoenician red-polished jugs with herbs; decorated bone inlay; an incised bone kohl tube and a high-footed basalt bowl (Van Der Kooij 1993:340-342).

PETRA

Petra was the capital of the Nabatean kingdom in Edom, it is situated about 80 km (47.5) miles south of the Dead Sea. Excavations were undertaken at various times between 1929-82 and have continued periodically since. Primary finds have been from the Hellenistic and Roman period.

Early evidence has been uncovered of the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods. Various surveys have yielded a small amount of Edomite pottery from the Iron Age. This is also true of Umm el-Biyars (located behind Petra) (Avraham 1993: 1183-84).

TAWILAN

Tawilan is a village located in the hills to the north of Petra. C. M. Bennett excavated the site in 1968, 1970 and 1982. The results show a series of Late Iron Age (eighth-seventh century BCE) house walls and domestic pits. Material finds included: Late Iron Age Edomite pottery; a seal depicting an altar and a star and crescent (emblems of the moon god Sin and the goddess Ishtar) and a cuneiform tablet which was a legal document. Jewelry was also found that dated to the ninth century BCE (Bienkowski 1993: 1446-1447).

DIBON

The site of biblical Dibon is close to the modern village of Dhiban, 64 kilometers (39.5) miles south of Amman on the road of Kerak and 4 kilometers (2.5) miles north of the Arnon River. It was the capital of the Moabite kingdom in the Iron Age and an important center in the Nabatean and later periods.

The Bible has references to Dibon. Numbers 21:30 states Dibon was one of the cities seized from Moab by Sihon, king of the Amorites. The tribe of Gad (Numbers

32:34) was assigned to Dibon and in Numbers 33:45 it was called Dibon-Gad. Isaiah 15:2 and Jeremiah 48:18 indicate that it was the chief Moabite city in the time when Moab had achieved some limited independence from Assyria and Babylonia.

Excavations were carried out in Dibon by the American School of Oriental Research, from 1950-1955. At the southeast corner of the mound a few sherds of the Early Bronze Age III were found and definite Early Bronze occupation was uncovered to the north of the mound.

After an apparent gap in occupation, there is evidence for an early Moabite occupation (Iron Age I) on the summit of the mound. A major structure found there seems to have been a sanctuary and with it was associated a terra-cotta incense stand of the Iron Age I. There were several other large buildings in the northeast that represent public buildings of this same period. In the southeast corner the finds were almost all Iron Age II, from about the middle of the ninth century BCE down to the destruction of the city by Nebuchadnezzar in 582 BCE. The architectural and stratigraphic finds showed that there had been a royal quarter in the area that relate to the time period of King Mesha. The citadel consisted of a wall going around the east, southeast, and southern parts of the hillock, connecting up with the earlier defenses to the north and west. Within this loop are the remains of a building, but it was difficult to find much of it because a Nabatean temple was build over it eight centuries later.

Moabite Stone

This is a basalt stone, bearing an inscription by King Mesha, which was discovered at ancient Dhiban, by Father Klein, a German missionary at Jerusalem, in 1868.

For more details about this important discovery see in this dissertation, Chapter 4, Section 4.5.3.1 under Moabite Inscriptions (Tushingham 1993:350 - 352).

MEDEBA (MADABA)

Medeba is located 30 km (19 miles) south of Rabbath-Ammon (modern Amman). It is listed among the cities conquered and occupied by the Israelites (Num. 21:30; Jos.13:9, 16). In the days of David, the Israelite commander Joab defeated the Aramaeans in a bitter battle fought in the vicinity of Medeba (2 Samuel 10 and 1 Chronicles 19). According to the Mesha Stela (lines 7-9), the town was liberated by the Moabite king in what is calculated to be the second half of the ninth century BCE (Piccirillo 1993:992).

Excavation started at Medeba in 1868 with the discovery of the Mesha Stele. Seven expeditions then took between 1872 and 1896. In 1896 an important discovery was made in a third century C E church, known as the Church of the Virgin Mary. This discovery was a map which was part of a mosaic floor. It is the earliest map ever found showing ancient Israel. For this reason it is being mentioned in this dissertation. Aside from the geographic details, the map displays: ships on the Dead Sea; fish in the Jordan and the Nile and a lion pursuing a gazelle in the plains of Moab. The plant world shown includes palm trees in the vicinity of Jericho, Bethagla, Callirhoe, and Zoar. Other scattered plant species are also shown. The

large cities (Jerusalem, Neapolis [Shechem], Lod-Diospolis, Yavneh, Charachmoba, Ashdod-Yam, Ascalon, Eleutheropois [Beth-Govrin], Gaza and Pelusium) are presented. Main roads and routes were shown. An examination of the names reveals that the Medeba Map was based on a Roman route map (Avi-Yonah 1977:830 -832).

Further excavations continued in Medeba in 1966, 67 and 1979. One of the primary groups was the Studium Biblicum Franciscanum in Jerusalem under the direction of M. Piccirillo. The author of this dissertation had the privilege of meeting with Dr. Piccirillo in 1990 and discussing his work.

There were two tombs discovered in the necropolis area west of the tell which provided the only archaeological evidence that Medeba was inhabited in the thirteenth century BCE, in the last phase of the Late Bronze Age. A second tomb from Iron Age I-II was found on the slopes of the hill in front of the tell on the south. The tombs produced pottery (included was Mycenaean ware), bronze and iron utensils, beads and scarabs which allowed the archaeologist to date the remains (Piccirillo 1993: 992, 998 and 999).

5.5.3 PHOENICIA

The term "Phoenician culture" is referring to the culture that developed during the Iron Age in Phoenicia itself (extending from the Carmel ridge in the south to the Syrian coast in the north) as well as the colonies established by the Phoenicians along the Mediterranean from

Cyprus to Spain. The primary sites of Phoenicia proper include the cities of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Sarepta (Zarephath) and Arwad. Phoenician sites have been excavated between Mount Carmel and Rosh Haniqra (Israel's northwestern border). These include Achzib, Tell Keisan, Acre and Tell Abu Hawam. Additional sites along the Carmel coastal plain are Shiqmona, Tel Mevorakh, and Dor (which has been discussed previously under sites in Israel).

The following is information regarding some of the locations and excavation history of these sites:

ZAREPHATH (SAREPTA)

Zarephath is located 1.8 km (8 miles) from Sidon. The earliest reference to Zarephath is in the Egyptian satirical Letter of Hori (Pritchard 1993:477). The town was referred to in 1 Kings 17:8-24 as the place where Elijah aided a widow by providing food in the time of famine and by raising her child back to life.

In 1969, a five-year program for excavating Zarephath was sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania under J. B. Pritchard. Remains found included Byzantine, Roman, Hellenistic, Iron Age and Late Bronze. From the Iron Age (ninth-sixth centuries BCE) came important objects related to Phoenician culture, pottery, architecture, tombs and religious materials. This excavation has given one of the most extensive and best stratified documentation from Phoenicia (Blaklock 1983:483).

TYRE

Tyre is located 40 km (25 miles) south of Sidon. The harbor constructed on the south side of the island dates to the tenth century BCE. Its huge foundations are

submerged by 15 m. (50 ft.) of water. A large amount of materials from the Greek and Roman period have been partially uncovered. A considerable amount of the ancient city is still unexcavated beneath the modern town of Tyre (Blaklock 1983:459). In the 10th century BCE, Hiram, King of Tyre, joined two islets together by putting a land fill between them. In 815 BCE, traders from Tyre founded Carthage in North Africa. Eventually the Phoenicians continued to establish colonies in other areas of the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

SIDON

Sidon is located 40 km (25 miles) north of Tyre and 24 miles SSW of the modern city of Beirut on the Lebanese coast. It was first mentioned in the Amarna letters (thirteenth century BCE) while Tyre maintained her loyalty to Egypt, Sidon pursued an independent policy and became allies with the Amorites. Assyrian texts showed that Sidon paid tribute to Ashurnasirpal II (876 BCE), Shalmaneser III, Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V. After the time of the Assyrians, Sidon was conquered by the Persians (351 BCE). They were unable to resist the superior forces of Artaxerxes III. The desperate Sidonians locked their gates and set fire to their city rather than to submit to the invader. It has been estimated that almost 40,000 people died in that fire. After that, Sidon was conquered in sequence by the Greeks, Romans and Arabs.

Early excavations of Sidon were led by Ernest Renan in the late 19th century in which the large necropolis of Magharat Abloun outside the city was uncovered. In 1937 Middle Bronze Age tombs were opened in mountain villages overlooking Sidon and a number of archaeological surveys

were conducted in and around the city. A number of other burials have since been uncovered that dated to the 10th and 11th century BCE (Blaklock 1983:414).

BYBLOS (GEBAL)

Byblos is located 17 miles NNE of Beirut, Lebanon. It was identified by E. Renan in 1860. Excavation work started in 1921 with Maurice Dunand and more seasons following resulting in Byblos being an extensively excavated site.

Occupation levels have produced material finds from Neolithic to the Crusader periods. One of the important discoveries related to the Iron Age was an inscription from King Ahiiram sarcophagus showing the Canaanite-Phoenician script (Blaklock 1983:208). See Section 4.5.5.4 under Literacy and Inscription in this dissertation.

ACHZIB

The ancient site is located 14 km (9 miles) north of Acco on the Mediterranean coast of present day Israel. Achzib was mentioned from Assyrian sources related to Sennacherib who listed it along with Sidon and Acco in the cities he conquered in his third campaign to Phoenicia and Israel/Judah in 701 BCE.

The tombs were excavated at various times from 1941-1990. The occupational levels included time periods from Late Chalcolithic, through Iron Age (I, II, III) and on to Crusader times. Material finds showed evidence of Phoenician (including the Achzib) wares and culture (Prausnitz 1993:32, 34 and 35).

ACCO (AKKO): TELL EL-FUKHAR (ANCIENT ACCO)

Acco is located 8 miles north of Haifa. It was mentioned in the Execration Texts of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, Egyptian documents from the Late Bronze age (Thutmose III's roster) and the Amarna letters (listed thirteen times in these). During the Iron Age II, it was a very important city and mentioned in several Assyrian documents. Twelve seasons of excavations were conducted by Haifa University between 1973 and 1989. The material remains showed occupational levels from the Bronze Age, Iron Age I, II, III and from the Persian period to Crusader times. Material finds from Late Bronze Age IIB, Iron Age II A and B, plus Iron Age III showed evidence of Phoenician and Achzib wares. Industrial installations showed evidence of pottery kilns and purple-dye industry (characteristic of Phoenician culture) (Goldmann 1993: 16-23, 27).

TELL KEISAN

Tell Keisan is located in the central northern basin of the Acco coastal dome 8 km. (5 miles) from the Mediterranean Sea. In the Papyrus Anastasi, the city is named Achshaph and identified as it stated that it was located "south of Acco." It is mentioned in Jos. 11:1; 12:20 and 19:25. Excavations have been carried out from 1971-1980 and the finds yielded materials from the Bronze Age, Iron Age I, II, III, and Persian to Roman times. The material cultures from the Iron Ages showed typical Phoenician ware and among other significant finds were containers used for the manufacturing of the purple dye (Iron I-II) (Humbert 1993:863-867).

ABU HAWAM

Tel Abu Hawam is an ancient harbor city located within the limits of modern Haifa, on Israel's Mediterranean coast. The site is composed of one settlement, two necropolises and three anchorage facilities. Excavations started in 1929 and continued at various times until 1986. These were conducted primarily through Israel's Department of Antiquities and Haifa University. The material finds were represented in Middle Bronze II, Late Bronze I, II, Iron I, IIA-B, II-C, as well as Assyrian, Babylonian and Persian periods.

Phoenician material culture was especially evident at Iron Age II B, Stratum III, which revealed: Phoenician bichrome pottery; three-room houses; hand-burnished thick red-slip; a bastion outer wall and ramp and sandstone ashlar such as were found at Tyre. The Phoenician culture was also evident in Stratum IV, V, and a considerable amount of Cypriot IIB-C and Mycenaean imports were uncovered (Artiz 1993:9-13).

MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE PHOENICIA DURING THE IRON AGE

Phoenicia was famous for their trade especially the making of the purple dye from murex shells, known as Tyrian Purple. The installations needed to make the dye were found throughout the ancient Phoenician cities as listed above from various time periods, usually the Iron Age. Glass production was also important and was especially known in the city of Sidon. Phoenician Pottery of the Iron Age was known by three main types that were clearly identified at Sarepta, Tyre, Tell Keisan and the Phoenician cemeteries at Achzib, plus other sites outside of Phoenicia. Such Phoenician pottery was identified as Bichrome Ware, Black

on Red (also called Cypro-Phoenician) and the Phoenician Red Slip Ware from Achzib. These are covered in more detail in this dissertation in Sections 4.2.12 and 4.2.13. For more information on other subjects related to Phoenician's Material Culture, please refer to the following chapters:

4.5 Literacy and Inscriptions; 4.6 Temples, Gods, and Cult Objects and 4.14 Burials. Also see the following illustrations: 4.1-9 Phoenician Red-slip juglet; 4.12-2a Woman and flute from Achziv and 4.12-2b Woman playing a tambourine from Sarepta; 4.13-5 Ivory Fragment of Phoenician Woman and 4.13-7a Woman Figurine both from Sarepta.

OVERVIEW OF PHOENICIA AND THE IRON AGE PERIOD

The background for some of the information on this topic was presented in a dissertation written by Aaron Brody titled, "The Material Cultural Study of Canaanite and Phoenician Civilization." Aaron Brody was a student at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. This writer found the dissertation to be helpful.

Excavations at Tyre and Sarepta on the Lebanese coast showed a continuous settlement during all phases of the Iron Age (Avigad 1992:132-41). The sites produced dwellings with plastered surfaced and stone-lined pits of the early to late Iron Age including: Tyre, stratum XIV and Sarepta Area II, Y, stratum GI-F.

Sites of southern Phoenicia show parallels with the settlements found at Tyre and Sidon during the early Iron Age at Keisan and Abu Hawan. This is known by the ceramic and metal types found at these sites (Negbi 1974:159-72).

In subsequent strata of the Iron I beyond this transition phase, Keisan, Abu Hawam, and Dor have well planned buildings of the 3 or 4 room house types, showing a shift away from the typical Bronze Age courtyard house, but resembling the contemporary architecture at urban Megiddo and village sites in the central hill country, Transjordan, and Syria (Mazar 1990:39-57).

TRADE FROM OTHER PLACES WITH PHOENICIA

Mycenaean IIIC material (Iron Age I from Cyprus) was found in the Levantine coastal sites of Sukas, Byblos, Sarepta, Tyre, and Akko. Northern inland valley sites like Megiddo, Rehov, and Tel Dan also reflect imports from Cyprus, rather than Mycenaean IIIC pottery traded from Philistia (Dothan 1982:70-86) (Mazar 1992:265).

In the Iron IB, Phoenician monochrome and bichrome pottery were found outside of Phoenicia proper at sites like Hazor, Megiddo, Dor, and as far south as Tel Masos. This pottery was also found in Cypriot tombs on the Island of Cyprus (Gilboa 1998:420-423). The continuance of regional sea trade in the 11th century is marked by the reciprocal presence of Cypriot White-Painted I wares in Lebanon and Israel (Gilboa 1989:204-218). This maritime trade of Levantine goods to Cyprus and Cypriot goods to the Levant marks the first steps in the process of exchange and expansion of Phoenicians into the Mediterranean world.

In the Iron Age II, settlements were clustered along the coast and coastal plains. Small exposures at Tyre and Sarepta showed changes in architectural traditions of the Iron I to more monumental buildings constructed of quarried

ashlar stones laid in a header-stretcher fashion (Avigad 1978:12).

This Iron II architectural style was clearly seen in exposed monumental buildings at sites in which Israelite royal cities and commercial center were developed (Holladay 1995:379-81). Pottery and ivories supported the material traditions of this time as they related to the economic and artistic cultural exchange between Phoenicia and the Israelites. Phoenician defensive architecture is represented in the fortress site Khirbet Rosh Zayit, in the foothills overlooking the Akko Plain. Religious architecture is seen in the simple temple building at Sarepta whose initial phase dates to the 8th century BCE (Pritchard 1975:13-40) (Holladay 1997b:109). Phoenician harbor construction is seen in Iron II moles (jetty or rocks that divert the water) and quays at sites such as Tabat el-Hammam, Tyre, Atlit, Jaffa, Jazirat Faraun and at Phoenician settlements throughout the Mediterranean (Friedman 1993).

Careful stratigraphic excavations at Tyre and Sarepta have produced important ceramic data as mentioned before. The ceramic developments were the red slipped and burnished decorative tradition culminating in the highly polished types often called Achziv ware and Samaria ware (which is considered an incorrect term by certain archaeologists) Earlier Iron I bichrome wares continued into the Iron II, marked by a general transition from early use of decorative vertical concentric circles to the later application of horizontal, parallel decorative stripes (Avigad 1978:48). Craft specialization and true artistry is represented by finds of Iron II Phoenician: metalwork; ivory and bone

carvings; jewelry; glass; statuary; terra-cotta masks and figurines (Mazar 1990: 514). These items were exported from Phoenicia to other countries and were discovered in: Philistia, Judah, Israel, North Syria, Cilicia, Assyria, Greece, Etruria, and Spain. Iron Age II chipped stone sickle blades, which are direct descendants of the large geometric type introduced back in the Middle Bronze IIA, are eventually replaced by iron sickles around 800 BCE (Rosen 1997a:140-43). Grindstone mortars are replaced by ceramic grinding bowls or mortaria. Thus both chipped and ground stone industries and craft specialization are largely lost by the end of the Iron Age II.

Burials are represented by a variety of types in examples from both Achzib and Khalde. The morphometry of the Phoenician skeletal remains from Achzib shows a heterogeneous population which resembles preceding peoples from the Middle and Late Bronze Ages. An Iron II tophet (childs' graveyard) was found on the Lebanese coast. This discovery was made on the island of Tyre. This discovery gave evidence that child sacrifice was practice in Phoenicia. The sacrifice of Phoenician children was also confirmed by a variety of textual sources and the finding of other tophets, throughout Phoenician territories in its western region (Seeden 1991:1-38).

Early Phoenician trade ventures beyond Cyprus are suggested by 10th century BCE imported luxury items found in the tombs at Lefkandi in Euboea, Greece. Discoveries of contemporary Proto-Geometric pottery at Tyre and elsewhere along the Levantine coast confirm reciprocal contact with 10th century BCE Greece. The later Iron II period is marked by a significant spread of Phoenician trade stations

and colonies throughout the Mediterranean to the Atlantic shores of Morocco and Spain. The 9th century BCE settlement is evident in the Phoenician temples and shrines at Kition on Cyprus.

A contemporary way station on the southern coast of Crete is marked by the extramural temple building of Phoenician construction at Kommos, which exhibits typical Phoenician offerings and cultic material. These sites may have been steps along the trade route to the desirable metals resources of Sardinia and eventually led to the founding of the colony at Carthage in North Africa. This occurred towards the end of the 9th century BCE and the beginning of the 8th century BCE. From there contact and settlement spread to the eastern coast of Sicily, to key sites in Sardinia, and beyond to Spain. Similarly a string of sites was started along the North African Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts in the 7th-6th centuries BCE (Aubet 1993:185-217).

These colony sites and trading stations, regardless of location, have certain similarities in: position of settlement; house plans; material cultural styles and burial types which form an assemblage that can be identified as typically Phoenician. This assemblage is demonstrably different from indigenous material cultural horizons. Recent petrographic work on Phoenician Red Slip Wares from sites throughout the Mediterranean demonstrates that the pottery was manufactured locally and not distributed overseas from a location of central manufacturing. Iron II trade contacts without settlements are clear from individual Phoenician finds in: Philistia; Judah; Israel; Neo-Hittite settlements in Cilicia; around

the Gulf of Alexandretta; Neo-Assyrian palace and fortress sites; Greek settlements and at Etruscan sites in Italy (Aubet 1993:66-74).

Hacksilber Research has conducted ore-provenience testing on silver found in Iron II hoards in the southern Levant. Some of these finds indicated that Spanish and Sardinian silver was traded to the Levant region in the late Iron Age, presumably by Phoenician merchants. Trade in large timber from Phoenician sources can be reconstructed from the spans in monumental buildings excavated at sites in Palestine which would have had to have been bridged with sizeable timbers (Brody 2004:11-12). This trade and other exchanges of artisans and collaborative commercial ventures between Phoenicia, Israel, and Judah are mentioned in the Hebrew Bible.

The recent exploration of two 8th century BCE shipwrecks, in deep water off the coasts of Ashkelon, Israel, represents the earliest Phoenician ships discovered. See Section 5.4, Philistia, in this dissertation. The preliminary determination of the origin and date of the two 8th century BCE wrecks is based upon typological analysis of the items found on the sea bed. These items included: storage jars; cooking pots; a mushroom lipped jug or decanter; a grinding bowl or mortarium and a ceramic incense burner. The storage jars parallel those found at Hazor and Tyre. They are typical of those at sites in northern Israel and the Phoenician coastal region. The mushroom lipped jug is a trademark of Phoenician craftsmanship. The presence of the incense burner is evidence of the cultic practices of Phoenician seafarers aboard ship. The cries of these mariners to their

patron gods did not help protect the crew who met their doom on the same sea which brought fame and wealth to their maritime civilization (Ballard, 2002). See Figure 4.9-4b in this dissertation under the section titled Weights and Measures in Material Culture.

Other references in this dissertation related to the Phoenician culture: See Section 4.5.5.4 and 4.5.6.1. in this dissertation.

5.5.4 NORTHERN SINAI OF EGYPT; SYRIA AND TURKEY

5.5.4.1 Northern Sinai

In the tenth century BCE, northern Sinai again became an important link between Egypt and Canaan. Egyptian, Assyrian, and biblical sources provide accounts of the military, administrative, and commercial activities along the roads in the Iron Age II-III. More than thirty Iron Age settlements between Wadi el-Arish and Wadi Ghazzh give evidence of the Assyrian hold on southwestern Philistia in the eighth to seventh centuries BCE. They were administrative and commercial centers for the international trade, including the Arabian spice trade (Oren 1993c:1386-87).

One such cluster of Iron Age settlements was investigated recently at Ruqeish near Khan Yunis, yielding new data about Assyria's deployment on the border of Egypt. Earlier excavations at this site uncovered a cemetery with Phoenician-type cremation burials. During the excavation by Ben-Gurion University more remains were found such as those which showed domestic, public, and industrial occupation. There was also a massive defense wall. Ruqeish was considered to be a major commercial center in

southwestern Philistia that was also prominent in maritime traffic along the coasts of Phoenicia, Israel, Philistia, and Sinai (Oren 1993d:1390).

Excavations at Tell Abu Salima (Oren 1993e:1392-94) (q.v. Sheikh Zuweid) reveal a large building in the Assyrian architectural style. This contributes to the theory that the Assyrian-administration in Egypt went as far as the Wadi el-Arish.

On the edge of the Delta plain, approximately one kilometer north of Tell el-Her, near the ancient frontier canal, the North Sinai Expedition investigated an extensive site (T-21), about 20 a. in size. At the center of the site is a massive, square mud-brick enclosure (200 by 200 m) with walls 15 to 20 m wide. Pottery analysis dated this site to the late seventh century BCE (Oren 1993f:1394).

5.5.4.2 Syria and Turkey

The countries of Syria and Turkey have had major work done in several excavations. The finds have opened an outstanding archaeological history of these areas especially during the Early, Middle, and Late Bronze periods. Added to this has been the Roman and Byzantine periods.

In regards to the time period of this dissertation, it is important to again acknowledge some very significant inscriptions found in Syria and Turkey that have been identified and discussed under Material Culture, Inscriptions, in this dissertation. Please note that these references are given below.

1. Incirli Stele

In 1993, a UCLA survey team found a stele near the village of Incirli, south of Karamanmarash, Turkey. See 4.5.5.2, Incirli Stele.

2. Melqart Stele of Bar-hadad (Ben-Hadad)

This monument was discovered in a village about 5 miles north of Aleppo in northern Syria in 1940. The text of the inscription was published in 1941 by Maurice Dunand. See 4.5.4.3, The Melqart Stele of Bar-hadad (Ben-Hadad).

3. Zakir Stele

The Zakir Stele is the inscription of Zakir, king of Hamath and Lu'ash. It was found in 1907, in Afis, located twenty-five miles southwest of Aleppo, by H. Pognon. See 4.5.4.4, Zakir Stele.

One fairly new excavated site in Syria is Tell Acharneh. This is a large, 70 hectare site located in the fertile Orontes Valley of western Syria. The excavation was started in 1998 by Professor Michel Fortin of Laval University in Quebec. The site possesses a "double" acropolis, separated by a wide opening, and an extensive "lower town" surrounded by a thick earthen rampart. The preliminary season at the site (November 1998) revealed that the site was occupied during the Early and Middle Bronze Age and the Iron Age II (900-700 BCE). Scholars have identified it with ancient Tunip, a city known from ancient inscriptions from Mari, Thutmosis III, and the Amarna Letters. A stone stele with an Akkadian inscription was found. The inscription was dated to ninth century BCE and described the Assyrian King Sargon II's defeat of the Aramean king of Hamath and his piling of enemy corpses in the Orontes River. Already petrographic analyses of pot sherds from the Early, Middle Bronze and Iron Age have resulted in distinguishing which petrofabrics constituted

the wares manufactured locally at Acharneh. More work is scheduled to take place at this site.

Petrographic analysis is a valuable adjunct in the study of ancient pottery. This analysis involves the microscopic identification and characterization of mineral particles found within clay bodies of ceramic artifacts. It is a valuable tool for understanding several important aspects of ancient culture and technology. Petrographic research, for example, can assist in locating the source of the raw materials used to manufacture a ceramic artifact. Each object possesses a distinct petrographic "fingerprint" that may or may not be consistent with the particular geological setting in which it was found. Such information can be enormously useful at a given archaeological site for discriminating between ceramic objects locally manufactured and those imported from elsewhere. In turn, these data may lead to valuable insights about the nature and extent to which various settlements engaged in communication and cultural exchanges. They help also in reconstructing the nature and degree of socio-economic complexity that existed at a given settlement or region (Cooper 1999:1-5).

5.5.6 Concluding Comments on the Sites

The first survey of the sites in this dissertation concentrated on the Northern Kingdom area. However, the Southern Kingdom sites and some sites in the surrounding lands, even as far east as Persia were needed to understand more about the life, politics and religion in the Northern Kingdom during the Iron II period.

To properly assess the value of the sites in regards to the historical biblical context, it was important to

carefully research, interpret and report the findings as were presented by the archaeologists in their identification of the sites. This information has been presented in considerable detail in this dissertation. Some of the factors were more specific than others, but almost every excavation has provided some data that contributed to illuminating the history of this period.

Architecture at the sites played an important role in understanding history. At several sites, royal buildings, houses, storage units, temples and stables were uncovered. The excavations of the Assyrian kings' palaces at Nimrud, Nineveh and Khorsabad have provided, not only vivid awareness of their impressive architecture, but also records left on their walls. These revealed historic events that affected Israel and Judah.

The pottery from the sites contributed information: regarding the dating of the periods of occupation; the status of the people (rich or poor); methods the people used in religious rituals; trade with other lands and the destruction of cities from attackers like the Assyrians.

The finding of city walls, water-systems, gates and fortifications at many sites offered considerable understanding of the history of the Iron Age II events as given in the Hebrew Text.

The discoveries of ancient inscriptions at numerous sites discussed in this dissertation have contributed valuable information that has provided considerable knowledge of this historic period. These inscriptions were recorded in Aramaic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Akkadian/Assyrian, Moabite, Ammonite and Ancient Egyptian.

The findings of pagan temples, shrines, altars, figurines, gods and cult objects attest to the history of the Northern Kingdom and Neighboring Lands. The Biblical references that have been presented provide some of the significant information about the religious practices of the Israelites and neighboring groups that influenced their lives.

The name "Iron Age" is used because of the increase of iron objects that were found from the excavated sites starting with the tenth century BCE. However, bronze implements continued to be used throughout the Iron Age.

In order for attackers to capture the cities of Israel and Judah they had to overcome some major obstacles that were developed because many of the cities were walled and fortified. Excavations of the city sites gave clear evidence of this by the unveiling of city walls, glacis, moats and gate complexes. The Assyrians perfected strategies to offset each of these challenges as was recorded on their palace wall reliefs.

Excavators recovered a large number of artifacts at various sites that gave information on the use of weights and measurements in the Iron II period. In addition to items such as a bath and shekel, there were inscribed artifacts, such as ostraca that provided important information on trade and commerce that dated to the eighth century BCE. These inscribed ostraca were written in Hebrew, Aramaic and other languages.

A number of significant installations used in food preparation were found at numerous sites. Among the most

significant ones were: winepresses, olive crushing mills for oil and mill stones for grinding grains.

Musical instruments or figurines of people playing instruments were discovered at various locations. These provided insight about their appearance and use in the Hebrew Scripture.

Thanks is given to the scholars, dirt archaeologists and volunteers of the sites that have made the information available to enhance the knowledge of the history of the Iron Age II in elucidating the time of Omri to the Exile.