

Archaeology and the Old Testament

Chapter 14: The Conquest, Part 1

Dr. Gregg Wilkerson



THE CONQUEST

- Few topics generate as much debate as the nature, date and historicity of the Biblical Exodus and the Conquest of Canaan.
- Liberal scholars claim that the Exodus/Conquest is a *fabrication*.
- Conservatives believe it is *historical fact*.



THE DATE OF THE CONQUEST

- **Post-Hyksos Invasion of Egypt**
- *All dates* for the Conquest agree that it post-dated the expulsion of the Hyksos by Ahmose (Amosis) in the mid-16th century BC.
- This event ended the 14th Dynasty and marked the beginning of the 15th Dynasty in Egypt.
- At this time, the name of the capital city for Northern Egypt, Aravis (formerly Rowaty, Tell el-Dabca), was renamed Peru-nefer, meaning “happy journey”

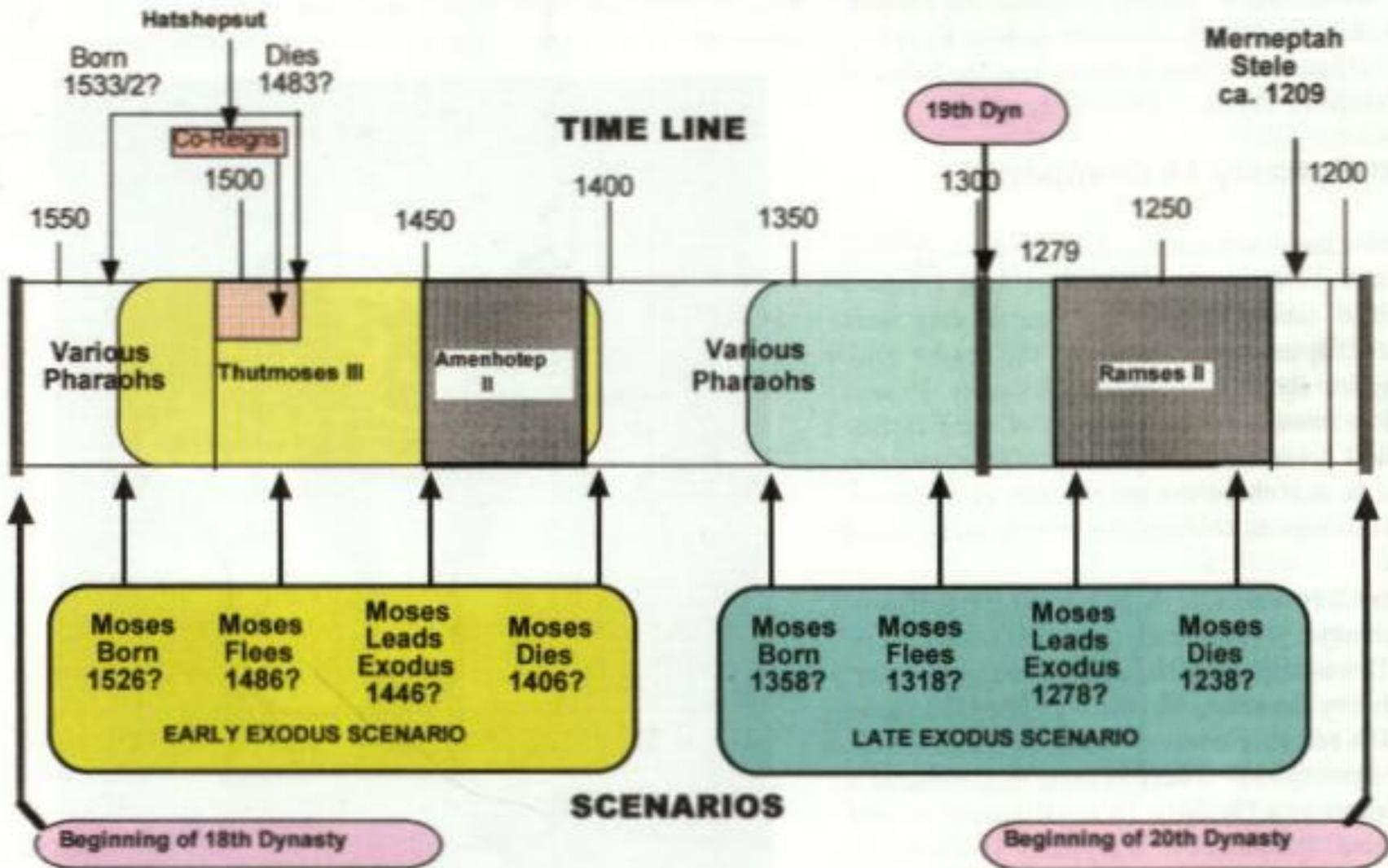


Two Competing Theories

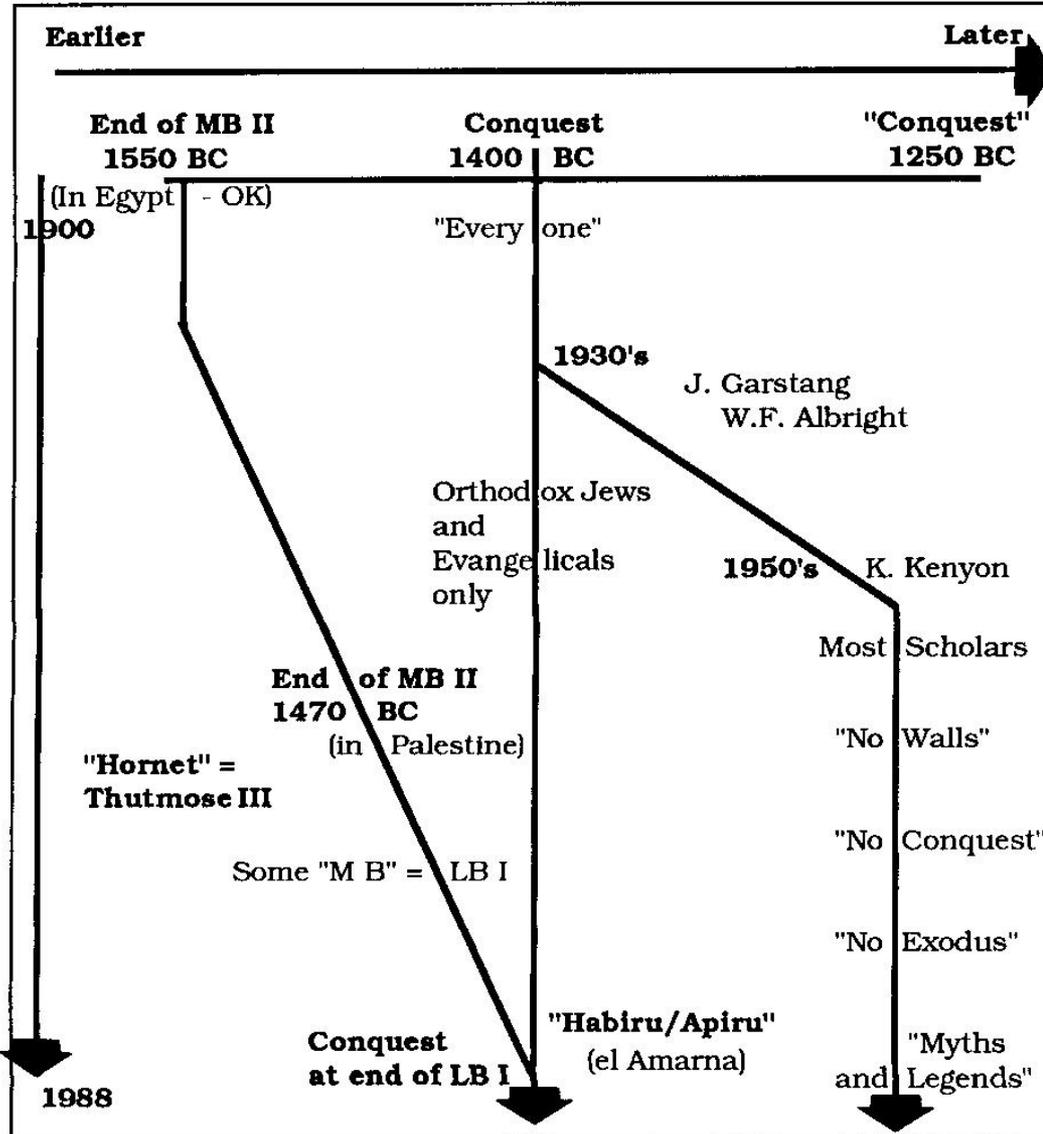
- Early Dates (1220-1280)
- Late Dates (1445-1470)



WHO WAS THE PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS?



EXODUS & CONQUEST



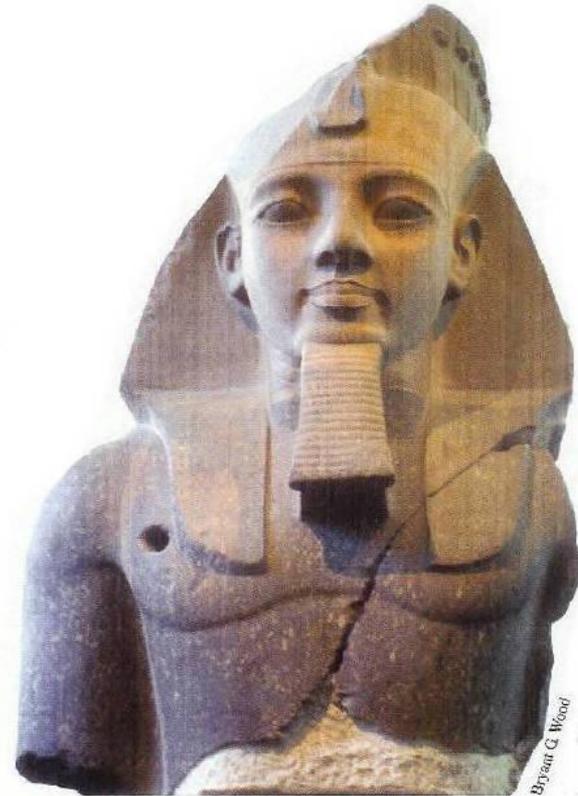
LATE DATE

- Generally preferred by liberal (“minimalist”) scholars
- Many liberal scholars deny that there ever was a Exodus/Conquest
- They place the conquest in the reign of Rameses II (1279-1212 BC) or Merneptah I (1212-1202 BC) during Egypt's 19th dynasty.
- At this period, the “Store Cities” of Pithom and Rameses are believed to be places where the Hebrew were slaves.



LATE DATE

- A key verse is Exodus 1:11.
- Israelites built the store cities of Pithom and Rameses.



Ramesses II, ruler of Egypt for 67 years, ca. 1279–1212 BC. Called "the Great" because of his military exploits and construction projects, his statues and buildings can still be seen in Egypt today. Even his mummy is on display at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. He also had a great family by his several wives—at least 45 sons and 40 daughters! The tomb of his sons has recently been found in the Valley of the Kings in Thebes. According to the popular, but anti-Biblical, theory of a 13th century Exodus, Ramesses II is thought to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Statue from Thebes, now in the British Museum.

Aling, 2004; B&S, 17:2:53

Rameses II

- Long-lived ruler Rameses II was a great builder.
- It is easy to make the connection that Rameses II build the store city named “Rameses” in Exodus 1:11



However...

- The city name Rameses is also described in the Patriarchal Narratives (Gen. 47:11) as Joseph's retirement home
- This happened 430 years before the Exodus (Gen. 15:13; Exodus 12:40).
- Rameses II could not possibly have lived during the time of Abraham.



LATE THEORY

- The verses referring to Rameses in the Patriarchal Narratives must reflect updating of an older city name during later editing.
- Updating of an older city name to a newer one also occurs in Gen, 14:14 where the later name Dan is used for the contemporary name of Laish (Judges 18:7-20).



ORIGINAL NAME FOR THE “STORE CITY” OF RAMESES?

- Rowaty (Tell el-Dabca) (Joseph, Gen. 47:11)
- Peru-nefer
- Aravis
- Tanis
- Zoan
- Rameses (Judge Ehud, Judges 3:12-31)



LATE DATE

- A foundational element of the Late Date theory, the store city of Rameses, is not a very stable one for identifying the Pharaoh of the Exodus



LATE DATE

- Rameses II mentions using slave labor of the '*Apiru* (a possible Egyptian word for "Hebrew").
- This reconstruction places the Conquest/Judges no later than 1207 BC



LATE DATE AND MERENPTAH STELE

- 1212 BC
- Military campaign of Merenptah in Palestine
- “Ashkelon has been carried off
- Gezer has been seized
- Yano'am has been made into nothing
- *Israel* is laid waste; his seed is not
- Plundered is the [land] of Canaan...
- Palestine (Hurru) has become a widow for Egypt”



Merenptah Stele

- The word "Israel" is marked with diminutive indicating it is a people not a place, an indication that they were nomads.
- Merenptah fought against the "Shasu", interpreted as a tribe of Israelites



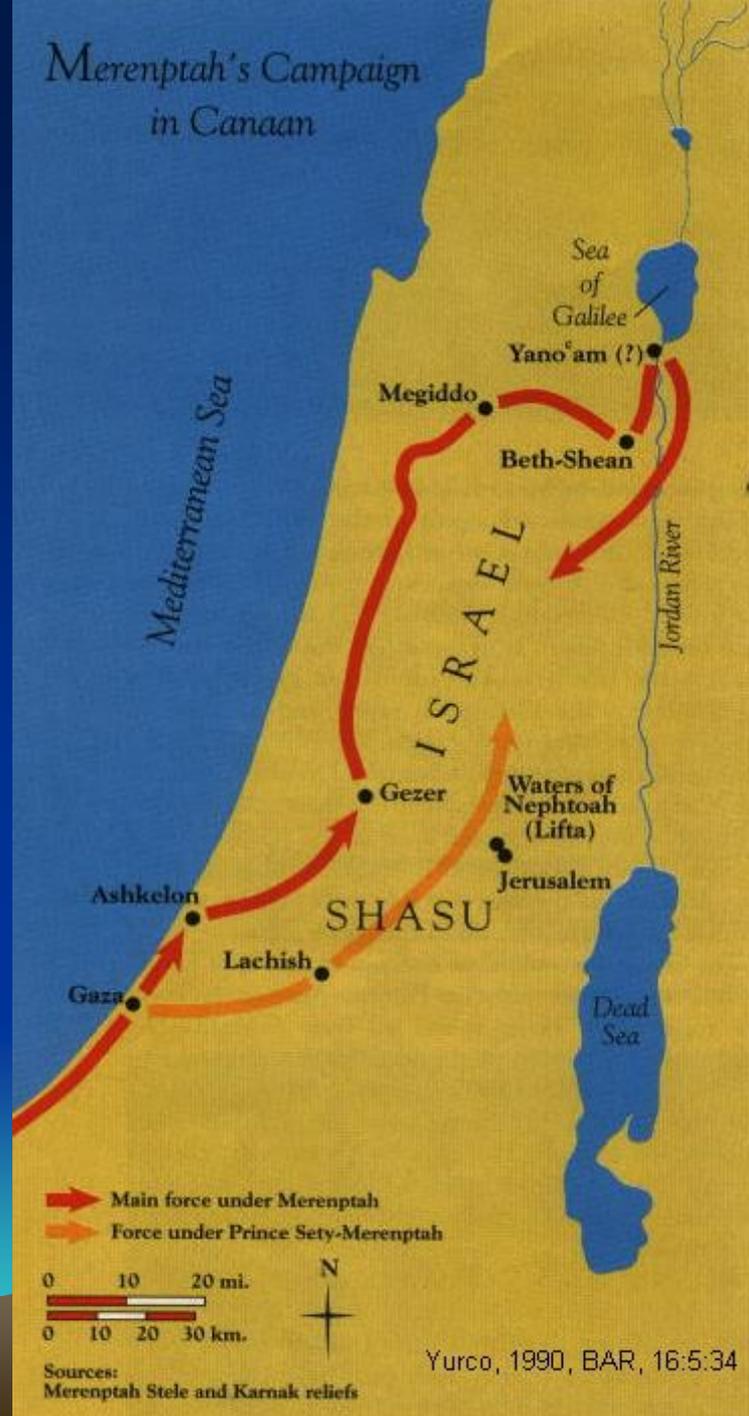


Halpern, 1995, BR, 11:1:29; Photo by Juergen Liepe

Merenptah
Stele, 1212
BC

“Israel is laid
waste, his
seed is not”

Merenptah's Campaign in Canaan



Yurco, 1990, BAR, 16:5:34

Sources:
Merenptah Stele and Karnak reliefs

LATE DATE

- Historicity of the Twelve Tribes is placed in doubt.
- There is a question as to whether Levi was a tribe at this time.
- The status and composition of the half-tribes of Manasseh and Ephriam are also questioned.
- Another reason for questioning the historicity of the literal Biblical account are the improbable parallelism of the twelve tribes of Ishmael (Gen. 25:13-16) Edom (Gen. 36:10-19) and Seir (Gen. 36:20-30).

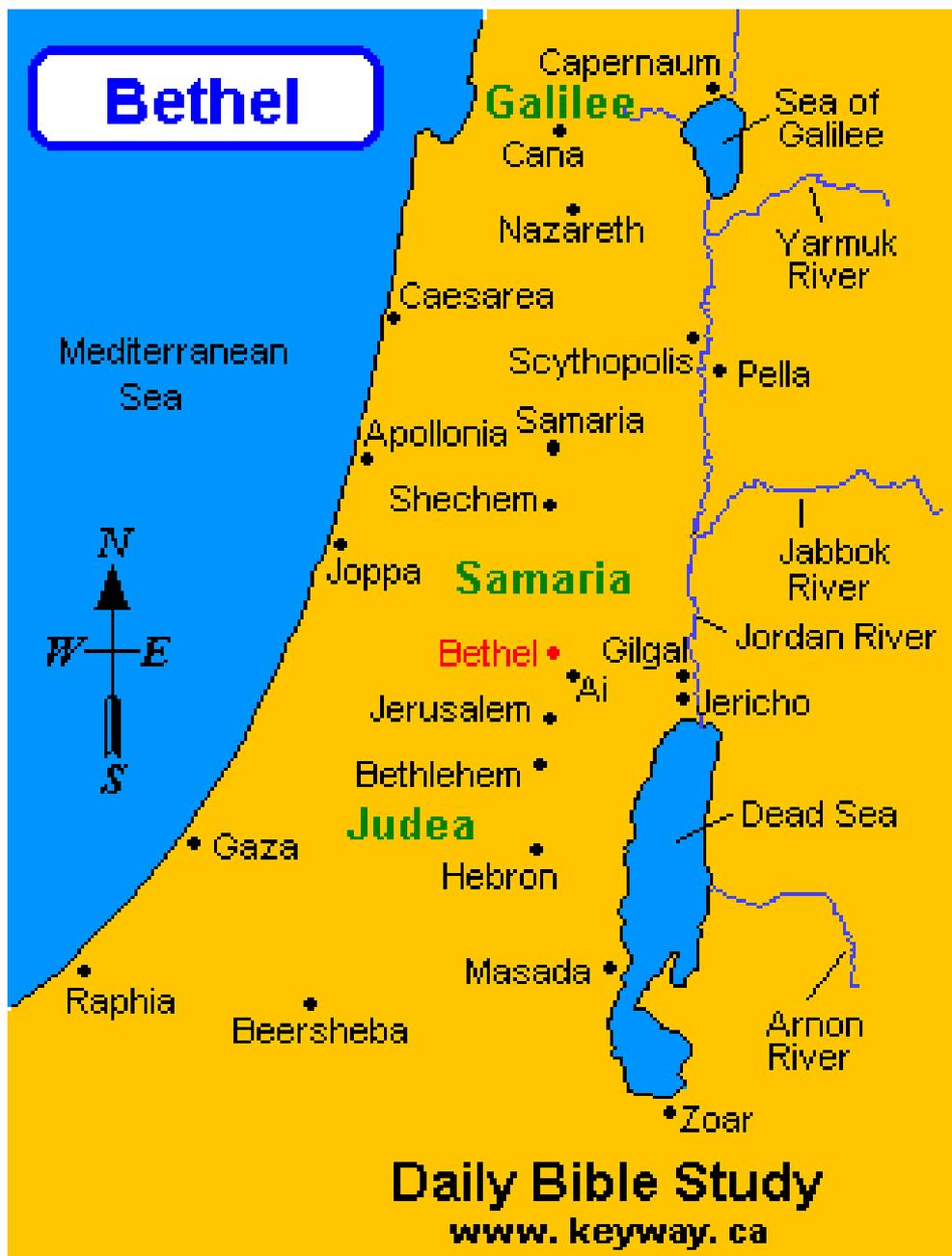


ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESTRUCTIONS: LATE DATE

- Thick destruction levels at Bethel, Tell Bit Mirsim = Deber(?), and Lachish circa 1250 BC.
- But there is no destruction from this date at Jericho or Ai
- No occupation of Jericho or Ai at time of conquest/settlement.
- Amorite capital of Hesbon was settled after Israel entered Transjordan. It was not conquered by Israelites

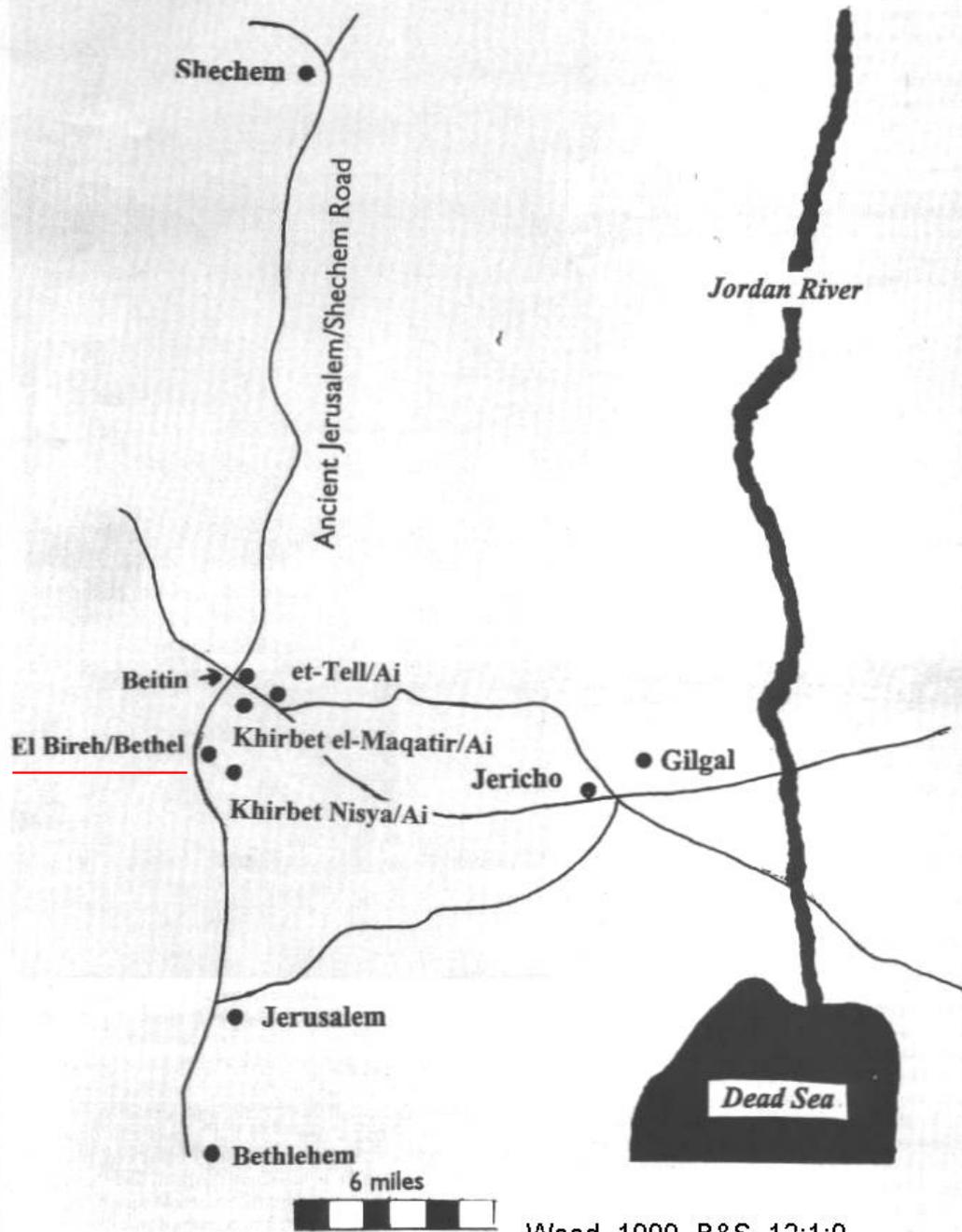


Bethel



Daily Bible Study

www.keyway.ca

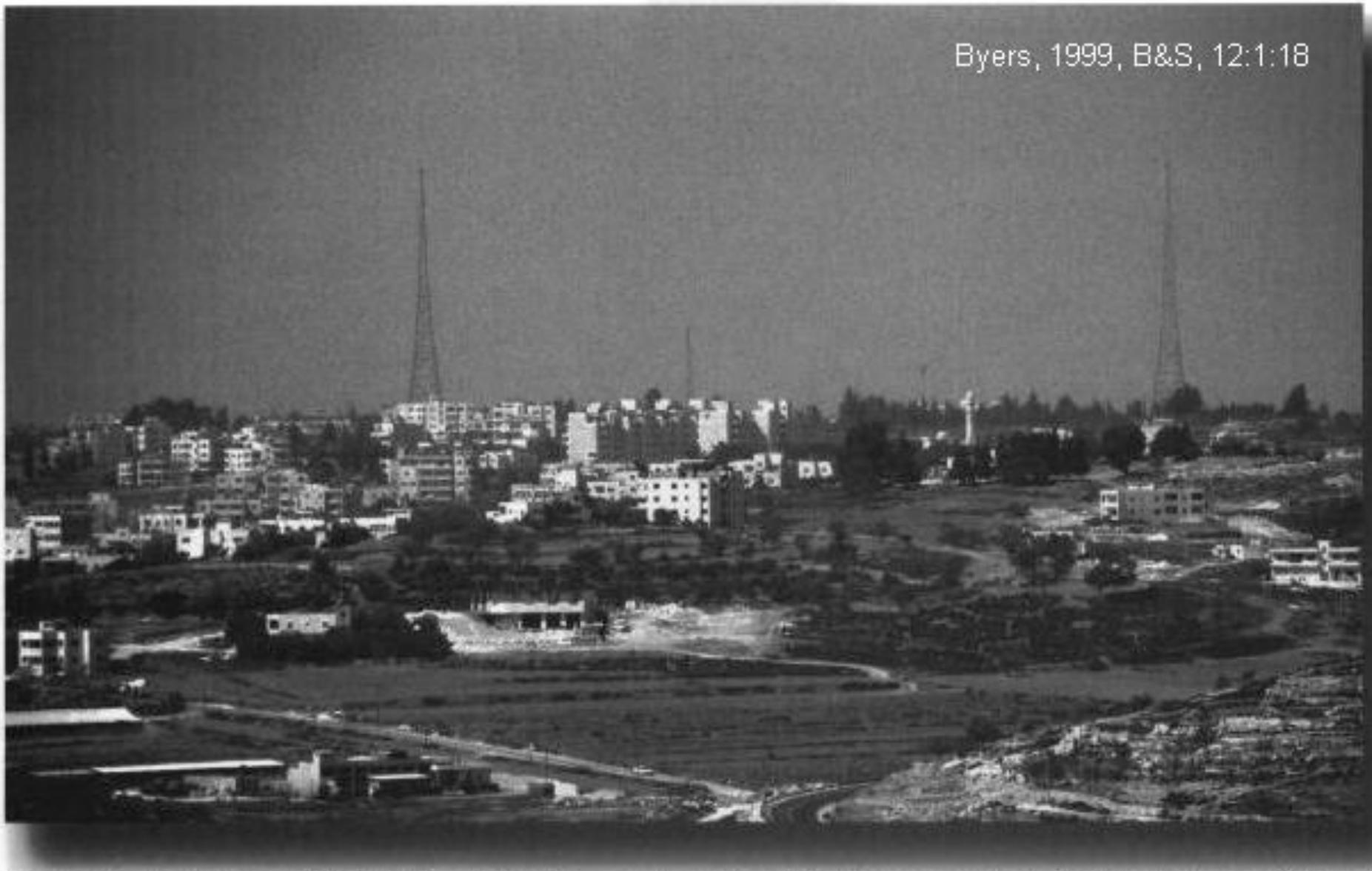


Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:9

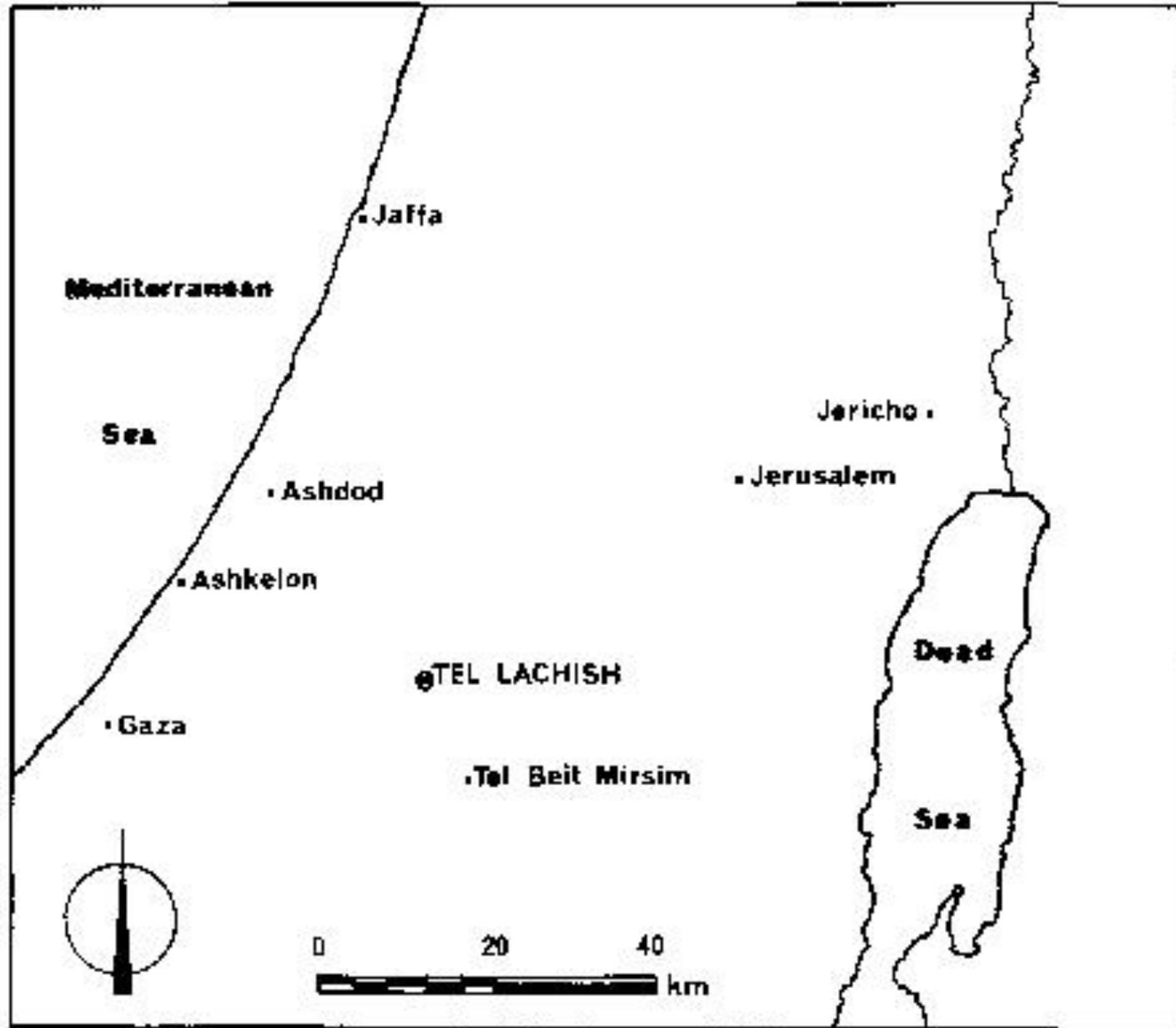
Bethel = El
Bireh

BETHEL WAS DESTROYED C. 1250 BC

Byers, 1999, B&S, 12:1:18



The modern town of El Bireh, although never systematically excavated, is the best candidate for Biblical Bethel based on historical evidence.



Ussishkin, 1979, B&S, 8:2:33

LACHISH WAS DESTROYED C. 1250 BC

LACHISH

Kern, 2004, ODY, 7:1:43; Photo D. Tal and M. Haramati

Siege Ramp
701 BC





ARAMEANS

Damascus

Hivites

Israel
During
Joshua's
Time
The 7
Nations
of Canaan

BASHAN

Girgashites

Canaanites

Amorites

AMMONITES

PHILISTINES

Jebusites

Perizzites

MOABITES

Hittites

EDOMITES



According to Late Date theory, Heshbon was “conquered” many years after 1250 BC

← Heshbon, Amorite capitol

Tell Hesban (Biblical Heshbon; Num. 21:21-32)

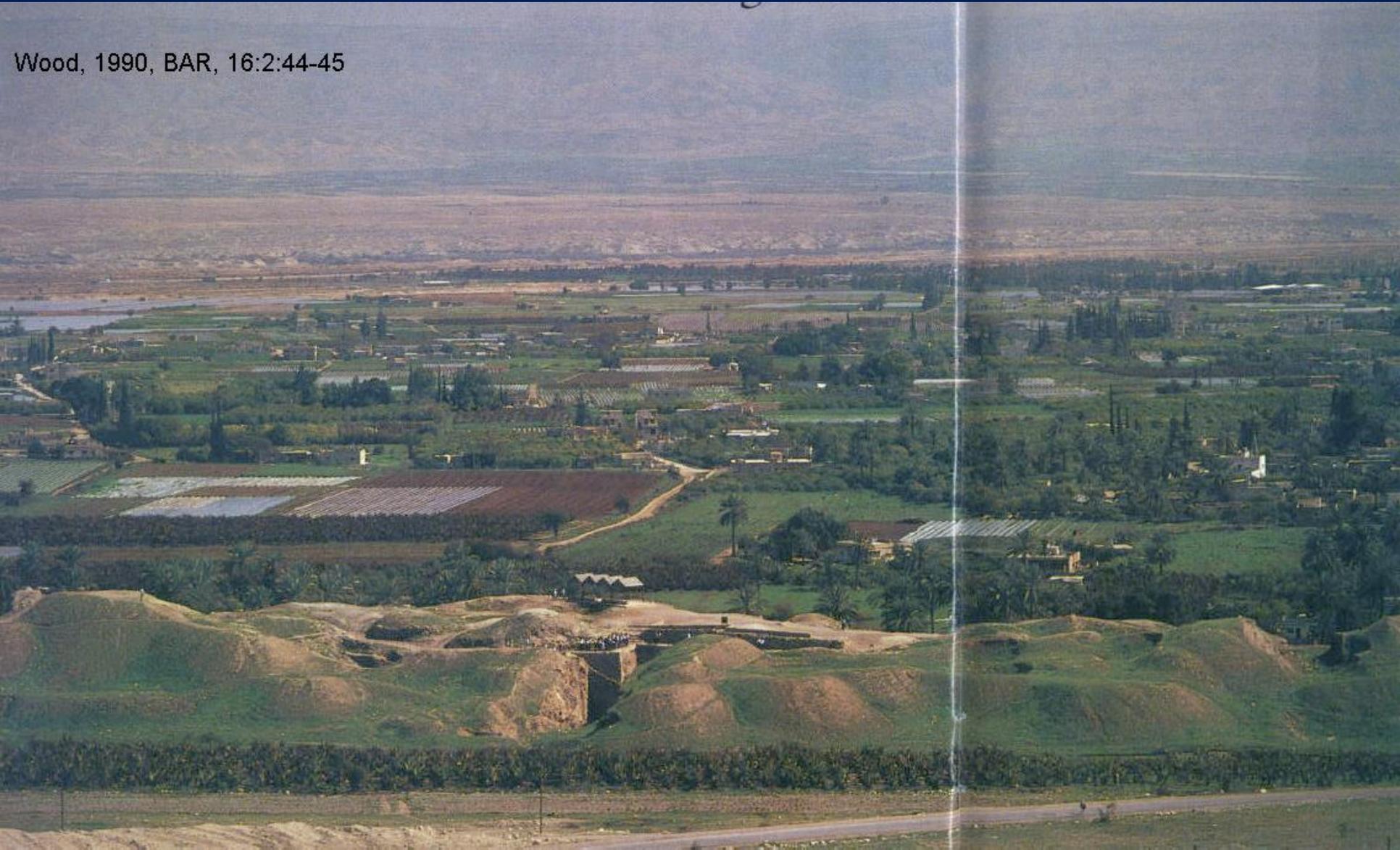


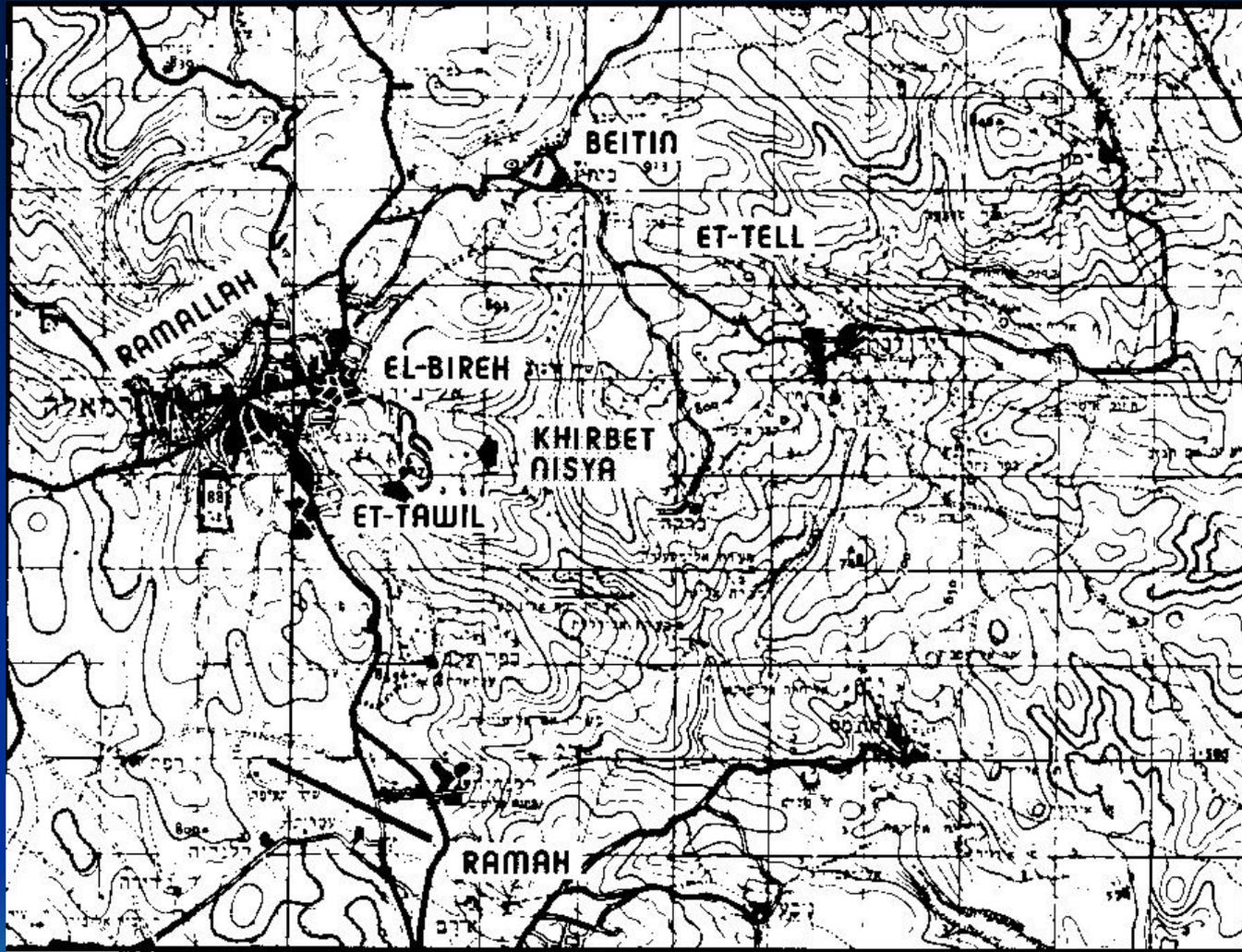
Jericho



JERICHO (No destruction c. 1250 BC)

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:44-45





LOCATIONS
FOR AI AND
BETHEL

The "Hour-Glass" road system. Roads from the north and south come together as they go through Ramallah and El-Bireh.

Hansen, 1989, ABR, 2:2:46

Biblical Ai (Khirbet Nisya)



LATE DATE

- Throughout Palestine there are no other walled cities for Israelites to "conquer" circa 1250 BC.
- These observations lead to the conclusion that the Exodus/Conquest stories were concocted under direction by leaders of the early Monarchy to give authority to their rule and to establish a sense nationalism.



LATE DATE

- According to late date interpretation, the destruction of Palestine city-states at the end of Middle Bronze Age II was performed by Egyptians as they chased the Hyksos out of Egypt.
- Early Date theorists attribute many of these destructions to Joshua.

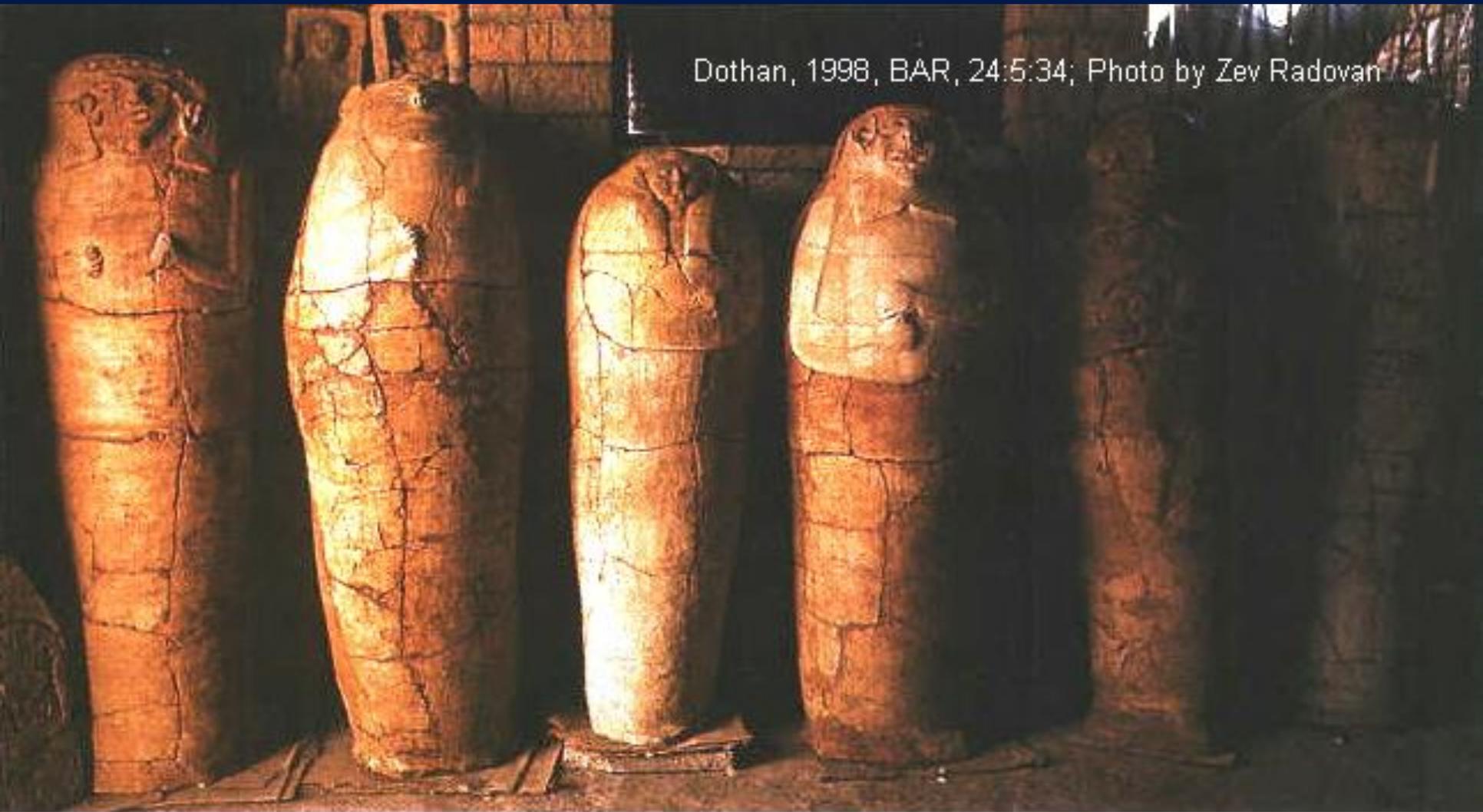


Egyptian destructions in Palestine

- c. 1550-1470 BC
- Along Coast
- Anthropoid coffins



Dothan, 1998, BAR, 24:5:34; Photo by Zev Radovan



ANTHROPOID COFFINS, Deir el-Balah, 14th-13th century BC

Problems with Egyptian Theory Middle Bronze Age II Destructations

- The Egyptians were weak after 150 years of Hyksos occupation and not inclined to imperial campaigns. I
- It took them three years to achieve their first victorious siege against the Hyksos at Sharuhem.
- It is unlikely that they could have sent armies over to Palestine at this time.



Problems with Egyptian Theory Middle Bronze Age II Destructions

- Further, while many cities in Palestine were destroyed by violent conflagrations about 1550 BC, in some cases it happened much later.
- Many late destructions occurred circa 1470 BC.



Problems with Egyptian Theory Middle Bronze Age II Destructions

- Late date Egyptian destructions included punitive campaigns by Thutmose III (1483-1450 BC) at *coastal* cities of Gaza, Joppa, Gezer, Aphek, Megiddo, Be.th Shan, Taanach, Hazor and others.



Problems with Egyptian Theory

Middle Bronze Age II Destructions

- Egyptians typically recorded military triumphs in large-scale monuments or reliefs.
- There is no Egyptian record of Thutmose III or any later pharaohs attacking the Palestinian hill country.
- The Middle Bronze Age II (MBII) extended well into the 1400's BC in Palestine, especially in the interior

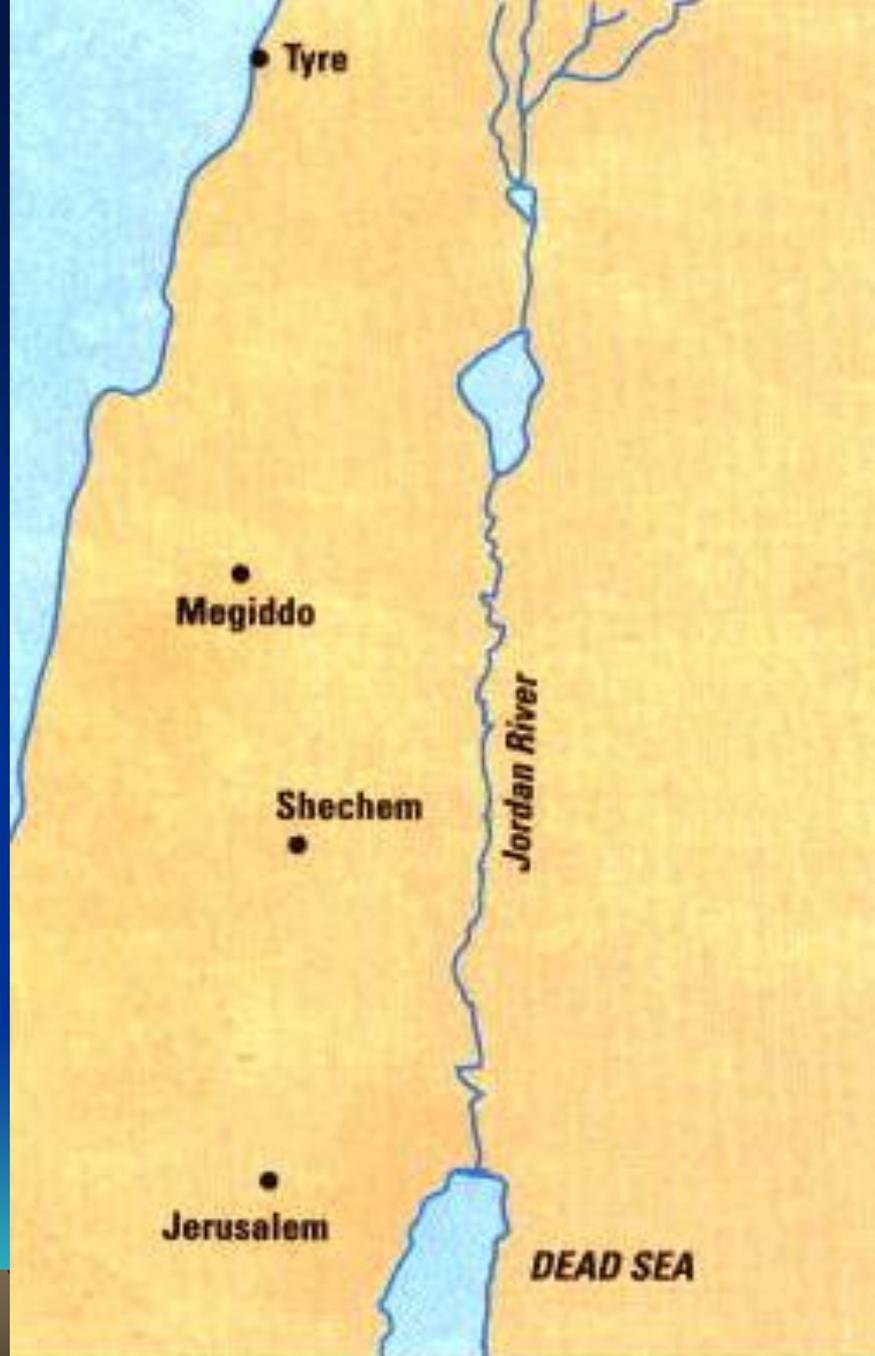


LATE DATE

Cross, 1992

- Early Israelite group at Shechem ('Apiru)
- Banded together and formed into a covenant group of 'El-berit (El of the Covenant).
- Genesis 33:20 mentions a burial plot of land and altar set up "to El, the god of Israel" (i.e. Jacob's God).





← SHECHEM

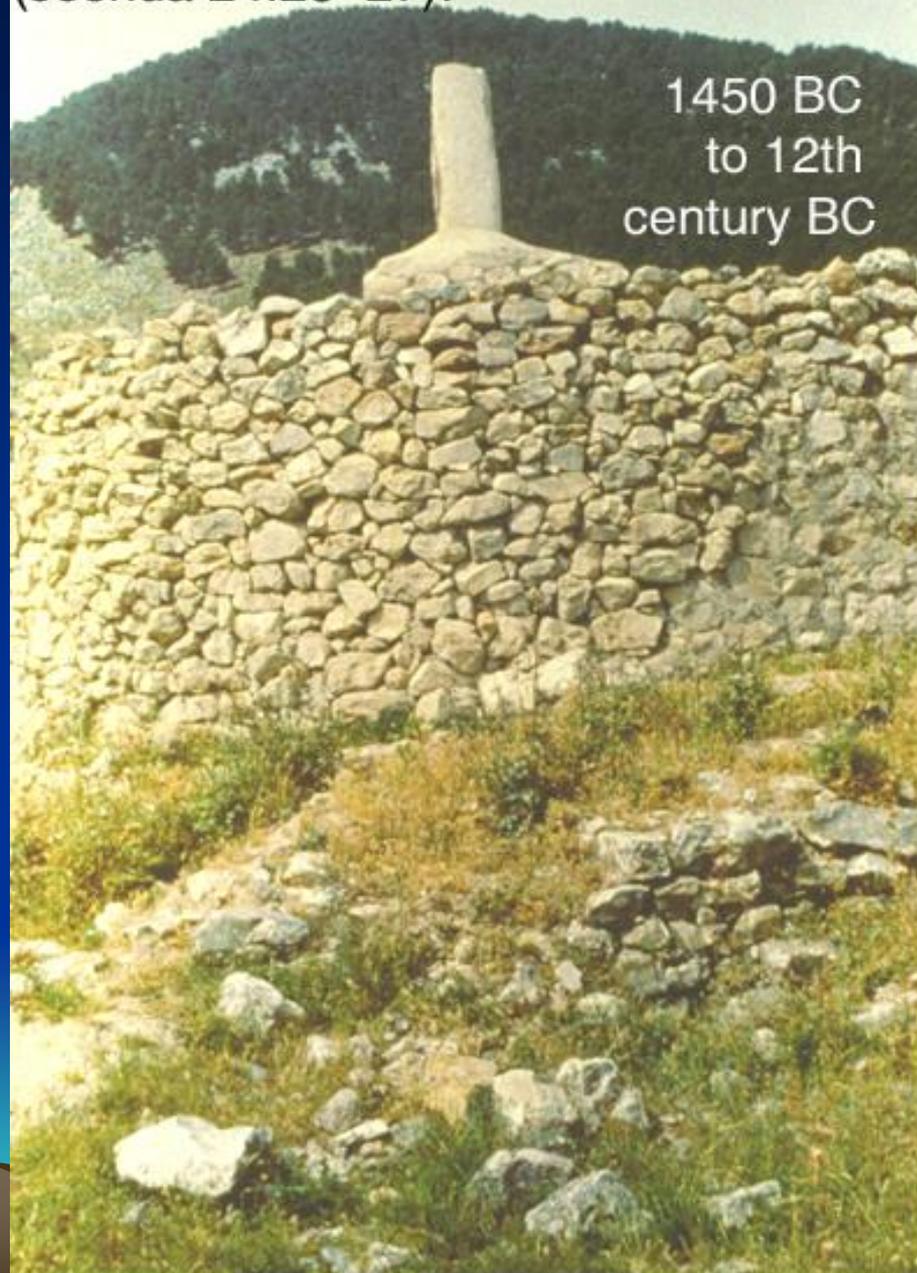
Photo by Staatliche Museen, Berlin; Shanks and Cross, 1992, BR, 8:4:32



‘Apiru =
“Hebrew”

Tel el-Amarna Letters

Shechem, Pillar “Stone of Witness”?
(Joshua 24:25–27).



1450 BC
to 12th
century BC

Shechem
Covenant

BWP:AR41; Photo by Zev Radovan

SHECHEM



The Middle Bronze Age ruins of Shechem, looking southeast from the base of Mt. Ebal. Abraham traveled freely between Shechem and Beersheba. In Genesis 12:6, Shechem is referred to as a *mâqôm* (“place”) indicating it was uninhabited. When Jacob came to Shechem after returning from Haran, however, Shechem was an *îr*, or “city” (Gn 33:18), which was fortified (Gn 34:20, 24). Archaeological findings at Shechem indicate that it was founded at about the time of Jacob.

Ray, 2004; B&S, 17:2:38. Photo B.G. Wood

LATE DATE Cross, 1992

- A Moses group, devotees of Yahweh (“El of the South”) joined the early Shechem group later in early Iron Age.
- Covenant-making with other groups resulted in a twelve-league tradition.



Early Date Theory

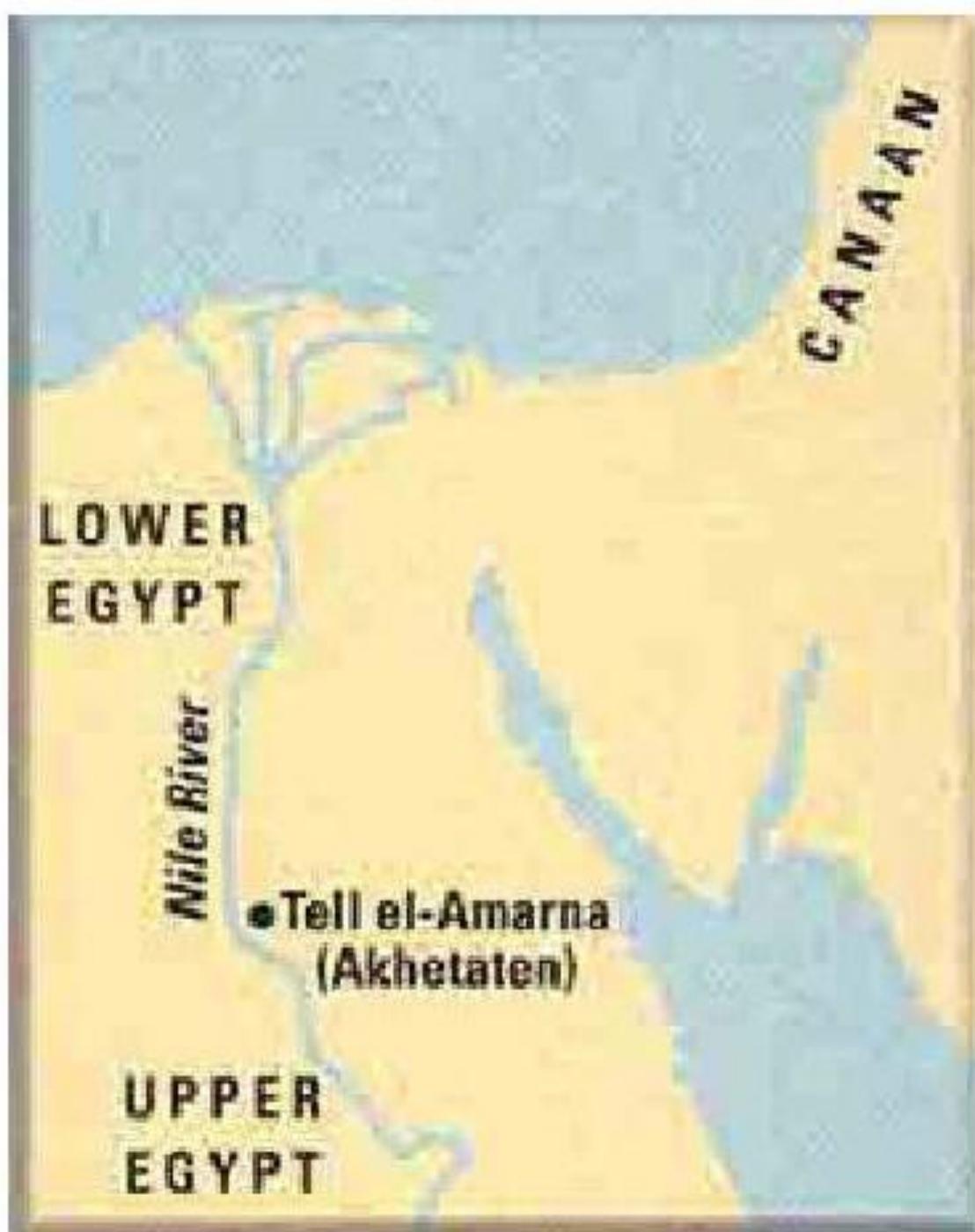
- Championed by conservative (maximalist) scholars.
- 1 King 6:1 indicates that, 480 years after the Exodus, Solomon began construction of the Jerusalem Temple in 966 BC.
- Judges 11:26 says that Israel had been in land 300 years prior to this Temple's construction.
- Subtracting 40 years for wilderness wanderings and the 300 years described in Judges 11:26 yields a date of 1445 for the start of the Exodus.
- Adding 40 years wandering, the Conquest starts in 1406 BC and ends in 1398 BC per Joshua 14:7,10



Early Date and the Amarna Tablets

- The Amarna tablets (c. 1400 BC) record international correspondence under 18th Dynasty Pharaoh Amenhotep III
- Requests from Canaanite vassals for help to drive out the Habiru (or 'Apiru) nomadic invaders.
- Habiru has been interpreted as an Egyptian word for "Israelites" (but this is not accepted by all scholars)





**LOWER
EGYPT**

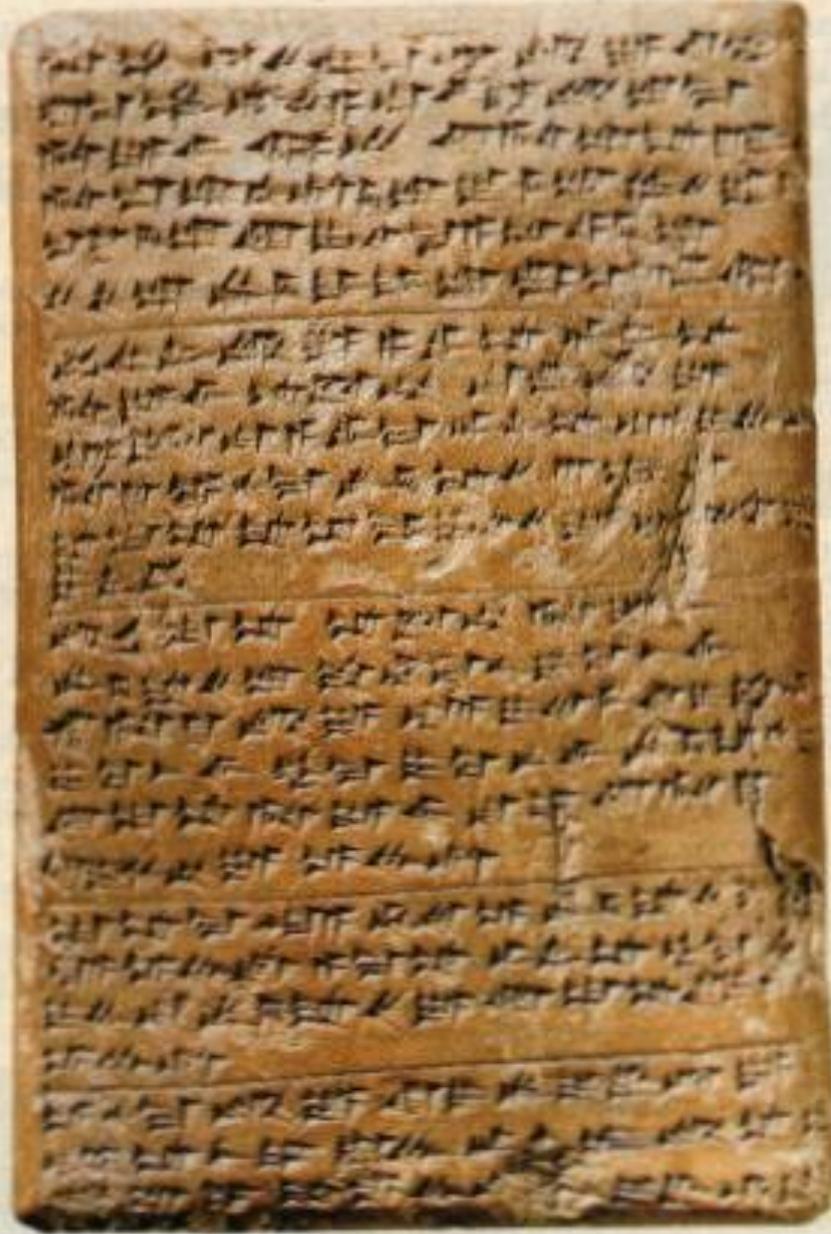
Nile River

● **Tell el-Amarna
(Akhetaten)**

**UPPER
EGYPT**

CANAAAN

BILDARCHIV PREUSSISCHER KULTURERBESITZ, BERLIN/VORDERASIATISCHES MUSEUM



Amarna Tablets, c.
1400 BC

Habiru or 'Apiru =
"Hebrew"

AMARNA TABLET, 14th century BC

Na'aman, 1998, BAR, 24:4:42

Egyptian Column Base Fragment

- From Rameses II
- “Ashkelon”, “Canaan” and partial “Israel”
- Fragment in Egyptian Museum of Berlin
- Spelling slightly different than the Merenptah Stele.
- Points to original list of names from time of Amenhotep II (1453-1419 or 1427-1401)





“Ashkelon”,
“Canaan”,
and partial
“Israel”

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz Ägyptisches Museum und Papyrussammlung

Egyptian column base fragment depicting bound captives superimposed on name rings. The first two names are Ashkelon and Canaan. Egyptologist Manfred Görg suggests the third, incomplete, name is Israel. He believes the name list was originally compiled in the early 18th Dynasty, the time of the Exodus-Conquest according to *Biblical chronology*. Wood, 2005, B&S, 18:4:99

Early Date

- The Exodus/Conquest occurred about 150 years after the end of Middle Bronze Age II
- Cities in the “Promised Land” were at their peak.
- Afterwards, they collapsed, as did almost all civilizations around the Middle East and Mediterranean.



Early Date

- These conquests were made by a variety of invaders (Sea Peoples), including the Israelites.
- The Israelites, a relatively small and weak group of people, were in the right place at the right time



Early Date

- Ai, Jericho and Hazor burned to the ground
- In other cities vanquished citizens were killed in religiously motivated genocide
- Israelites tended to spare the cities themselves.



Early Date

- They preferred to live in what they conquered rather than destroy perfectly good real estate.
- The archaeological record shows a punctuated conquest with short-term victories and a gradual expansion of Israelite hegemony over three centuries (period of the Judges).



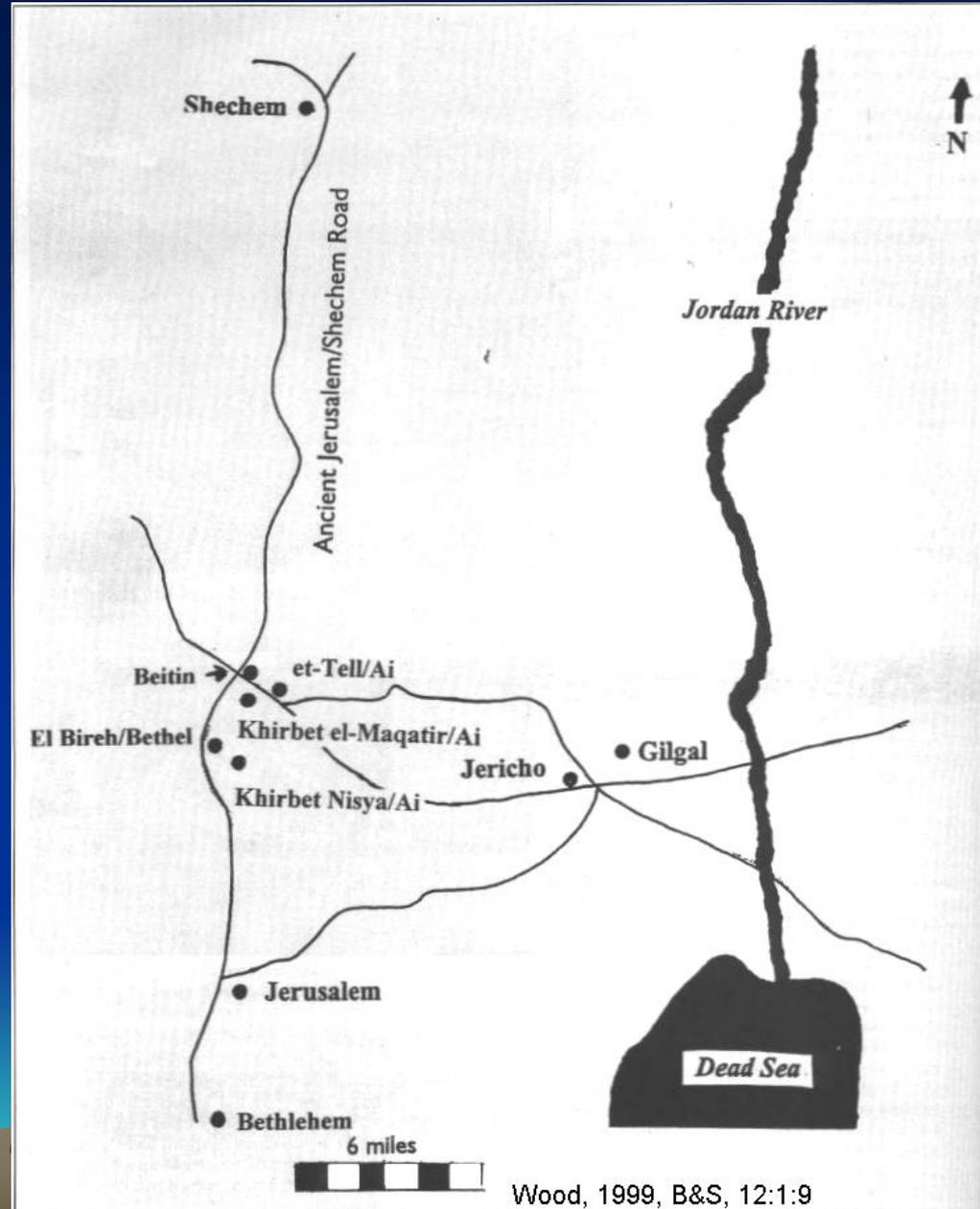
Early Date

- Early date proponents counter a central anti-thesis of the Late Theory:
- No walled cities in the Levant for the Israelites to conquer in LB IA-IB or LB IIA (c. 1480-1295 BC).



Early Date

- LB fortified cities did exist in the Levant.
- An example is the LB I fortress at Khirbet el-Maqatir.



Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:9

Sites relating to the Ai story in the Book of Joshua.

Area of Kh. el-Maqatir and Wadi Sheban, view south



M-00

FIELD	E
SQ.	M-7
LOCUS	1,2
DATE	06-15
EXP.	S-426

West wall of the LB I fortress, view south. At the left end of the meter stick is the inner face of the wall. To the right is the stone core of the wall and to the left is rubble fill of the terrace which abutted the inside of the west wall. In the background is the newly-constructed wall of the agricultural plot which now encloses the southwest sector of the fortress. Wood, 2000, B&S, 13:3:69; Photo by M. Luddeni

Early Date

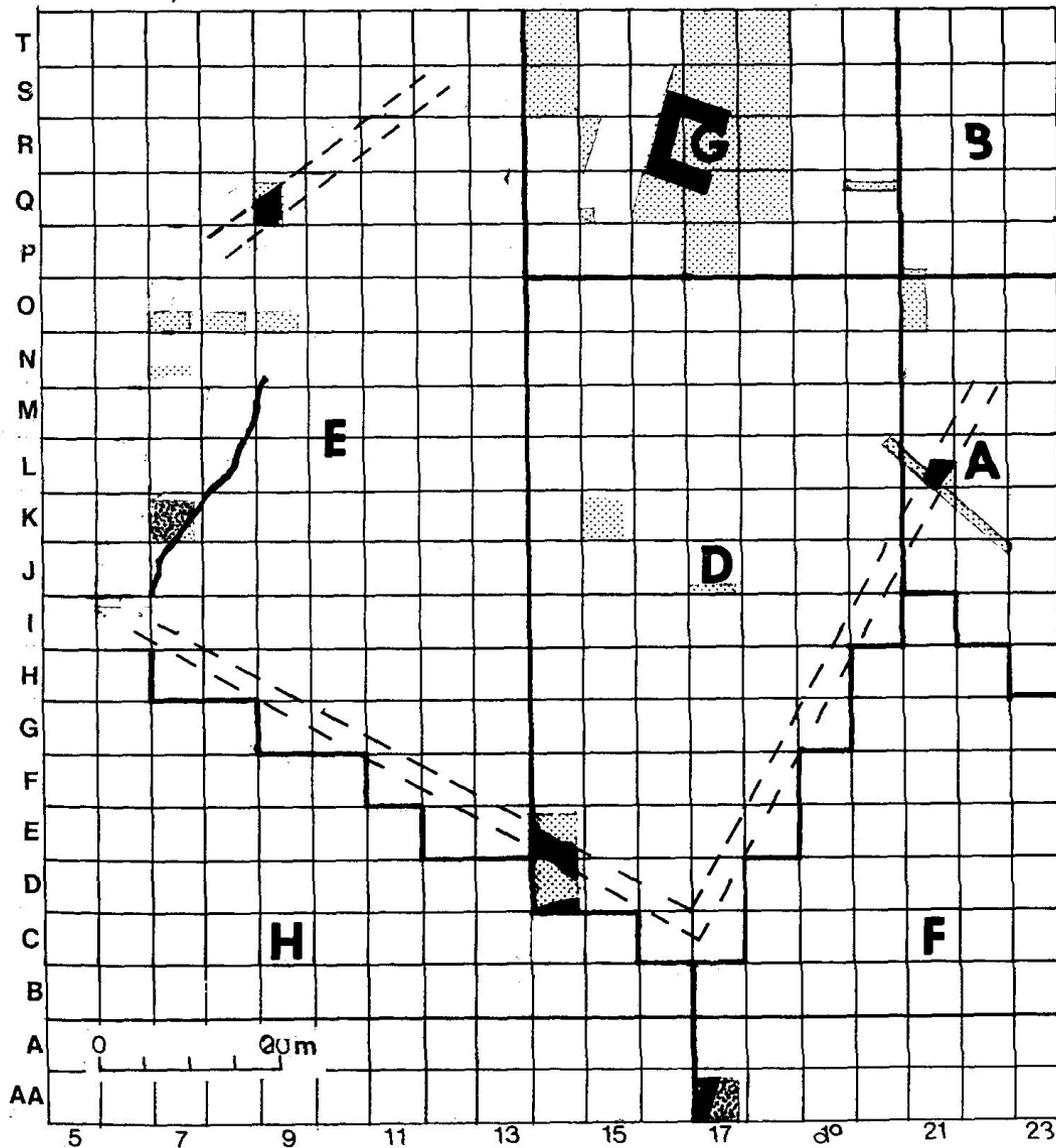
Hanson, 2000

- Survey of 51 LB sites in the region described in Numbers 13:21-22, 29
- Area that the scouts reconnoitered and described as having “walled cities”.
- Negev, hill country, Hebron and Jebus regions

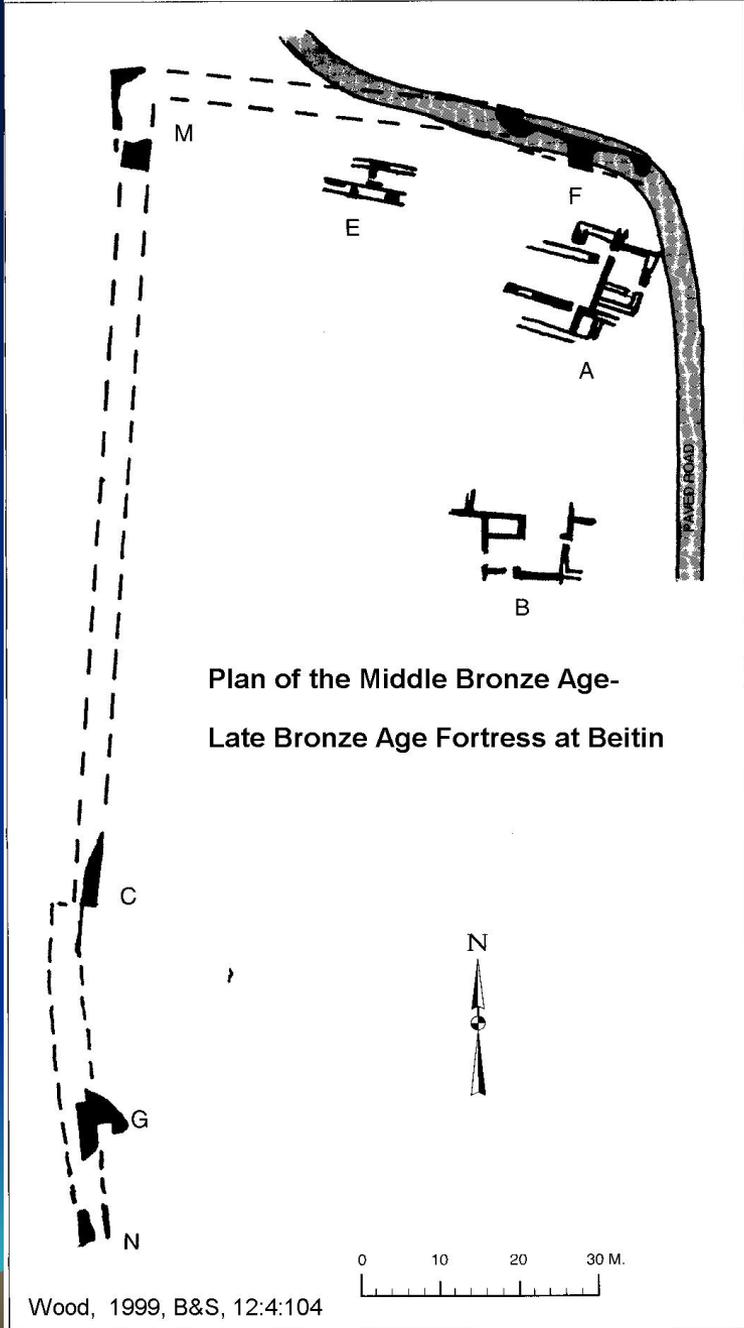


Illustration 6: Plan of the Late Bronze I fortress at Kh. el-Maqatir. The small size of the enclosure, less than 2 acres in area, is suggested in Joshua 7:3 and 10:2.

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:25



Plan
Lower
Bronze
Age
fortress,
Kh. El-
Maqatir



Plan of the Middle Bronze Age-
Late Bronze Age Fortress at Beitin

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:104

Plan of Lower Bronze Age fortress at Beitin

HAZOR

Late
Bronze
age
Hazor
Josh.
11:1, 10

Early Date

Hanson, 2000

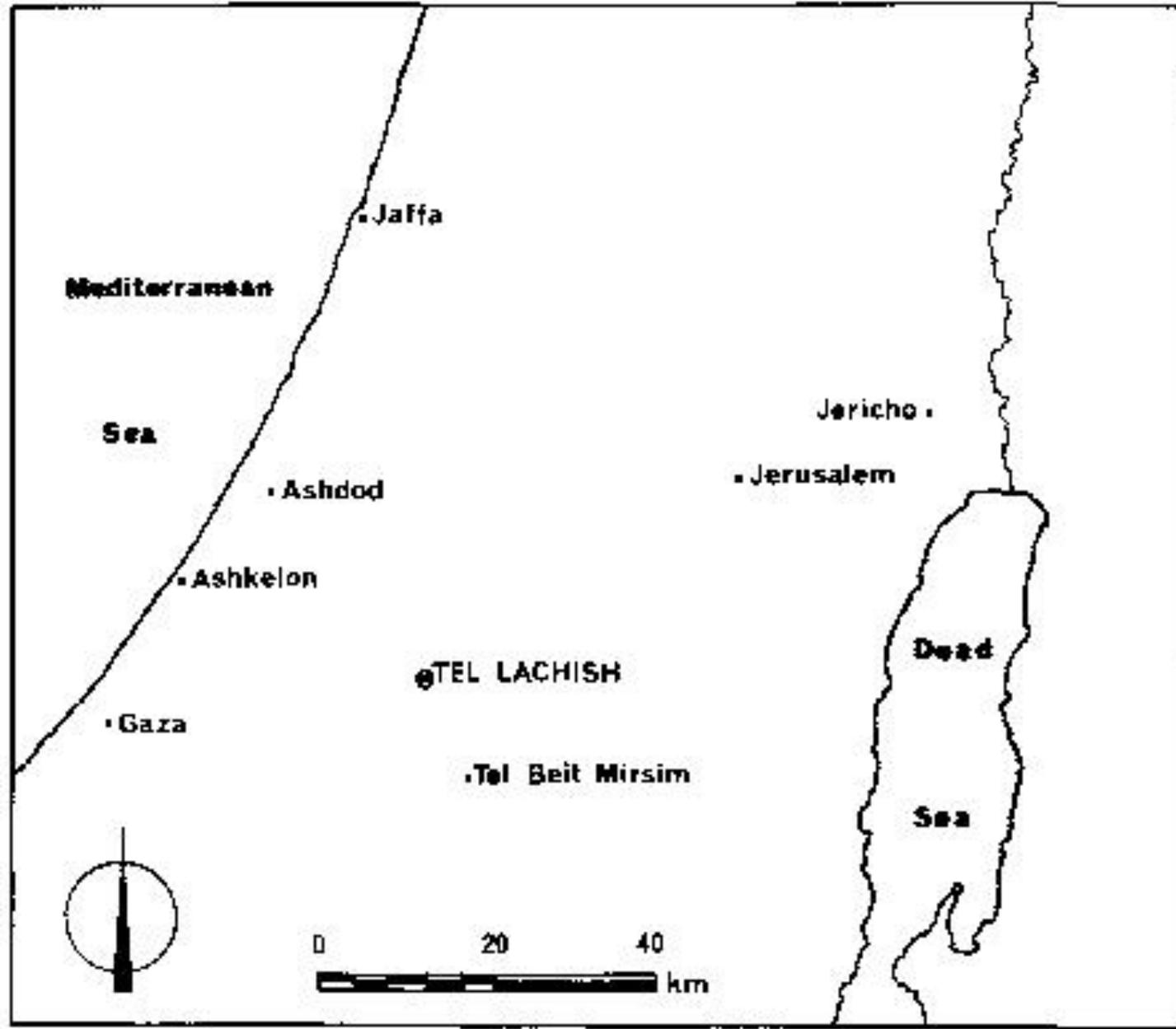
- Of the 51 sites, 27 (53%) were fortified
- 24 were unfortified and six were “uncertain”.
- Of the three unfortified Egyptian cities: Beth-Shean, Lachish and Jokneam were located on high mounds.
- The buildings on these high mounds linked to form a perimeter that may have appeared to be walls from a distance.



BETH SHEAN

Hansen, 2003, B&S, 16:3:88





Ussishkin, 1979, B&S, 8:2:33



LACHISH

The Late Bronze Age temple: general view of the main complex from the west.

Ussishkin, 1979, B&S, 8:1:39

JERICHO, MIDDLE BRONZE AGE



PALESTINE EXPLORATION FUND. GARSTANG ARCHIVE

View south across the Middle Building, possibly Eglon's palace, excavated by John Garstang in 1933. Janeway, 2001, B&S, 14:1:16

Early Date

- During the Conquest, not all Canaanite settlements were walled (Deut. 3:5).
- But many were (Num 13:28).
- 49 LB I sites can be identified with sites mentioned in the Book of Joshua.
- Of these, there is very close correspondence between the biblical descriptions of the character of these sites and the archaeological findings .



Table IV (Cont.): LB I Sites Identified with Locations in the Book of Joshua

Site Name	Ref #	Name of Site in Book of Joshua	Reference(s) in Book of Joshua	“City” (<i>’ir</i>) or fortified in Jos/Dt	Evidence of LBI Fortifications	Comments Hansen, 2003, B&S, 16:3:87
Maqatir Kh. El-	36	Ai?	Chaps 7-8	8:4ff	2.5m wide wall	
Megiddo	32	Megiddo	12:21; 17:11	17:12 ref to 17:11	Gate, glacis, walls	
Miqne, Tel	35	Ekron	13:3; 15:11, 45–46; 19:43	15:51	Thick-walled fortress	Fortress on acropolis
Qashish, Tel	40	Dabbesheth?	19:11	19:16 ref to 19:11		
Rabud, Kh.	41	Debir	10:38–9; 12:13; 15:7; 15:15, 17–19; 21:15	21:16 ref to 21:25, 10:39?	4m wide walls	
Sera , Tel	43	Ziklag	15:31; 19:5	19:6; 15:21	uncertain	Palace w/ 2m wide walls on acropolis
Shechem	44	Shechem	24:1–28; 17:7; 20:7; 21:21; 24:32	21:21	3.5 to 4m wide walls, gate	Excavator calls walls “cyclopean”
Shiloh	45	Shiloh	18:1–10; 19:51 21:2; 22:9–12			Referred to as <i>camp</i> in Jos 18:9
Taanach	47	Taanach	12:21; 17:11; 21:25	21:25	1.75m wide wall	
Wawiyat, Tel el-	48	Neah?	19:13	19:15 ref to 19:13		Small village

NEXT WEEK

- Nature of the Conquest



Archaeology and the Old Testament

Chapter 14: The Conquest, Part 2

Dr. Gregg Wilkerson



NATURE OF THE CONQUEST

- **Traditional Military Overthrow**
Traditional Military Overthrow
- **Assimilation-Infiltration**
- **Peasant Revolt**
- **Synthesis Theory**



Traditional Military Overthrow

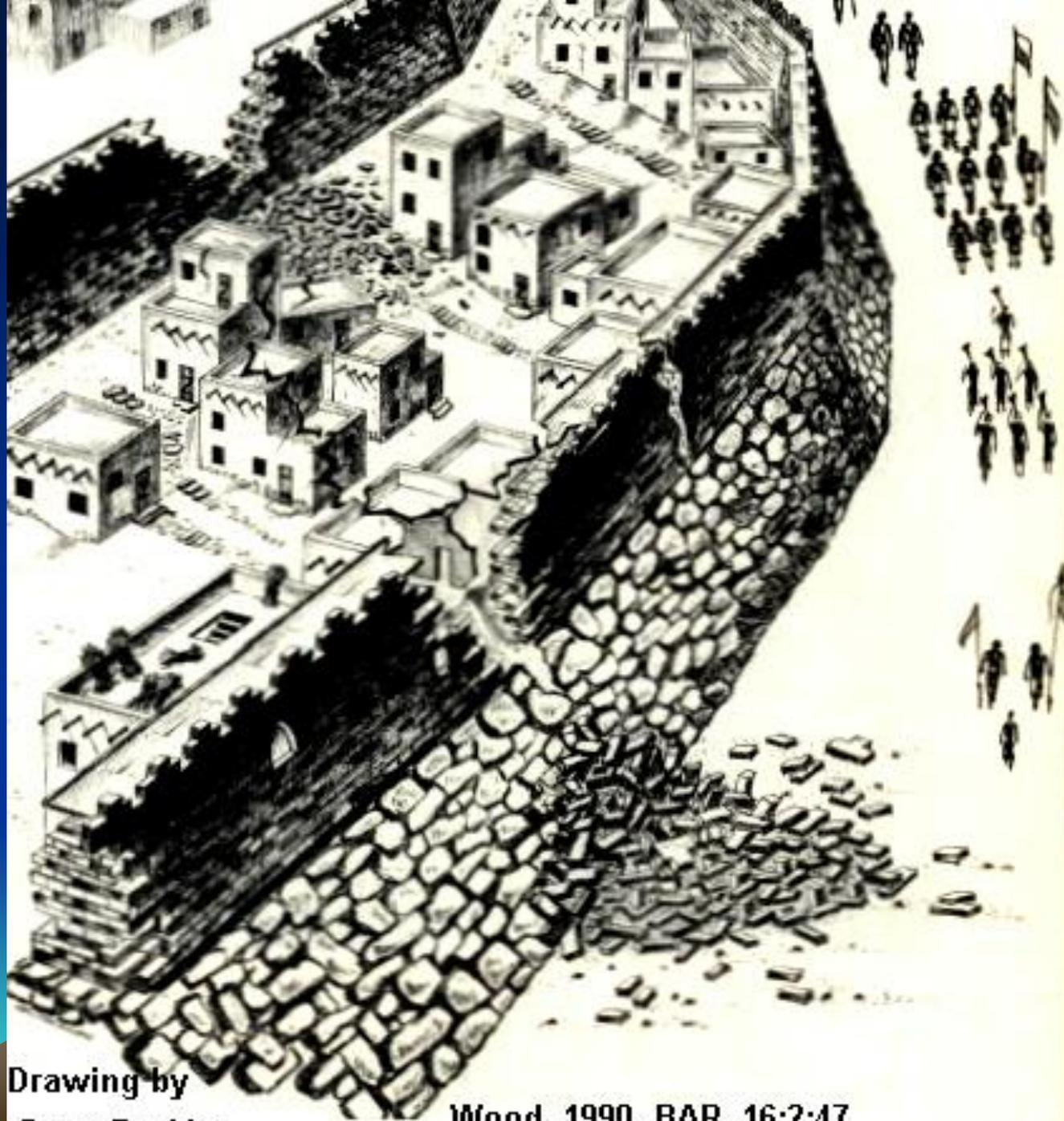
- Mostly a military operation.
- "Hornet" of Exodus 23:28, Deuteronomy 7:20 and Joshua 24:12 was Thutmose III.
- He "softened up" the Canaanites of coastal Palestine circa 1470 BC.



Traditional Military Overthrow

- This set up opportunity for Israelites to invade and capture the hill country cities
- Hill country cities had been weakened by loss of trade and military support with coastal neighbors.
- When lowland cities tried to come to rescue of hill country cities, they were easily defeated.





Military overthrow of Jericho

Drawing by
Gene Fackler

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:47

BRONZE AND IRON AGE BRONZE BLADES

Mold for Bronze Axe Heads



BWP:BA77, Photo by Zev Radovan

MIDDLE
BRONZE
AGE

EARLY
BRONZE
AGE



IRON
AGE
(PHILISTINE)

BWP:BA78; Photo by Zev Radovan

Assimilation-Infiltration

- the “Conquest” was due to assimilation and infiltration.
- Peaceful Israelite immigrants into earlier Canaanite culture.
- Based in part on the Tell el-Amarna Letters which describe conflicts with 'Apiru (=Hebrews?) circa 1350 BC



Photo by Staatliche Museen, Berlin; Shanks and Cross, 1992, BR, 8:4:32



Amarna tablet,
c. 1350 BC

Assimilation-Infiltration

- In Palestine, there is a wide distribution of 136 simple farming communities (Early Iron Age)
- The remains of the farming communities lie above destruction layers of cities of the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 BC).
- Stratigraphy plus paleoenvironmental surveys:
- There was gradual population movement from the desert fringe into the interior valleys and finally to the hill country during the Early Iron Age



Assimilation-Infiltration

- "Israel" was a small group of villagers of pastoralists living in the hill country, not a strong 12-tribe league.
- Israel originated through a loose federation of tribes who infiltrated Canaan over a long period of time .
- No massive immigration from the outside is needed to explain sudden establishment of Israelite settlements.



Assimilation-Infiltration

- Early Israelite population was about 20,000
- Not the 2 million suggested by the 600,000 warriors mentioned in the Exodus stories.
- Demographic shifts of Early Iron Age Palestine are linked to wider socio-economic disruptions, not Israelite military activity.



Assimilation-Infiltration

- The thickly settled, numerous, fortified towns of circa 1750 BC are followed by sharp population drop circa 1550 BC in Middle Bronze Age IIC.
- In the Late Bronze Age, (1550-1200 BC) large cities along the coast and in major valleys continued to flourish.
- 90% of the hill country settlements were abandoned.



Assimilation-Infiltration

- The remaining 10% were smaller in size.
- Hill-country farmers became pastoralists on the fringe of desert (opposite the traditional sequence).
- This change in lifestyle would be difficult to see in the archaeological record.



Assimilation-Infiltration

- A symbiosis between pastoralists and large city states was disrupted shortly after 1250 BC due to collapse of centralized governments.
- Wandering herders then occupied abandoned hilltops for their permanent settlements in the Early Iron Age:
- This was the Early Israelites



Assimilation-Infiltration

- A historical memory of this migration and infiltration is found in Ezekiel (16:3):
- "Your origin and your birth were in the land of Canaan"



Assimilation-Infiltration

- Evidence for some kind of assimilation is also found in changes in ethnicity of some individuals as described in different portions of the Hebrew Bible.



Assimilation-Infiltration

- Obed-edom the Gittite.....transformed to a Levite
- *1 Chron 13:13* *1 Chron 15:17*
- *2 Chron 25:24*



Assimilation-Infiltration

- Gadites defect and assimilate to David in 1 Chron 12:8

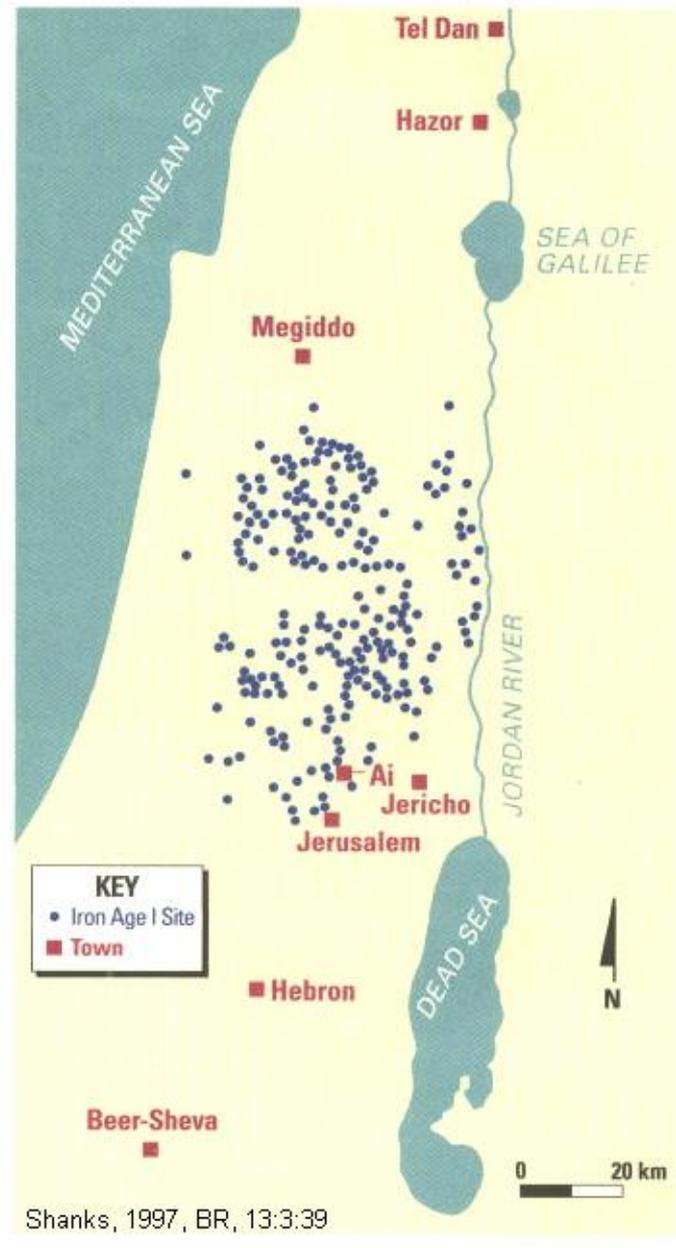


Peasant Revolt

- The “Conquest” was a slow “invasion” of the hill country
- While the Canaanites kept the good valley land and fortified cities
- Canaanite renegades revolted against their urban oppressors.
- Rebels left Canaanite cities in the western part of Palestine and the Valley of Jezreel,
- Rebel Canaanite underclass fled east and south to the central hill country



*Settlements in Canaan's
Central Hill Country During
Iron Age I (1200-1000 B.C.E.)*



Joshua 17:16,18

Central hill country

- "The tribe of Joseph said 'The hill country is not enough for us; yet all the Canaanites who dwell in the plains have chariots of iron, not only those in Beth Shean and its villages but also those in the Valley of Jezreel'...the hill country shall be yours, for though it is a forest [heavily vegetated] you shall clear it and possess it to its farthest borders."



Hill Country Site, Beth Shean

BETH SHEAN

Hansen, 2003, B&S, 16:3:88



Peasant Revolt

- Settlements at this time in the hill country used rainwater cisterns to supplement wells.
- There are 102 small hillside settlements that are known, among them Ai and Raddana.
- Of these 90 were newly founded.
- Peasant Revolt supporters say that 'Apiru in Egyptian records is not a term for the Hebrews or any ethnic group. Instead, it is said to be indicative of a social class.



Amarna tablets, 'Apiru = "Hebrew"'



Amarna Tablets. 380 clay tablets in cuneiform script came from the "Office-House of the Letters of Pharaoh"

Byers, 2002, B&S, 15:4:112; Photo by Bryan Wood

Peasant Revolt

- Late Bronze Age societies of Canaan where highly stratified.
- 'Apiru ideology (borrowing from Israelite monotheism) provided a basis for native Canaanites to unite in order to throw off rule of aristocracy.
- The aristocracy which used a pantheon of divinities to legitimize the king's power.



Peasant Revolt

- Canaanites, when they joined this ideology, exacerbated the rebellion and this mixed group became "Israelites."
- The rebels had no extensive trade networks, except in metals, which were obtained as ingots and fabricated on site.
- They were isolated, highly individualistic communities without political cohesion



Objections to Peasant Revolt

- Surveys in Galilee and ancient Ephraim and Judah:
- Show no evidence for a major demographic shift from coastal cities to the hill country.



Khirbet Mazin Fortress Iton Age II (10th to early 6th centuries BC) guarded the spring and outlets of both Wadi Mazin and Wadi Kidron. BWP: DSS10
Photo by Hershel Shanks



Biblical
Middin of
Joshua
15:61 in
Ephriam

Synthesis Theory

- The end of Middle Bronze Age II (MBII) was about 1550 BC.
- At that time, civilizations collapsed all around the Mediterranean due in part to climatic variations.
- City states had become small and weak by 1250 BC (late date).
- The Conquest began with partly successful military victories (ala Jericho, Ai) circa 1450 BC.

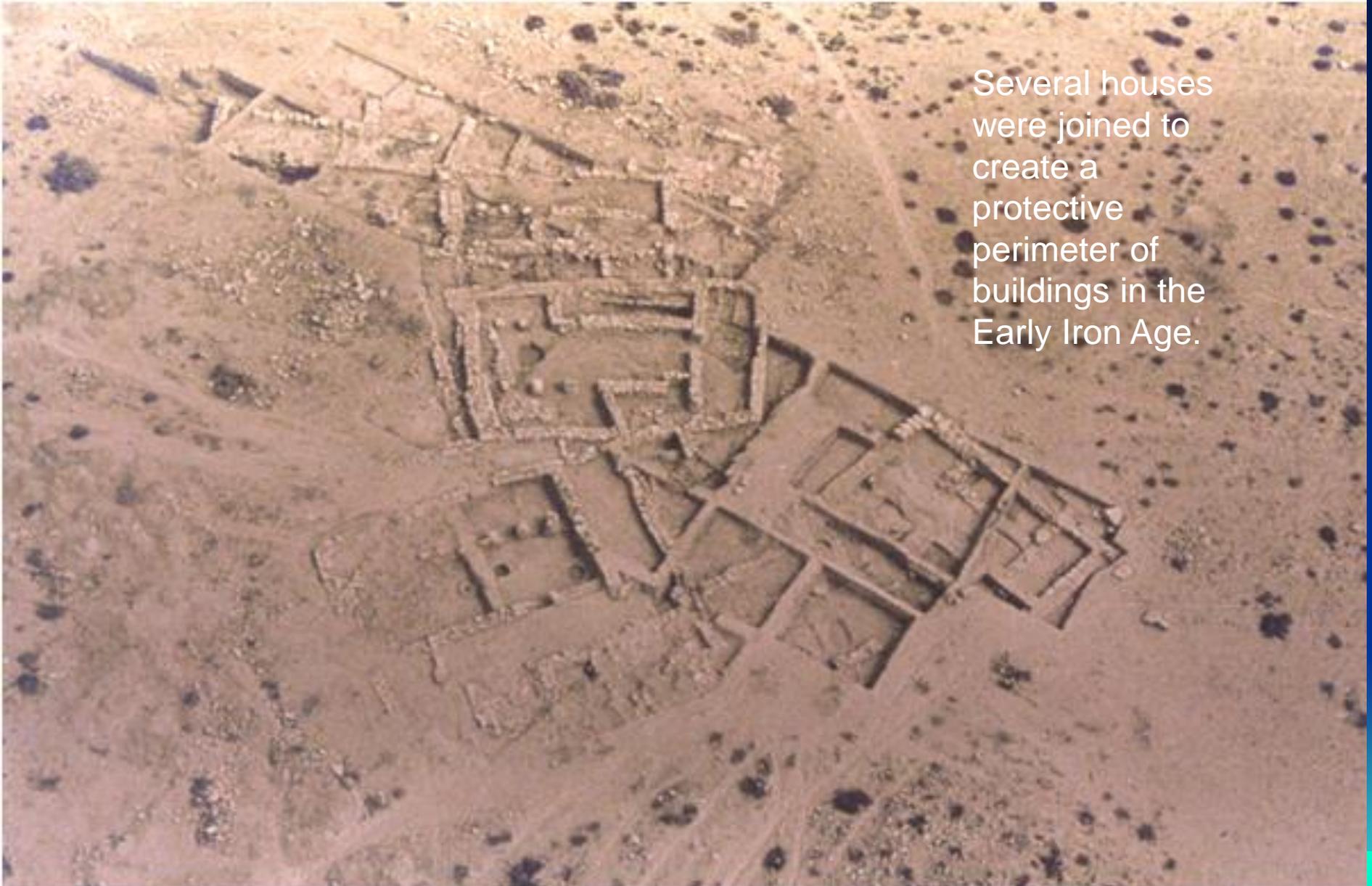


Synthesis Theory

- The Israelite federation's autonomy was maintained through assimilation and revolt over temporary, minor, rulers.
- The Synthesis Theory suggests that some biblical descriptions of partitioning of land are exaggerated.
- Biblical population figures for the Israelites are interpreted to be inflated or poetic.



Tel Masos (Aerial), Early Iron Age Settlement



Several houses were joined to create a protective perimeter of buildings in the Early Iron Age.

Dan, Model of Middle Bronze II Age Gate



BWP:GA40; Dan, Model of Middle Bronze Gate

POTTERY STYLES

- Pottery is key to understanding the Conquest.
- When the Israelites arrived, the Canaanites they displaced had a set of mundane, utilitarian pottery forms.



POTTERY STYLES

- The Israelites adopted or copied many of the earlier Canaanite forms.
- This is in contrast to contemporaneous pottery from the coastal Philistines.
- The Philistine Bichrome ware, with its diagnostic red and black decorations appear along with the Philistines about 1175 BC



Philistine Bichrome Ware, late 12th century BC

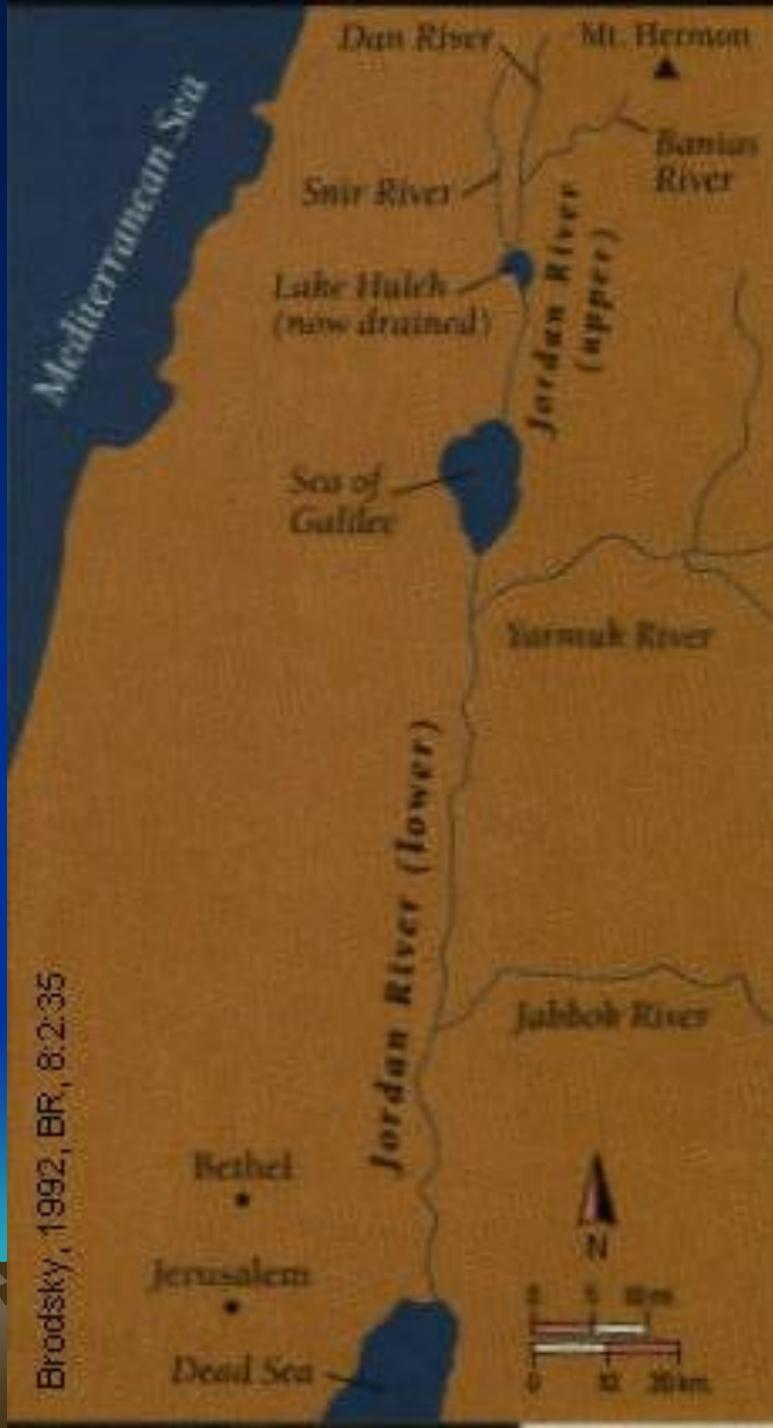


Shanks and Dever, 1996, BAR, 22:5:33

CROSSING OF THE JORDAN

- The first step in the Conquest was the crossing of the Jordan River
- Described in Joshua 3:16.
- The story has some similarities to the crossing of the Red (Reed) Sea





Brodsky, 1992, BR, 8:2:35

JORDAN
RIVER
FOLLOWS
THE DEAD
SEA RIFT
ZONE

Photo by G. Eric Matson, Brodsky, 1992, BR, 8:3,42



THE Jordan

Symbol of Spiritual Transition

HAROLD BRODSKY



CROSSING THE JORDAN

- There are two sections to the Jordan
- Upper Jordan north of the Sea of Galilee
- Lower Jordan between Galilee and the Dead Sea.
- The Upper and Lower Jordan River valleys are not well suited for farming due to annual flooding



Waterfall at the source of the Jordan River



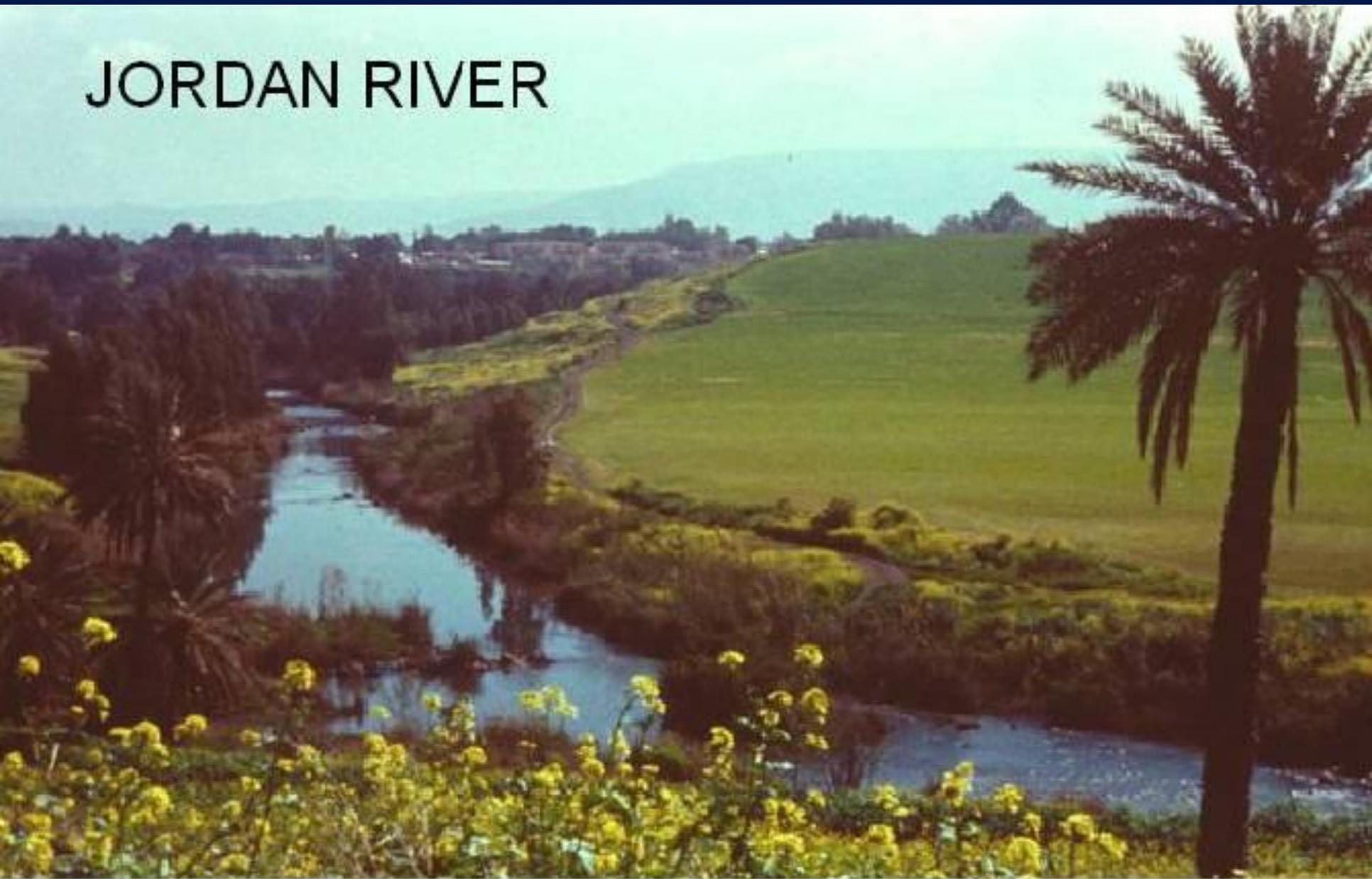
BWP:BA2; Photo by Garo Nalbandian

Winter waterfall near
Metullah in Upper Galilee



BWP:GA11; Photo by Werner Braun

JORDAN RIVER



BWP:BA7 Photo by Garo Nalbandian

- The lush “thickets of the Jordan” are deceptive.
- The land grows marsh vegetation but crops do not survive annual flooding.
- At flood time, the Jordan is not possible to traverse, but in the dry season, you can wade across it.



Photo by Erick Lessing; Brodsky, 1992, BR, 8:2:37

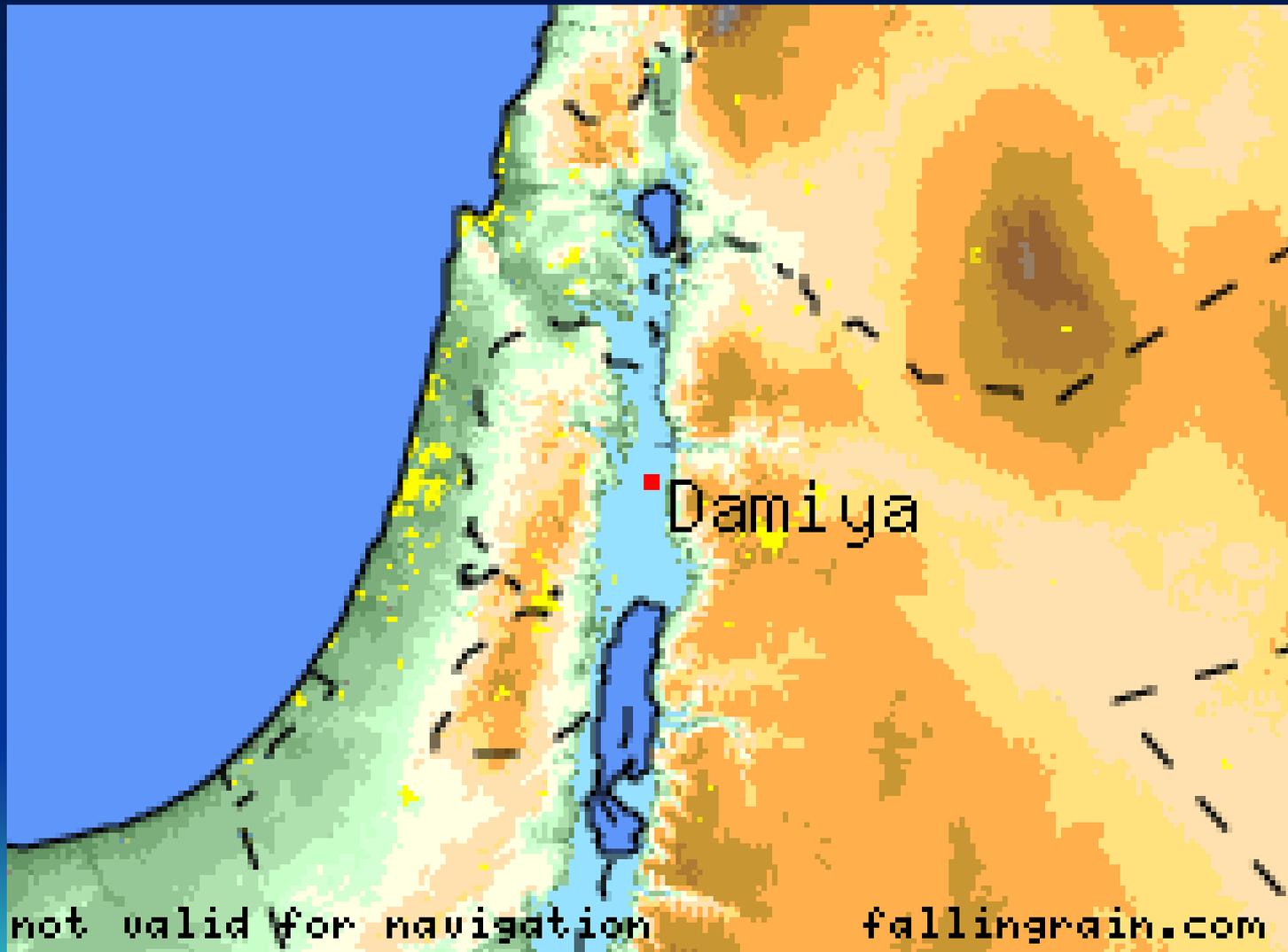


JORDAN RIVER AND THICKETS

Crossing the Jordan

- It is postulated that the drying up of the Jordan at flood stage was caused by an earthquake,
- Resulted in a landslide that created a dam on the Jordan for a short period of time at Adam, modern Damiya.
- Similar events were recorded in 1267 AD when the river was dammed for 10 hours
- 1927 AD when it was stopped for 21.5 hours.
- Other stoppages are known in AD 1906, 1834, 1546, 1267 and 1160





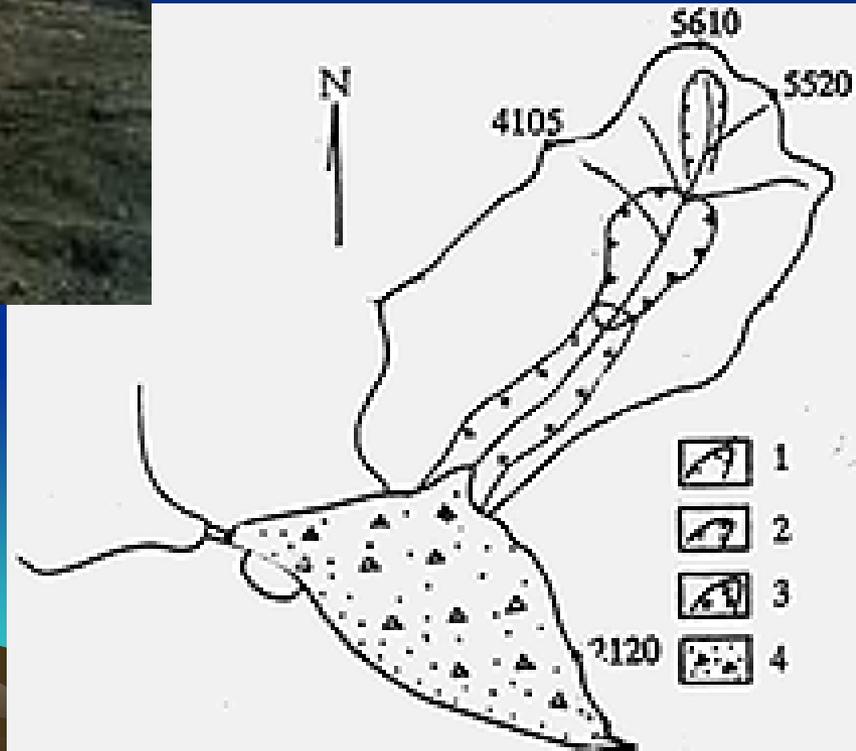
not valid for navigation

fallingrain.com

Layou River, Dominica, 1997



Yigongzangbu River, Tibet, 2000



Yigongzangbu River, Tibet, 2000



JERICHO

- Neolithic settlement in 8000 BC makes Jericho the one of the oldest cities
- At 670 ft below sea level, it is also the lowest
- It was strategically located, guarding the heartland of Canaan.
- Any invasion of the central hill country from the east would first have to capture Jericho



Jericho



Neolithic Tower, Jericho, 7000 BC



BWP:BA66 Photo by Zev Radovan



Flint Arrowheads, Neolithic Tower, Jericho

BWP:BA76: Photo by Zev Radovan

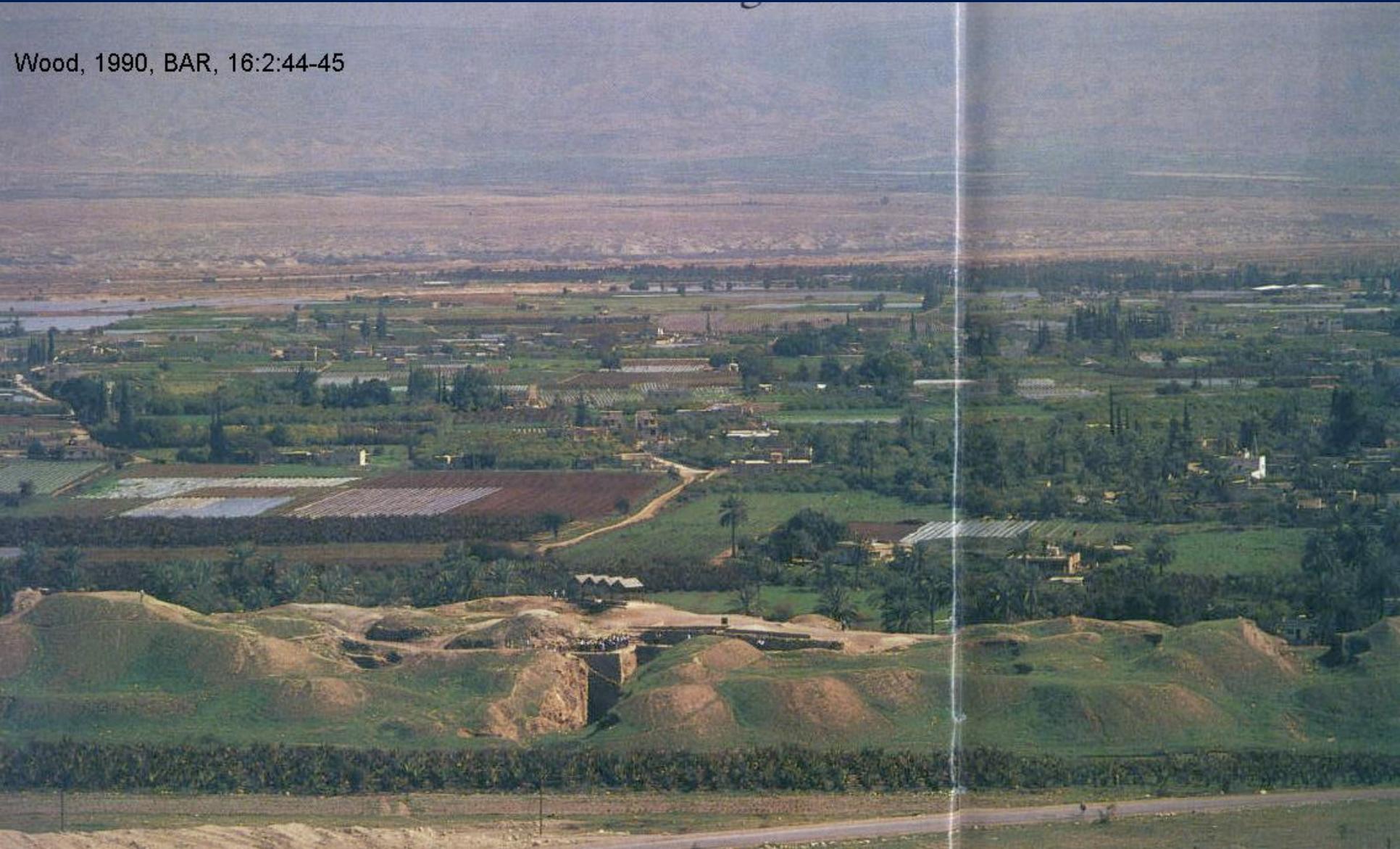
Jericho, 8000 BC

- End of Ice Age
- Climate was pleasant
- Not deadly hot, like today
- An spring, an oasis of moderate micro-climate in a frozen world



JERICHO

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:44-45



Jericho

- Tell-es Sultan is the site of ancient Jericho.
- Near a spring on the western edge of the Jordan Valley, just north of the Dead Sea

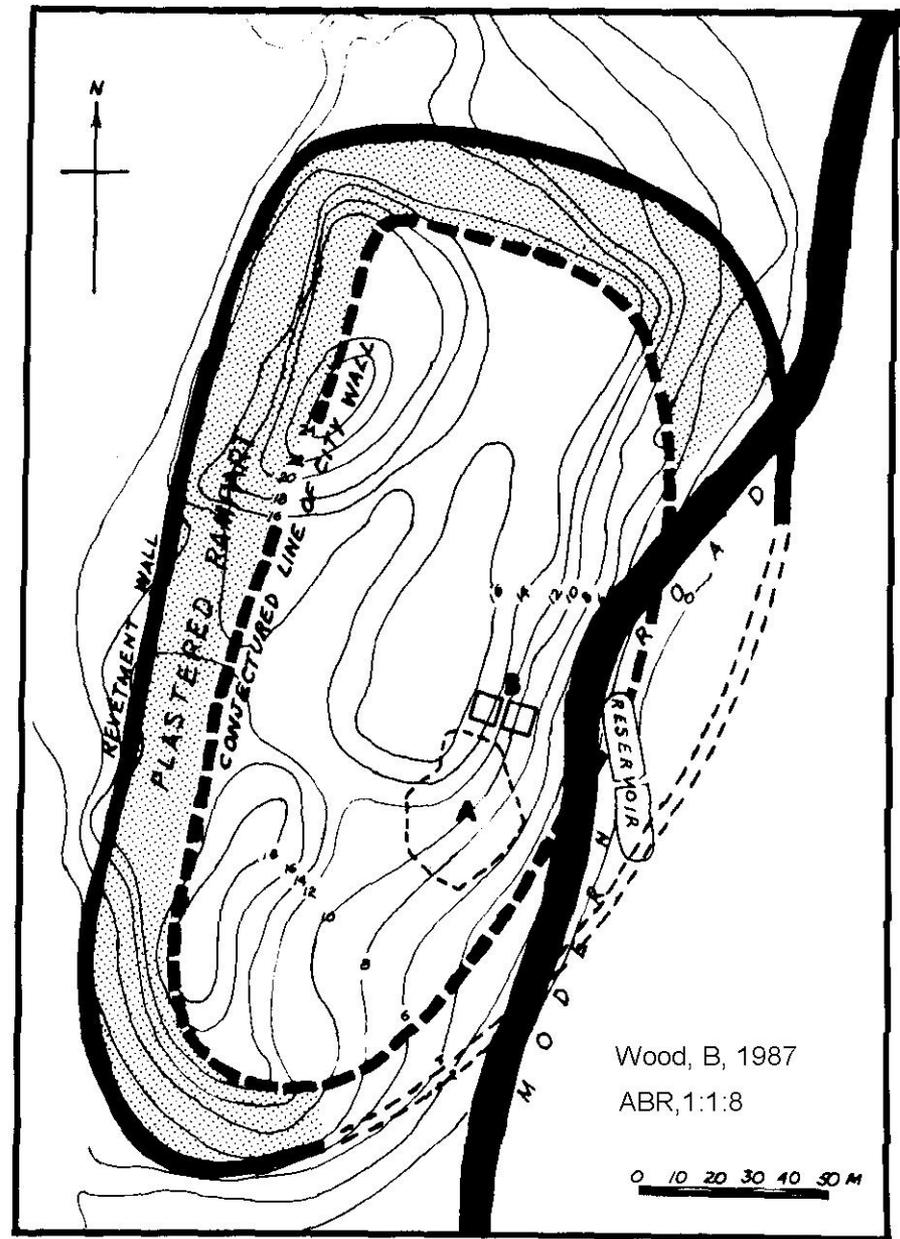


Spring of Jericho

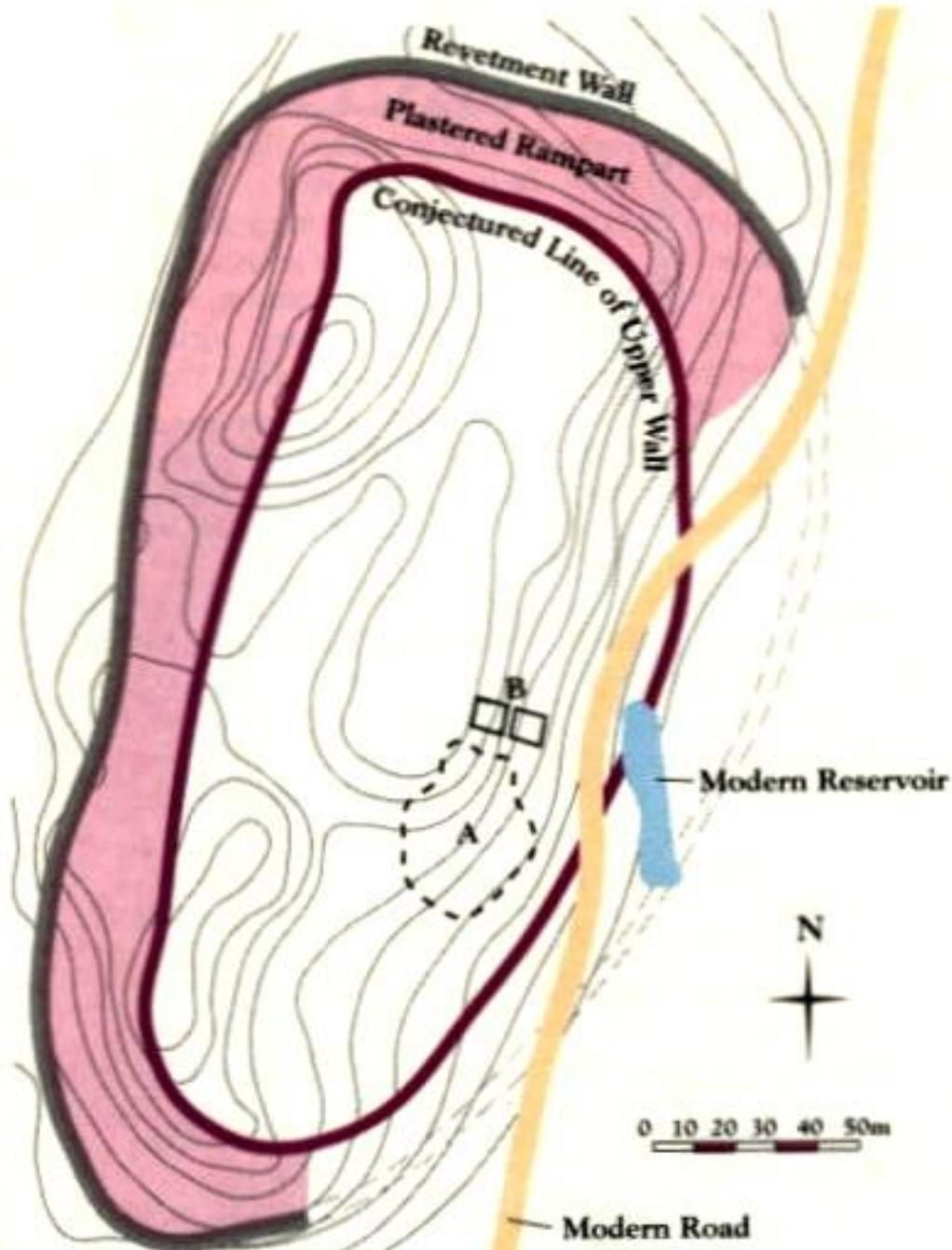


BWP:BA11 Photo by Garo Nalbandian

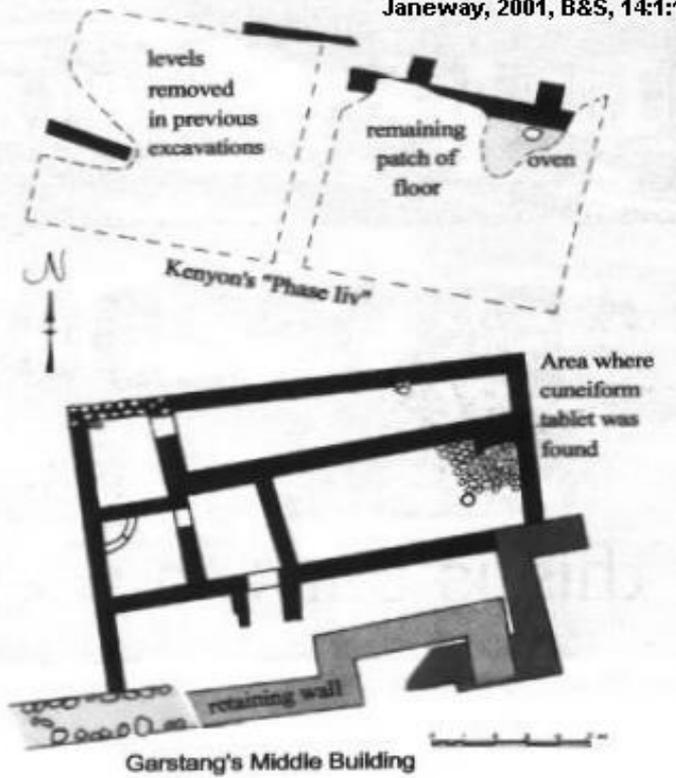
Ancient Cities of Jericho



Plan of Jericho showing the revetment wall, plastered rampart and conjectured line of the city wall of the final Bronze Age city. A and B: areas excavated by Garstang and Kenyon, respectively, where buildings from the final Bronze Age city were found.



EVYANT WOOD



JERICHO, 14th century BC (LB IIA): Elgon's Palace

JERICHO DEBATES

- Liberal (minimalist) scholars tend to take the position that Jericho was not destroyed by Israelites (c. 1250 BC), but by earlier invaders.
- No evidence (yet) for movement of people from the Jordan Valley into Judah's territory during Iron Age I.



JERICHO DEBATES

- Conservative and, particularly, fundamentalist (maximalist) scholars say that Jericho was destroyed by a miracle (or miraculously timed earthquake)
- Joshua's army destroyed the city just as it says in the book which bears his name.



JERICHO DEBATES

- Likewise, liberal scholars think the Jericho/Ai stories are etiological.
- Designed to explain the ruins of those cities.
- These stories were an invented history for the purpose of glorifying the house of David.
- According to this view, Jericho did not exist at the end of the 14th century (1400 BC, end of LB1) or the end of the 12th century BC (1200 BC), or if it did, it was only a small village



JERICHO DEBATES

- In defense of an Israelite destruction, conservatives say the Biblical account circa 1450 BC fits Jericho's location, environment, time of year and people.
- It was a real historic victory elaborated in an epic.



JERICHO DEBATES

- They postulate that the early Israelite military victories and the formation of the 12-member league was very rapid (100-200 years) and completed by the late 12th and 11th centuries BC



NEXT TIME

- Garstang
- Kenyon
- Wood
- Bienkowski



Archaeology and the Old Testament

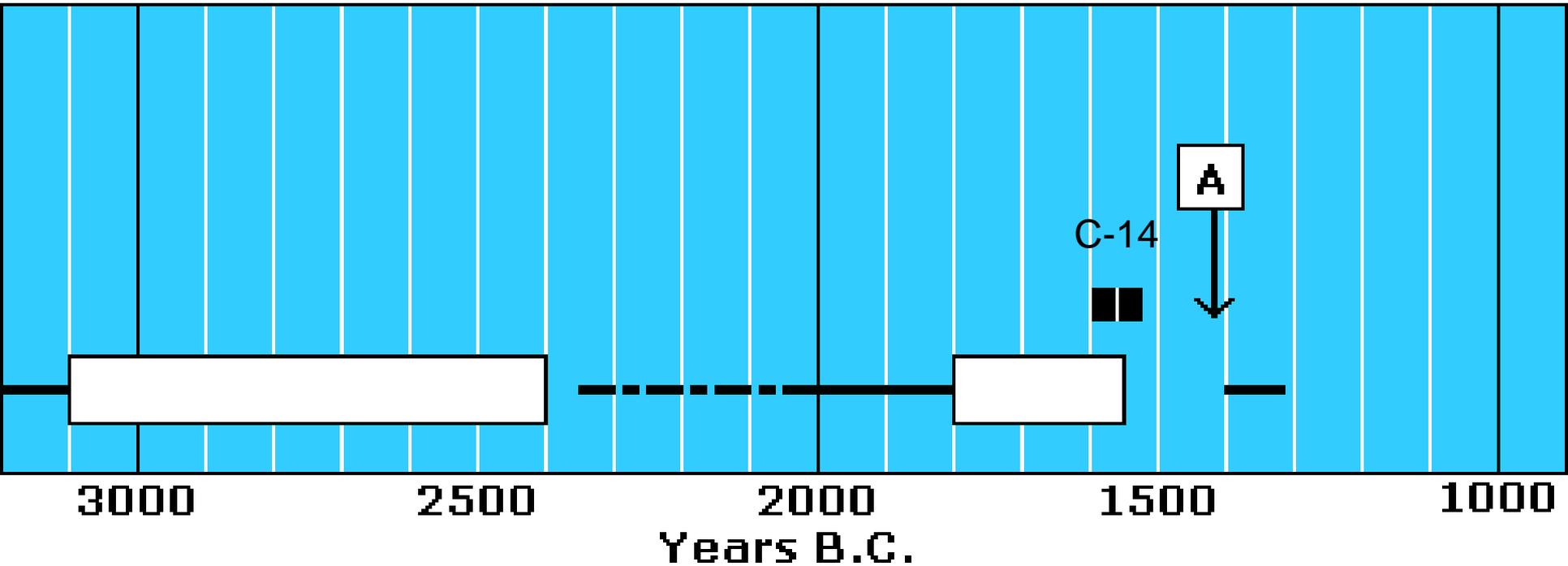
Chapter 14: The Conquest, Part 3

Dr. Gregg Wilkerson



Dating Joshua's Jericho

Archaeological History of Jericho

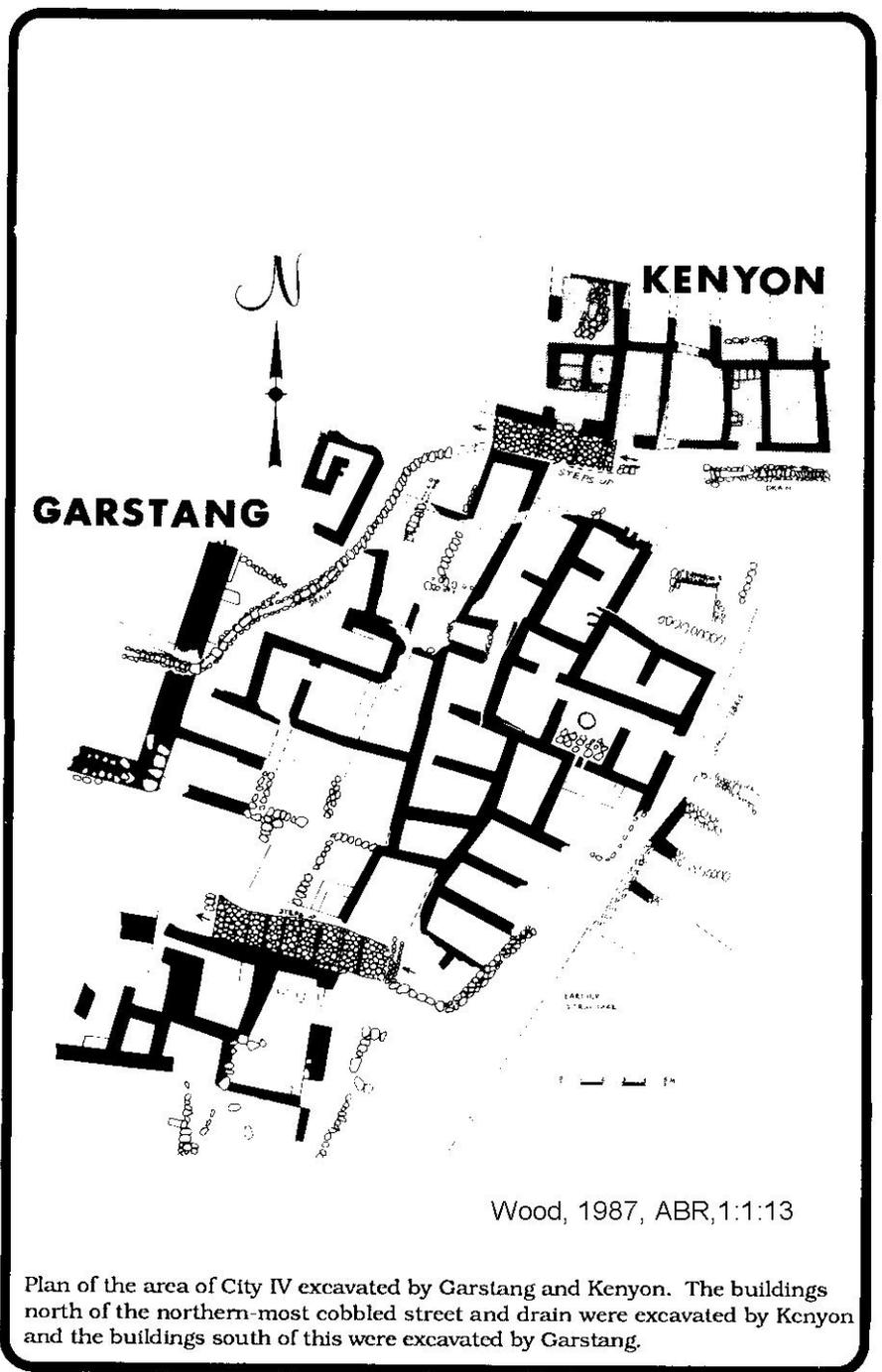
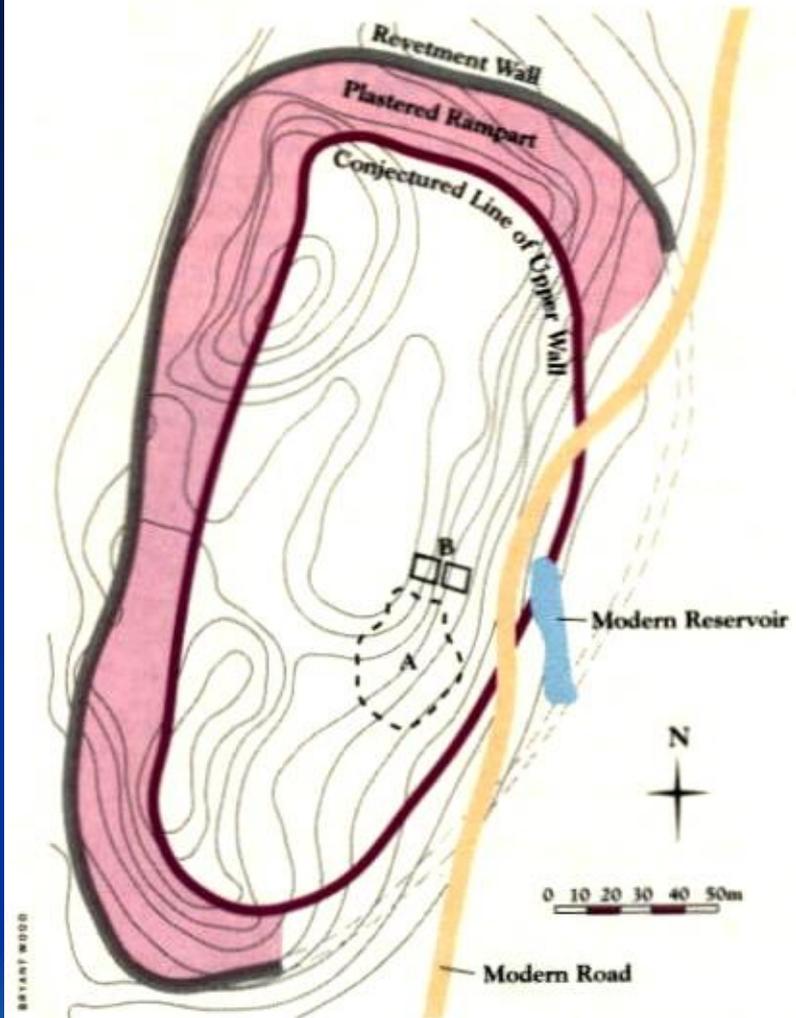


White bars = major walled occupations Black lines = unwalled occupations

John Garstang

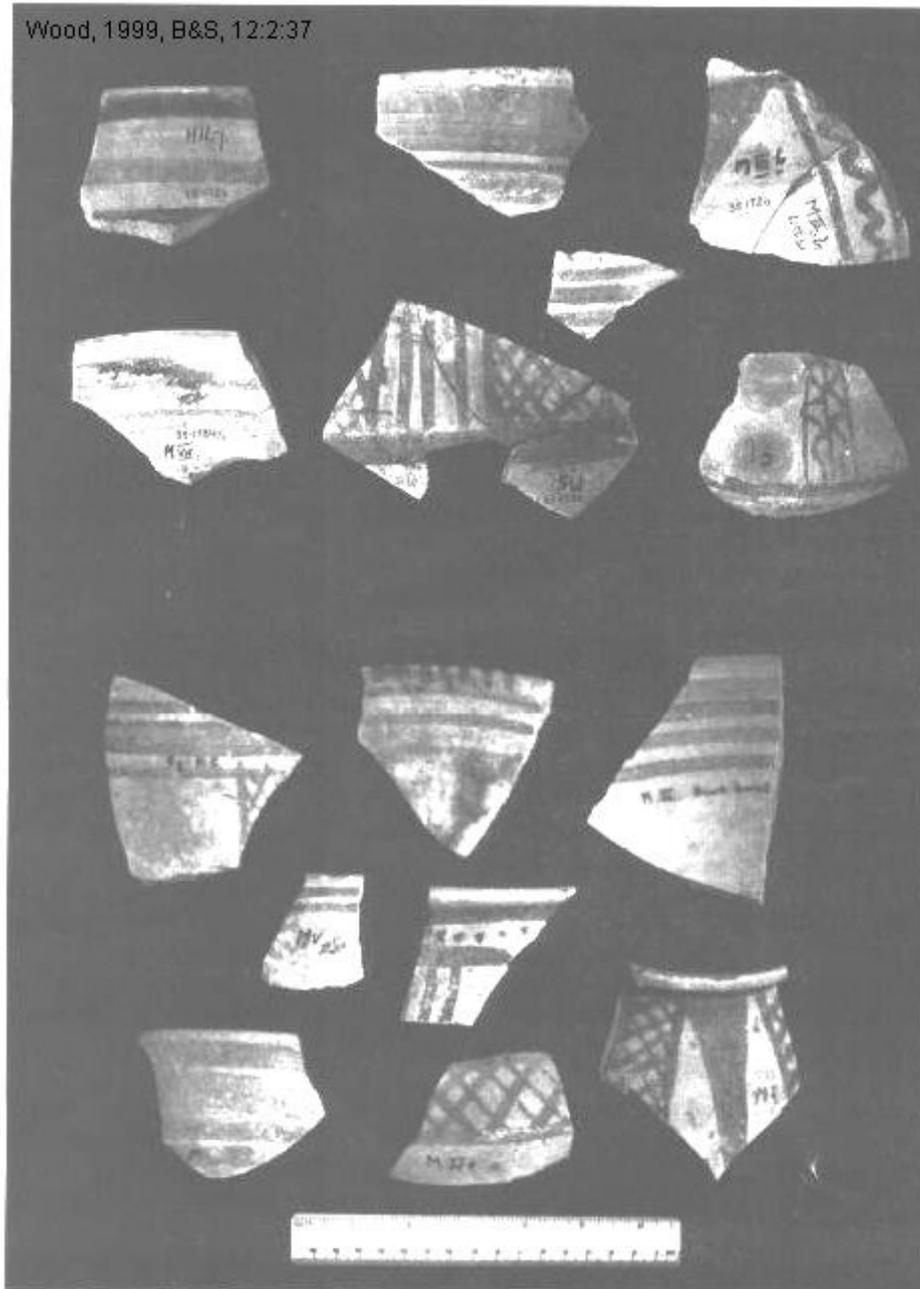


- 1879-1956
- Between 1930 and 1936 found a double wall around Tell-es Sultan (Jericho)
- He dated the wall to the late 15th-early 14th centuries BC (Late Bronze Age)
- Agreed with the conservative interpretation of a Conquest circa 1400 BC



Wood, 1987, ABR, 1:1:13

Plan of the area of City IV excavated by Garstang and Kenyon. The buildings north of the northern-most cobbled street and drain were excavated by Kenyon and the buildings south of this were excavated by Garstang.



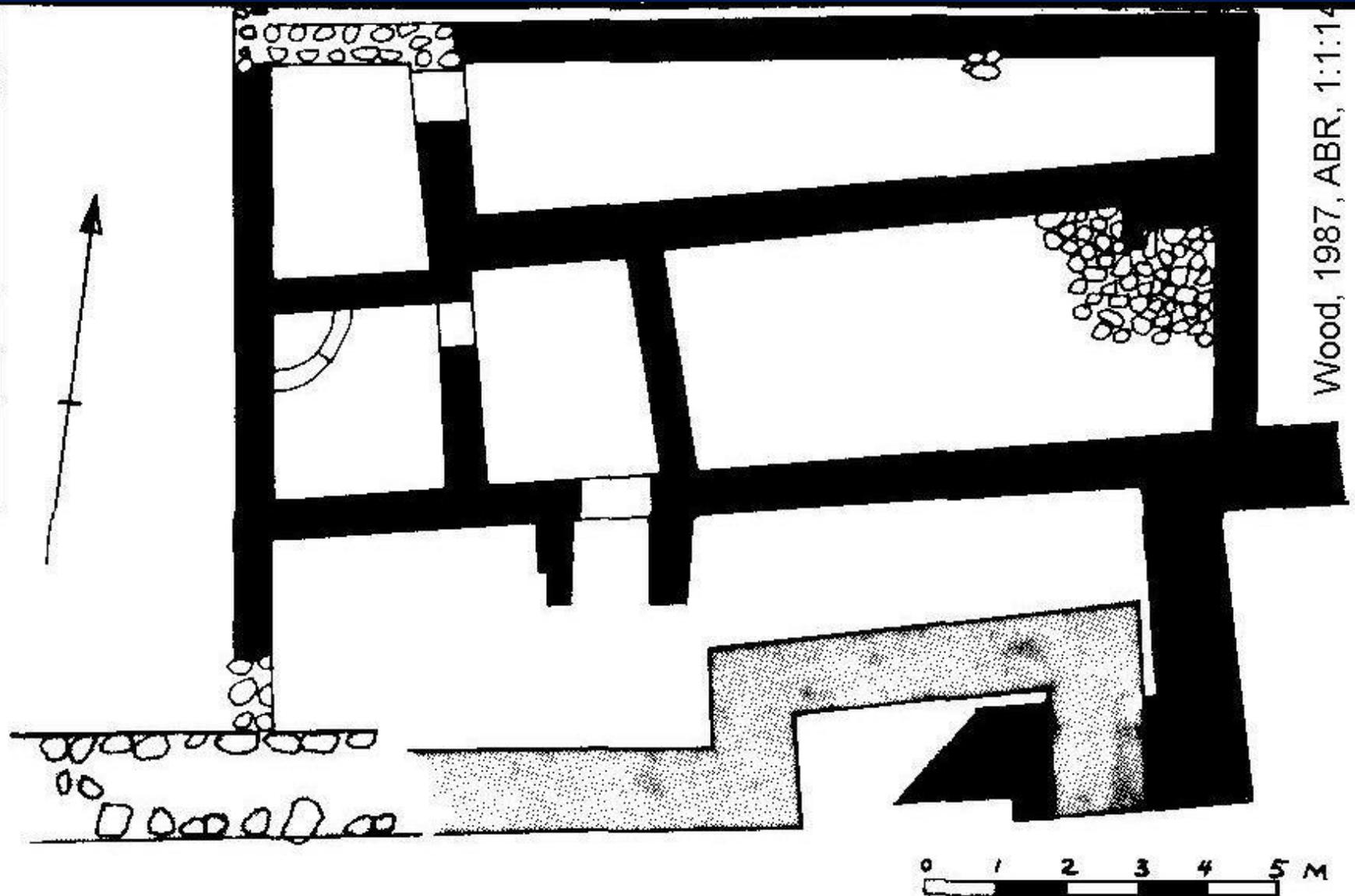
Philistine Bichrome Ware, Garstang excavations

Pottery found at Jericho by John Garstang. This distinctive pottery, decorated with red and black geometric patterns, was in use only in the 15th century BC, the time of the Israelite Conquest according to Biblical chronology.

Garstang's Jericho

- This wall he associated with City IV
- City IV was interpreted as Jericho in the time of Joshua.
- City IV was followed by a period of long abandonment and then a period of "Middle Building" in the late 14th century BC
- This later building he associated with palace of Elgon, king of Moab (Judges 3)

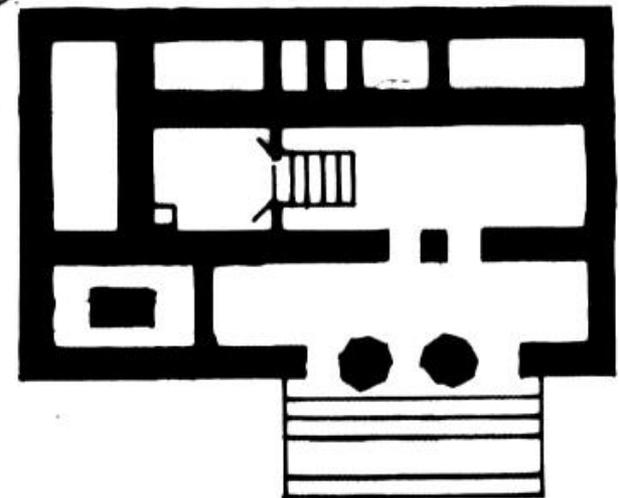
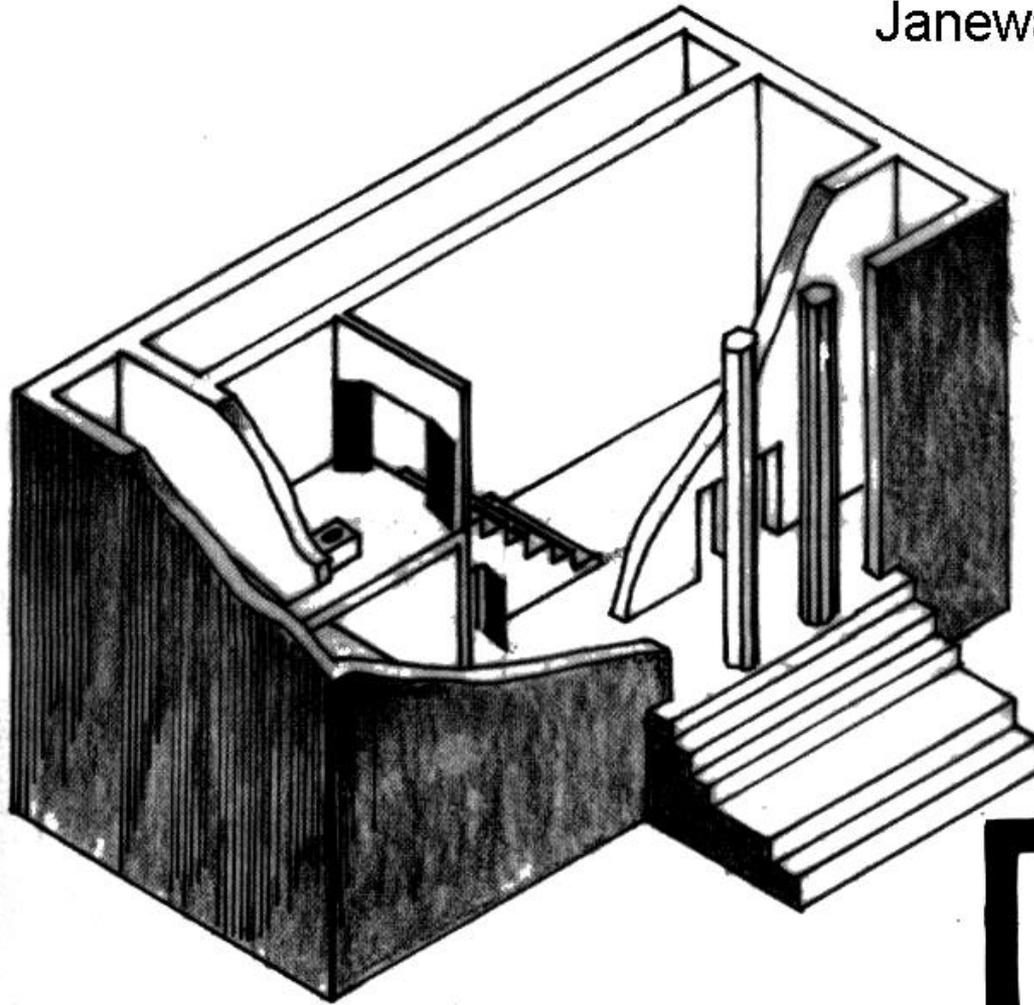




Wood, 1987, ABR, 1:1:14

Plan of the "Middle Building" excavated by John Garstang.

Janeway, 2001, B&S 14:1:17



**Elgon's Iron age II palace at
Jericho, bit halani style plan**

Garstang's Jericho

- After the "Middle Building" phase in the late 14th century BC...
- The next occupation of Jericho was in Iron Age during the divided monarchy



Kathleen Kenyon

- 1952-58 re-excavations
- Re-evaluation of John Garstang's work
- Major influence in archaeology and biblical studies.
- Excavated about 1/13th as much as Garstang
- Largely ignored much of his work.
- Re-dated the conflagration of Jericho to the 13th century BC



Kathleen Kenyon

1906-1978

BETTMANN/CORBIS

Kathleen Kenyon. Mazar, 2006, BAR, 32:1:18

Kenyon's Jericho

- Basing date for Jericho's destruction on the *absence* of specific types of imported pottery.
- The "Conquest" of Jericho was in 1325 BC when the city had no walls.
- Destroyed levels of City IV dated to Middle Bronze Age I (MBI) circa 1550 BC (approximately the same time as destructions at Hebron and Lachish).



Kenyon's Jericho

- Kenyon attributed the destruction of MBI Jericho to the Hyksos or to Egyptians in follow-up campaigns as they pursued the fleeing Hyksos.
- Jericho was not destroyed by Israelites.
- There was no walled city at Jericho for the Israelites to conquer.

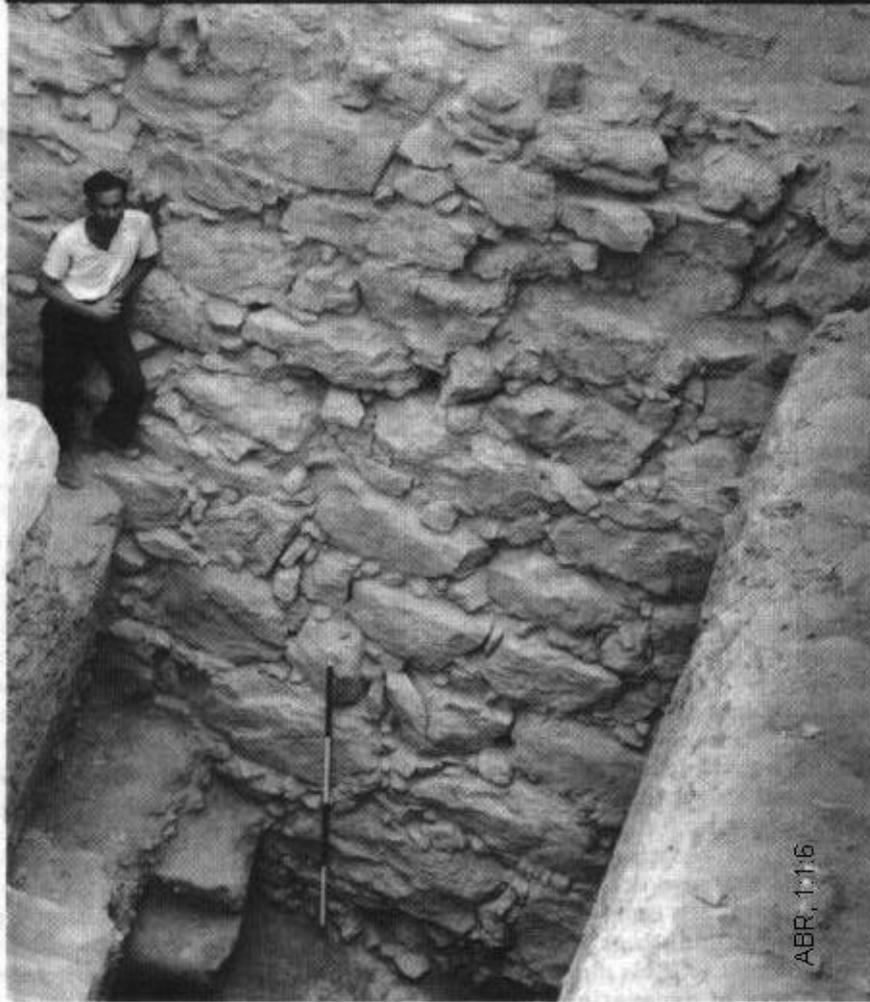




One of a number of storage jars full of grain found by Kethleen Kenyon in the final Bronze Age city at Jericho. (Photo courtesy of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.) Wood, B., 1987, ARB,1:1:9

Uncovering the truth at

JERICHO



The revetment wall of Jericho City IV uncovered by Kathleen Kenyon.
(Photo courtesy of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.)



Kathleen Kenyon's excavation of the walls of Jericho which showed that the walls date to the Early Bronze period rather than the Late Bronze period as proposed by John Garstang.



Portion of the final Bronze Age city excavated by Kathleen Kenyon. The houses opened onto a street, seen on the left. (Photo courtesy of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem.) Wood, 1987, ABR, 1:1:9

LACHISH LEVEL BY LEVEL King, 2005, BAR, 31:4:41

	DATES	EVENTS	MAJOR FINDS
Level I	4th century B.C.E.	Alexander the Great defeats Darius III; Persian empire falls	Solar Shrine; fortified city wall and gate; Palace
	6th century B.C.E.	Persian empire established	
Level II	Early 6th century B.C.E.	Babylonians conquer southern kingdom of Judah (586 B.C.E.); Lachish destroyed;	fortified city; city wall and gate; "Lachish Letters,"
	Second half of 7th century B.C.E.	Assyrian empire falls to Babylonians (612 B.C.E.)	Palace-fort in ruins
BREAK IN HABITATION FROM SECOND HALF OF 7TH CENTURY B.C.E. TO 701 B.C.E.			
Level III	8th century B.C.E.	Lachish destroyed (701 B.C.E.); Assyrians conquer northern kingdom of Israel (722 B.C.E.)	Assyrian siege ramp; Judean counter ramp; fortified city with two walls; densely populated; third Judean palace-fort
Level IV	9th century B.C.E.	Kingdoms of Israel and Judah established; rise of Assyrian Empire	second Judean palace-fort; two city walls with gates
Level V	10th century B.C.E.	Lachish settled by Israelites; Pharaoh Shishak invades Israel (c. 925 B.C.E.); Lachish destroyed	first Judean palace-fort;
BREAK IN HABITATION FROM 12TH CENTURY B.C.E. TO END OF 11TH CENTURY B.C.E.			
Level VI	12th century B.C.E.	Lachish destroyed by invading Israelites or "Sea Peoples" (second half of 12th century B.C.E.); Egyptians control Canaan, including Lachish; Reign of Pharaoh Ramesses III (c. 1182-1151 B.C.E.)	Acropolis Temple (Fosse Temple abandoned); monumental public building; unfortified city; Ramesses III cartouche
Level VII	13th century B.C.E.	Egyptians control Canaan	Fosse Temple; domestic area in unfortified city

Kenyon's Jericho destroyed at this time

Kenyon's Jericho

- Kenyon accepted and confirmed Garstang's "Middle Building" date of late 14th century BC.
- She re-dated Garstang's double wall on top of the tell to a time 1,000 years earlier in Early Bronze Age.





Kenyon's
excavations

Jericho
revetment wall

She dated to
1350 BC



The author atop the stone retaining wall at Jericho. He is pointing to the remnants of the mud brick wall that collapsed when the Israelites attacked the city. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:2:33

Critique of Kenyon

- David Livingston (1988,1990)

- Bryant Wood (1987,1990)



Critique of Kenyon

- At Jericho, local Late Bronze Age I (LBI)
- pottery (1550-1400 BC)
- Egyptian scarabs
- stratigraphical considerations
- C-14 dating
- City IV was still in existence into 1400 BC.



Critique of Kenyon

- Kenyon's date for the destruction of Jericho of 1325 is too late. Kenyon misread *local* pottery of City IV as Middle Bronze Age I.
- It should have been dated to LBI. She had a date of destruction which was wrong by 75 yrs.
- Reinterpretation of the pottery indicates a date of circa 1400 BC, in agreement with Early Date theory

Critique of Kenyon

- Some imported pottery was found at Jericho
- Contradicting Kenyon's argument of a late date based on **absence** of Cypriot bichrome ware.



Fritz, 2002, BAR, 28:4:30

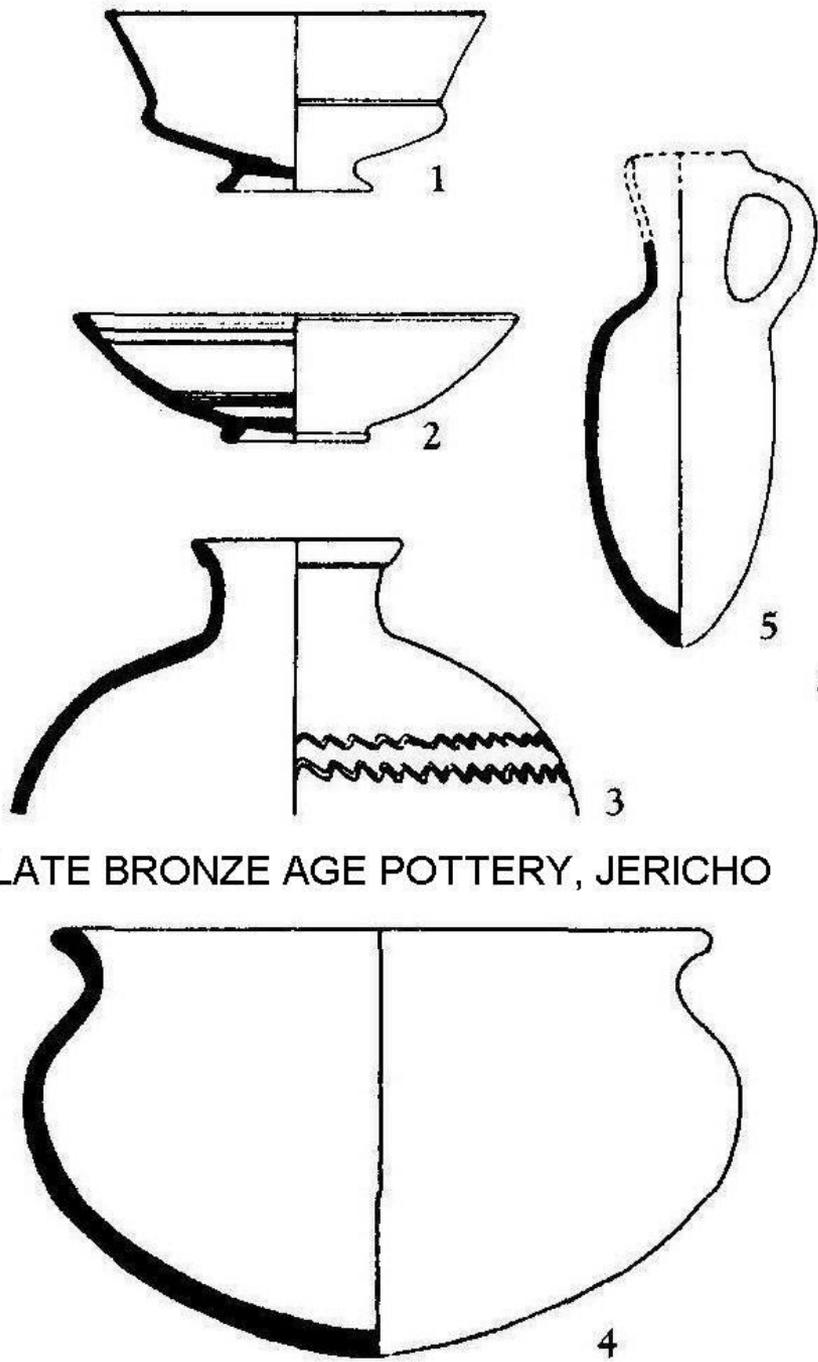


Philistine Bichrome
Ware

Cypriot
imported
bichrome
ware,
Jericho,
City IV



KENYON, JERICHO (1); JERICHO 5 (2-5)



LATE BRONZE AGE POTTERY, JERICHO

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:52

Critique of Kenyon

- Both Kenyon and Garstang dug in poor quarters of the city.
- In those areas exotic and expensive bichrome ware would NOT be expected in abundance.
- Garstang's reports show considerable quantity of pottery decorated with red and black paint.



Critique of Kenyon

- These appear to be imported Cypriot bichrome ware
- This is the kind that Kenyon said she could not find and the absence of which was central to her dating the destruction of City IV to the 16th century BC



Critique of Kenyon Season of the Destruction

- Full grain jars show that the siege was short and that it occurred at harvest time (e.g. in the spring)
- Is in accordance with Joshua 2:8, 3:15, and 5:10.
- Inhabitants had no time to flee with foodstuffs.





Storage
Jars, full of
grains,
Jericho,
City IV

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:51; Photo BSAJ

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:51; Photo by Jericho Excavation Fund





Jars full of grain found by John Garstang at Jericho. They were charred in the fire that the Israelites set to destroy the Canaanite city.

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:2:42

Critique of Kenyon Season of the Destruction

- This observation contradicts Kenyon's theory that Egyptians destroyed City IV.
- Normally the Egyptians attacked prior to harvest when food supplies inside the fortified cities were at their lowest.



Critique of Kenyon Stratigraphy

- From Middle Bronze Age II (Phase 32, 1650-1550 BC) to the destruction of City IV there are:
- 20 architectural phases with 3 major and 12 minor destructions.
- All this stratigraphy developed in only about 100 years.
- Too short a time to have development of this extensive stratigraphy.



Critique of Kenyon Collapsed Wall

- Excavations of revetment wall at base of mound show :
- "fallen red bricks piling nearly to the top of the revetment wall"
- These bricks came down from a now-eroded and collapsed upper red mud brick wall that was on top of the stone foundation wall as described in Josh 6:20



Critique of Kenyon Collapsed Wall

- The amount of fallen-down bricks in Kenyon's excavation are enough to have come from an upper wall 6.5 feet wide and 12 feet high.
- So there was a walled city at Jericho!



Critique of Kenyon Collapsed Wall

- This pile of fallen bricks made a natural causeway for Israelites use to go "up into the city" (Josh 6:20).



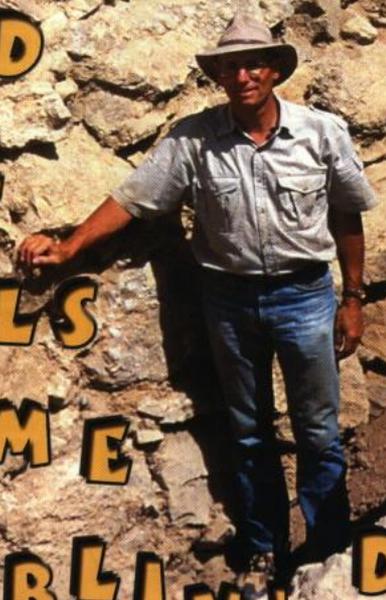
BIBLE AND SPADE

VOL.12, NO.2

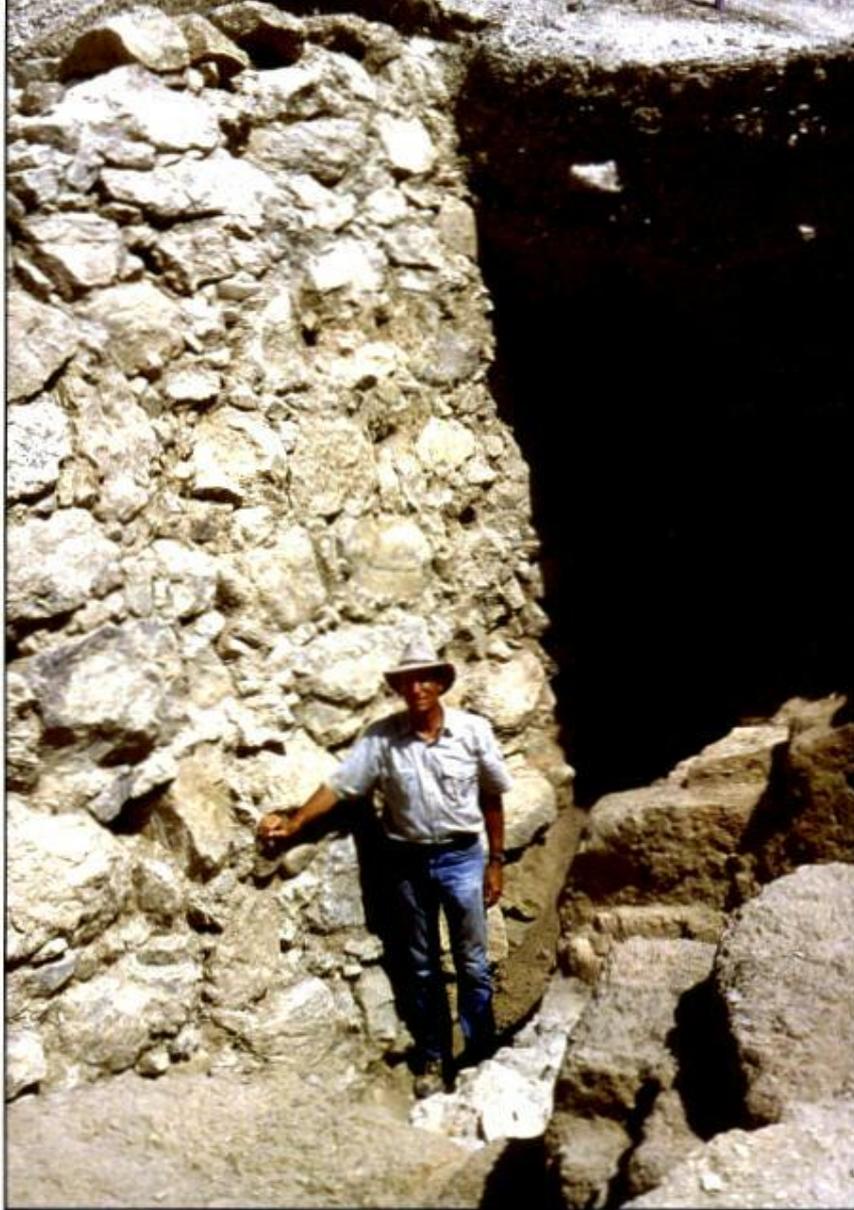
SPRING 1999

JERICHO

"AND
THE
WALLS
CAME
TUMBLIN'
DOWN!"



JERICHO
REVTMENT
WALL



Jericho retaining wall from the time of the Conquest that held in place an earthen embankment, Italian-Palestinian excavation, 1997. The Israelites marched around this wall for seven days. When the mud brick city walls collapsed, they were deposited at the base of the retaining wall forming a ramp by which the Israelites could enter the city (see drawing, previous page). Ashley and Aust, 2003, B&S, 16:2:55; Photo by Bryan Wood

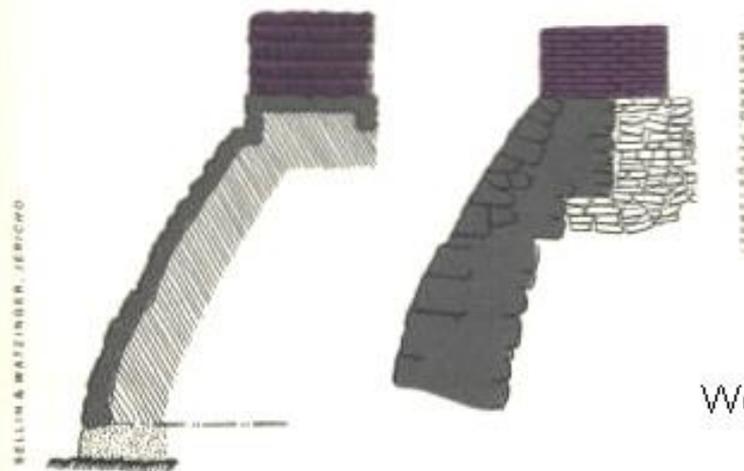
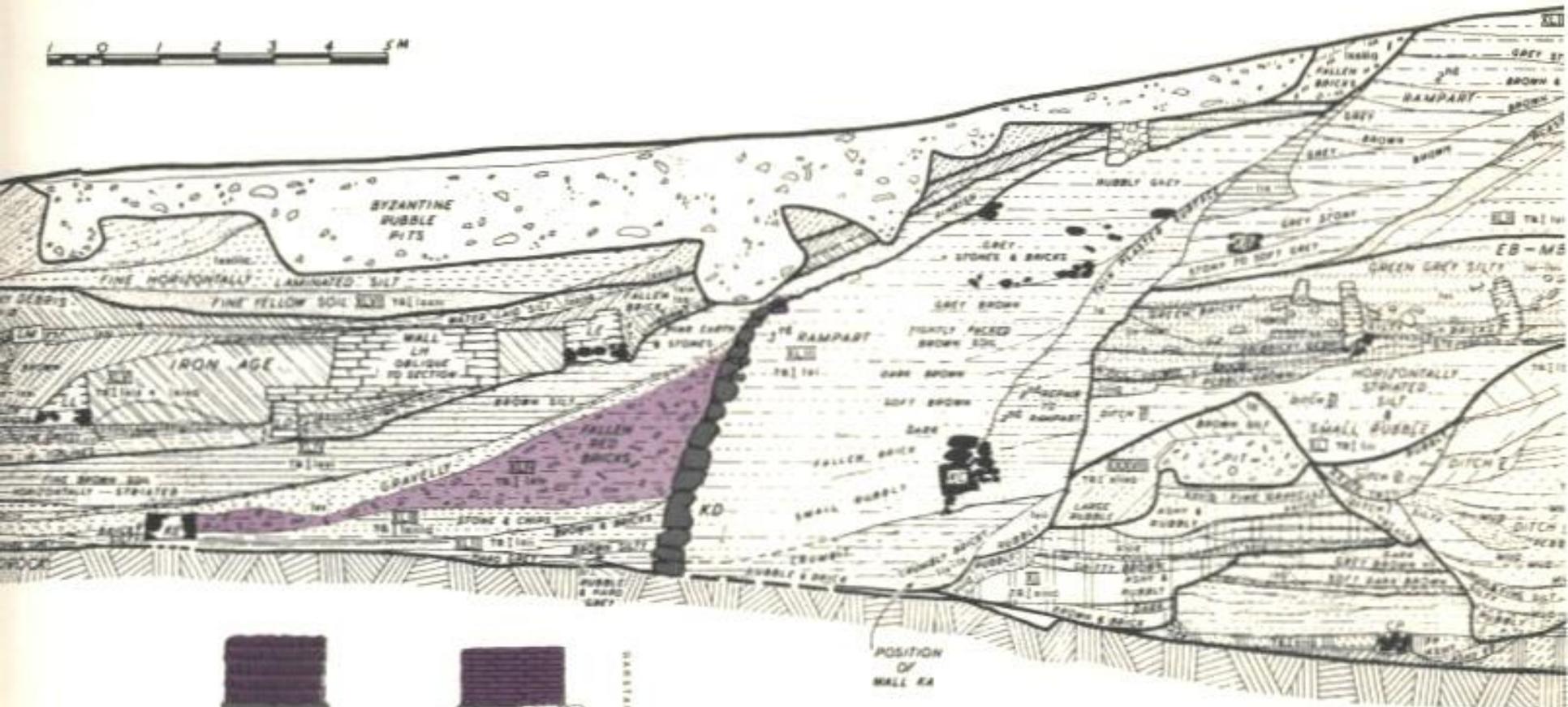


JERICHO REVTMENT WALL

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:55; Photo by BSAJ

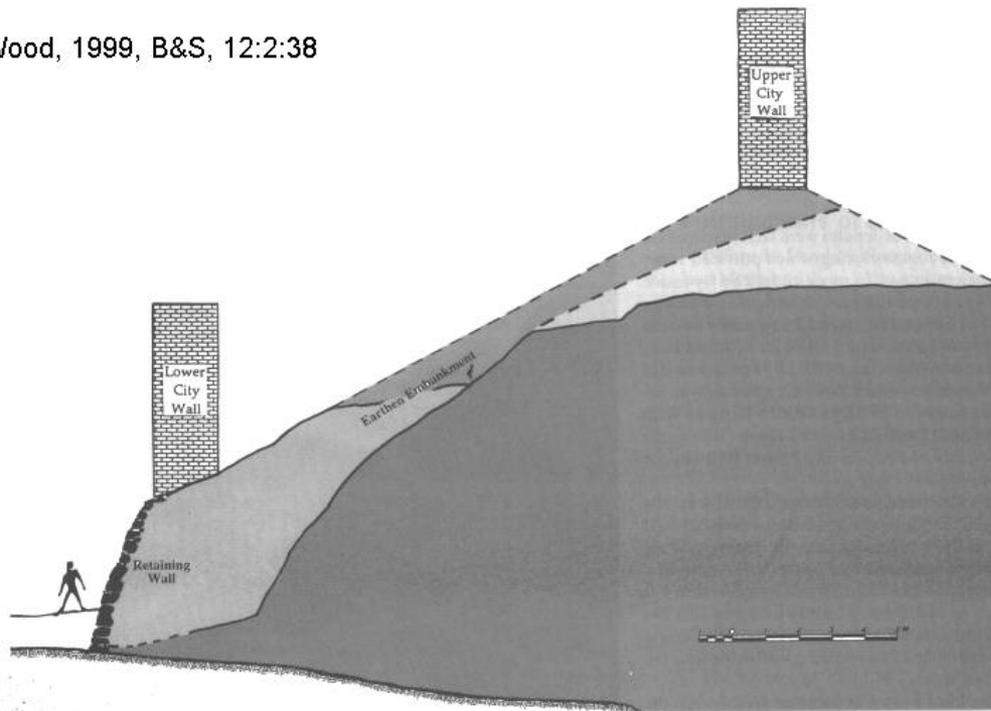


The author atop the stone retaining wall at Jericho. He is pointing to the remnants of the mud brick wall that collapsed when the Israelites attacked the city. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:2:33

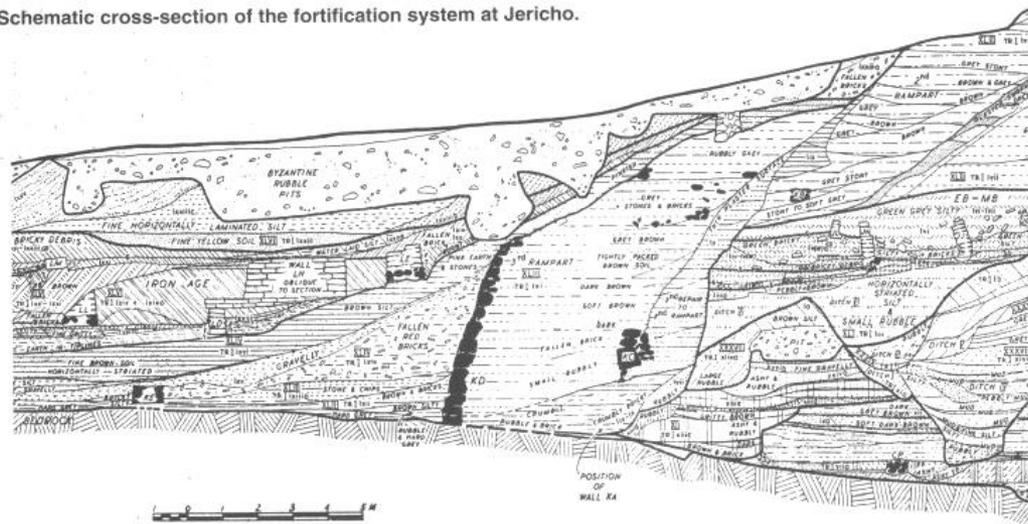


- Stone Revetment Wall
- Mudbrick Parapet Wall
- Fallen Mudbricks

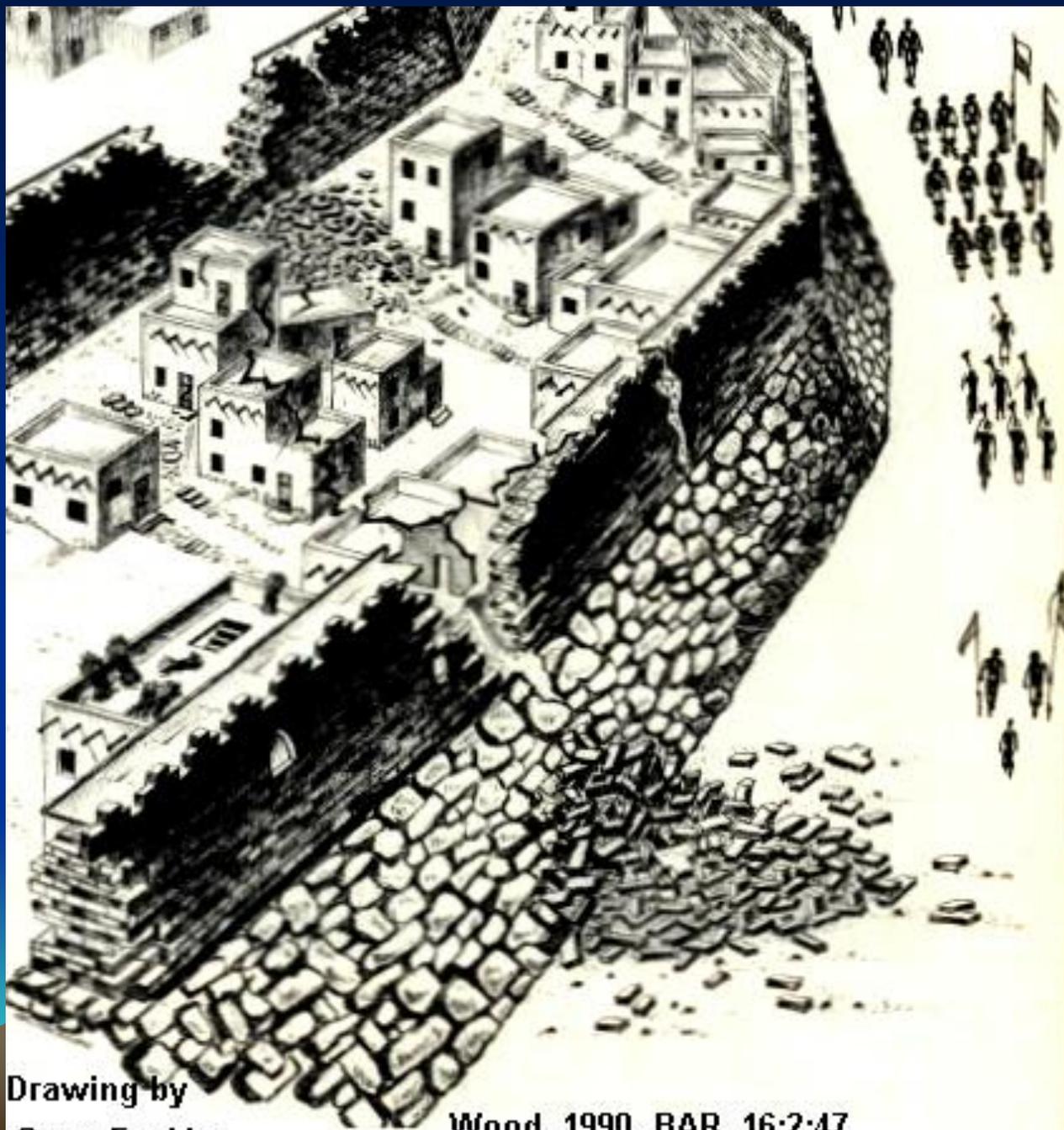
Wood, 1990, BAR. 16:2:55; Illustration after Kenyon, Jericho 3, Plate



Schematic cross-section of the fortification system at Jericho.



Section drawing of the north balk of Kenyon's west trench, showing the fallen mud bricks from the collapsed city wall (shaded area to the left of retaining wall KD).



Drawing by
Gene Fackler

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:47

Jericho Earthquake and selective collapse of wall sections

- There is evidence for earthquake activity associated with the collapse of the wall.
- But the Bible does not mention an earthquake in association with the destruction of Jericho.



Jericho Earthquake and selective collapse of wall sections

- Surely, such an event would have been recognized and recorded.
- Later editors of the Book of Joshua may have omitted reference to an earthquake in order to magnify the miraculous nature of the conquest of the city.



Destruction of City IV

- The destruction of City IV was complete.
- One meter or more of destruction debris over entire excavation area.
- So Garstang was right about the destruction date of City IV, after all.
- But distinctive Israelite material culture is not found in abundance in Canaan until about 150 to 200 years later.
- This is why most scholars reject a Conquest date as early as 1400

Egyptian Scarabs

- Egyptian scarabs and seals.
- In the cemetery northwest of Jericho.
- Shows that city was occupied continuously from the 18th to early 14th centuries.
- These scarabs contradict Kenyon's interpretation that the city was abandoned after 1550 BC.
- Scarabs are known from the reigns of Tutmosis III (c. 1504-1450 BC) and Amenhotep III (c. 1386-1349 BC)





Jericho
scarab seals
from the
cemetery
northwest of
the city

Wood, 1990, BAR, 16:2:53; Photo by T. Sagiv

C-14 Dating of City IV

- Six of these samples were charred cereal grains from the City IV destruction.
- City IV was destroyed in c. 1550 BC.
- This is 150 years earlier than the traditional date of 1407 BC
- An earlier C-14 date supported the c. 1400 traditional date.



C-14 vs Pottery

- Generally, pottery stratigraphy and dendrochronology (tree ring dating) are more accurate and precise than C-14 dating
- C-14 dating is getting better all the time, as is the pottery stratigraphy

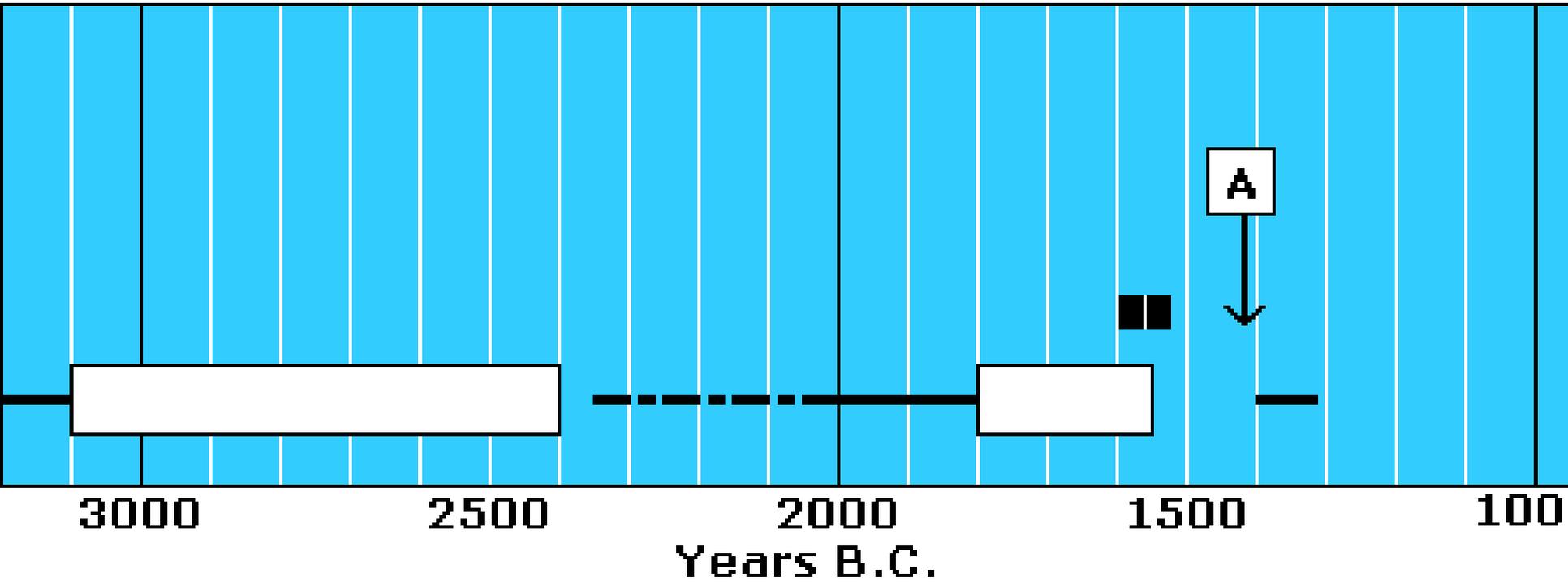


Hyper-Early Date Theory

- Gerald E. Aardsma
- 1996
- Conquest occurred c. 2400 B.C., not c. 1400 B.C.



Archaeological History of Jericho



Jericho Attack Rituals

- There were several rituals associated with fall of Jericho.
- The Israelite activities of marching, blowing trumpets and shouting were imitations or mockery of Canaanite religious practice.



Jericho = Yeracho

- Jericho (Yeracho) is derived from the Canaanite god Yerach.
- He was the moon god.
- The sun god was female. Her name was Shamash



BWP:AR12

Photo by Garo Nalbandian



Hazor, Late Bronze Age
Stele with Lunar Symbol

Two hands raised in
prayer to the
crescent moon
(Yerach, male, later
Shamash, female)



Jericho Attack and the Ugarit Legend of Keret

- People march once a day for 6 days around the city and 7 times on the 7th day.
- This is followed by a loud shout.
- Then gold and silver are "devoted" to God.
- In both stories, a woman (Rahab) is saved, becomes mother of a king and saves two messengers.



Jericho Attack and the Ugarit Legend of Keret

- **Joshua 6 (verse)**
- 1. No one went out or came in
- 2. King and mighty men "given" to Joshua
- 9a. Men of war first
- 9b. All the people
- 9c. Trumpets
- 10. No noise until the last day
- 14. Six day march
- **Kernet A lines**
- 1) 111-113
- 2)
- .
- 9a) 86-88
- 9b) 85-104
- 9c) 92-93
- 10) 116, 119-120
- 14) 106-108



Jericho Attack and the Ugarit Legend of Keret

- **Joshua 6 (verse)**
 - 15a. Early on the seventh day
 - 15b. Seven times on seventh day
 - 16. Shout
 - 19. Gold and silver are "devoted"
 - 25a. Rahab saved (Israel "got" a woman)
 - 25b. She became mother of a king
 - 25c. She had saved the two messengers
- **Kernet A (lines)**
 - 15a) 118
 - 15b) 114-115
 - 16) 119-122
 - 19) 126-127,138-139
 - 25a) 142-153
 - .
 - 25b) 152-153
 - 25c) 124-125,136



NEXT TIME

- The first and second battles for Ai



Archaeology and the Old Testament

Chapter 14: The Conquest, Part 4

Dr. Gregg Wilkerson



Ai

- After the Battle of Jericho, the Israelites continued their invasion westward and attacked the hill-country city of Ai.
- The first attack was a failure (Joshua 7:2-6).
- That was due to disobedience and greed in defying God's ban on keeping plunder from Jericho (Joshua 7:1).

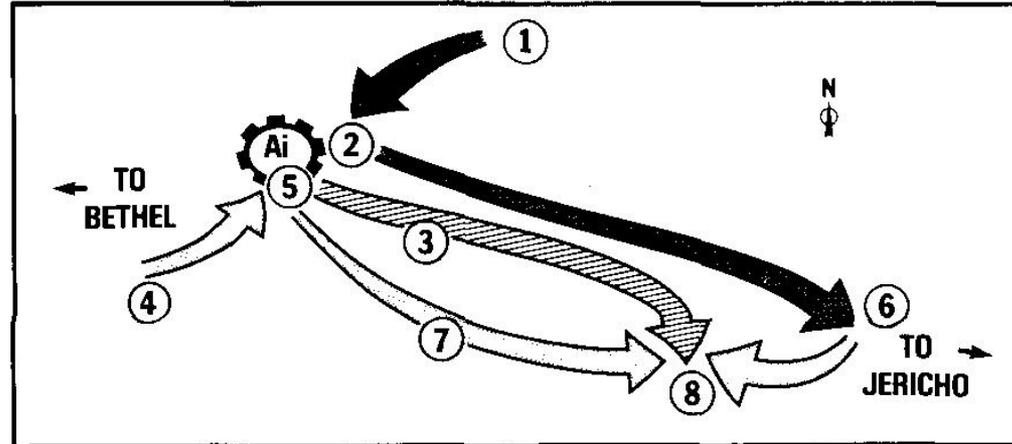


Ai

- After Ahican's disobedience was discovered and he executed by stoning (Joshua 7:14-26)
- A second battle of Ai occurred and the Israelites prevailed (Joshua 8:1-29).



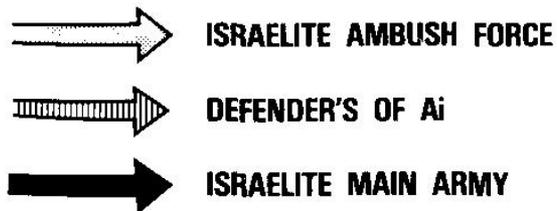
THE SECOND CAMPAIGN OF Ai* (JOSHUA 8)



LEGEND

1. ISRAELITE MAIN ATTACK.
2. FEIGNED RETREAT.
3. DEFENDER'S OF Ai PURSUE "FLEEING" ISRAELITES.
4. AMBUSER'S ASSAULT Ai AND SET Ai ON FIRE 5 .
6. ISRAELITE MAIN FORCE, SEEING SMOKE, TURNS TO ATTACK Ai's DEFENDERS.
7. AMBUSER'S ATTACK Ai's DEFENDERS FROM REAR.
8. Ai's DEFENDERS SURROUNDED AND ANNIHILATED.

*BASED ON A MAP IN "THE PROBLEMS OF Ai" BY ZIONY ZEVIT, BIBLICAL ARCHEOLOGICAL REVIEW, VOL. II, NO. 2, MARCH/APRIL 1985, P. 60.



Location of Ai

- The location of Biblical sister cities Ai and Bethel are disputed.
-



Ai and Bethel of c. 1250 BC

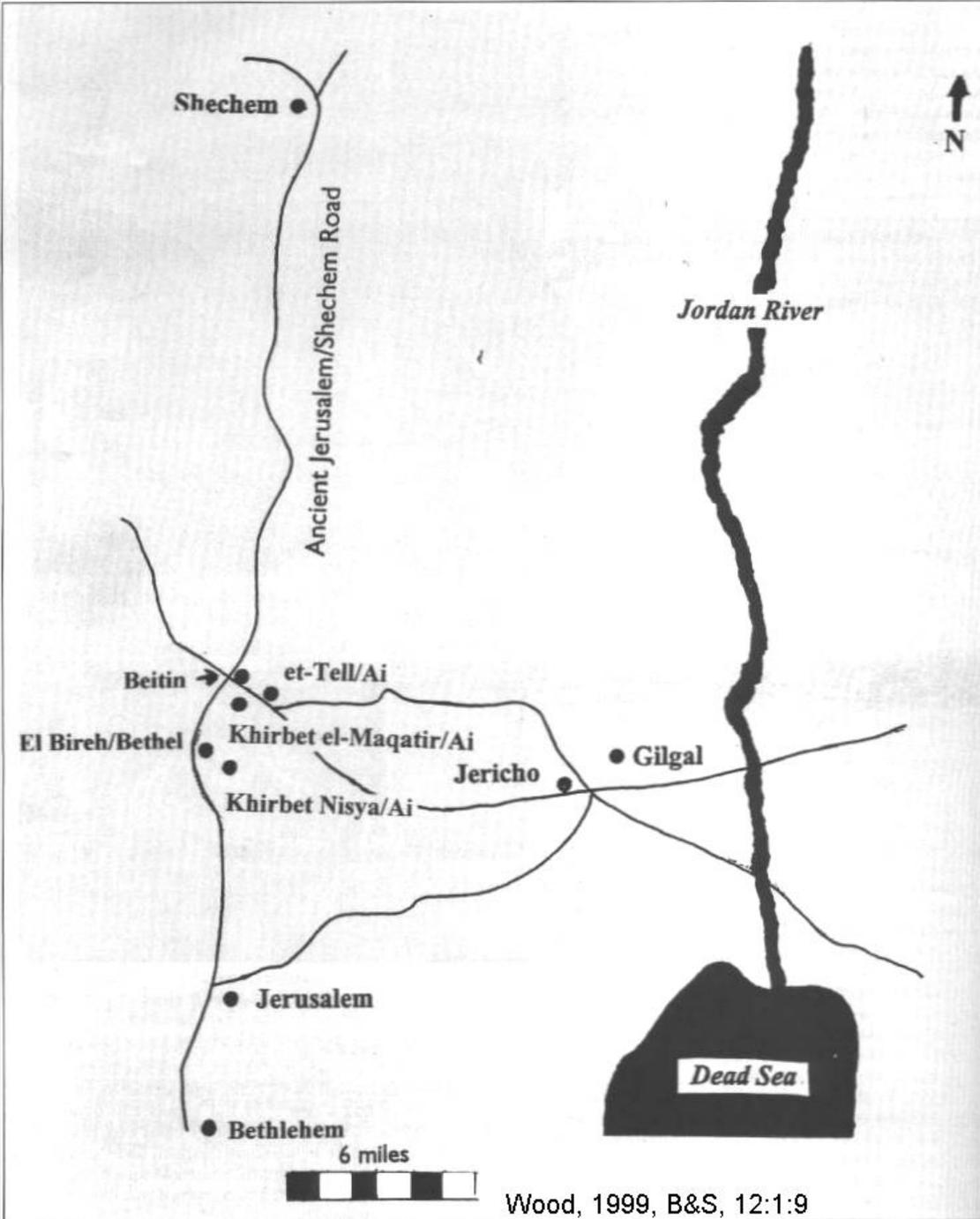
- Ai = Et Tell
- Bethel = Beitin



Ai and Bethel of c. 1400 BC

- Ai = Khirbet Nisya or Khirbet el Maqatir
- Bethel = El-Bireth

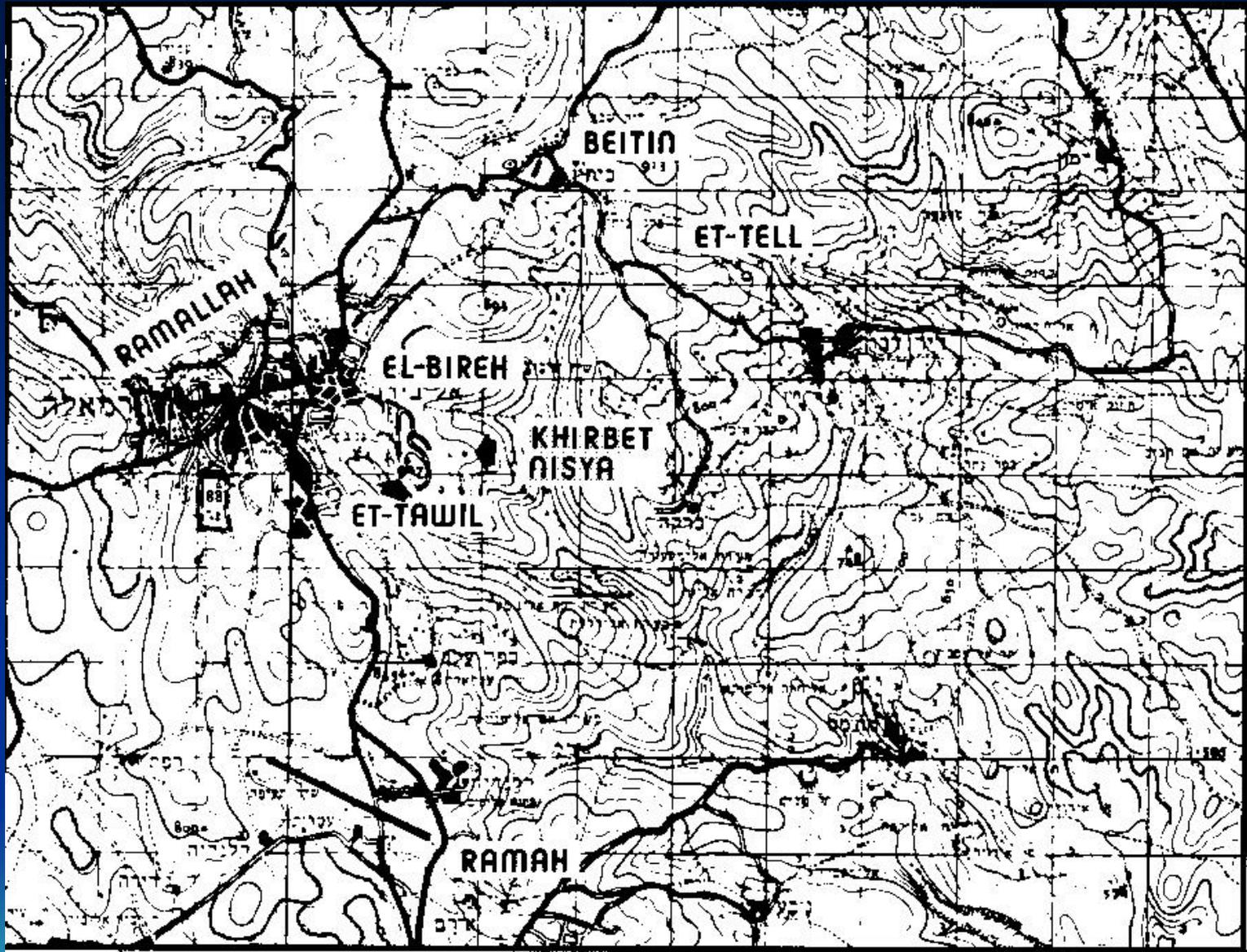




Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:9

Sites relating to the Ai story in the Book of Joshua.

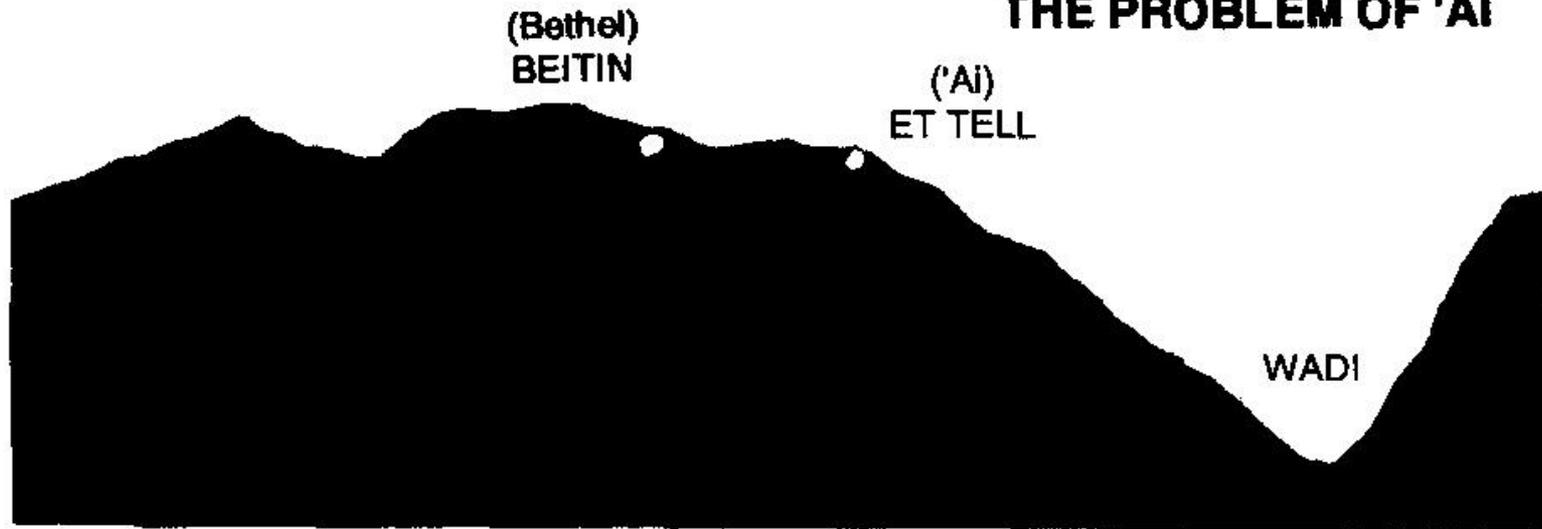




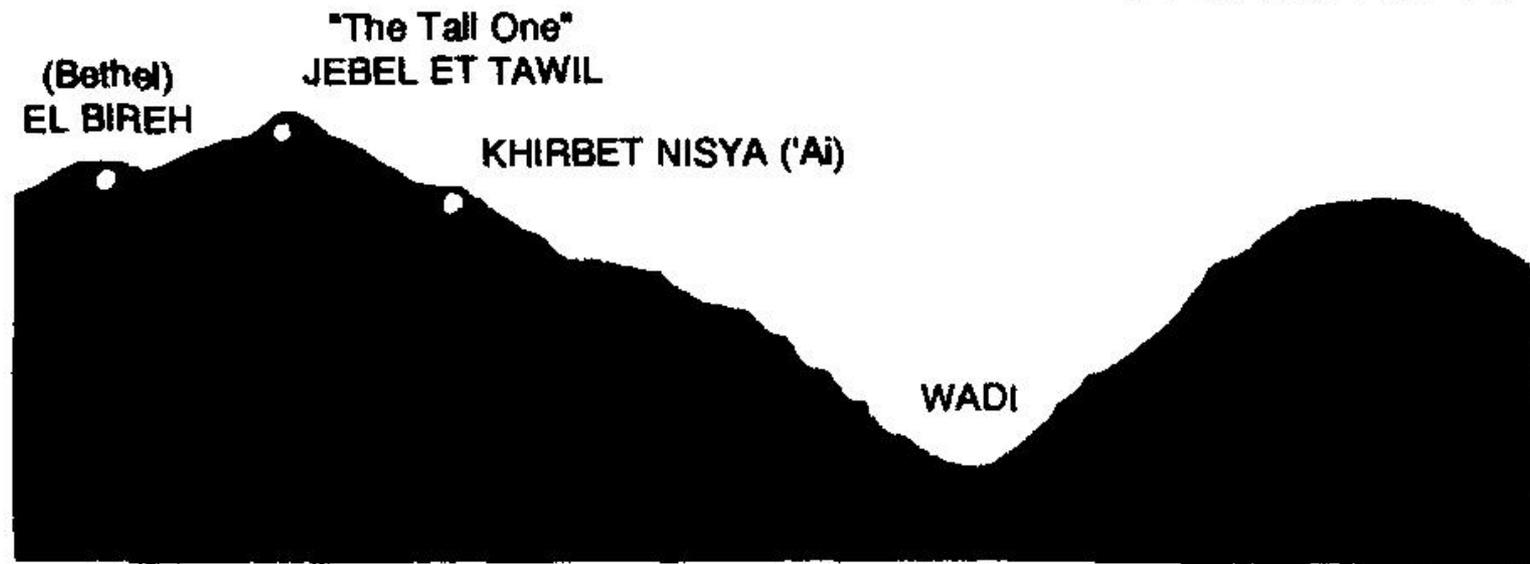
The "Hour-Glass" road system. Roads from the north and south come together as they go through Ramallah and El-Bireh.

Hansen, 1989, ABR, 2:2:46

THE PROBLEM OF 'AI



THE SOLUTION OF 'AI



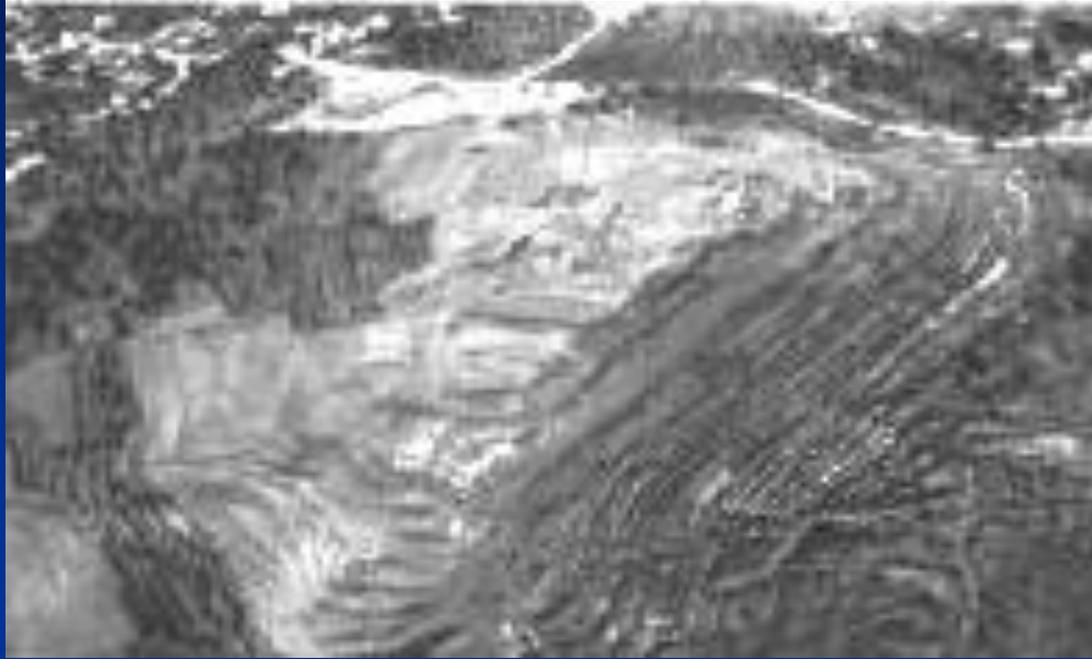
Et-Tell

(Minimalist site for Ai)

- On this site, Israelite farmers at built small structures and terraces on ruins of an older city c. 1200 BC.
- The settlement had 150 people living in it at time of Judges
- The people lived in primitive conditions but with bronze metallurgy.
- Bathing was rare.



Ai = Et Tell



Ai = Et Tell





Ruins of et-Tell, the site accepted by most scholars as ancient Ai. Et-Tell was occupied in the Early Bronze Age (3150–2400 BC) and Iron Age I (1200–1050 BC); it was not occupied in the Late Bronze Age (1550–1200 BC), the time of Joshua's Conquest. Livingston, 1999, B&S, 12:1:14

Et-Tell

(Minimalist site for Ai)

- The village was abandoned in 1050 BC.
- The site does not have many of the occupation levels it should have to be a candidate for Biblical Ai



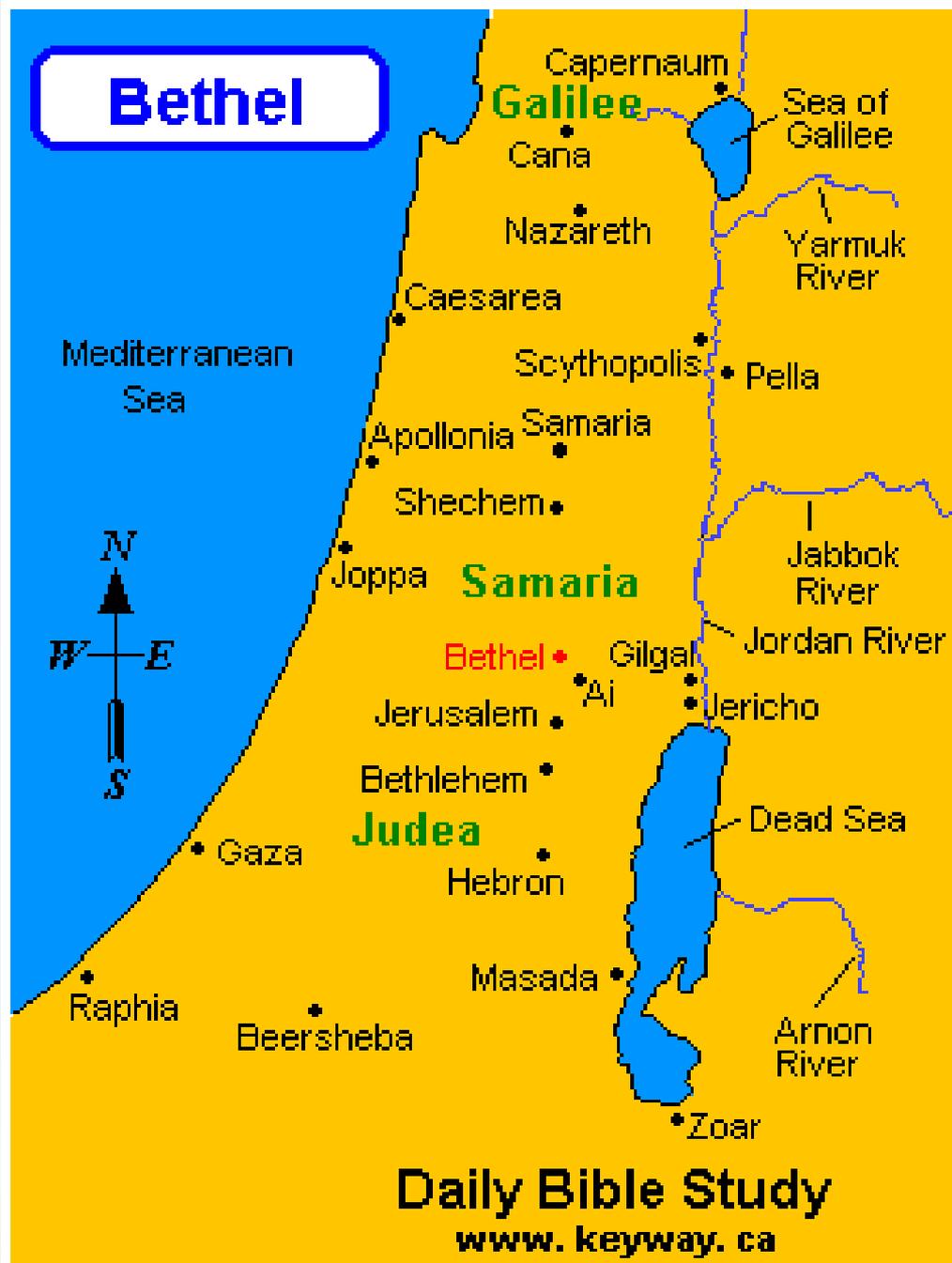
Beitin

(Minimalist site for Bethel)

- This site is on a relatively level area without strategic control of travel routes in the area.
- One road goes from Beitin to Jericho and a road to Nablus goes past it



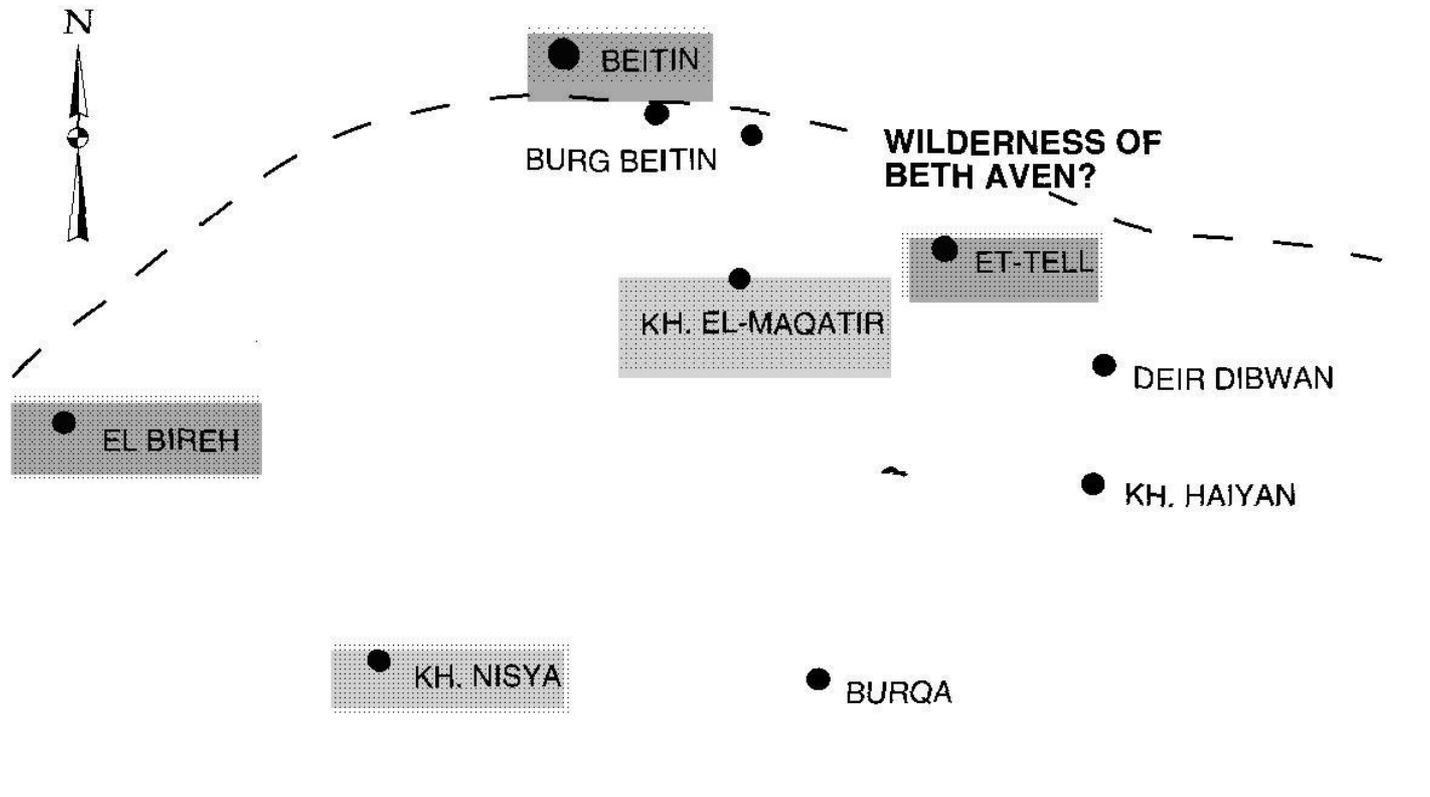
Bethel



Daily Bible Study

www.keyway.ca

EPHRAIM



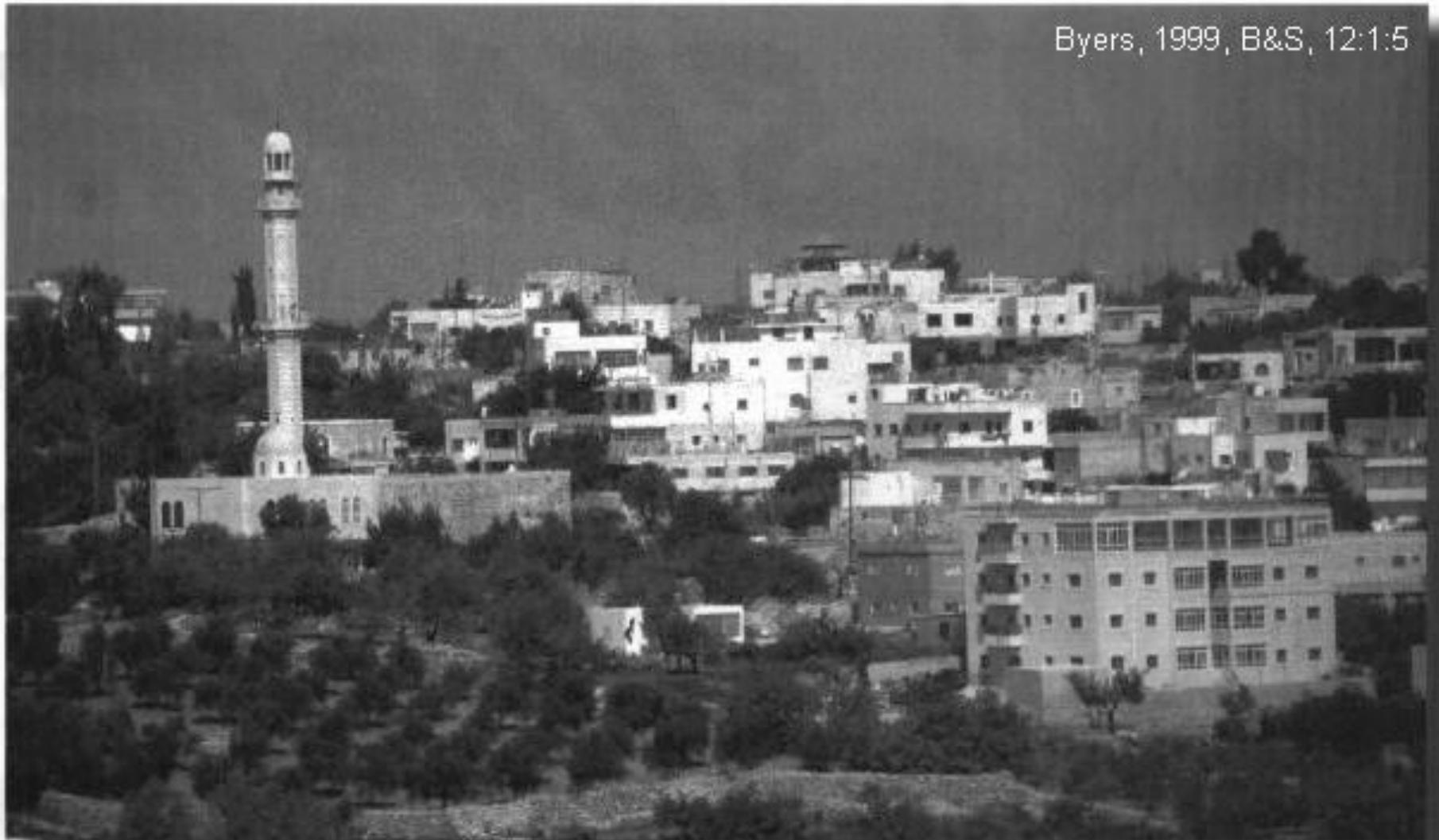
BENJAMIN

KH. TELL EL-^ʿASKAR



MUKHMAS
TELL MARYAM

Byers, 1999, B&S, 12:1:5



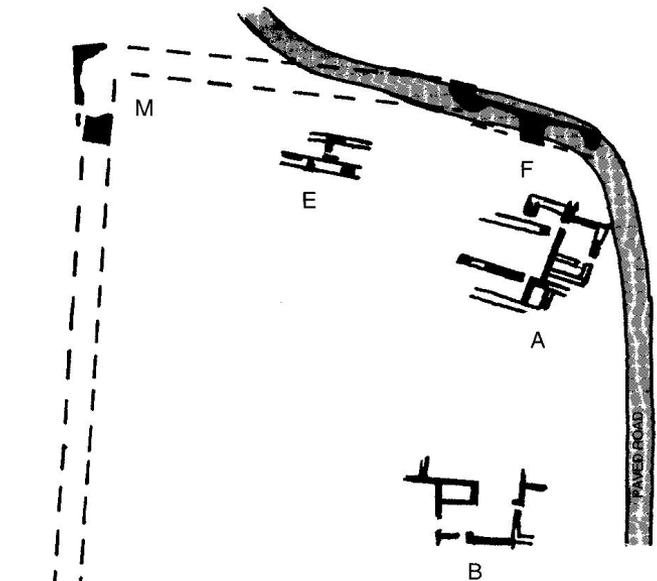
The modern town of Beitin is generally accepted by archaeologists as the site of ancient Bethel. ABR's David Livingston has demonstrated that Beitin does not fit the historical evidence for Bethel.

Beitin

(Minimalist site for Bethel)

- Excavations revealed a Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age fortress.
- It was built with well-built stones 3.5 m (11.5 ft) wide.
- It was a comparatively small site of 3.3 acres





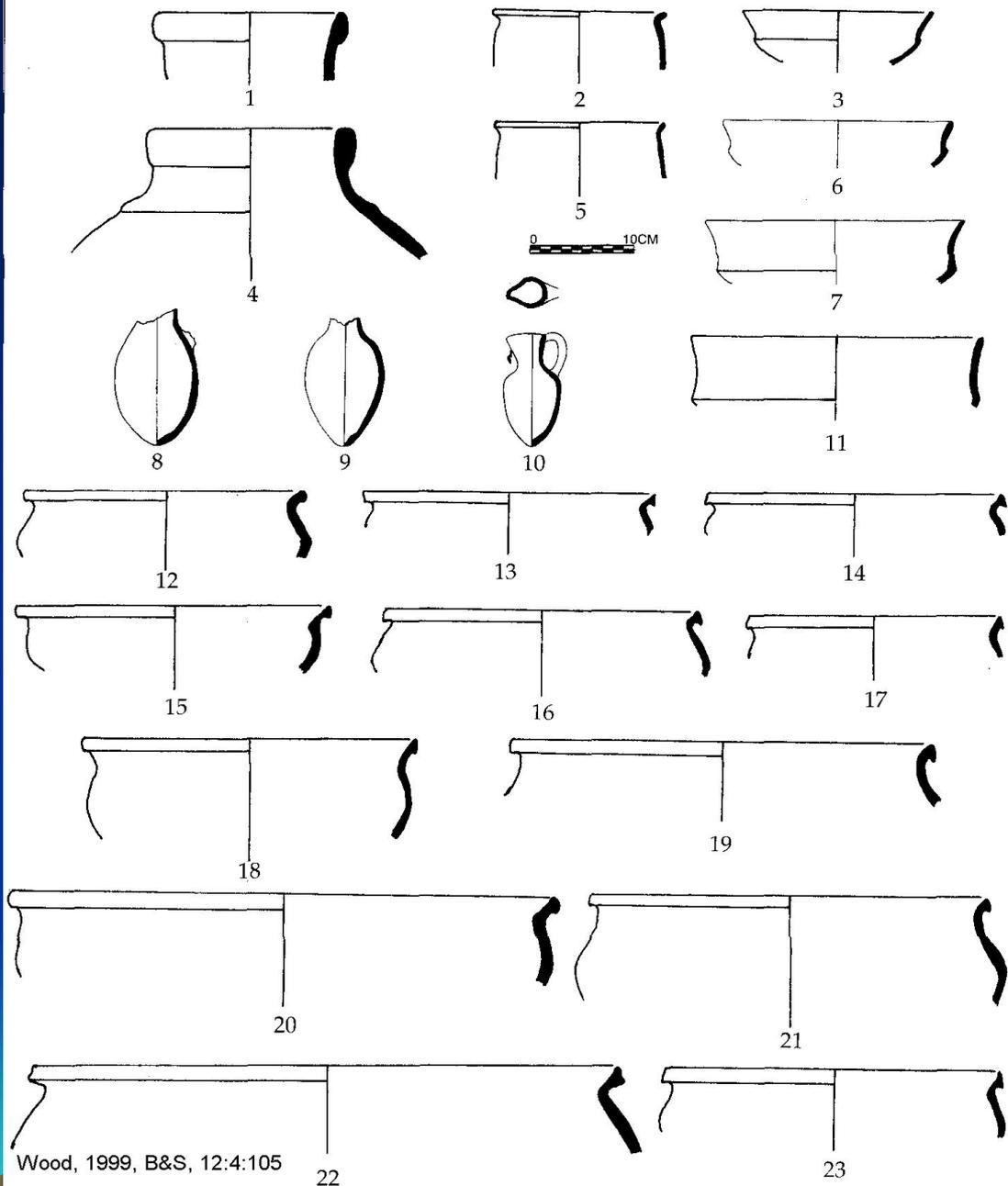
Plan of the Middle Bronze Age-
Late Bronze Age Fortress at Beitin

Beitin

(Minimalist site for Bethel)

- Abundant LBI pottery was found at this site.
- Included a red bowl with concentric red circles diagnostic of LBIB (second half of 15th century BC).
- Iron age remains are abundant, reflecting occupancy during the time of Saul





Beitin pottery, Late Bronze Age I

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:105

22

23

Late Bronze I pottery from Beitin. The pottery shown here demonstrates that the fortress at Beitin was in existence at the time of Joshua's attack against Ai. Numbers 1 and 4 are large pithoi similar to those ABR archaeologists are finding in abundance at Kh. el-Maqatir. The other vessels are: 2 and 5, carinated bowls with vertical upper wall; 3, 6, 7 and 11, flaring carinated bowls; 8-10, dipper juglets; 12-23, cooking pots. (Drawing by the author.)

Alternative interpretation

Beitin = Beth Aven

- The location of Beth Aven is given in Joshua 7:2 and 18:12-13 as northwest of Bethel.
- In 1 Samuel 14:23 it is described as west of Micmash (modern Mukhmas).
- Beitin is in the right place and has archaeological materials of the right age to be the Biblical Beth Aven.



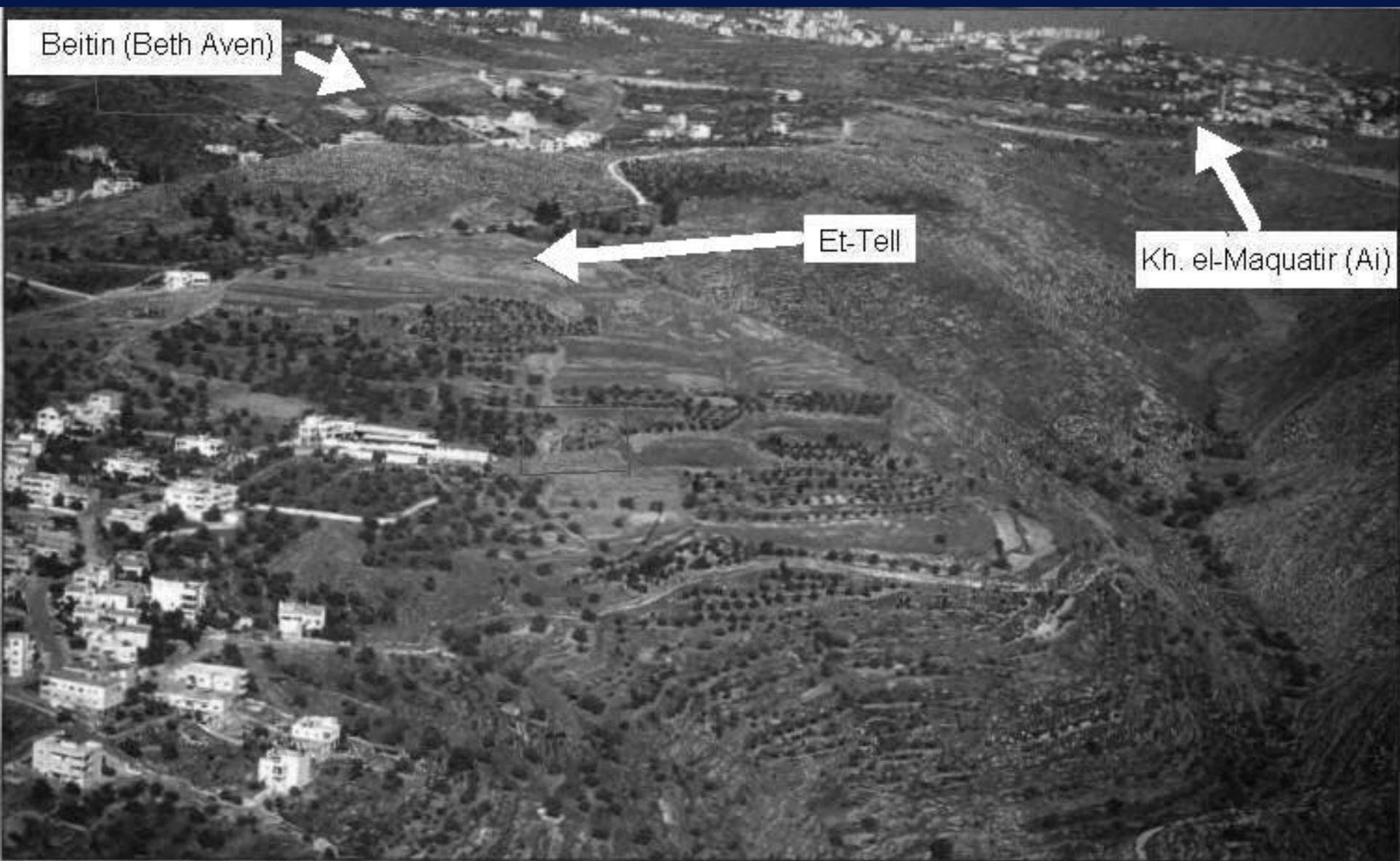


View northwest down the Wadi Gayeh. The houses of Deir Dibwan are at the lower left and et-Tell is in the left center. Beitin (Beth Aven) is visible in the upper right corner, and across the shallow northwest end of Wadi Gayeh is Kh. el-Maqatir at the upper left. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:107; Photo by Randy Cook



Photo by Randy Cook

Aerial view of Beitin looking east. The Middle Bronze-Late Bronze fortress is the open area in the lower left center of the photo. On the left edge is the curving paved road shown on the plan of the fortress (page 104). The Deir Dibwan road proceeds from the lower right corner to the upper center. The rectangular area just to the right of the mosque in the center is a Roman reservoir. Burg Beitin is at the top center to the left (north) of the Deir Dibwan road. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:106



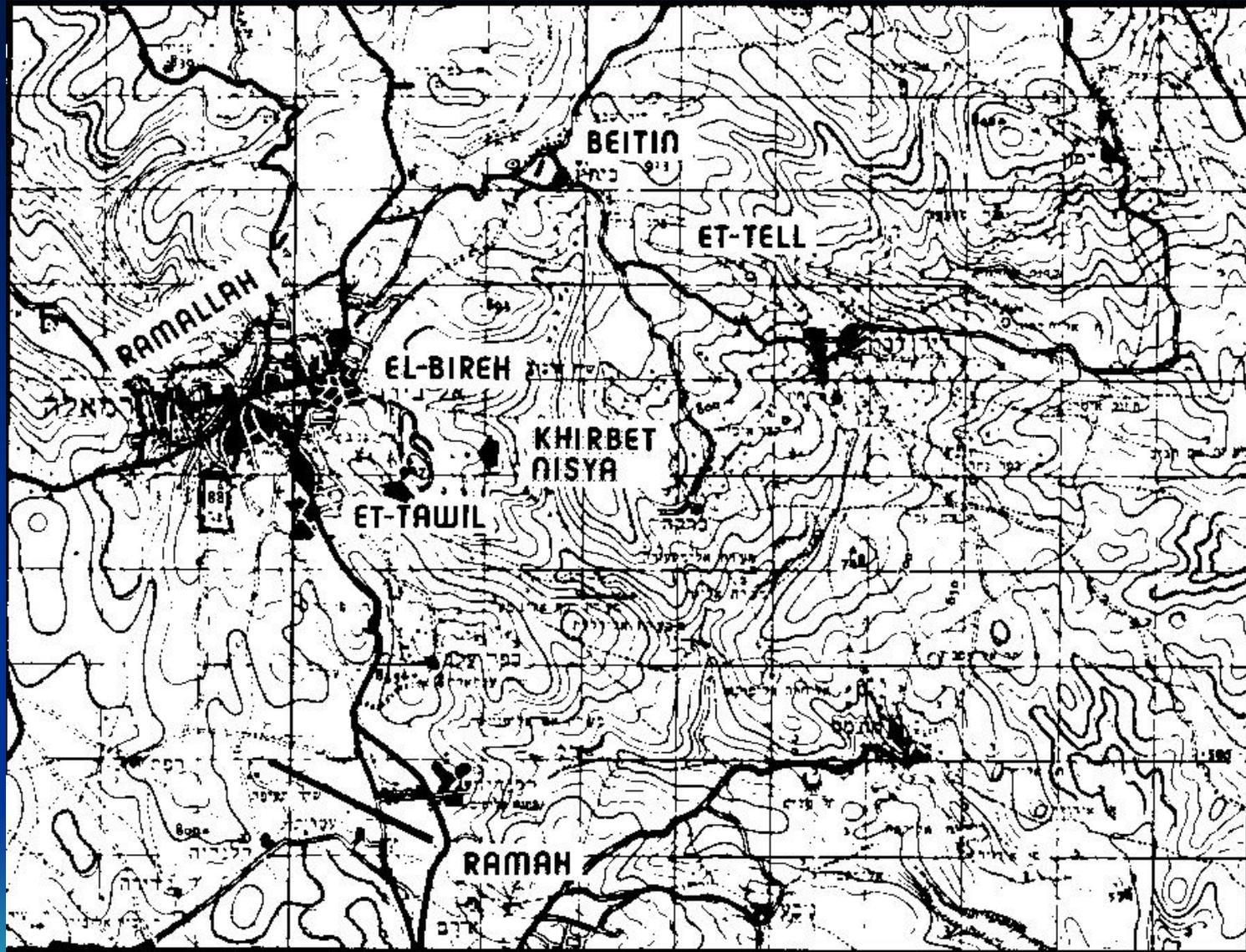
View northwest down the Wadi Gayeh. The houses of Deir Dibwan are at the lower left and et-Tell is in the left center. Beitin (Beth Aven) is visible in the upper right corner, and across the shallow northwest end of Wadi Gayeh is Kh. el-Maqtatir at the upper left. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:107; Photo by Randy Cook

El-Bireh

(Maximalist site for Bethel)

- El-Bireh has the required topography and is the right distance from Jerusalem to be Bethel.
- It is located on a road between Jericho and Shechem which converge at a narrow "hourglass" topographic arrangement.





The "Hour-Glass" road system. Roads from the north and south come together as they go through Ramallah and El-Bireh.

Hansen, 1989, ABR, 2:2:46

Byers, 1999, B&S, 12:1:18



The modern town of El Bireh, although never systematically excavated, is the best candidate for Biblical Bethel based on historical evidence.

Khirbit Nisya

(Maximalist site for Ai)

- Considerable material from MBIII into LBI (2000-1400 BC)
- Some EB material.
- A MB Canaanite fortress has been uncovered there.
- These include MBIIA,B and C; LBI local ware (no imports).
- The Iron Age I and The Iron Age II artifacts to the end of (Israelite?) occupation (586 BC).





Ancient

Beitin

et-Tell/Ai

El Bireh/Bethel

Khirbet el-Maqatir/Ai

Jericho

Gilgal

Khirbet Nisya/Ai

WHERE IS BETHEL AND AI?



Aerial view of Khirbet Nisya looking southwest. Size of the site to the outside edge of occupational debris is about 7 acres although architecture does not extend that far. El-Bireh (ancient Bethel?) is beyond the mountain off the upper right hand corner of the picture. Livingston, 1988, ABR, 1:1:24

Kh. Nisya; Livingston, 1999, B&S, 12:1:13



Livingston, 1999, B&S, 12:1:15

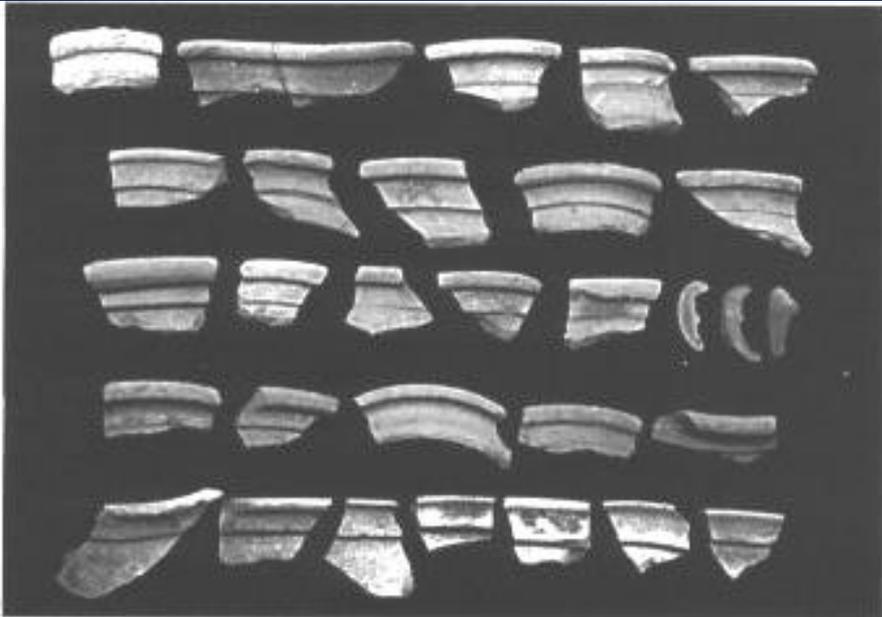


Kh. Nisya from the east, with trees marking the top of the site. Houses to the right are of the Orthodox Jewish settlement Psagot, where dig staff stays while excavating. The site's spring is on the lower left side on the hill.

Khirbit Nisya Pottery

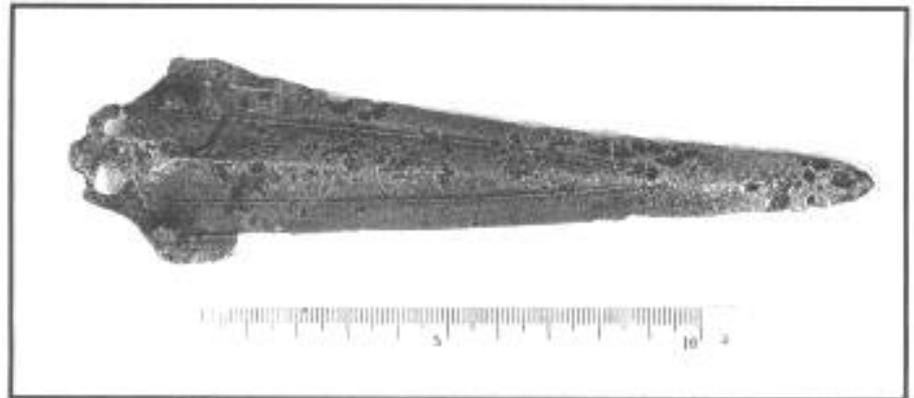
(Maximalist site for Ai)





1

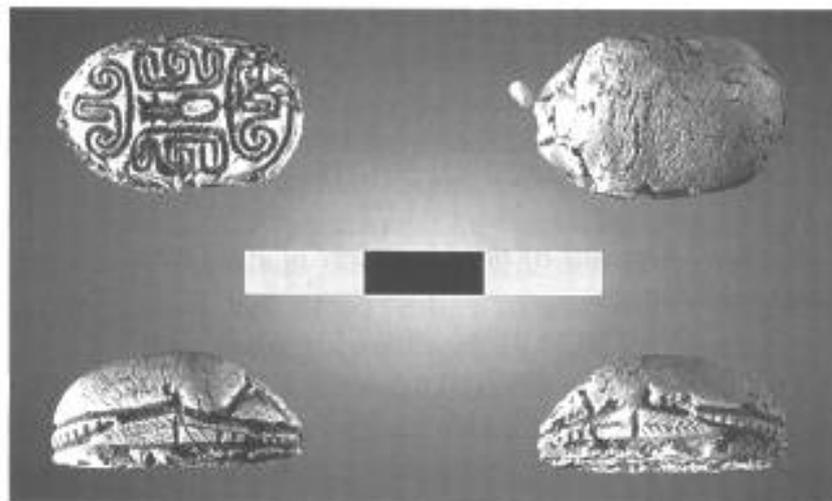
Middle Bronze Age finds at Kh. Nisya. Clockwise: 1. Sherds of typical Middle Bronze storage and water jar rims with characteristic profile found in fill levels from all over the site; 2. Well-worn five-ribbed MB dagger (6.5 in long) found in fill; 3. Egyptian scarab of Middle Bronze Age with cross and curl motif found in fill; 4. Cross and curl seal impression on jar handle. Note also the potter's mark in foreground. It was found in fill.



2



4



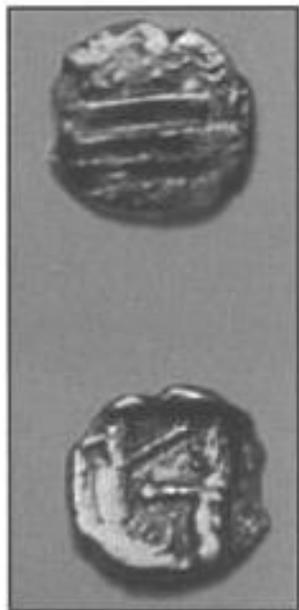
3

PERSIAN
PERIOD
POTTERY
FROM
AI



4

KH
NISYA



5



3



1



1



2



1

The Bible says the men of Judah, including Ai, returned to their own towns (Ezr 2:1, 28). Finds from this period (the Persian period) come from various areas of Kh. Nisya. Clockwise: 1. *Yahud* (Judah) seal imprints on handles and body sherd; 2. Rim, neck and shoulder of a large jar with triangular and circular decorations; 3. Small alabaster juglet from Persian context; 4. Head of a clay figurine from possible Persian level; 5. Silver Sidonian coin from the reign of Straton I (Abdashtart, 370–358 BC), twice size, with a likeness of the king of Persia slaying a lion on the obverse (bottom).

Khirbit Nisya Pottery

(Maximalist site for Ai)

- To be a candidate for Ai, a site must have remains from:
- Patriarchal times (MB)
- The Conquest (LB)
- Divided Kingdom (Iron Age II, IA II)
- Return from exile (Persian)
- Kh. Nisya has material from each of these eras.

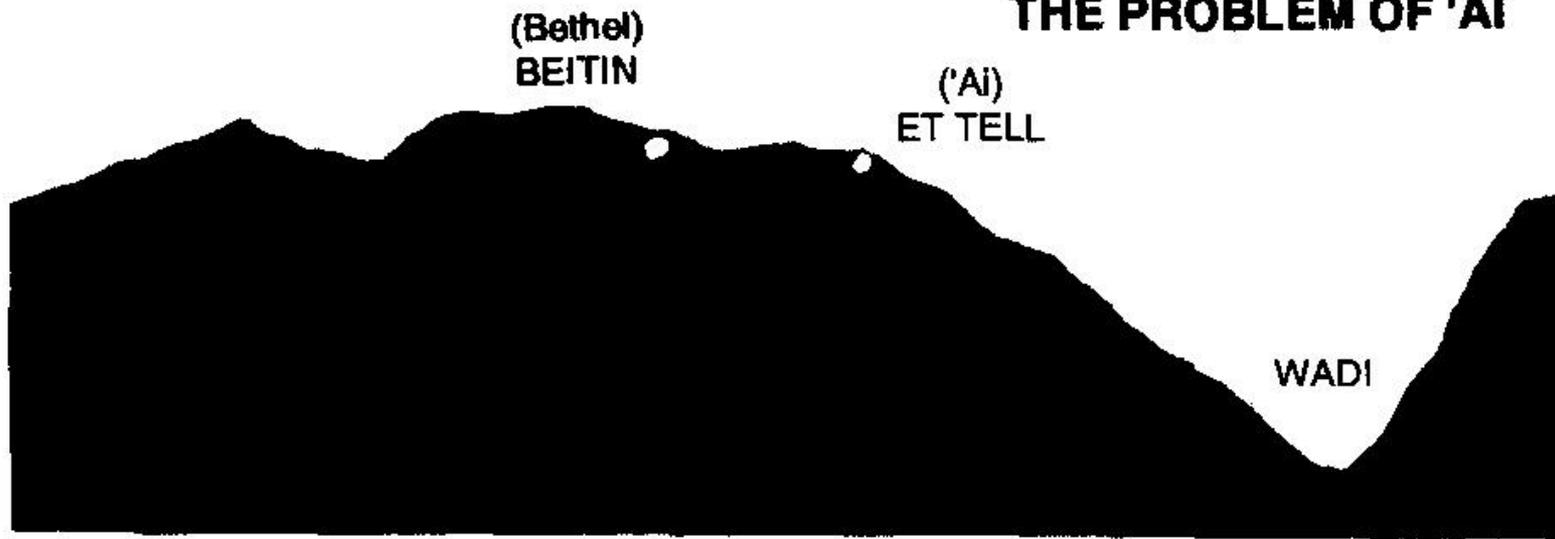


El Bireth/Kh Nisya vs Beitin/Et Tell

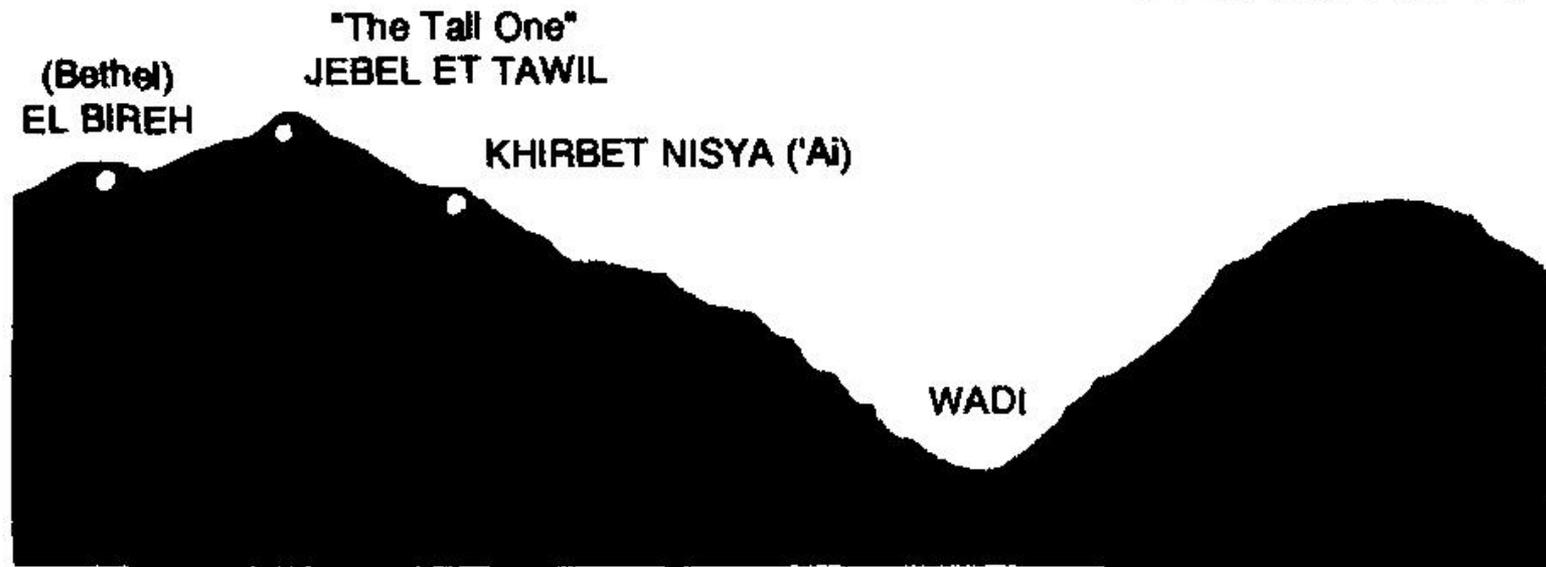
- From military point of view
- El Bireth and Kirbet-Nisya are more strategic than Beitin and Et Tell

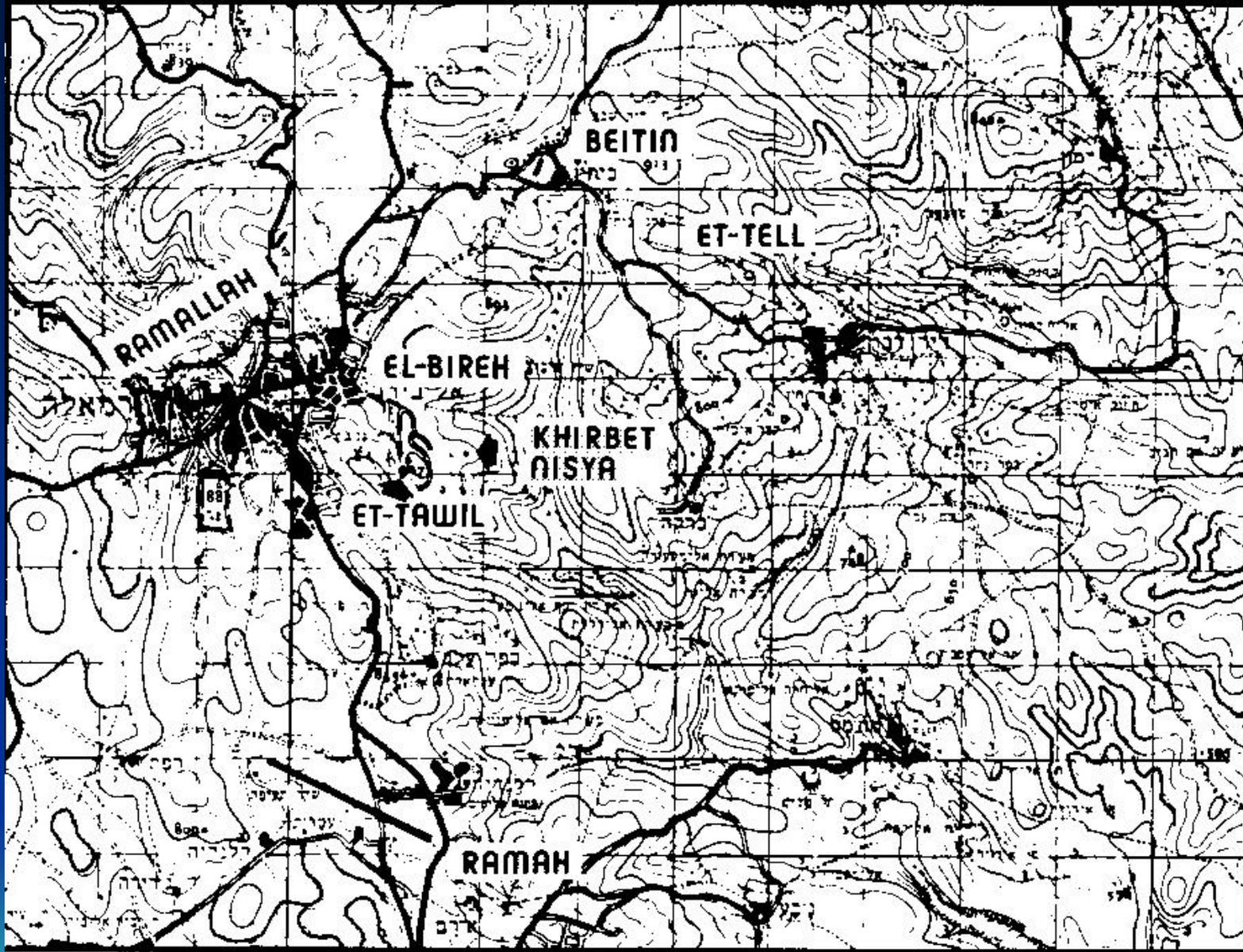


THE PROBLEM OF 'AI



THE SOLUTION OF 'AI





The "Hour-Glass" road system. Roads from the north and south come together as they go through Ramallah and El-Bireh.

Hansen, 1989, ABR, 2:2:46

Military Strategy

- El Bireh is at narrow part of "hourglass" connecting road on a north-south watershed system at junction of "Way to Beth Horon"
- Beitin is on a side road 2 miles away from main watershed.
- Kirbet-Nisya, if it were an eastern outpost for El-Bireh, would provide intelligence on activities in the Jordan Valley.
- This important tactical ability is not as good at Et-Tell



Military Strategy

- Et-Tell is not as accessible to its sister city Beitin as El-Bireth is to Kirbet-Nisya

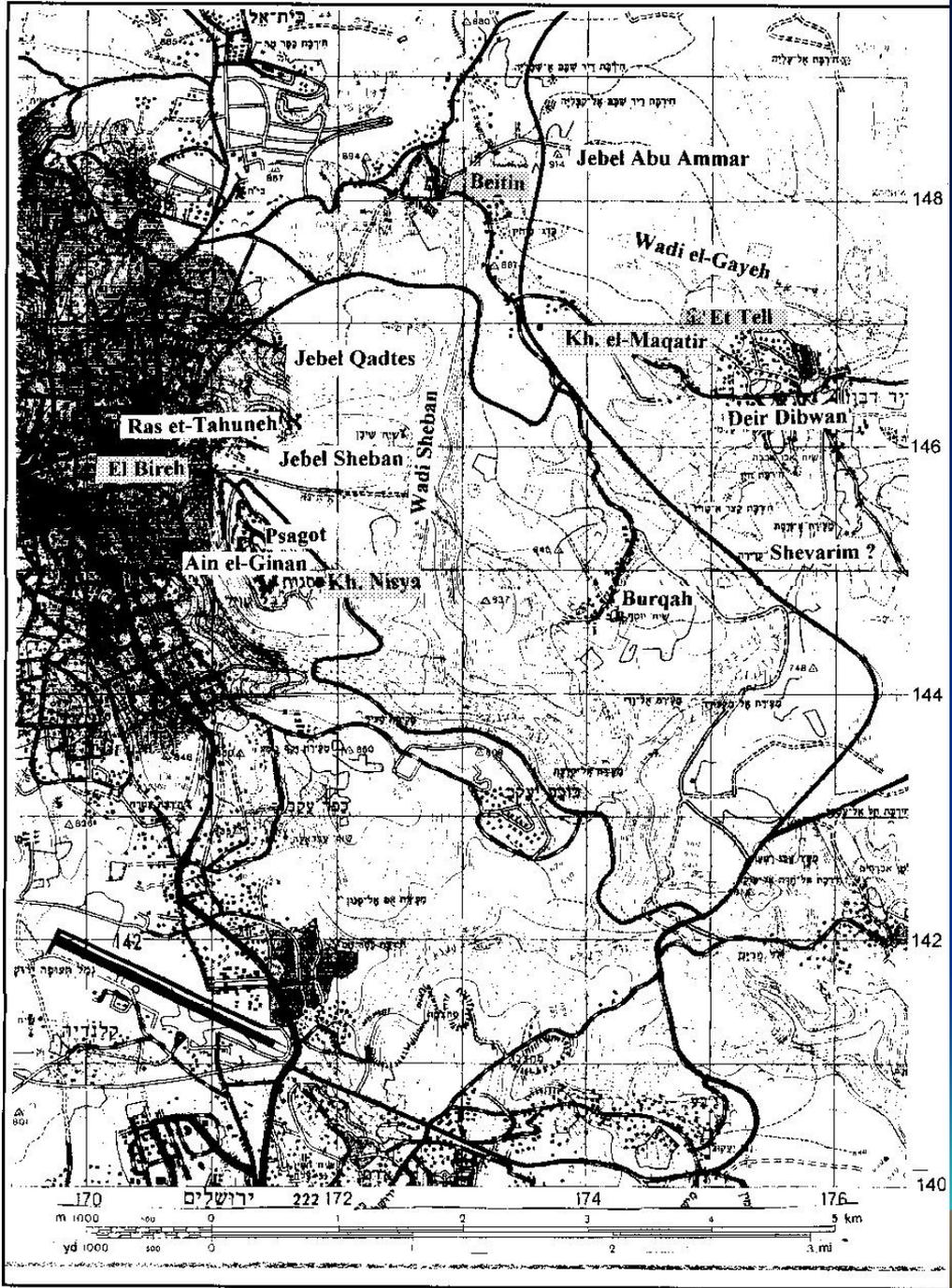


Khirbit el-Maqtar

(Maximalist alternative site for Ai)

- Southwest of Et-Tell.
- The Ai of Joshua's time was a relatively small settlement, smaller than Gibeon (Joshua 10:2)





← Kh el-Maqatir

Map of the region of Bethel and Ai. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:21



Aerial view of Khirbet el-Maqatir, Israel, looking north-north-west. Excavations here by the Associates for Biblical Research have produced evidence of a small fortress that matches the Bibli-

Area of Kh. el-Maqatir and Wadi Sheban, view south



Jericho

Jerusalem

Kh. el-Maqatir

Wadi

Sheban

Burg Beitin

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:23



Kh. el-Maqatir as seen from Jebel Abu Ammar to the north. The valley between here and Kh. el-Maqatir is called Wadi el-Gayeh. In the Bronze Age it probably served as the border between the Shechem and Jerusalem city states. Following the Conquest it was the border between the tribes of Benjamin and Ephraim (Jos 18:12–13). The Mount of Olives, 10 mi south, is visible in the distance.

Typographical requirements for Biblical Ai

- Strategic setting at northern outpost of Jerusalem and southern city-states
- On the boarder with the Shechem (an early Israelite ally) territory .
- Near Beth-Aven (=Beitin, Joshua 7:2)
- East of, and not far from Bethel (=El Bireh, Joshua 7:2, Joshua 12:9)
- Near a Stone Quarry (“Sevarim”, Joshua 7:5)
- Stone Quarry is on a decent from Ai (Joshua 7:5)





Stone quarry 1.5 mi southeast of Kh. el-Maqatir, possibly the *Šēvārîm* of Joshua 7:5. The root of *Šēvārîm* means “to break,” possibly suggesting an unusual broken rock formation or an actual quarry. *Šēvārîm* means “quarries” in modern Hebrew. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:24

Typographical requirements for Biblical Ai

- There is high ground north of the site that has military tactical value (Jebel Abu Ammar, Joshua 8:11)
- There is an ambush site on the west (Wadi Seban, Joshua 8:9)



Archaeological requirements for Biblical Ai

- Occupied at time of the Conquest (LBI period)
- Smaller than Gibeon (1.7 acres; Joshua 7:3; 10:2)
- Fortified (Joshua 7:5; 8:29)



Late Bronze Age (LB1) Fortress at Kh. El-Maqatir



Photo by
M. Luddeni

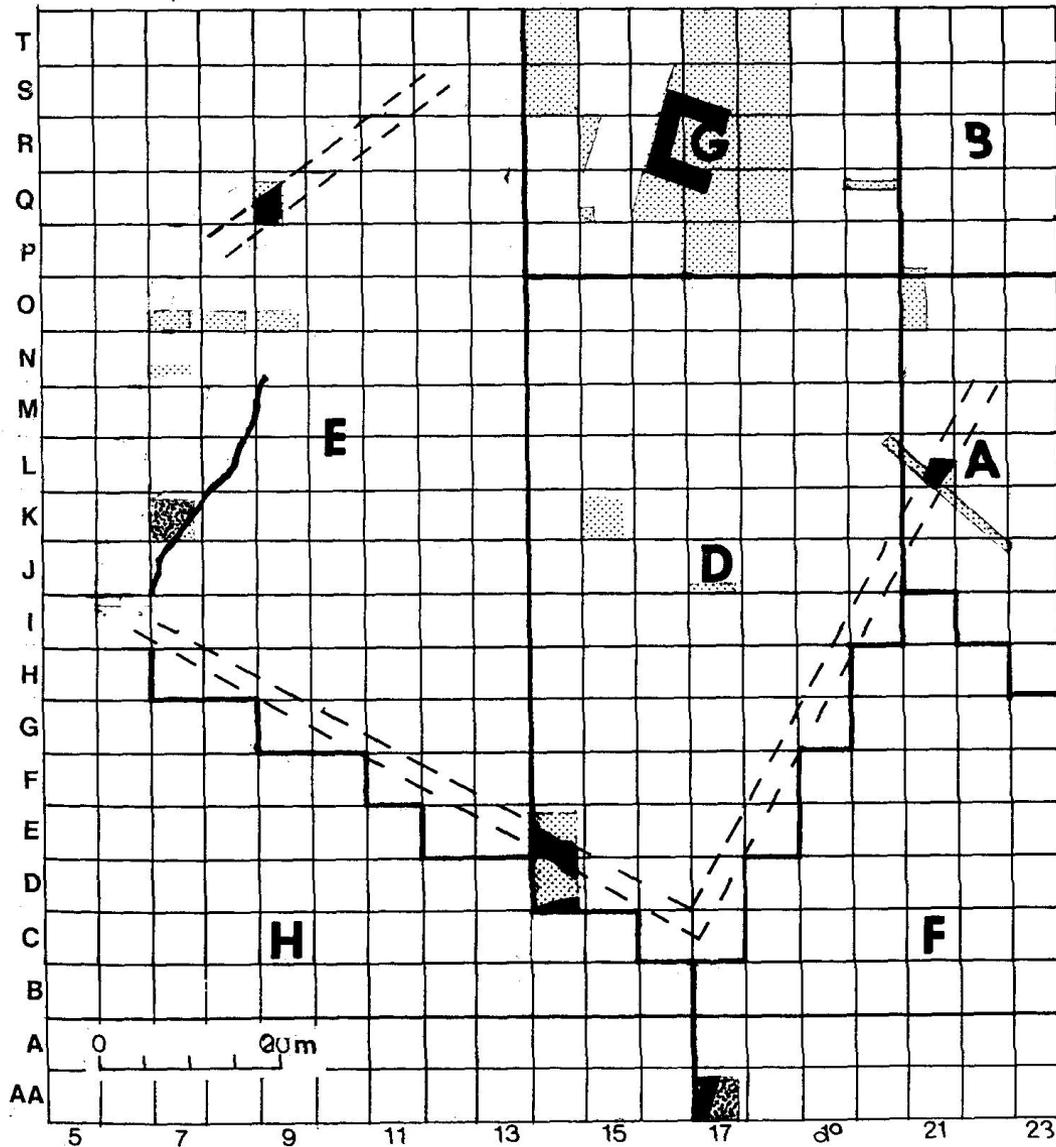
Inner face of the west wall of the Late Bronze I fortress at Khirbet el-Maqatir. Below the meter stick and to the left is the core of the wall. To the right is a cobblestone butters or terrace foundation. The 3 acre LB I fortress at Khirbet el-Maqatir was surrounded by enormous walls some 4 m (13 ft) thick. Hansen, 2003, B&S, 16:3:82



Pottery from the final phase of the Late Bronze I fortress. This small locus of LB I pottery and two slingstones were found in Square Q17 just south of the gate, lying on a paved courtyard or floor. It represents the only in situ pottery thus far found from the end of the period of the LB I fortress. Abundant pottery from the construction phase of the fortress has been recovered, however. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:24

Illustration 6: Plan of the Late Bronze I fortress at Kh. el-Maqatir. The small size of the enclosure, less than 2 acres in area, is suggested in Joshua 7:3 and 10:2.

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:25



Plan of LBI
Fortress at
Kh. El-
Maqatir

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:26



Southeast wall of the Late Bronze I fortress in Square L21, excavated in 1996. It was found beneath a Late Hellenistic (second century BC) wall and is 2.5 m (8 ft) wide.

Kh. El-Maqatir



Southwest wall of the Late Bronze I fortress in Square D14.
Excavated in 1998, the wall is 2.5 m (8 ft) wide.



Southern section of the west terrace wall. Discovered in 1998, this enigmatic structure may be an important part of the fortification system on the west side of the Late Bronze I fortress. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:26

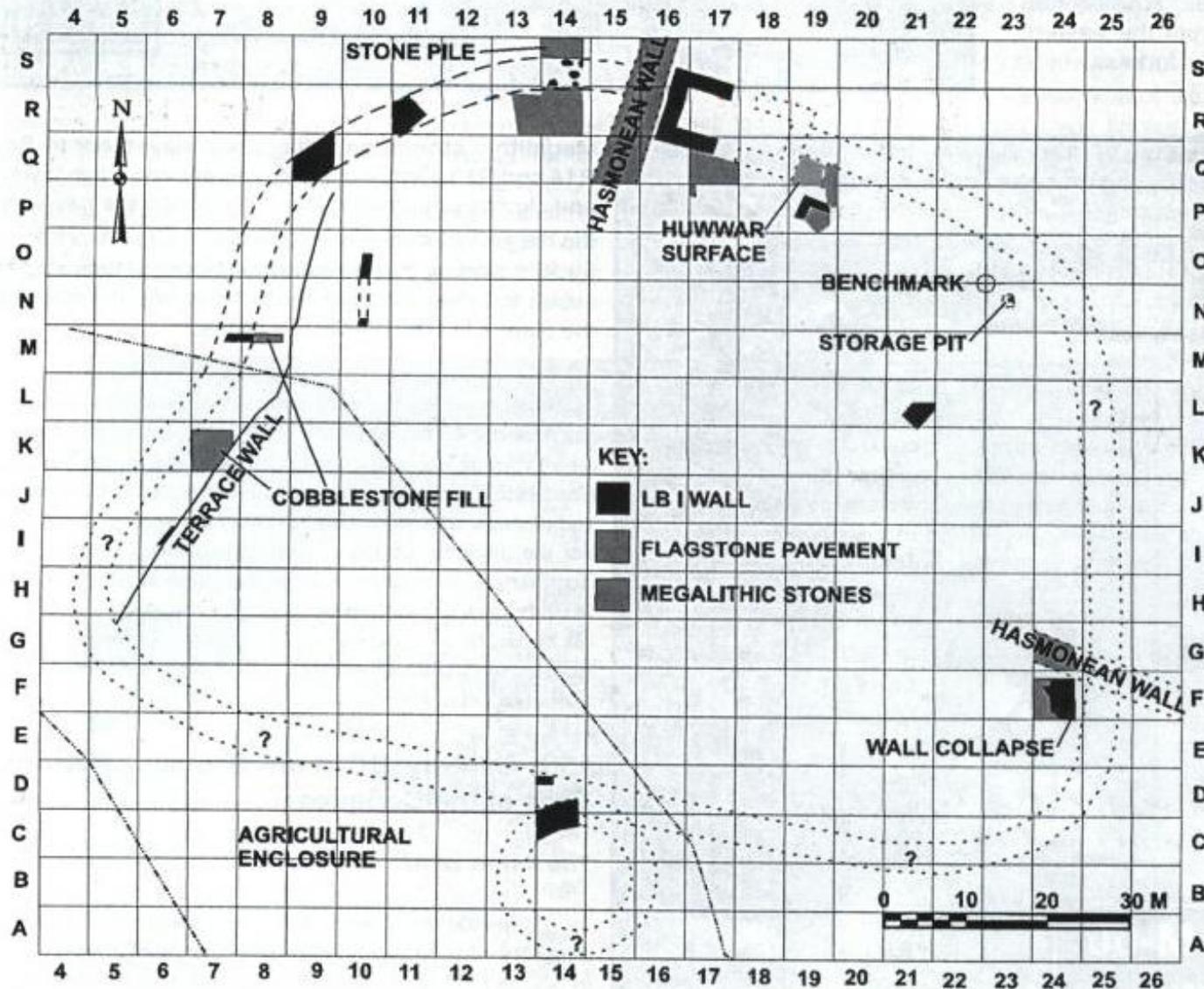
Kh. el-Maqatir

M-00

FIELD	E
SQ.	M-7
LOCUS	1,2
DATE	06-15
EXP.	S-426



West wall of the LB I fortress, view south. At the left end of the meter stick is the inner face of the wall. To the right is the stone core of the wall and to the left is rubble fill of the terrace which abutted the inside of the west wall. In the background is the newly-constructed wall of the agricultural plot which now encloses the southwest sector of the fortress. Wood, 2000, B&S, 13:3:69; Photo by M. Luddeni



THE LB I FORTRESS AT KH. EL-MAQATIR, 2000

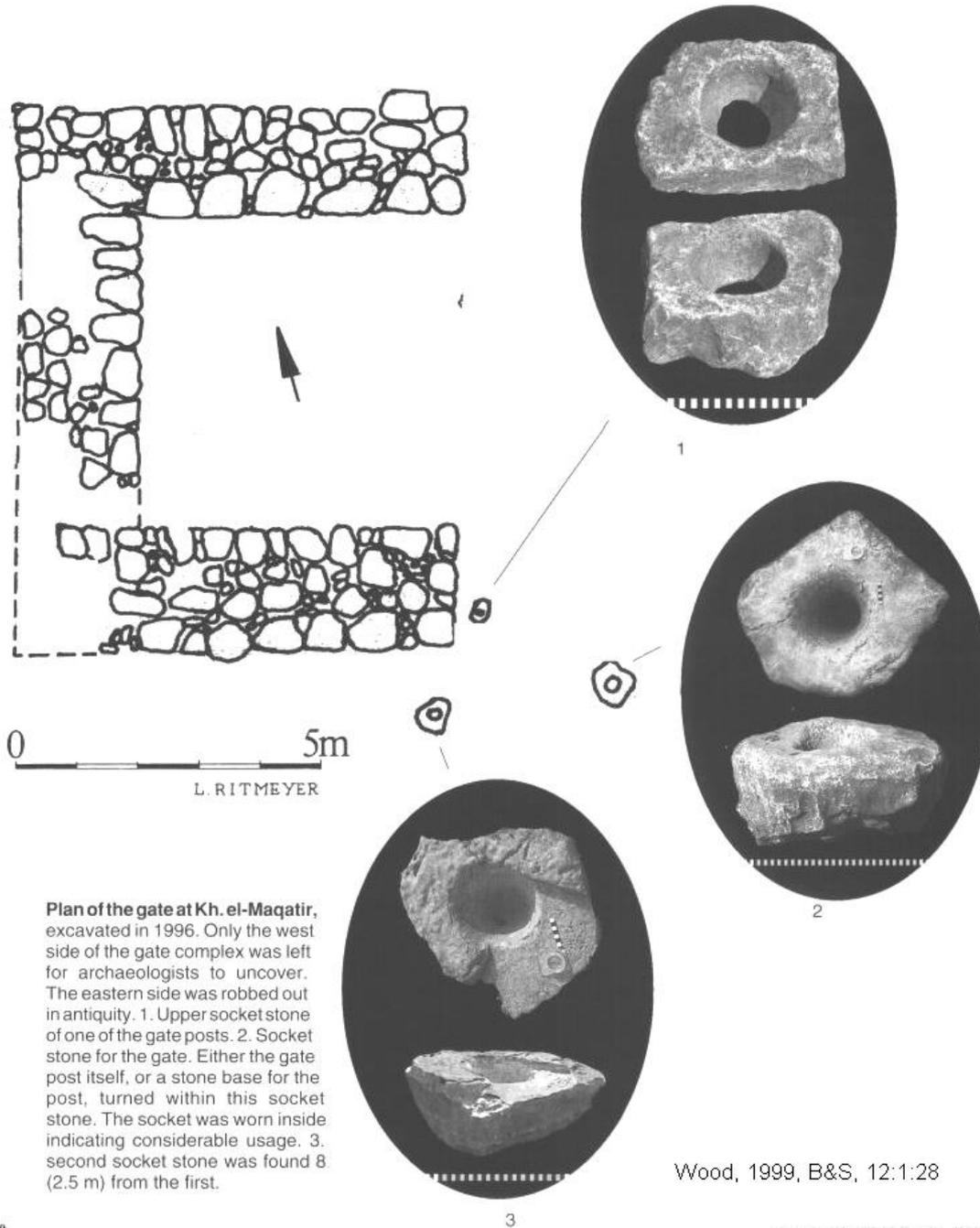
Archaeological Requirements: Gate on North Side





Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:27; Socket stone LB1 gate Kh. el-Maqatir

Plan and socket stones of city gate at Kh. el-Maqatir (Ai)



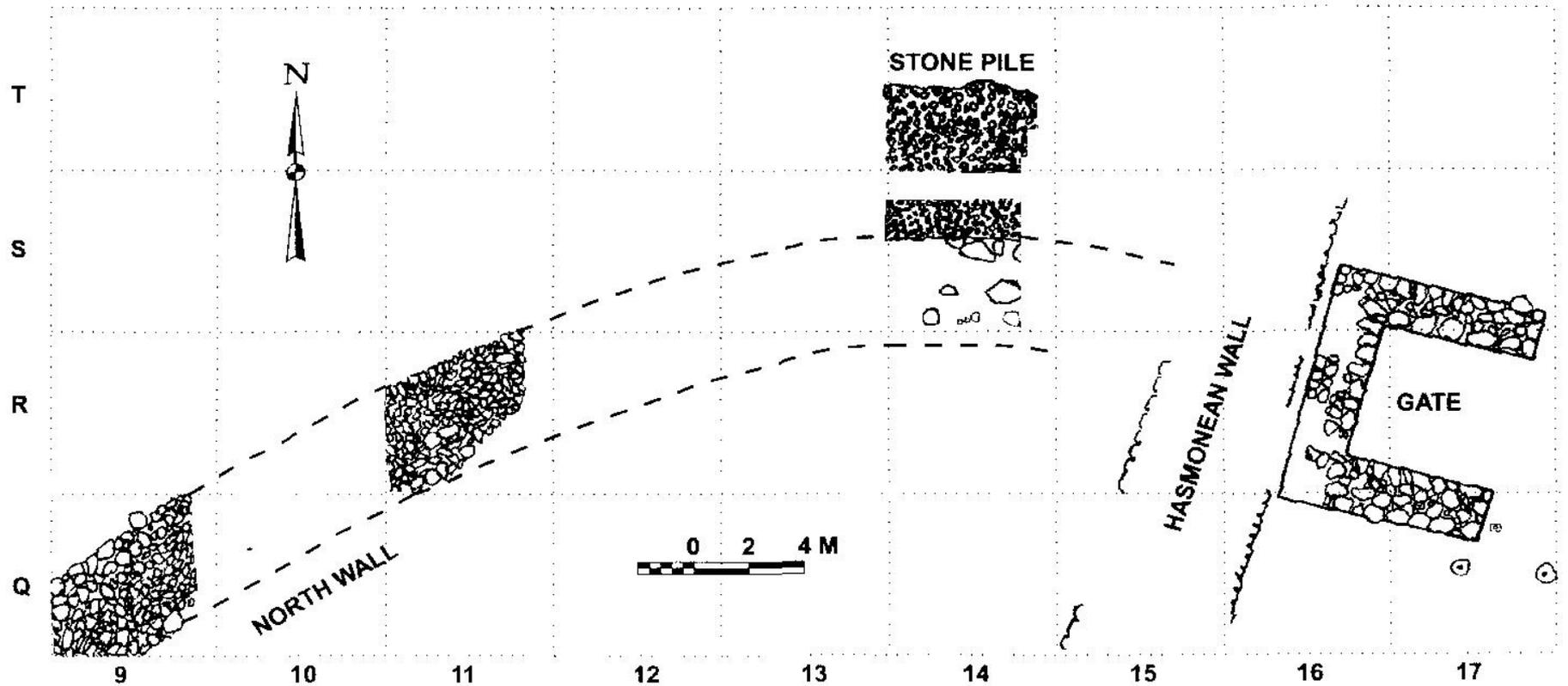
Plan of the gate at Kh. el-Maqatir, excavated in 1996. Only the west side of the gate complex was left for archaeologists to uncover. The eastern side was robbed out in antiquity. 1. Upper socket stone of one of the gate posts. 2. Socket stone for the gate. Either the gate post itself, or a stone base for the post, turned within this socket stone. The socket was worn inside indicating considerable usage. 3. second socket stone was found 8 (2.5 m) from the first.

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:1:28

Archaeological requirements: North Wall

- There is a massive (14 ft wide, originally 40 ft high) curving north wall with a gate complex from LBI at Khirbit el-Maqatir





NORTH WALL OF THE LATE BRONZE I FORTRESS AT KH. EL-MAQATIR

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:2:109

North wall of the Late Bronze I fortress at Kh. el-Maqatir. The wall, constructed of fieldstones, is 4.0 m (13 ft) wide. At the point where it connected to the gate it was cut through by a later (first century BC) Hasmonean wall. (Drawing by the author.)

Kh. el-Maqatir



M-99

FIELD	E
SQ.	R-11
LOCUS	2
DATE	06-17
EXP.	S-257

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:111 Photo by Michael Luddeni

The outer face of the curving north wall. Equivalent to the widest wall from this period found in Israel (4.0 m, 13 ft), it originally stood to a height of some 12 m (40 ft). It is understandable why Joshua lured the defenders of Ai out of their fortress rather than attempting to assault the walls.

Kh. el-Maqatir



North side of the Late Bronze I fortress looking east. The north wall is visible in the lower center and the west half of the gate can be seen in the center. Running left to right across the center is a wall of the Hasmonean fortress that cut through the north wall of the Late Bronze I fortress, just west of the gate. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:111 Photo by Randy Cook

Archaeological Requirements: Destroyed by Fire

- A 4-inch thick ash layer above the flagstone pavement of the LB1 fortress.
- Shows that it was destroyed in LB1 by fire.
- The conflagration is also indicated by re-fired pottery and calcinations of bedrock



Kh. el-Maqatir



M-00
FIELD A
SQ. F-24
LOCUS 3,4
DATE 05-25
EXP. S-291

Wood, 2000, 13:3:68. Pavement below 4 inch ash layer from destruction of LB1 fortress.



Kh. El-
Maqatir

Archaeological Requirements

“A ruin forever”

- Biblical Ai is described as “a ruin forever” in Joshua 8:20.



Miscellaneous Finds at Kh. El-Maqatir

- Pit
- Jug
- Enigmatic cylindrical object
- Circular Granary (Hasmonean Era)



Kh. el-Maqatir

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:112 Photo by Micael Luddeni

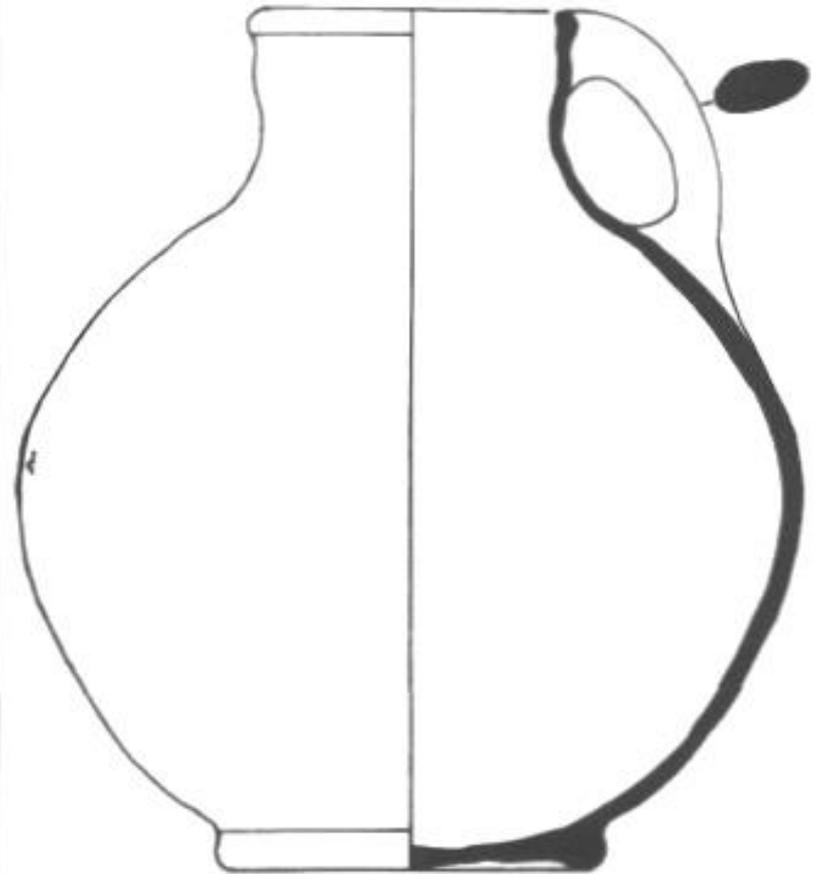


M-99

FIELD	E
SQ.	R-11
LOCUS	7
DATE	06-11
EXP.	S-237

Iron Age I pit from the time of Eli and Samuel. In the pit were a nearly complete jug (left), a mortar for grinding grain (center), and a mysterious cylindrical stone object (right).

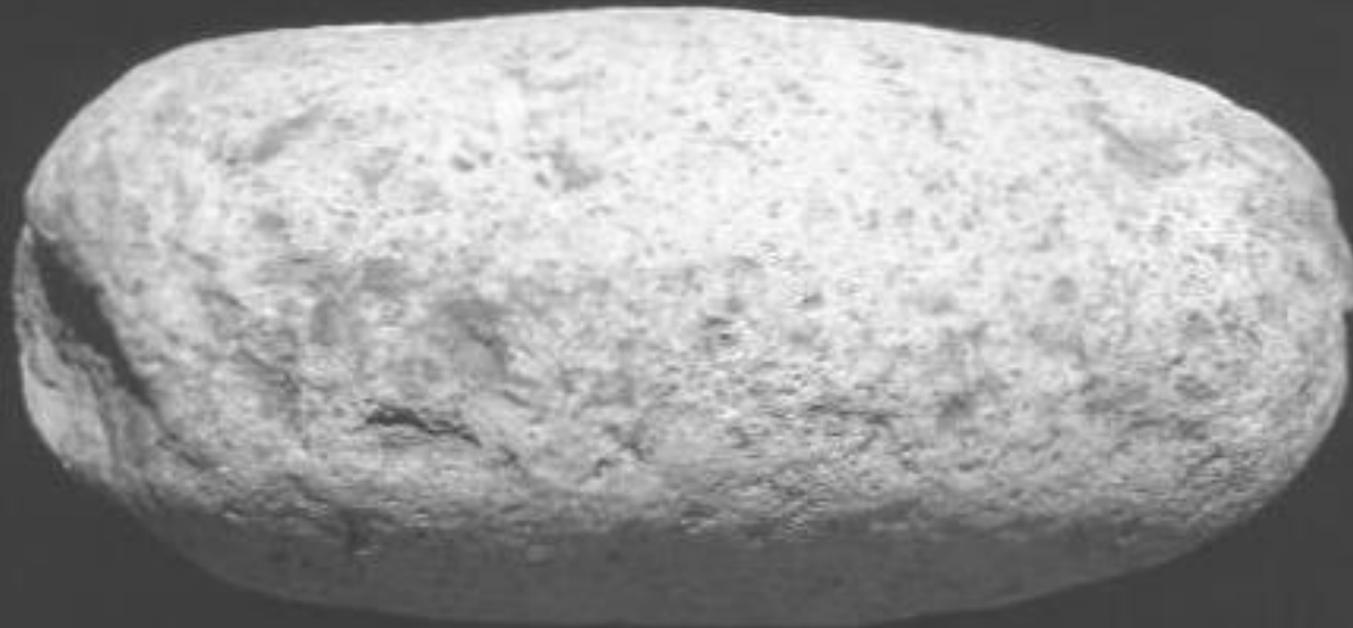
Kh. el-Maqatir



Jug, 11th century BC

Wood, 1999, B&S, 14:4:113 Photo by Michael Luddeni

Kh. el-Maqatir



Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:113 Photo by Michael Luddeni

Jug and enigmatic cylindrical object from the R11 pit. Dating to the 11th century BC, the jug would have been used to hold liquids such as water or wine. The cylindrical object is made of limestone, is 1/2 cubit (50 cm, 20 in) in length, and weighs 70 pounds. Its function is a mystery. (Drawing by the author.)

Hasmonean Era

- King Herod the Great



Kh. El-Maqatir

Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:112 Photo by Michael Ludden



Circular granary from the Hasmonean period. To the right is a 3 m (10 ft) wide wall from the LB I fortress. The wall is curvilinear and is possibly part of a circular tower. The granary was built against the southern face of the LB I wall. In the foreground, behind the balk string, is a small doorway through which the grain was removed.



Stone Cover

Kh. el-Maqatir



Square S14 where the Late Bronze I fortification wall was robbed out. The small stones on the right (north) side of the square were originally piled against the outer face of the Late Bronze I fortification wall. When a Hasmonean wall was built a short distance to the east, the stones from the Late Bronze I wall were removed for reuse, leaving a negative impression of where the wall once stood. A number of very large stones were left behind by the Hasmonean builders, evidently too heavy to move. Wood, 1999, B&S, 12:4:110 Photo by Michael Luddeni

NEXT TIME

- *MT GERIZIM, MT EBAL, AND SHECHEM*



Archaeology and the Old Testament

Chapter 14: The Conquest, Part 5

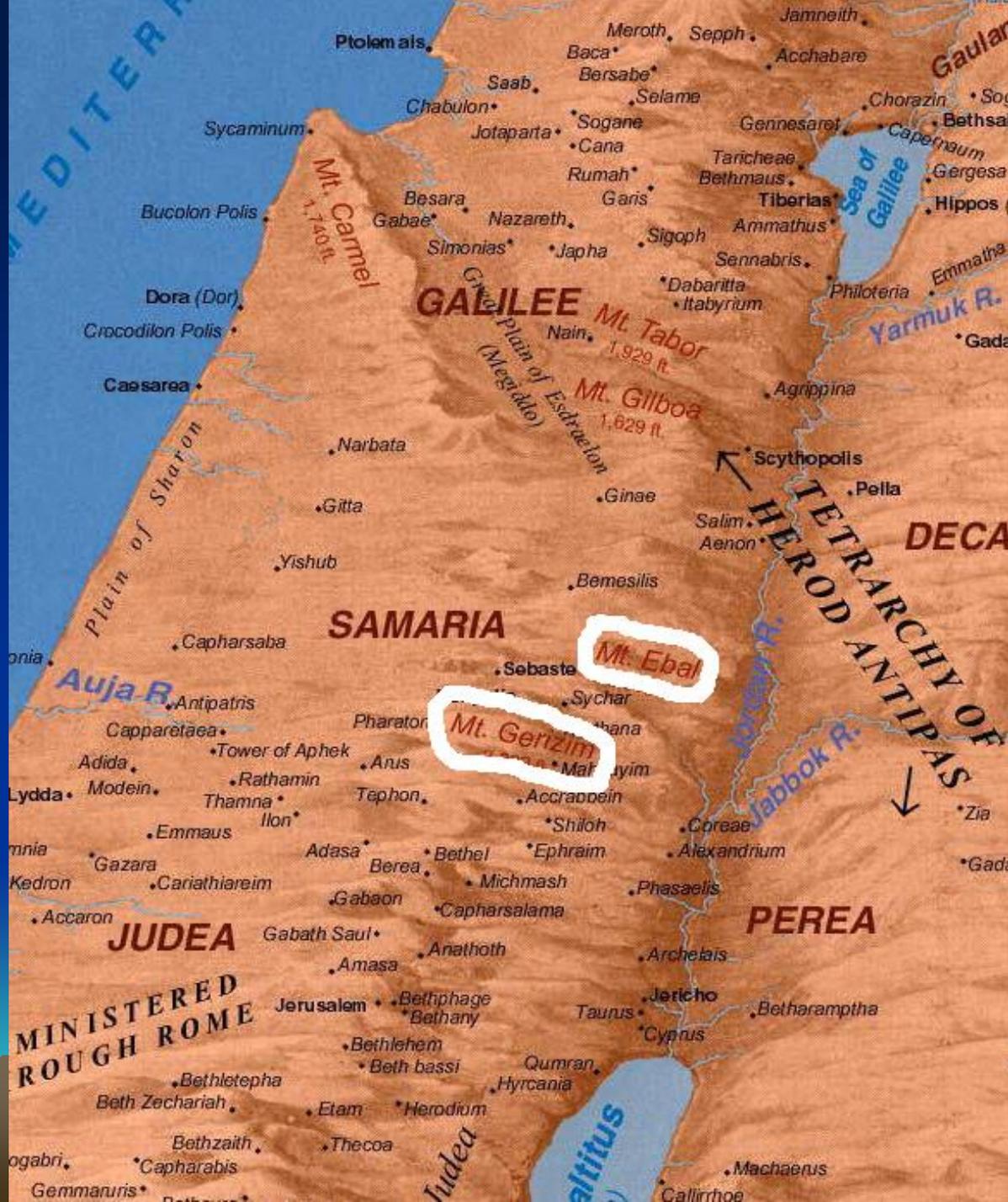
Dr. Gregg Wilkerson



MT EBAL AND JOSHUA'S ALTER

- After the victory in the 2nd Battle of Ai
- Joshua erected an alter on Mount Ebal
- Joshua 8:30-31 and Deuteronomy 27:4-8





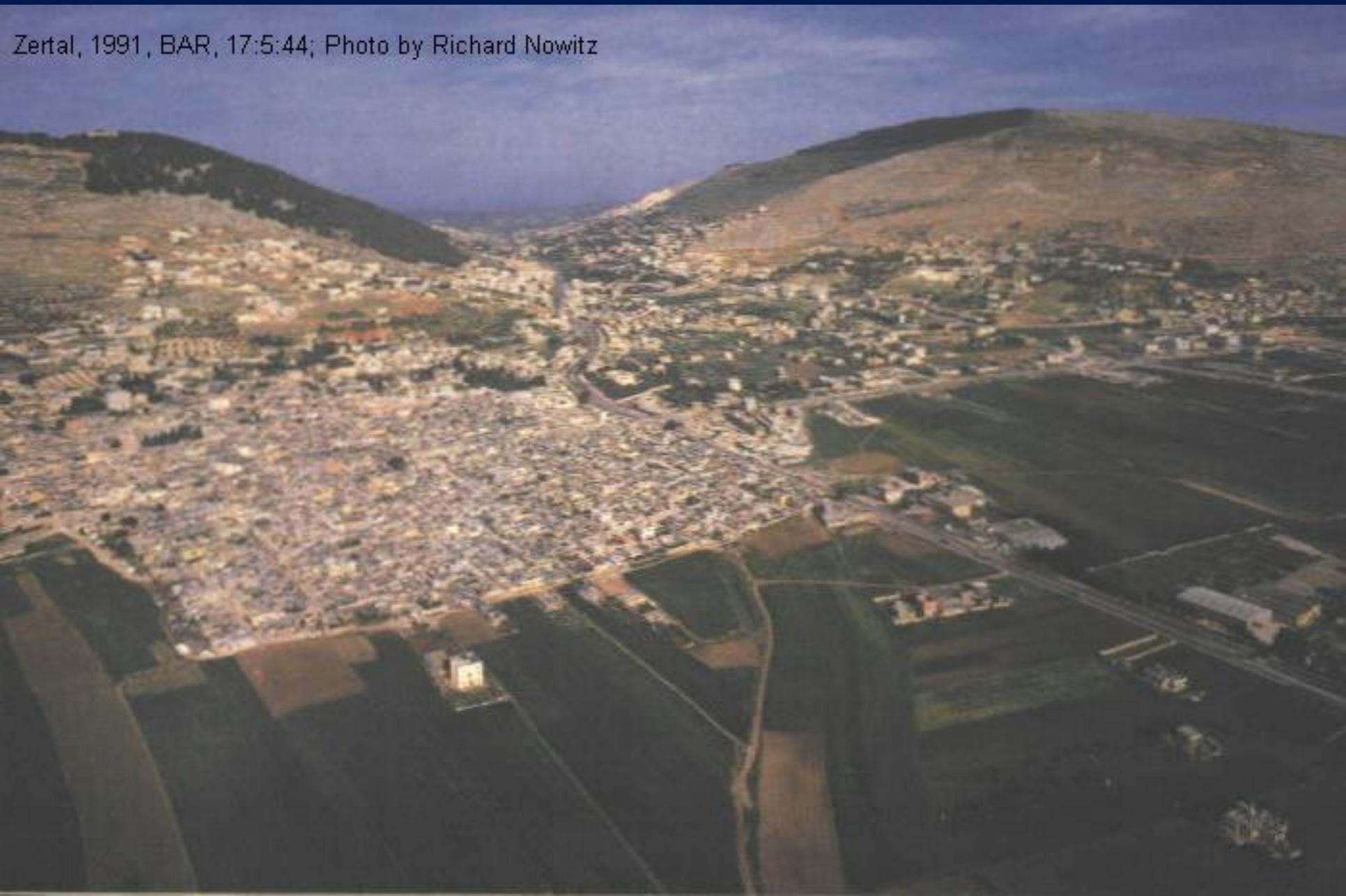
MINISTERED TO BY THE ROUGH ROMES

MT EBAL AND JOSHUA'S ALTER

- Open-air alter (*bamot*, “high place”)
- Alter follows the construction guidelines of Exodus 20:26 and has no steps.



Zertal, 1991, BAR, 17:5:44; Photo by Richard Nowitz





Zertal, 1991, BAR, 17:5:44; Photo by M. Weinberg

Mt. Ebal, Altar, 12th and 11th centuries BC

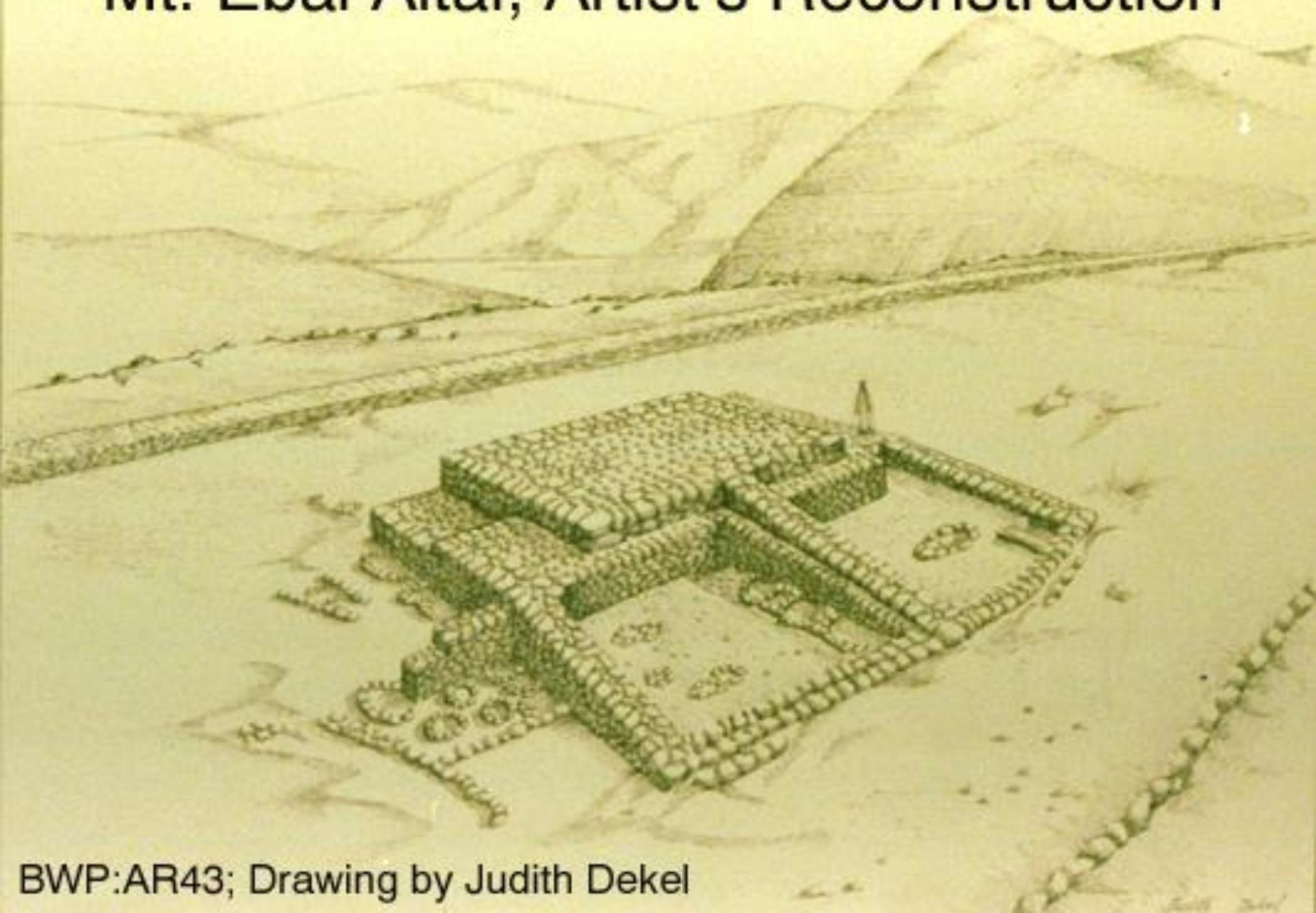
Deut. 27:1-10 and Joshua 8:30-35



BWP:AR42;

Photo from Adam Zertal

Mt. Ebal Altar, Artist's Reconstruction



BWP:AR43; Drawing by Judith Dekel

MT EBAL AND JOSHUA'S ALTER

- Two Egyptian scarbs date the site precisely.
- Collar rimmed jars and "man face" pottery handles of 13th-12th centuries BC are at the site.



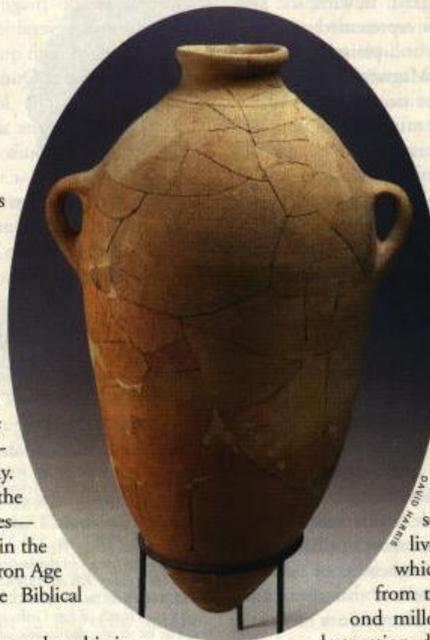
Israelites & Canaanites

You *Can* Tell Them Apart

VOLKMAR FRITZ

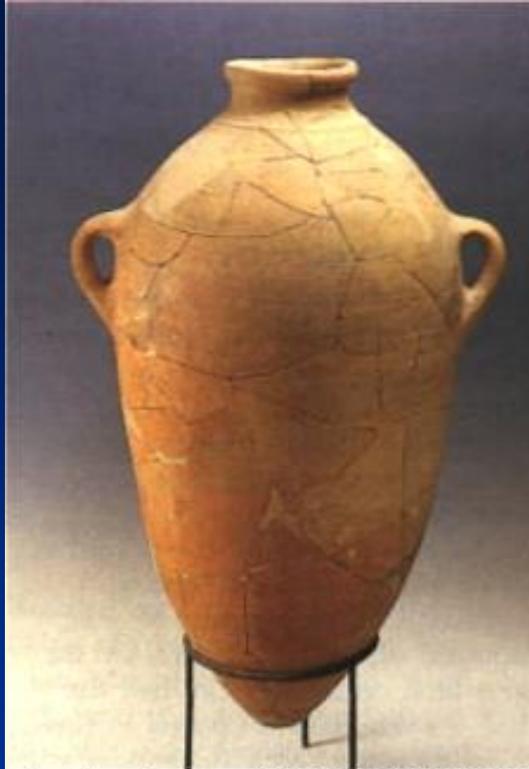
Scholars have spilled much ink trying to understand the relationship that existed between the Canaanites and the Israelites before the establishment of the monarchy. Can the two groups—the Canaanites and Israelites—actually be distinguished in the archaeological record of Iron Age I (1200-1000 B.C., the Biblical period of the Judges)?

I should say at the outset that this is a different question than where the Israelites came from—whether they came from outside the land or from inside or both. Wherever they came from, it is clear that in the period prior to the establishment of the United Monarchy in about 1000 B.C., there were people in the land of Canaan



who called themselves Israelites. (Otherwise there would have been no Israelites to form the United Monarchy.)

During the second millennium B.C., the population of Canaan—the land west of the Jordan River, according to Egyptian and Akkadian sources of the time—lived mostly in cities, which had been in existence from the beginning of the second millennium B.C. until their destruction during the course of the 12th century. These cities were strongly fortified and ruled the countryside surrounding them. Beginning in about the middle of the second millennium B.C., however, these city-states began to decline. For the most part, their fortifications were gradually abandoned.



COLLAR-RIM JARS. Named after the collar-like ridges at the bottom of their short, wide necks (see detail below), these jars had been thought to be a distinguishing feature of Israelite culture in the central highlands of Canaan. Now scholars are no longer so sure, having noted the presence of such jars in non-Israelite locations. As is the case with the Philistines, architectural features and the patterns of settlement are an equally important indication of a particular ethnic group.

The drab and utilitarian appearance of collar-rim jars stands in contrast to the elegant and highly decorated Philistine ware shown on page 47. Collar-rim jars could typically hold 10 to 15 gallons of water and were the principal means of storing or moving water in the central Canaanite highlands until about 1000 B.C. After that time, the widespread use of iron tools made possible the digging of cisterns in bedrock; collar-rim jars fell into disuse, one of history's early victims of technological advancement.

Shanks and others, 1993, *BAR*, 19:5:51; Photos by David Harris



MT EBAL AND JOSHUA'S ALTER

- Level I is 1200-1150 BC
- Level II 1225-1200 BC
- These periods cover the time of Biblical stories of Deborah and Barak and Judge Gideon.
- An incense burner (ritual chalice found) was found at the bottom of alter



MT GERIZIM, MT EBAL, AND SHECHEM

- Recitation of the law and blessings on Mt Ebal
- Recitation of curses on Mt Gerizim
- Josh. 8:32-35
- c. 1406 BC (Early Date)
- Late Bronze age, LB IB
- City of Shechem, situated in the valley between Mt Ebal and Mt Gerizim, corresponds to Level XIV of Tel Balata





Stager, 2003, BAR, 19:4:28

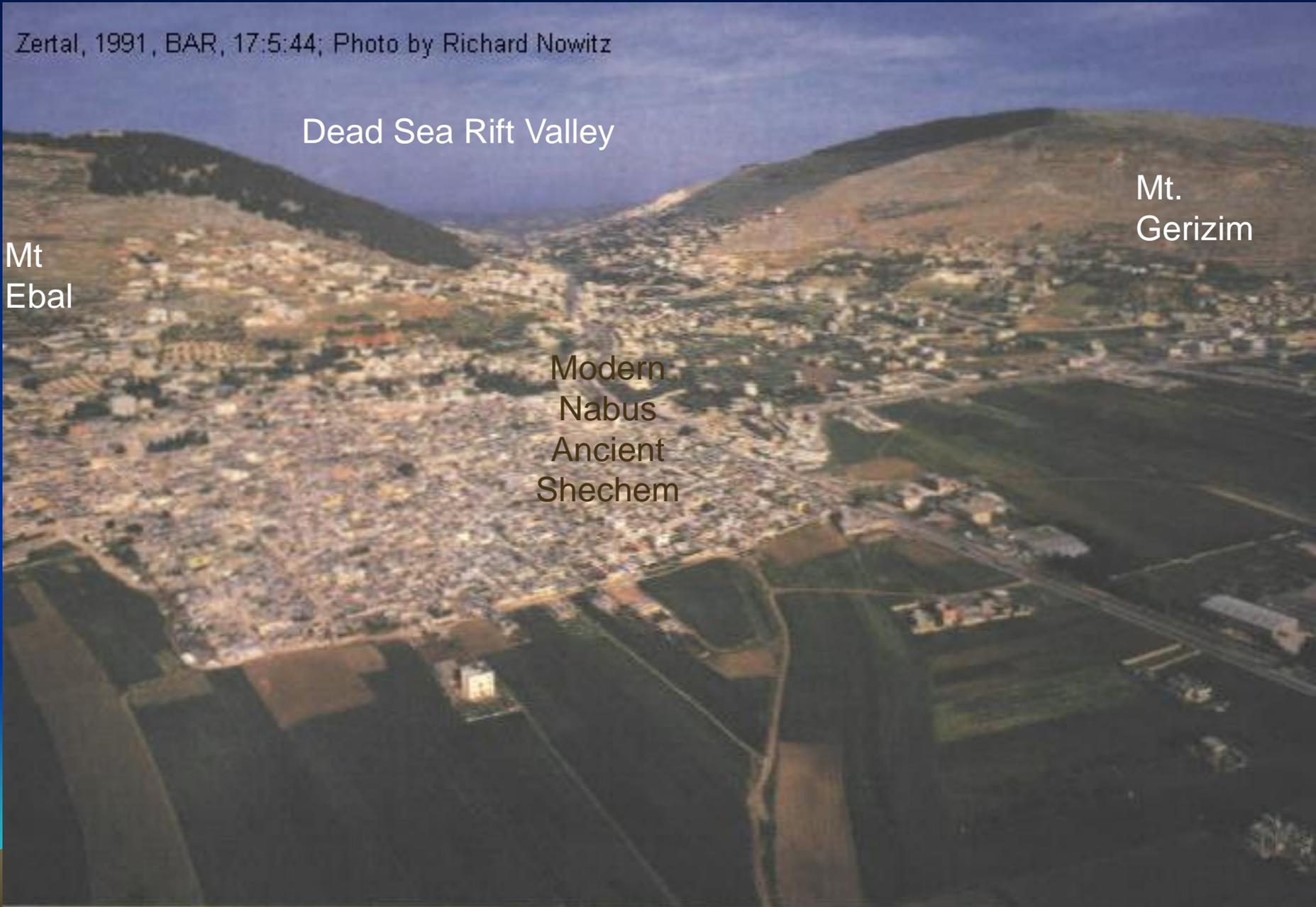
Zertal, 1991, BAR, 17:5:44; Photo by Richard Nowitz

Dead Sea Rift Valley

Mt
Ebal

Mt.
Gerizim

Modern
Nabus
Ancient
Shechem





Mt. Gerizim

Israel Antiquities Authority

Ruins of a fifth century AD octagonal church on Mt. Gerizim, view north. The church, dedicated to Mary, was built on top of a temple built by the Samaritans in the late fifth century BC. John Hyrcanus destroyed the temple in the late second century BC. The small domed building at the northeast corner, the tomb of an Arab sheikh, is the structure visible from Jacob's well in the valley below.

Shechem: Jacob to Joshua

- Jacob (Levels XXII-XXI)
- Joshua (Level XIV)
- 350 years
- City grew
- Was fortified with earthen embankments and cyclopean wall fortifications.



Shechem: Jacob to Joshua

- Destroyed around 1540 BC.
- Debris layer up to 5.25 ft (1.6 m) deep.
- That destruction is attributed to an Egyptian military campaign by Ahmose I or Amenhotep I





Amenhotep I

Ahmose I

Egyptian Destruction to time of Joshua

- After the Egyptian destruction of Shechem
 - Rebuilt about 90 years later in LB I as Level XIV.
 - Level XIV included reconstruction of city defensive walls and homes.
 - A well built, fortress-type temple was also constructed at this time.
 - It was this city that Joshua encountered when he arrived to read the Law per Moses' instructions
- 

Shechem after Joshua

- Joshua 8:33, 35 suggests that the city of Shechem of Level XIV became inhabited by both Israelites and Shechemites:
- “All Israel, aliens and citizens alike...were standing on both sides of the ark of the covenant...there was not a word...that Joshua did not read to the whole assembly of Israel, including...the aliens who lived among them.”



Shechem after Joshua

- There is no description of a military overthrow of Shechem.
- After the conquest, Shechem became an important Israelite city
- Was one of only three Israelite Cities of Refuge on the west side of the Jordan.
- It was also a Levitical city (Joshua 20:7; 21:21)



Shechem of Joshua and the Amarna Letters

- Additional information about the situation at Shechem in the LB period.





Amarna Tablets. 380 clay tablets in cuneiform script came from the "Office-House of the Letters of Pharaoh"

Byers, 2002, B&S, 15:4:112; Photo by Bryan Wood

Shechem of Joshua and the Amarna Letters

- In the mid-14th century, the kings of Shechem were criticized by other Canaanite rulers for cooperating with an invading group call the *Habiru*.
- Many conservative scholars equate *Habiru* with “Hebrew”



The Shechem covenants

(c.1404 and 1390? BC)

- First Shechem covenant was made early in the Conquest, as directed by Moses (Josh 8:30-35).
- Second Shechem covenant was made at end of Joshua's life (Josh 23, 24).
- Both have a Hittite-like structure



Hittite Structure of the Shechem covenants: 1406

- **Hittite treaty**
 - 1. Offerings of sacrifice
 - 2. Writing of the law on stones
 - 3. A blessing on the people
 - 4. Reading of the law and the curses and blessings
- **Joshua 8**
 - 30-31 ; Alter and offerings
 - 32 ; copy of law engraved on blocks of stone
 - 34-35 ; Blessings and curses
 - 34-35 ; Blessings and curses



Hittite Structure of the Shechem covenants: 1390

- **Hittite treaty**
 - 1. Offerings of sacrifice
 - 2. Writing of the law on stones
 - 3. A blessing on the people
 - 4. Reading of the law and the curses and blessings
- **Joshua 23-24**
 - 24:24 ; People promise to worship
 - 24;26-27 ; copy of law made and witness stone erected
 - 23:9; 24:19-20 ; Blessings and curses
 - 24:27 ; hearing the words, Blessings and curses



Witness Stone of Shechem

- Masseba

Stager, BAR, 29:4:33; Photo by Garo Nalbandian



A GREAT WHITE SLAB, today only about half its original 10-foot-height, still meets visitors to Shechem's fortress-temple. The slab, or *masseba*, had two smaller counterparts, which flanked the temple entrance.

NEXT TIME

- The era of the Judges

