



# ANCIENT ISRAEL

# ANCIENT



# ISRAEL

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE  
COLLECTIONS OF  
THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

*Gabrielle Vera Novacek*

FEATURING OBJECTS FROM  
THE HAAS AND SCHWARTZ MEGIDDO GALLERY



The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

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DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF ALBERT HAAS  
BY HIS FAMILY





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## FOREWORD

*Ancient Israel* is the second in a series of books designed to present highlights from the priceless collections of the Oriental Institute's Museum, while highlighting the history of each of the great civilizations represented in our eight permanent galleries. Not only are these objects extraordinary for their aesthetic appeal and historical importance, but they are also especially precious because they were scientifically excavated and carefully recorded; as such they form a uniquely important resource for scholars around the world.

The treasures in the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery mostly derive from the pioneering Oriental Institute excavations at Megiddo — the site also known as Armageddon. Because of its central and strategic position along the key route traversing ancient Israel, Megiddo was the nexus for numerous cultural influences from the entire eastern Mediterranean region. Excavations through the many stratigraphic layers of Megiddo brought to light a fascinating sequence of cultural contacts and the development of civilization from the Neolithic through the Iron Age, chronicling the origins of cities in this part of the Near East, the Canaanite cultures of the Bronze Age, and the origins of ancient Israel. The gallery showcases many treasures, large and small. The Megiddo ivories are one of the most precious collections of objects in the Oriental Institute Museum. The statues of Astarte and Ēl exemplify the religious beliefs of the Canaanites, while the horned altar evokes key themes in Israelite history and religion. One of the few objects in the gallery that does not derive from Megiddo is unique — the only fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls on permanent display in an American museum. In a very real sense, the Megiddo Gallery encapsulates the history of ancient Israel.

The Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery honors two families — Albert (“Bud”) and Cissy Haas, and Maurie and Lois Schwartz, whose warm friendship over the years and commitment to the Oriental Institute have left us all an enduring legacy. I also want to acknowledge the generosity of Bud's brother, Howard Haas, whose support was instrumental for the publication of this volume. Finally, I want to thank Gabrielle Novacek, whose deep knowledge and tireless efforts in researching and writing this book will be apparent to all who read it.

Gil J. Stein  
Director, The Oriental Institute



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On January 29, 2005, the Oriental Institute celebrated the public opening of the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery. This occasion marked the return of some of the most extraordinary artifacts ever excavated in the southern Levant to permanent public display. The Oriental Institute's long history of exploration in the region is testimony to a long-standing scholarly passion for discovery and the pursuit of knowledge. In the pages that follow, we draw from the momentum generated by the opening of the Megiddo Gallery and present a selection of highlights from the Institute's Southern Levant collection.

Many individuals contributed to the ultimate completion of this volume and it is virtually impossible to disassociate this project from the development of the Haas and Schwartz Megiddo Gallery. I therefore extend my gratitude to a number of individuals. First and foremost, many thanks to Raymond Tindel, John Larson, Jean Grant, Karen Wilson, and the entire staff of the Oriental Institute Museum for their patient assistance. Tim Harrison, Carole Krucoff, and David Schloen provided valuable feedback and guidance in the task of crafting the textual narrative. Additional scholarly input was graciously given by Robert Ritner, Emily Teeter, Richard Beal, Norman Golb, and Adi Keinan. Gil Stein, director of the Oriental Institute, provided institutional support, without which this project would not have been possible.

Finally, many thanks go to Geoff Emberling, former chief curator of the Oriental Institute Museum. Dr. Emberling has been a driving force in the return of the Israel collection to the public eye. He has also served as a tremendous mentor for which I cannot thank him enough.

Gabrielle Vera Novacek  
The Oriental Institute





## STRATIGRAPHY OF MEGIDDO

Stratum	Period	Dates (BC unless otherwise noted)
Stratum XX (early)	Pottery Neolithic	5500–4500
Stratum XX (late)	Chalcolithic	4500–3500
Stratum XIX (early) (Stages VII–V)	Early Bronze IA	3500–3300
Stratum XIX (late) (Stage IV)	Early Bronze IB	3300–3100
Stratum XVIII (Stages III–II)	Early Bronze II	3100–2650
Stratum XVII/XVI (Stage I)	Early Bronze IIIA	2650–2350
Stratum XV	Early Bronze IIIB	2350–2200
Stratum XIV	Early Bronze IV/ Middle Bronze I	2300–2000
Stratum XIII–XII	Middle Bronze IIA	2000–1750
Stratum XI–X	Middle Bronze IIB–C	1750–1550
Stratum IX	Late Bronze I	1550–1400
Stratum VIII	Late Bronze IIA	1400–1300
Stratum VIIB/A	Late Bronze IIB	1300–1200
Stratum VIB/A	Iron IA	1200–1025
Stratum VB	Iron IB	1025–975
Stratum VA/IVB	Iron IIA	975–925
Stratum IVA	Iron IIB	925–732
Stratum III–II	Iron IIC	732–586
Stratum I	Persian	539–332
Stratum 0	Roman	63 BC–AD 324

The Southern Levant  
Collection of the  
Oriental Institute

The Oriental Institute's Southern Levant collection reflects nearly a century of exploration in the region by University of Chicago scholars. Under James Henry Breasted, the first director of the Oriental Institute, it became an institutional mission to support a major archaeological project in every significant region of the Middle East. In order to establish a presence in the regions associated with the events of the Bible (generally identified today by scholars as the southern Levant and roughly encompassing modern Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Territories), work was undertaken at the site of Megiddo. With funding from the Rockefeller family, excavations were conducted at Megiddo by the Oriental Institute from 1925 to 1939 under the successive leadership of Clarence S. Fisher, Philip L. O. Guy, and Gordon Loud. At that time, Megiddo was within the British Mandate of Palestine. The project was ultimately halted by the outbreak of World War II.

After the war, the Oriental Institute returned to the region, now working in the newly independent state of Israel. Under the direction of Pinhas Delougaz and Helene Kantor, attention was shifted to the Early Bronze Age mound of Khirbet el-Kerak, or Beth Yerah, on the southwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. In addition to the Early Bronze

FIGURE 1.

*Map of southern Levant and its environs.*

The term "southern Levant" is used by scholars to describe the area encompassed by modern Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian Territories. The site of Megiddo is located in the northern part of the region where the Wadi al-'Arah enters the Jezreel Valley. This position made Megiddo a natural focal point for both trade and warfare over the millennia





FIGURE 2.

*The Rockefellers visit Megiddo.*

In 1929, members of the Rockefeller family toured Megiddo with James Henry Breasted, the founder of the Oriental Institute. The Rockefellers provided most of the funding for the Megiddo excavations. In addition to Breasted (third from right), the party included John D. Rockefeller, Jr. (fourth from right); his wife, Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (fifth from right); and his son, David Rockefeller (third from left) (OIM photograph P. 16281)

Age city, the excavators also uncovered the remains of a Byzantine church on the mound. Since that time, the Oriental Institute has maintained a scholarly presence in the region through affiliation with the Leon Levy expedition to the major Philistine city of Ashkelon, a project at the Early Bronze Age town of Yaqush in the Jordan Valley, and excavations at Marj Rabba and plans to excavate at Khirbet al-Mafjar.

The Oriental Institute's work at Megiddo is still today seen by scholars as one of the most pivotal projects in the history of the archaeological exploration of the southern Levant. Not only were the excavations conducted on a scale which would be virtually impossible to fund today, the archaeological materials from Megiddo often serve as the foundation for reconstructing historical and social developments throughout the region. When dealing with the biblical periods in particular, the interpretation of the history of Megiddo arouses more debate among scholars than perhaps any other site.

The Oriental Institute's Megiddo collection has long been one of the primary bodies of data used in reconstructing the cultural history of the region, and its ceramics have served as a foundation for determining the pottery sequences of the southern Levant. Megiddo is among the most extensively excavated and published sites in the region and is unusual in its temporal scope. One of the Oriental Institute's most visible legacies at the site, a great step trench, has allowed scholars to chart the full

history of Megiddo from prehistoric times to the end of the Iron Age. Ongoing debates of interpretation are one of the primary reasons why work still continues at the site today under the auspices of Tel Aviv University.

In the pages that follow, we trace the cultural history of the southern Levant, illuminated through pieces drawn from the Oriental Institute's ancient Israel collection. While the majority of artifacts come from Megiddo, we also present several additional artifacts from other Oriental Institute projects in the region to present a complete cultural sequence.

**FIGURE 3.**

*Work being conducted in the great step trench.*

Workers during the 1935-39 excavations at Megiddo dig a large sounding trench in order to investigate what features are below ground. In the foreground, the walls of a Late Bronze Age palace (1550-1200 BC) can be seen (OIM photograph P. 39747)





## MEGIDDO: CULTURAL CROSSROADS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

The region of the southern Levant (the lands today encompassed by modern Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Territories) has always served as an important land bridge connecting east and west and serving as a conduit for the movement of people, goods, and ideas. During the Bronze Age, as major civilizations developed in Egypt and Mesopotamia, trade routes were formed which crisscrossed the southern Levant. Among them was the Via Maris, known in Egyptian records as the Way of Horus, which followed a coastal route out of Egypt before turning eastward to continue on toward Damascus and Aleppo. The ancient city of Megiddo (Tell el-Mutesellim) held one of the most strategic positions along this corridor. Megiddo guarded the entrance to the Wadi al-'Arah, a critical pass through the Mount Carmel range that connects the Mediterranean coastal plain with the interior Jezreel Valley, the largest valley in the region to bisect the hill country that dominates central Israel.

As a result of the strategic importance of Megiddo, the history of the city has earned it the designation as one of the bloodiest areas of the

FIGURE 4.

*Aerial view of Megiddo.*

The mound of Megiddo (Tell el-Mutesellim) covers an area of about 15 acres and rises almost 200 feet above the surrounding plain. Excavations at the site are ongoing, under the auspices of Tel Aviv University

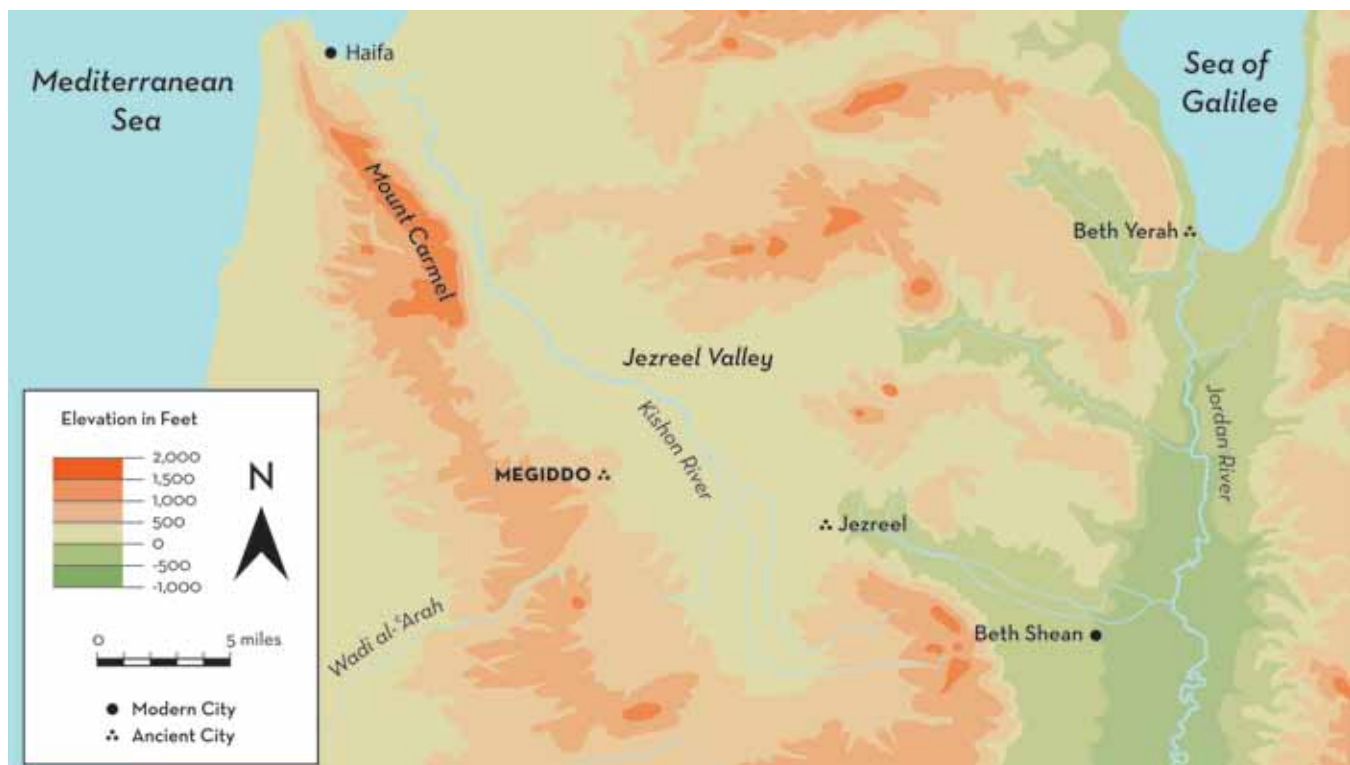




region. At least thirty-four major battles were conducted in and around the city, beginning with the Egyptian campaign of Pepi I in the third millennium BC. Historical records preserve accounts of numerous armies passing through the region over the millennia, including the Egyptians, Canaanites, Israelites, Philistines, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Muslims, Crusaders, Mongols, French, Ottomans, and British. Among the biblical characters to wage battle in the area were Saul, Josiah, Deborah, Barak, Sisera, Gideon, and Jehu. In the post-biblical era, Saladin, Napoleon, and Allenby all left their historical footprint upon the site. Megiddo's strategic position is perhaps best described by Pharaoh Thutmose III of the Egyptian New Kingdom who, upon being forced to engage in a long siege of the town in the early fifteenth century BC, noted that "the capture of Megiddo is as the capturing of a thousand cities" (Pritchard 1969, p. 237). In the context of this bloody history, it is no surprise that it is Megiddo that was designated as the setting for the penultimate battle between the forces of good and evil in the New Testament book of Revelation. The term "Armageddon" is in fact derived from the name of the city.

Although a flashpoint for conflict, Megiddo served as more than a simple battleground for warring factions. Merchants, kings, and nomads passing through the area often lingered at the site, thus resulting in a tremendous confluence of culture, ideas, goods, and political forces. It is no surprise that the site of Megiddo preserves one the longest occupational sequences of any archaeological site in the southern Levant. This comprehensive sequence of cultural deposition, when combined with the complex military history of Megiddo, provides us with an unparalleled vantage point from which to study the cultural history of the southern Levant. As the crossroads par excellence of the region, Megiddo preserves a unique and remarkable record of ancient Near Eastern cultural history.

FIGURE 5.  
Map showing strategic position of  
Megiddo in the Jezreel Valley



# The Early Bronze Age

(CA. 3500-2000 BC)

During the Early Bronze Age (ca. 3500–2000 BC), the southern Levant experienced its first major period of urbanization. Scholars generally divide the Early Bronze Age into three primary eras, identified as the Early Bronze I–III. During the Early Bronze I, large population shifts resulted in a proliferation of settlement in the region’s inner valleys, near important water sources, and along major trade corridors. In many cases, settlements that first emerged in the Early Bronze I would become urban centers in the following Early Bronze II and III periods.

It was during the Early Bronze Age that the first real large-scale horticulture of olives, grapes, dates, and figs took place in the southern Levant and many scholars believe that urbanization in this period can be tied to demand for these goods by the pharaohs of Old Kingdom Egypt. While the foothills and highlands of the region were best suited to horticulture, grain farming was the focus in the plains and valleys. As settlements began to specialize along these lines of production, they would have become increasingly interdependent, thus fostering the growth of larger, more bureaucratic population centers.

The Early Bronze I (ca. 3500–3100 BC) at Megiddo has been identified as Stratum XIX. The Oriental Institute excavations uncovered the remains of a double temple complex dating to this period. The complex featured two broadroom-style structures with raised pedestals for statues of deities opposite their entrances. In front of the temples was a fenced-in courtyard, featuring a pavement of flat stones incised with depictions of various animals, as well as human figures including a man playing a lyre. It has been suggested that Megiddo may have been a temple-town in this period, with the temple complex serving as a central shrine for the area.

With the transition to the Early Bronze II–III periods (ca. 3100–2200 BC), Megiddo was part of a wide-scale urbanization that occurred throughout the region. As population centers grew into cities, massive fortifications were constructed, along with public buildings, granaries, and reservoirs. The peak of this urbanization occurred during the Early Bronze II and may be correlated with the apex of trade in oil and wine with Egypt at this time. The Early Bronze II–III periods at Megiddo, identified as Strata XVIII–XV, saw the construction of a stone fortification wall surrounding the city, as well as a large public building and a clearly defined sacred area that included a large temple and circular altar. In the latter part of the period, the public building was replaced by a ceremonial gate with a monumental staircase leading toward the sacred area where two additional temples were built.

In order to illustrate the material culture of Early Bronze Age Megiddo, we present an inscribed paving stone from the Early

Bronze I temple complex, as well as a range of hallmark ceramic types and an example of a zoomorphic figurine. The Megiddo collection is supplemented by pieces excavated by the Oriental Institute at the Early Bronze Age mound of Khirbet el-Kerak (Beth Yerah) on the southwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee.



1.

1.  
**INSCRIBED PAVING STONE**  
Limestone  
Early Bronze I  
3500-3100 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum XIX  
45.5 x 24.5 x 6.5 cm  
OIM A22494

THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE EXCAVATIONS of the Early Bronze I remains at Megiddo uncovered a remarkable double temple complex featuring two broadroom-style structures with raised pedestals for statues of deities opposite their entrances.<sup>1</sup> In front of the temples was a fenced-in courtyard, surfaced by a pavement comprised of numerous flat stones, forty of which were incised with depictions of various animals, human figures, and other symbols and objects.

The incised slabs were placed in rows and concentrated near the edge of the pavement in the area where worshippers would have begun their ascent toward the temples. The entrance to the sacred complex was on its east side, and the pavement sloped up sharply toward the temples. As people would have ascended the paved ramp, they would have seen the various human and animal figures inscribed in the stones.

1. Broadroom-style buildings, a popular architectural form during the Early Bronze Age, are rectangular in shape and are characterized by doorways placed along the long axis of the structure

Recent scholarship provides compelling evidence that the motifs depicted on the temple paving stones are drawn from the contemporary Naqada II and III traditions of late Predynastic Egypt.<sup>2</sup> Numerous parallels between the Megiddo paving stones and Egyptian motifs can be seen in styles of human and animal representations from Predynastic Egyptian slate palettes, pottery vessels, and ivory objects found in the temples at Hierakonpolis and Abydos. A number of Egyptian prestige goods were also found on or near the Megiddo pavement. These include a copper ceremonial sword and alabaster mace-heads.

During this formative period, Egypt was becoming a presence in the southern Levant, eventually establishing settlements in the southwest of the region. Taken together, the pavement and the associated Egyptian prestige goods suggest that at least a small number of Egyptians were in some way present and involved in religious life at Megiddo during the Early Bronze I. Scholars have long suggested that Megiddo at this time served as a regional cult center, as well as an important gateway to trade. The city would thus have been a logical place for Egypt to extend its influence.

FIGURE 6.

*Courtyard of the double temple complex with paving stones in situ (Megiddo, Locus 4008. OIM Field Negative 4438)*



2. A number of scholars have suggested Egyptian connections to the Megiddo pavement. The most recent treatment is the work of Adi Keinan of Tel Aviv University (2006)





2.

2.  
**GRAY BURNISHED  
 WARE BOWL**

Ceramic  
 Early Bronze IB  
 3300-3100 BC  
 Khirbet el-Kerak  
 Trench L, Stratum IV  
 14.8 x 37.0 cm  
 OIM A118464

ONE OF THE MOST distinctive elements of the Early Bronze I ceramic assemblage of the northern regions of the southern Levant is Gray Burnished Ware. G. E. Wright was the first to identify this unique pottery, calling it “Esdraelon Ware,” from the Greek form of Jezreel, in recognition of its very localized pattern of distribution. Gray Burnished Ware is characterized by its highly burnished and lustrous dark gray or black slip that was produced by firing the vessels in reduced, or low oxygen, conditions. A preference for hand-formed, top-heavy shapes, as well as the use of black burnish, suggests the possibility of some connections to a later group of ceramics known as Khirbet Kerak Ware which entered the region in the Early Bronze III period. Scholars believe that Gray Burnished Ware is likely connected to northern influences from northeast Anatolia and Syria during the Early Bronze I period.

This complete Gray Burnished Ware bowl from the Oriental Institute’s excavations at Beth Yerah features a classic row of plastic knobs around the low-set ridge of carination. Gray Burnished Ware appears to have had more of a precious decorative or socially derived function, rather than a utilitarian one. This bowl was found inside what appears to be a mausoleum. The round structure was built of two rows of stones with an opening on its northern side. Inside, a number of whole vessels which presumably held offerings were found on the floor surface. The Gray Burnished Ware bowl was found buried just beneath the floor, together with a subterranean infant jar burial.



3.  
**TWINNED VESSELS**  
Ceramic  
Early Bronze III  
2650–2200 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum XVII  
16.6 x 33.8 x 15.6 cm  
OIM A23878

THESE CONJOINED JUGS ARE a distinctive form that appears in the Early Bronze Age pottery of the southern Levant. Although they are found throughout the era, they are at their largest size in the Early Bronze III. This piece from Megiddo is one of the finest examples of the twinned vessel form to have been found in the region. The two halves of the vessel are formed by identical jugs treated with a smeared exterior red-brown wash. The jugs are then conjoined at mid-body where an opening would have allowed for the free flow of fluids between the two pieces. A carrying handle is attached at the rim of each jug.



3.

4.  
**KHIRBET KERAK WARE  
 POT STAND**  
 Ceramic  
 Early Bronze III  
 2650–2200 BC  
 Khirbet el-Kerak  
 Road Station 5–6, Stratum IV  
 29.0 x 22.5 cm  
 OIM A118465

ACCORDING TO THE MOST commonly accepted model for the progression of the Early Bronze Age in northern regions of the southern Levant, the transition from the Early Bronze II to the Early Bronze III is marked by the appearance of the striking Khirbet Kerak Ware, the origins of which have traditionally been sought far to the north in eastern Anatolia. Khirbet Kerak Ware was first identified by W. F. Albright during his surface examination of the site of Khirbet el-Kerak (Beth Yerah). It was Albright's student G. E. Wright who formulated the notion that the appearance of Khirbet Kerak Ware in the southern Levant was indicative of the arrival of Anatolian population groups at the beginning of Early Bronze III.

In the wake of Israeli excavations at Beth Yerah in the 1940s, Ruth Amiran took the evidence one step further to formulate the classic migration model for the "Khirbet Kerak Ware People." Amiran noted a number of key features that distinguished Khirbet Kerak Ware from indigenous types already in production in the southern Levant at the time, including the fact that it was handmade and not wheel made. Furthermore, the surface decoration and forms reflect foreign artistic conceptions, with a preference for top-heavy sinusoidal forms, thick and highly burnished black or red slips, and grooving or ribbing to decorate vessel exteriors. The pot stand depicted here is a form unknown to the local pottery of the southern Levant. Clear parallels to these features can be seen, however, in the Red-Black Burnished Wares found in Anatolia and Transcaucasia.

The distribution of Khirbet Kerak Ware in the southern Levant is limited to the northern parts of the region, the southern boundary of which is marked by Megiddo in the west and Beth Shean in the east. The Oriental Institute's work in the southern Levant has proven to be critical to our understanding of the Khirbet Kerak Ware phenomenon. In addition to the Oriental Institute's project at Megiddo, several seasons of excavation were conducted by Chicago teams at the major Early Bronze Age mound of Beth Yerah in the 1950s and 1960s. This pot stand was uncovered in 1964 in a trench alongside a modern road cut across the length of the mound. Since 1989, the Oriental Institute has also worked to excavate the site of Yaqush in the Jordan Valley. Located near the important Jordan River crossing at Naharayim, early results from Yaqush indicate a significant cultural shift at the site with the arrival of Khirbet Kerak Ware.



4.

5.  
**ZOOMORPHIC FIGURINE**  
 Ceramic  
 Early Bronze IIIA  
 2650–2350 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum XVII  
 5.3 x 7.2 x 2.4 cm  
 OIM A23921

DURING THE EARLY BRONZE Age in the southern Levant, the primary themes evident in cultic artifacts are the fertility of the land, vegetation, and herd animals. As farming and herding activities formed the basis for the ancient southern Levantine economy, it is not surprising that fertility was a primary concern of worship as well. Representations of horned animals are particularly common and this yoked and horned zoomorphic figurine from Megiddo is a classic example. Zoomorphic figurines are often found in domestic contexts and likely would have been kept as small votive objects.



5.

6.  
**SPOUTED "TEAPOT" JAR**  
 Ceramic  
 Early Bronze IV / Middle Bronze I  
 2300–2000 BC  
 Megiddo, Tomb 989D2  
 11.7 x 15.8 cm  
 OIM A16497

FOLLOWING THE FLORESCENCE OF the first urban culture in the southern Levant during the Early Bronze II–III periods, the region experienced a significant and widespread collapse. Large fortified Early Bronze Age centers like Megiddo contracted and became small, unfortified village settlements. Egypt saw a similar decline at this time and entered into the First Intermediate Period. Debating whether this 300-year-long period of decline has more in common with the preceding Early Bronze Age or succeeding Middle Bronze Age, scholars have given it several names, including the Early Bronze IV, Middle Bronze I, and the compromise Early Bronze IV / Middle Bronze I.

Formerly, many scholars believed that the collapse in urban culture at this time was the result of a massive migration of semi-nomadic tribes from Syria known as Amorites. To help support their argument, they pointed to the presence of imported Syrian pottery like this “teapot” from Megiddo. Numerous wheel-made vessels of this characteristic Gray Ware have been found at Megiddo, generally painted with white horizontal or wavy lines and in either “teapot” or goblet form. W. F. Albright, in searching for the historical background for the biblical narratives, suggested that this movement of Amorite tribes into the southern Levant during the Early Bronze IV / Middle Bronze I served as the setting for the stories of the patriarchs found in the book of Genesis.

Today some scholars instead explain this period as an internal shift in modes of life and social structures. As urban centers collapsed from a variety of internal and external causes, a more nomadic and village-based form of social organization became prominent. The Syrian pottery is therefore understood as the result of ongoing trade activity. Others, however, suggest that this model downplays the truly radical cultural break that occurred at this time. Instead, they suggest that a vacuum was created by the urban collapse at the end of the Early Bronze Age that was exploited by pastoral nomads who had already been living in the area.



# The Middle Bronze Age

(CA. 2000-1550 BC)



During the Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2000–1550 BC), the southern Levant recorded its second major era of urbanization. Megiddo was among the population centers to experience a period of florescence at this time. Questions of how and why these cities developed in the region have long been of interest to scholars who have noted that when urbanism returned to the southern Levant, it was fully developed in terms of architectural styles, city planning, and ceramic technologies.

Studies tracing the styles and influences of various aspects of Middle Bronze Age material culture and architecture in the southern Levant have suggested that the new urbanism is probably somehow connected to cultural influences from Syria, where Semitic-speaking Amorite groups were culturally dominant in the region west of the Euphrates River. Rather than being the result of a massive migration or invasion of Amorite peoples, however, more recent work has demonstrated that Middle Bronze Age urbanism and its associated architectural styles, material culture, and ceramic technologies moved steadily down the coast of the southern Levant, suggesting a southward cultural transfer from the northern Amorite sphere.

Megiddo at this time grew slowly but steadily as an urban center. Among its primary architectural features were a number of tremendous defensive structures including a large city wall and massive earth glacis that surrounded the city, as well as a monumental primary gate. The construction of an earth glacis was one of the most striking hallmarks of Middle Bronze Age cities in the southern Levant. An artificial slope was created by dumping enormous volumes of earth on an existing mound. These Middle Bronze Age glacis frequently continued to define the morphology of the site during later periods of occupation and many are visible today.

In addition to the defensive structures, substantial areas of the interior of Middle Bronze Age Megiddo were excavated by the Oriental Institute. Near the primary city gate, a series of palaces were uncovered. Portions of a residential area were also excavated, revealing parallel streets enclosing square blocks of dwellings. The conscious arrangement of dwellings within the residential area suggests that some form of central planning authority was involved.

The latter part of the Middle Bronze Age, the Middle Bronze IIB–C (1750–1550 BC), is connected with the ascendance of the Hyksos kings in Egypt. At this time, following the collapse of the Middle Kingdom, Egypt entered an era of decline known as the Second Intermediate Period. As the pharaohs of the Thirteenth Dynasty struggled to maintain control over Egypt, a rival Fourteenth Dynasty declared control over the region of the western Nile Delta. This instability in Egypt opened

the door for Semitic groups from the Levant to move into the eastern Nile Delta. Known in Egypt as *heka khasewet* (“foreign rulers”) and in Greek records as the Hyksos, these Semitic peoples eventually took control of the city of Avaris (Tel ed-Dab’a) and ruled as foreign kings of the Fifteenth Dynasty. As Egypt emerged from the Second Intermediate Period under the leadership of the rulers of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Dynasties from Thebes, the Hyksos were driven out of the Nile Delta. After the fall of Avaris, the Hyksos were pursued by the Egyptian armies across the Sinai Desert and into southern Canaan. A number of lasting contributions to Egyptian tools and techniques of warfare were made by the Hyksos, including the introduction of the horse-drawn chariot and the composite bow.

Various scholars seeking to place the biblical narratives in historical context have suggested that the Middle Bronze Age and the prosperous urban culture of the southern Levant is the most suitable setting for the patriarchs of the Bible. The Hyksos period in particular has frequently been cited as the possible historical background to the biblical exodus. In addition to being the only documented and reasonably dated historical event involving a large number of Semitic peoples both residing in the Nile Delta and being pursued into the southern Levant by the pharaoh’s armies, the Hyksos era also provides a suitable backdrop in which the biblical figure of Joseph could have ascended to a prominent position within the pharaoh’s court.



7.

7.

**RED BURNISHED JUG**

Ceramic

Middle Bronze IIA

2000-1750 BC

Megiddo, Stratum XIII, Tomb 5012

18.3 cm

OIM A23851

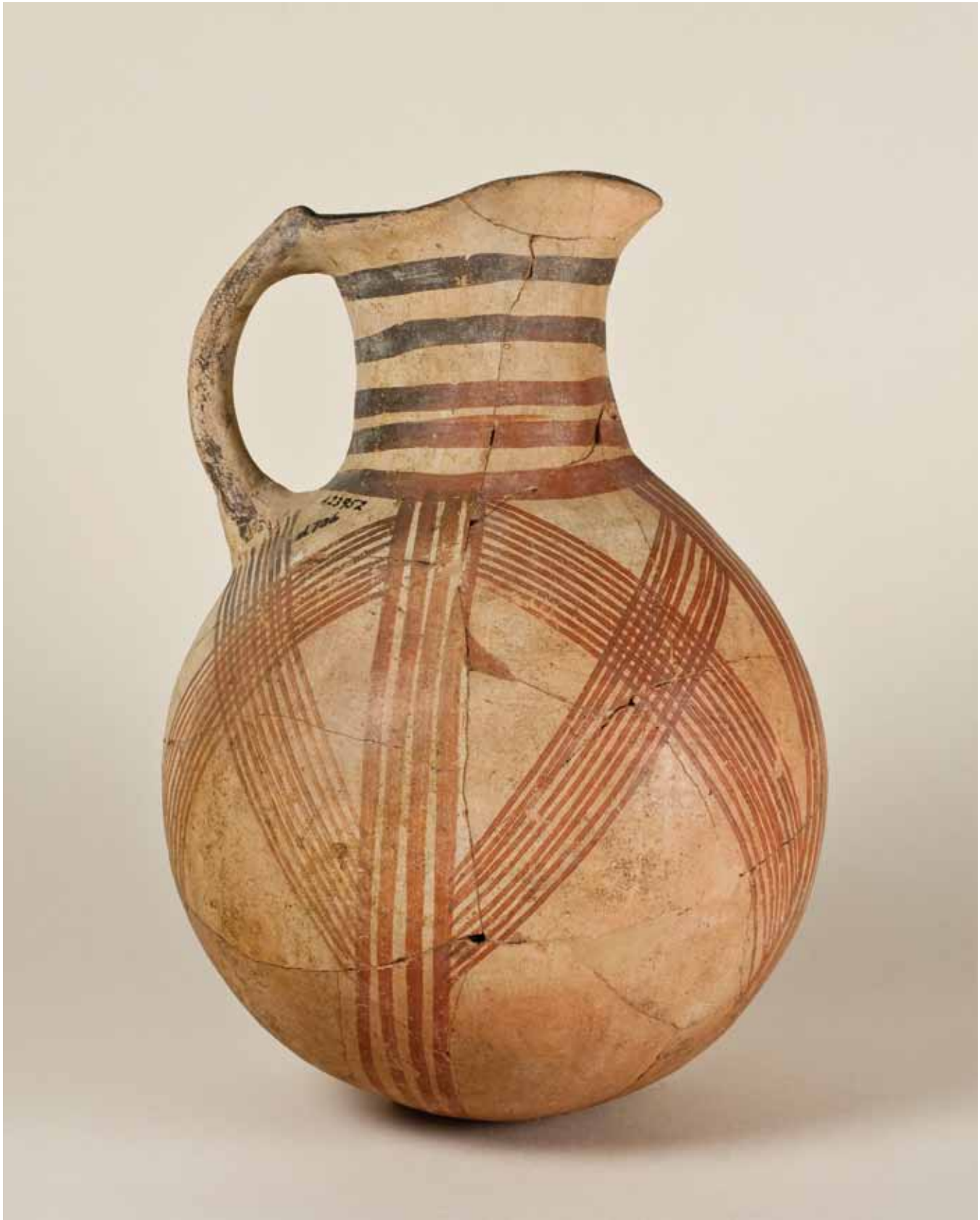
SCHOLARS HAVE LONG NOTED that when the transition from the Early Bronze IV / Middle Bronze I period to the Middle Bronze II took place around 2000 BC, a number of features of the new urban culture of the southern Levant rapidly emerged in fully developed form, most likely as a result of influence from Amorite cultural groups living farther to the north in Syria. In addition to a high degree of urban planning in the settlements and the construction of large public structures and defensive edifices, the level of local ceramic craftsmanship reached a peak in this period.

Many of the shapes of pottery that became prominent in the Middle Bronze Age have no immediate local antecedents in the southern Levant. Partly responsible for the proliferation of a new ceramic repertoire was the introduction of the fast potter's wheel which allowed for a wide range of new, often elegant shapes to be produced. The shape of this jug from Megiddo is typically known as "piriform" due to its resemblance to the shape of a pear. The highly burnished red slip on this example is a hallmark of Middle Bronze Age pottery and was likely intended to imitate the appearance of copper.

8.  
CYPRIOT WHITE-PAINTED VI  
JUG  
Ceramic  
Middle Bronze IIB-C  
1750-1550 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum X, Tomb 5243  
27.6 x 20.0 cm  
OIM A23952

THE MIDDLE BRONZE AGE is the first period in which Cyprus interacted with the southern Levant to a significant degree. At this time, the population of Cyprus was growing and its social organization becoming increasingly complex. The grave goods and sizes of tombs at sites such as Lapithos and Karmi offer clear evidence for a new degree of class stratification. Fortification walls were built to surround numerous settlements, indicative of mounting tensions and conflict on the island. It was during the Middle Bronze Age that Cyprus became a major exporter of its copper to both Minoan Crete and the greater Levant, appearing in texts by its ancient name Alashiya. It is likely that the fortification walls reflect increasing tensions as communities fought for control of the scarce resources of both land and copper.

A small quantity of Cypriot imported pottery dating to the Middle Bronze Age has been found at Megiddo, a reflection of the trade relations between Cyprus and the southern Levant at this time. This jug belongs to a group known in Cyprus as White-Painted VI.



8.



9.

9.  
DAGGER BLADE AND  
POMMEL

Bronze, Limestone  
Middle Bronze IIA  
2000-1750 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum XIII  
23.6 x 4.6 cm (dagger)  
4.2 cm (pommel)  
OIM A23839A-B

IN ADDITION TO THE proliferation of massive fortifications surrounding major urban centers like Megiddo during the Middle Bronze Age, excavations have also yielded a wide range of weapons in both tomb and cultic deposits. The Middle Bronze Age has thus typically been identified as a militarized era with the greatest source of friction most likely occurring between competing local city-states. At this time, the southern Levant experienced significant advances in metalworking methods and bronze casting techniques, resulting in marked improvements in weapons manufacture.

The smelting of bronze alloys from copper and tin had first been introduced during the preceding Early Bronze Age, but it was during the Middle Bronze Age that the technique spread throughout the Near East. Tin could not be found locally in the southern Levant, and thus elaborate systems of exchange that brought tin from Anatolia, Iran, and Afghanistan were established. Bronze was found to be far superior to simple copper which quickly dulled, and the alloy was remarkably malleable, allowing for the casting of a wide range of complex shapes.

It has been noted that most of the weapons found in Middle Bronze Age contexts are those of personal combat, rather than the weapons of soldiers. Thus spears, axes, and daggers, like this example from Megiddo, dominate the assemblage. Personal weapons would likely have served as ritualistic warrior status symbols, bringing with them social prestige. It is therefore not surprising that many pieces are found in tombs or cultic contexts.



10.  
HYKSOS SCARAB AND  
MODERN IMPRESSION

Steatite  
Middle Bronze IIB-C  
1750-1550 BC  
Megiddo, Tomb 5067  
1.2 x 0.9 cm  
OIM A23815

DURING THE MIDDLE BRONZE IIB-C period (1750–1550 BC), Egypt entered a period of instability known as the Second Intermediate Period. It was during this era of decline in Egypt that Semitic peoples from the Levant were able to settle in the eastern Nile Delta where they eventually founded a local foreign dynasty. Known in Egypt as *heka khasewet* (“foreign rulers”) and in Greek records as the Hyksos, these Semitic peoples eventually took control of the city of Avaris (Tel ed-Dab’a) and ruled northern Egypt as foreign kings of Egypt’s Fifteenth Dynasty.

By this time, scarabs had become the most favored type of seal produced in Egypt. Prior to the Middle Kingdom, cylinder seals had been the dominant form. Although steatite was the most common material used, scarabs could be produced from faience, ivory, carnelian, jasper, lapis lazuli, and a range of other stones and metals. Cut to resemble the scarab beetle, the base was then inscribed in order to personalize the seal for the owner. Egyptian scarabs have been found widely distributed throughout the southern Levant in numerous periods, attesting to the long-standing interaction between the two regions.

While ruling in Egypt, the Hyksos kings increasingly came to absorb certain aspects of Egyptian royalty and culture. They adopted the Egyptian royal titulary, taking on the Egyptian god Seth as their titular deity. The Hyksos also frequently imitated the local glyptic art during this period, producing what scholars call “Hyksos scarabs.” These scarabs retained the basic Egyptian scarab seal form, but their inscribed designs incorporated certain stylistic changes. Hyksos scarabs were frequently decorated with interlacing patterns, floral motifs, and often meaningless combinations of stylized Egyptian hieroglyphs, such as this example found at Megiddo.



10.

# The Late Bronze Age

(CA. 1550-1200 BC)

During the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550–1200 BC), the pharaohs of Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty undertook a program of imperial expansion into the southern Levant. The preceding Middle Bronze IIB–C period, contemporary with the Second Intermediate Period in Egypt, had been marked by the ascendancy of the Hyksos in the Nile Delta. Upon expelling the Hyksos from the Delta, the New Kingdom pharaohs embarked on a period of conquest in the southern Levant. Egyptian rule in the region was consolidated in 1479 BC at the Battle of Megiddo where a united front of Canaanite city-states was defeated by the armies of Pharaoh Thutmose III. Megiddo became a vassal in a broad Egyptian empire.

Egyptian control of the southern Levant was maintained through a network of military garrisons and administrative centers at cities such as Megiddo. Powerful local Canaanite families continued to serve as the ruling classes in the region; however, they were required to pay heavy tribute to their Egyptian overlords and to demonstrate loyalty to the pharaoh. A marked absence of fortifications at the Canaanite cities in this period suggests that the local rulers were not permitted to build their own defensive systems. At Megiddo, there was a large ceremonial gate which led to the palace upon entering the city, but there was no city wall.

A remarkable archive of documents from the Egyptian royal city of El-Amarna has provided scholars with an unparalleled glimpse into the complex relationships between the city-states of the southern Levant in the context of vassalage. Among the letters of the El-Amarna archive were communications between Pharaoh Akhenaten and Biridiya, the Canaanite ruler of Megiddo. The letters speak of intercity rivalries, such as in this example in which Biridiya is having problems with Lab'ayu of nearby Shechem. According to the letter, as soon as Lab'ayu heard that Egypt had recalled some of its troop defenses from Megiddo, he used the opportunity to start making advances against the city:

Say to the king, my lord and my Sun: Message of Biridiya, the loyal servant of the king. I fall at the feet of the king, my lord and my Sun, 7 times and 7 times. May the king, my lord, know that since the return (to Egypt) of the archers, Lab'ayu has waged war against me. We are thus unable to do the plucking [of wool from sheep], and we are unable to go out of the city gate because of Lab'ayu. When he learned that archers were not coming out, he immediately [de]termined to take Magidda. May the king save his city lest Lab'ayu seize it. Look, the city is consumed by pestilence, by .... So may the king give a garrison of 100 men to guard his city

lest Lab'ayu seize it. Look, Lab'ayu has no other purpose. He seeks simply the seizure of Magidda. — EA 244<sup>3</sup>

As Egypt dominated the southern Levant, Mitanni and then the Hittites acted as its main rivals in Anatolia and Syria. Meanwhile, the Mycenaean civilization was at its apex in the Aegean. Despite its vassal status while under Egyptian rule, Megiddo experienced a period of material prosperity. As the city was located in a strategic position as far as trade was concerned, it became a natural portal for the movement of goods and ideas during this period of tremendous contact and trade between the empire powers of the Late Bronze Age. The objects from Megiddo during this period reflect the wide diversity of cultural contacts at the site.

ALTHOUGH THIS EGYPTIAN STATUETTE fragment was found in a Late Bronze Age context at Megiddo, it was manufactured in Egypt somewhat earlier in the Middle Bronze IIA period, during the Egyptian Twelfth Dynasty. Only the bottom portion of the seated figure remains; however, the inscribed hieroglyphs preserve the individual's identity. According to the inscription, the statuette depicts the Egyptian official Djehutyhotep who served as nomarch of the Hare nome in Middle Egypt during the Middle Kingdom. The hieroglyphic text is conventional and provides Djehutyhotep's name and titulary which includes "Controller of the Two Thrones," "Overseer of Priests," "Chief of Five," and the "High Priest of Thoth."

3. Translation from Moran ed. and trans. 2002, 298-99.

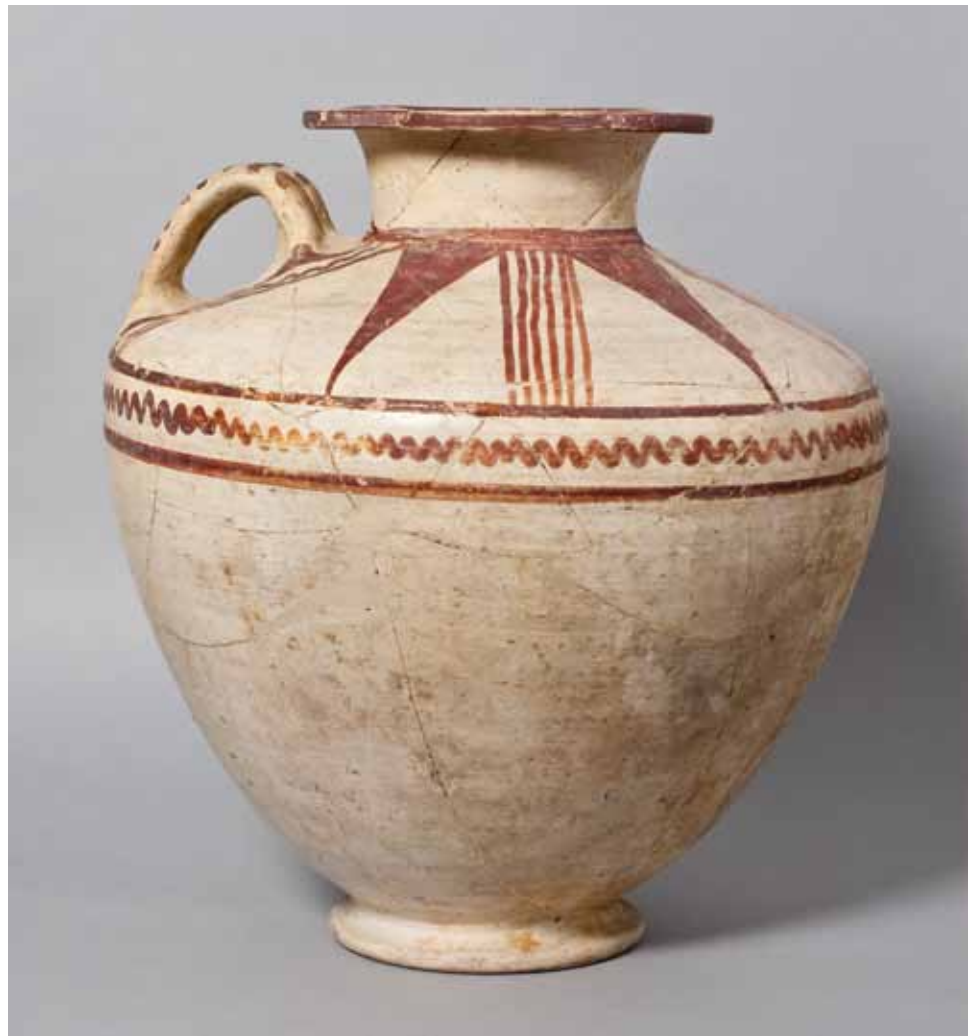
The seat of the Hare nome (the 15th nome of Upper Egypt) was in Hermopolis, near the modern Egyptian city of Mallawi. The nome's administrative officials were buried in the rock-cut necropolis of adjacent Bersheh. Djehutyhotep's burial place has been identified as one of the most spectacular tombs at the site. A relief inside the tomb depicts the transport of a colossal statue by sled from the calcite quarry at Hatnub.

Djehutyhotep's statuette was found in a secondary context at Megiddo where it was used as a building stone within a Late Bronze Age wall along with other Egyptian statue fragments. It is not clear how, when, or why the statuette came to be in the southern Levant.

11.  
**EGYPTIAN STATUETTE  
 OF DJEHUTYHOTEP**  
 Diorite  
 Middle Bronze IIA  
 12th Dynasty, ca. 1900 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VII  
 24.0 x 17.0 x 13.5 cm  
 OIM A18622



11.



12.

12.  
**CHOCOLATE-ON-WHITE JUG**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze I  
 1550–1400 BC  
 Megiddo, Tomb 1100A  
 31.9 x 31.0 cm  
 OIM A16554

THE TERM “CHOCOLATE-ON-WHITE WARE” is used to describe a type of pottery that was manufactured locally in the southern Levant from the late Middle Bronze II to the Late Bronze I period (ca. 1600–1400 BC). The hallmark feature of the Chocolate-on-White pottery, first described in Sir Flinders Petrie’s accounts of his excavations at Tell el-‘Ajjul in the 1930s, is its excellent surface finish. The exterior of the vessel was given a highly burnished and uniform creamy white slip and then chocolate-brown geometric pattern decoration was painted over top of this base.

Chocolate-on-White decoration typically appears on a variety of bowl forms and kraters, as well as jugs like this example from Megiddo. Petrographic analyses of the large collection of stratified Chocolate-on-White Ware vessels from the site of Tell Abu-Kharaz in the Jordan Valley suggest that the pottery was manufactured in two primary production areas, the central Jordan Valley and southern Lebanon. The relatively short period of use of the ware, its highly distinctive surface treatment, and localized zone of production all contribute to making the Chocolate-on-White Ware ceramics important relative chronological markers of local origin in the southern Levant.



13.

**BICHROME JUG**

Ceramic

Late Bronze I

1550–1400 BC

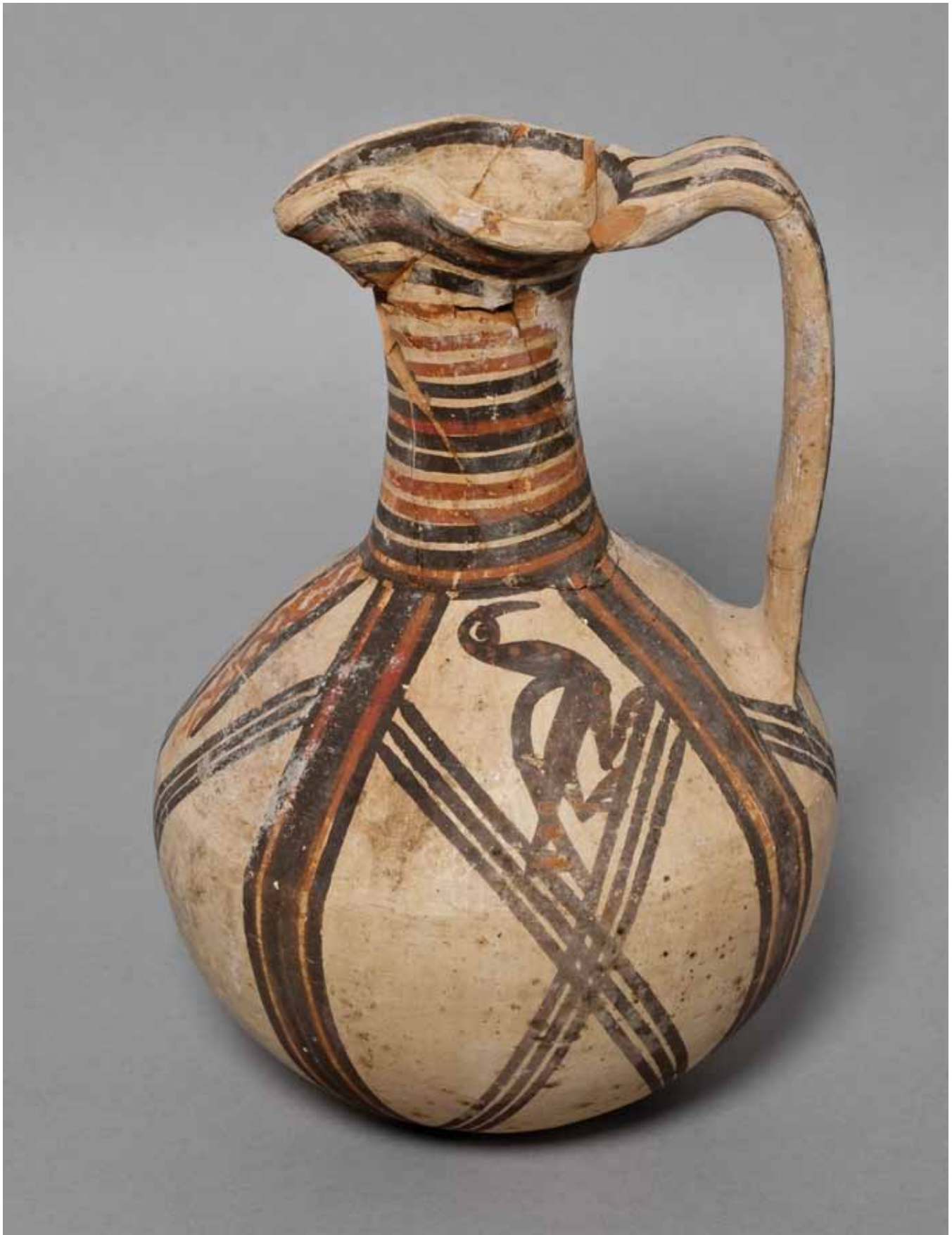
Megiddo, Stratum IX

19.7 x 14.0 cm

OIM A21161

ONE OF THE MOST distinctive elements of the Late Bronze Age ceramic assemblage of the southern Levant is Bichrome Ware, illustrated by this jug from Megiddo. Bichrome Ware vessels were manufactured using a very high level of ceramic craftsmanship. Vessels were wheel-made from well-levigated, light-colored clays. The surfaces were then burnished and painted with a variety of motifs in red and black on the upper part of the body. These motifs were typically arranged into windows, or metopes, separated by triglyphs. Within the metopes, ibexes, birds, and fish were all commonly depicted.

Early studies of Bichrome Ware postulated that many vessels could be ascribed to a single workshop in the vicinity of Tell el-'Ajjul (located in modern Gaza City). Since then, a more rigorous evaluation of the clay sources used to create the vessels, as well as their shapes, has demonstrated that the ware is in fact of Cypriot origin and was distributed across a wide region including much of Egypt and the Levant. At Megiddo, as was the case with other Cypriot imports as well as those from the Mycenaean world, local imitations were also manufactured.



THIS TYPE OF BOWL, often referred to as a “milk bowl” by scholars due to its distinctive milky white painted slip, is one of the most famous types of pottery to be produced during the Late Bronze Age on the island of Cyprus. Properly known as White Slip Ware, diagnostic features of these vessels include a wishbone-shaped handle as well as the characteristic white slip and embroidery-like patterns painted on the interior and exterior surfaces. Potters’ wheels were not used in the production of milk bowls, and scholars have suggested that the near-perfect hemispherical shape was achieved by using a gourd as a mold.

Analysis of White Slip Ware has demonstrated that the fabric was somewhat porous, indicating that these vessels were never meant to be used for storage or transport, nor were they intended to be used for cooking. Although unsuitable for these particular uses, the bowls, drinking cups, and jugs that are typical of the ware suggest that the vessels most likely functioned as tableware. It has been suggested that the ware was developed by the Cypriot potters as a luxury domestic vessel that was both aesthetically pleasing and could be used for the consumption of hot liquids.

The milk bowl was an extremely popular Cypriot export and examples have been found at virtually every Late Bronze Age site in the Levant, including Megiddo, particularly during the fourteenth century BC.

14.  
**CYPRIOT “MILK BOWL”**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze Age  
 1550–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, East Slope, Tomb 50  
 10.4 x 18.6 cm  
 OIM A13122



14.

DURING THE LATE BRONZE Age, there was a significant proliferation of imported Cypriot vessels into the southern Levant. As we see with ceramic imports from the Mycenaean world, the emphasis was upon luxury wares. This small jug from Megiddo belongs to a group of imported pottery from Cyprus known as Base Ring I Ware. Base Ring I Ware is characterized by the use of hard-fired clay and a red-slipped surface that was intended to mimic the appearance of copper. The name for the ware is derived from the bases of the vessels which resemble rings.

Although a variety of Base Ring I Ware forms have been found, the most common type to appear in the southern Levant is the *bilbil* jug, illustrated by this example from Megiddo. The term *bilbil* is derived from the sound that liquid makes when poured from the narrow opening of the vessel. The function of the bilbil jug seems to be reflected in the shape of the main body of the vessel which imitates the form of an upturned poppy head. There is some possibility that the jugs were used for the trade of opium and its derivatives.

15.  
**BILBIL JUG**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIA  
 14.2 x 9.0 cm  
 OIM A28014





16.

16.  
**MYCENAEAN BULL FIGURINE**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIIB  
 10.0 x 5.4 x 7.0 cm  
 OIM A18522

THE POWERFUL CITY-STATE OF Mycenae, located about 90 km southwest of Athens in modern Greece, was the center of a civilization that dominated much of the eastern Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age. As the Mycenaeans engaged in trade throughout the region, it was only natural that their goods would pass through the city of Megiddo. Numerous luxury ceramic vessels, figurines, and even carved ivory found at the site attest to this interaction.

Mycenaean ceramics were generally of excellent craftsmanship, featuring very fine clay and a high technical standard of production. Mycenaean imports were particularly prominent in the Late Bronze II period at Megiddo, and local Canaanite imitations of Mycenaean wares became increasingly common as well. In addition to ceramic vessels, animal figurines displaying this same high level of craftsmanship were found at the site, including this bull figurine. This example is a “tail/handle” type of the Late Helladic IIIB period in mainland Greece. The tail/handle, part of left horn, and left hind leg have been restored after excavation.

Bulls were an important religious symbol and object of worship to the Mycenaeans, as they were to their predecessors the Minoans. Frescoes from both cultures depict the famous ritual of bull leaping in which athletes vaulted over the horns of the animal. In ancient Greek mythology, the bull is also associated with the story of the Minotaur, a creature that was half man and half bull who was held in a labyrinth beneath the Minoan palace at Knossos. According to the story, Poseidon caused Pasiphae, the wife of King Minos of Crete, to mate with a bull and become mother of the Minotaur. Scholars believe that Poseidon was the chief god of the Mycenaean pantheon and was associated with earthquakes. Poseidon would later be replaced by Zeus and his functions related to the sea.

17.

**BICONICAL KRATER**

Ceramic

Late Bronze II

1400-1200 BC

Megiddo, Tomb 912D

37.1 x 30.9 cm

OIM A16415

AS A RESULT OF the tremendous range of international influences in the southern Levant during the Late Bronze Age, it is tempting to focus primarily upon those luxury goods and ceramics that were imported to Megiddo from elsewhere in the Near East and the East Mediterranean. During this period, however, local potters also produced a significant range of well-executed and decorated ceramics. This type of krater, a popular form among local Late Bronze Age pottery, is described as “biconical,” for its shape resembles two cones joined together at their bases. This particular vessel is one of the most famous pieces from this group to ever have been found in the southern Levant. Uncovered in a Late Bronze Age tomb deposit at Megiddo, the vessel was not only found in a complete state, but also features a group of decorative motifs that are a hallmark of ceramics in this period.

The basic pattern of decoration on this vessel is referred to by scholars as “triglyph metope.” Generally, a frieze around the circumference of the vessel was divided by triglyphs into individual windows, called metopes. Potters in this era applied the triglyph metope pattern to a tremendously diverse range of ceramic forms, even when the form was not well suited. The triglyphs could appear in a variety of patterns including straight or wavy lines, crisscrosses, checkerboards, or other designs. The most common motif found within the metopes, as we see on this example from Megiddo, was a tree flanked by facing ibexes. Crabs, birds, and other animals were also sometimes used and also appear on this piece.

Numerous studies have noted that the palm tree and ibex motif can be associated with the symbolism of the date palm as a cosmic “tree of life.” The date palm served as a critical part of ancient subsistence, used for timber, weaving, animal fodder, high-energy food, and the production of date-palm wine. As such, the date palm appears throughout Near Eastern iconography as a popular symbol of fertility.





17.

18.  
MITANNIAN CYLINDER SEALS  
AND MODERN IMPRESSIONS

a.

Steatite  
Late Bronze IIA  
1400–1300 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VIII  
2.3 x 1.0 cm  
OIM A20928

b.

Lapis Lazuli with Gold End Caps  
Late Bronze IIA  
1400–1300 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VIII  
2.4 x 1.7 cm  
OIM A21119

AMONG THE POLITICAL POWERS interacting with one another during the Late Bronze Age was the kingdom of Mitanni, located in northern Mesopotamia in the Khabur River valley. In Assyrian textual sources, the Mitanni kingdom appears as Khanigalbat. Although the kingdom is identified with the Hurrian population groups who occupied the region at the time, Mitannian king names are of Indo-Aryan origin. Precious little can be reconstructed regarding Mitannian language or history and the origins of the Mitanni kingdom are largely shrouded in mystery.

During the early part of the Late Bronze Age, Mitanni and Egypt frequently came into conflict with one another over territorial control of Syria. Mitanni sent troops in support of the Canaanites to the Battle of Megiddo in 1479 BC, where Thutmose III consolidated his control over the southern Levant. Thutmose later conducted a campaign into Mitanni territory, during which he became the first pharaoh to cross the Euphrates. Over time, relations improved and marriage alliances were formed between the Mitanni kings and the Egyptian pharaohs, as famously illustrated by the El-Amarna letters (cuneiform clay tablets found in Egypt which document their correspondence). Eventually, Mitanni was conquered by the Hittite king Suppiluliuma I.

A small number of Mitannian artifacts have been found at Megiddo, reflecting the city's location in between the two interacting powers of Egypt and Mitanni. Cylinder seals, such as these fashioned out of steatite and lapis lazuli with gold end caps, are the most typical class of Mitannian artifacts at the site.



18 a.



18 b.

THIS GOLD PENDANT IS embossed with an image of the Canaanite goddess Astarte. In Canaanite religious mythology, Astarte was the great goddess, consort of Ba'al, the god of fertility and storms. Astarte herself was usually associated with sexuality, fertility, war, and the productive powers of nature. In mythological texts from the ancient city of Ugarit (located in coastal Syria) she can also be androgynous. Astarte appears under several additional names in Canaanite religious texts, including Asherah, 'Anat, Ba'alat, and Elath. Astarte would later continue as the principle goddess in Phoenician religion.

Astarte has been connected to the Greek goddess Aphrodite and was also adopted by the ancient Egyptians as a lunar goddess and the daughter of Ra or Ptah. The cult of Astarte appears in the Bible as a competitor with ancient Israelite religion with one of the clearest examples occurring in relation to the "Queen of Heaven," the Mesopotamian goddess Ishtar, equivalent to the Canaanite Astarte. The writings of Jeremiah, dated several centuries later, describe the women of Judah making special cakes and burnt offerings as part of her rituals:

Don't you see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather sticks, the fathers build the fire, and the mothers knead dough, to make cakes for the Queen of Heaven, and they pour libations to other gods, to vex Me. — Jeremiah 7:17-18

19.  
**ASTARTE PENDANT**  
 Gold  
 Late Bronze IIA  
 1400-1300 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIII  
 6.6 x 2.7 cm  
 OIM A20900



19.



20.

20.  
**HEADBAND**  
 Gold  
 Late Bronze I  
 1550–1400 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IX  
 22.0 x 1.6 cm  
 OIM A18585

DURING THE LATE BRONZE Age, the city of Megiddo was part of the Egyptian empire. Although it would seem logical to assume that Megiddo's status as a vassal would have left it in a state of decline, the Late Bronze Age levels at the site have in fact produced some of the most exquisite luxury goods ever to have been found at any site in the southern Levant. Despite the city's lack of political autonomy, Megiddo's location at an important trade crossroads meant that it still served as a major passageway for the movement of people and goods across the Near East. In fact, this role was enhanced in the international climate of the Late Bronze Age.

Luxury items in particular have been found in abundance at Megiddo and demonstrate both a high level of craftsmanship and the use of rare and precious raw materials such as gold. Among the Late Bronze Age deposits excavated at Megiddo are a number of tombs in which members of the elite ruling class were buried. These individuals, both children and adults, were frequently richly adorned with jewelry for burial. This gold headband was found in one of these tombs, still in place across the skeleton's forehead. A number of other jewelry items were also found with this skeleton, including gold rings used to adorn the hair and two pendants fashioned from gold and faience that may have been earrings. Similar diadems are attested in Greece and Cyprus from around the same period.







21b.



21c.

21.  
**FIGURINE OF THE  
 CANAANITE GOD ĒL**  
 Bronze with Gold Leaf  
 Late Bronze II  
 1400–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VII  
 25.5 x 6.0 x 10.8 cm  
 OIM A18316

THE CONICAL HAT ON this seated figure identifies it as Ēl, the creator deity of the Canaanite pantheon. Many aspects of Canaanite religious practice are still unknown; however, scholars have been able to formulate a general understanding based upon various excavated objects, along with textual sources, such as those from Ugarit in Syria. It is clear that the Canaanite religion included a complex family of human-like gods functioning under a supreme patriarch, Ēl.

Cognate forms of Ēl are found throughout the Semitic languages of the Near East with the word commonly being used as a general noun for “god.” The Hebrew language is no exception where the word frequently appears in its plural form, *’ēlōhîm*. As such, it is difficult to identify when and if elements of Canaanite Ēl worship were adopted by the ancient Israelites. A number of scholars have noted that there appear to be clear cases in the Hebrew Bible in which Ēl is used as a proper name, most frequently in the patriarchal narratives, Psalms and Job. In Genesis, for example, Abraham refers to his god as *Ēl ‘Elyōn*, or God Most High. Abraham also encounters his god referring to himself as *Ēl Shaddai*, or God Almighty. According to Exodus 6:2–3, Yahweh revealed himself to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as *Ēl Shaddai*, but they did not know his true name.

Various theories have been proposed to explain the position of Ēl in Israelite religious development. Among them is a suggestion that the name of the Israelite god, Yahweh, may have originally been part of a longer Ēl name. In other words, the worship of Yahweh may have originally been understood as a localized version of Ēl worship but eventually split off to become a unique religious system better reflecting the social organization of the Israelite community.

22.  
 FIGURINE OF THE  
 CANAANITE GOD BA'AL  
 Bronze  
 Late Bronze Age  
 1550-1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Strata IX-VII  
 13.9 x 3.8 x 3.2 cm  
 OIM A22467

THIS BRONZE FIGURINE IS believed to represent the Canaanite god Ba'al Hadad, son of the supreme creator deity El. Ba'al Hadad was identified as the god of fertility and storms and was among the most prominent of the Canaanite deities. According to Canaanite mythology, Ba'al defeated both the sea god Yamm and the monster Lotan. He was also killed in an encounter with the god of the underworld, Mot, but was brought back to life by his sister and consort 'Anat. In figurine form, Ba'al was frequently rendered in this characteristic smiting pose, striding forward with one arm raised and tall crown on his head.

It is important to note that the word "ba'al" also served as a general northwest Semitic honorific meaning "lord" and was in turn assigned to any number of deities and even human officials. There is textual evidence for numerous gods referred to as "Ba'al," often specified by city, region, or other geographic reference. Many scholars believe that individual communities may have revered their own patron Ba'al and his corresponding female consort.

Ba'al worship appears to have infiltrated into Israelite religious practice on a regular basis. In the book of Judges, the Israelites frequently fall from favor after taking up the worship of Ba'al. Under the rule of Ahab and Jezebel, Ba'alism reached a critical level, resulting in a challenge between Elijah and the priests of Ba'al on Mount Carmel. At times, elements of the Canaanite Ba'al myths were actually adopted by the Israelite tradition, including the use of Ba'al's epithet "Rider of the Clouds" which appears in the biblical Psalms:

Sing to God, chant hymns to His name;  
 Extol Him who rides the clouds;  
 YHWH is His name ....

— Psalms 68:5





23.

23.  
**FEMALE FIGURINE**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze Age  
 1550–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Tomb 26B  
 14.6 cm  
 OIM A14117

HUMAN FIGURINES HAVE BEEN found in virtually every stratum at Megiddo, from the Neolithic to the Iron Age (compare no. 46, p. 91). Female figurines are the most prominent and are typically believed to represent traditional fertility goddesses. These goddesses are generally depicted as being voluptuous and with large breasts. This figurine from a Late Bronze Age tomb is rendered in a characteristic and enduring stance, holding her breasts in her hands. Scholars believe that women kept these figurines for help in conception and childbirth.

The female figurines can most likely be associated with characters from the Canaanite pantheon of gods. A great mother goddess appears in Canaanite religious texts under several names, including Asherah, 'Anat, Astarte, Ba'alat, and Elath. In the Hebrew Bible, she appears almost exclusively as Asherah, the consort of Ba'al, god of fertility and storms. Despite the emergence of monotheistic Israelite religion, archaeological evidence suggests that women continued to practice fertility cults in the home.

THIS LARGE SACRIFICIAL OFFERING STAND dates to a late phase of the Late Bronze Age at Megiddo. During this period, a large palace stood inside the main city gate in the northern part of the city. This stand was found in fragmentary condition inside of one of the many perimeter rooms which surrounded the central courtyard of the palace. Extensive restoration work was conducted, including the significant reconstruction of missing elements.

The stand itself may be a model of a shrine or temple structure. The style of painted decoration on this offering stand is particularly interesting because it reflects one of the most characteristic traditions of artistic motifs used on ceramic vessels in the Late Bronze Age in the southern Levant, here rendered on a religious artifact. Typically, the zone of decoration is divided into separate panels called metopes. Within each of the metopes, the most characteristic artistic representation is of lions together with palm trees. As is evident in this example, metopes are usually separated from one another by a variety of designs, including checkerboards, crisscrosses, rays, and other patterns. Wavy lines are likely to represent water.

24.  
**LARGE OFFERING STAND**  
 Ceramic  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIIB  
 103.0 cm  
 OIM A18308



24.



## THE MEGIDDO IVORIES

In the early years of the Late Bronze Age Egyptian occupation of Megiddo, identified as Stratum IX, a new royal palace was built in the northern part of the city. The palace was rebuilt several times during the Late Bronze Age. The latest phase of the structure, attributed to Stratum VIIA, featured Egyptian-style wall paintings and a three-chambered cellar, often called “the treasury” by scholars. It was within this cellar that the excavators uncovered one of the most important assemblages of Bronze Age ivories known from the Near East. The destruction of the Stratum VIIA buildings, which contained the “Treasury,” is dated to after 1150 BC, as some objects found in this level feature inscriptions of

FIGURE 7.

*The Megiddo ivories in situ.*

The Megiddo ivories as they lay in situ in the outermost room of the treasury (OIM photograph P. 29760)





late New Kingdom pharaohs Ramesses III and VI. It is likely that a large proportion of the ivories were carved in the Late Bronze Age and can be dated to 1300–1200 BC, but some may in fact be slightly later in date.

The majority of the Megiddo ivories were found in the outermost room of the treasury, lying mingled together with fragments of gold jewelry, animal bones, and alabaster pieces. Many pieces were so fragile it was necessary to first spray them with a celluloid solution so that they could be removed from the ground without breakage. The group includes 382 carved pieces, many of which today reside in the Oriental Institute Museum. What is perhaps most remarkable about the Megiddo ivories is the comprehensive range of cultural traditions preserved in their motifs. As a group, the ivories serve as testimony to the widespread internationalism of the Late Bronze Age.

The artistic motifs of the southern Levant that we see in the Megiddo ivories reflect the fact that a local artistic tradition was much slower to develop there than in Egypt or Mesopotamia. As such, the inspirations for many of the motifs that we see in the ivories come from the Aegean, Cyprus, the Hittite lands, and Egypt, reflecting Megiddo's role as a cultural crossroads. In many cases, one can see how the local artisans mixed these influences or executed the motifs in ways which would be out of place in their lands of origin. As motifs are mixed into new hybrid forms, it can become very difficult to trace their origins and evolutions.

The motifs considered to be of true local Canaanite inspiration are those which do not closely resemble any foreign examples, although quite frequently, Egyptian influences can be detected. Long-robed men are often considered to be particularly characteristic of the southern Levant. Also quite common to the ivories are motifs which imitate Egyptian styles. Examples include depictions of the Egyptian god Anubis and the papyrus column (*djed*), representing stability and endurance. In addition to Egyptianizing styles, the artisans of Megiddo also drew inspiration from the Aegean world where the Mycenaean civilization was at its peak. One of the most famous ivory pieces from Megiddo is the small griffin carved in relief (no. 25).



25.

25.  
**GRIFFIN PLAQUE**  
 Ivory  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIA  
 9.4 x 3.8 cm x 0.6 cm  
 OIM A22212

BETWEEN 1600 AND 1100 BC, the powerful city-state of Mycenae was the center of a civilization that dominated much of the Mediterranean world. Mycenaean Greece served as the backdrop to the epics of Homer and figures prominently in Greek mythology. In Homer's *Iliad*, it was the Mycenaeans who defeated the city of Troy. Mycenaean interaction with the southern Levant during the Late Bronze Age is reflected in a range of artifacts from Megiddo, including this piece found among the Megiddo ivories.

This small ivory plaque depicting a reclining griffin carved in relief is perhaps one of the most famous images from Megiddo. The imaginary griffin was a composite creature, featuring the body of a lion and the head and wings of a bird. Although the word “griffin” has its origins in Greek (*gryps* “to seize”), similar creatures are found in the artistic traditions of numerous cultures throughout the Near East. In Egyptian mythology, for example, Sefert, the keeper of the body parts of Osiris, was depicted with wings, the head of a hawk, and the body of a lion. This particular rendition of the griffin, featuring spiraling curls coming from its mane, is stylistically Mycenaean, an identification that has been supported by the discovery of a nearly identical plaque on the Mycenaean island of Delos. The only significant difference between the two pieces is one of execution, as the example from Delos was incised. It is not clear if this plaque was made by a local craftsman imitating a Mycenaean motif, or if it was imported.

A NUMBER OF GAMING boards were found among the Megiddo ivories, including this example which would have been used for the “game of 58 holes.” At one time, every fifth hole of the board and its central panel were inlaid with blue paste and gold. Gold studs were found alongside the board and probably served as caps on the pegs that were used in playing the game.

The “game of 58 holes” experienced widespread popularity in various parts of the ancient Near East. Examples have been found in archaeological contexts ranging from Egypt to Susa in a variety of shapes and styles. This example belongs to a class sometimes referred to as “fiddle-shaped” that has most frequently been found in the southern Levant and, less commonly, in Egypt. As we see with this piece, the fiddle-shaped boards feature a main body as well as a circular projection at one end with numerous pierced holes. The main body of the board features fifty-eight holes, several of which are emphasized by rosettes. These emphasized holes are always in the same locations on the board.

26.

**GAMING BOARD**

Ivory and Gold

Late Bronze IIB

1300–1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

26.5 x 17.8 x 0.5 cm (board)

OIM A22254A-B



26.

Although it is unclear how the “game of 58 holes” was played, there is some suggestion that these gaming boards may have been developed as a means to track the phases of the moon. When considered as two symmetrical halves, each side of the board features twenty-nine holes, roughly equivalent to the 29.5-day-long lunar cycle.

THIS IVORY PLAQUE IS one of several pieces within the Megiddo ivories collection that is purely Egyptian in style. Inscribed on the plaque in Egyptian hieroglyphs are prayers for an Egyptian woman named Kerker who served as singer for the Memphite god Ptah in a temple located at Ashkelon on the Mediterranean coast. Two additional plaques with prayers to Kerker were found at Megiddo as well.

The hieroglyphic inscription reads “[... for the spirit of the singer of] Ptah, south of his wall, [Lord of] ‘The Life of Two Lands,’ Kerker, the justified.” In Egyptian mythology Ptah was the creator. As the deified primordial mound, he brought forth the god Atum to rule over creation. The epithets in this inscription refer to Ptah’s primary temple south of the walls of Memphis in Egypt. It is this temple from which the anglicized name Egypt is in fact derived. The classical Greek form, *Aigyp̄tos*, was taken from *Hwt-kꜣ-Pth* (“Hat-ka-Ptah”) or “Temple of the Ka of Ptah.”

27.  
**INSCRIBED PLAQUE**  
 Ivory and Blue Paste Inlay  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIA  
 0.03 cm  
 OIM A22269

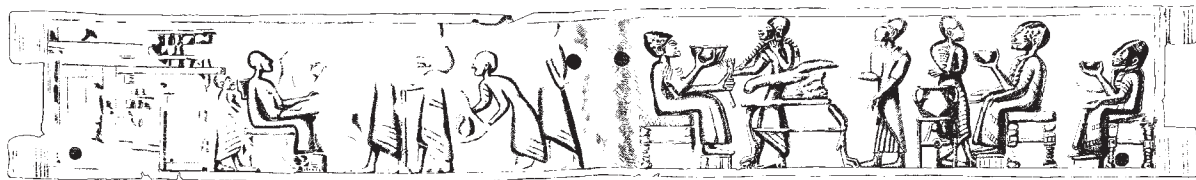


27.





28.



8a



8b

**FIGURE 8.**  
 (a) Drawing and (b) reconstruction of  
 feast scene. Loud 1939, pl. 32: 160b-c

28.  
**CHAIR BACK FEAST SCENE**  
 Ivory  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIA  
 1.0 cm  
 OIM A22270

SEVERAL PIECES THAT ARE believed to have served as chair backs were found among the Megiddo ivories. Taken together, this group of ivories appears to present a narrative illustrating a military battle, the return of the victorious army, the preparations for a feast, and the feast itself. In this example, two scenes are depicted. On the right, the participants at an elaborate feast are portrayed.

Unfortunately, much of the left half of the piece has degraded. Despite this lack of preservation, however, enough detail is still visible to suggest that the characters illustrated are quite similar to a scene depicted on another piece from the ivory hoard. Based upon these points of similarity, we may thus suggest that the scene likely depicts the king sitting upon his throne flanked by winged sphinxes as he is being presented with the spoils of battle.

29.

**FEMALE SPHINX PLAQUE**

Ivory

Late Bronze IIB

1300–1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

10.0 x 7.0 x 0.8 cm

OIM A22213

THIS PLAQUE IS ONE of three found among the Megiddo ivories to depict a recumbent, winged female sphinx. Egyptian sphinxes were more typically male and rarely featured wings. The very few examples of winged female sphinxes that have been found in Egypt are all adorned with helmets topped by floral arrangements and are generally holding a legible cartouche.

Several features of this example from Megiddo suggest that it was not manufactured in Egypt, but rather by a local artisan. In contrast to the typical style of Egyptian adornment, this sphinx wears a flattened helmet over which is situated a large arrangement of lotus flowers. Furthermore, the sphinx holds an object which, although unclear in nature, is certainly not a cartouche. Finally, and perhaps most telling, inscribed on the tenon at the base of the ivory and resembling the letter “x” is what appears to be the Canaanite letter *tav*.







30.

30.  
**PLAQUE OF THE EGYPTIAN  
 GOD ANUBIS**

Ivory  
 Late Bronze IIB  
 1300–1200 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIIA  
 0.9 cm  
 OIM A22310

WITH THIS IVORY PLAQUE we see an example of the tendency of the Megiddo ivory artisans to imitate Egyptian styles and motifs. In this case, the artisan has produced a representation of the jackal-headed Egyptian god Anubis. In Egyptian mythology, Anubis was associated with the underworld, most often functioning as a gatekeeper. Over time, Anubis became the god most closely identified with funerary rites and embalming.

Quite notable is the fact that the Megiddo Anubis plaque is remarkably similar in style to two plaques of the Egyptian household god Bes that were also found among the Megiddo ivories. On all three pieces, the depicted figures are posed in identical stances and wear the same headdresses, kilts, and long sashes. All three pieces are even of identical dimensions and it seems likely that they were produced by the same artisan. Among the features that most clearly point to a non-Egyptian manufacture for these pieces is the aforementioned long sash, often considered to be a tell-tale sign of foreign origin when appearing on representations of Bes.



31.

**HITTITE PLAQUE**

Ivory

Late Bronze IIB

1300-1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

1.2 cm

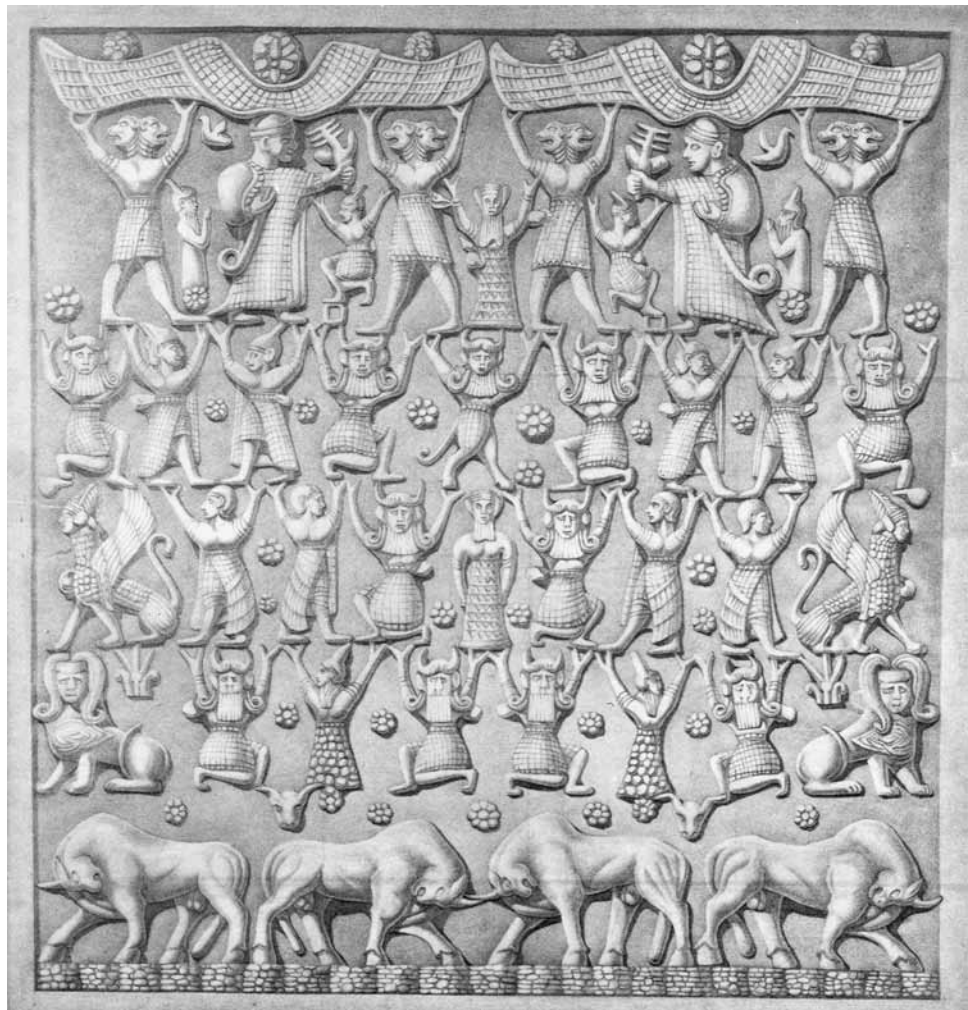
OIM A22292

AMONG THE EMPIRE POWERS active in the Near East during the Late Bronze Age was the Hittite kingdom of Hatti, centered upon the capital city of Hattusa (Boğazköy) in modern north-central Turkey. During the fourteenth century BC, under the successive reigns of Suppiluliuma I and Mursili II, the Hittites came to control much of Anatolia, upper Mesopotamia, and northwestern Syria. As Egyptian and Hittite imperial interests in the Levant came into contact, friction developed between the two powers. This friction ultimately culminated in the Battle of Kadesh in 1274 BC during the reigns of Ramesses II of Egypt and Muwatalli II of Hatti.

This Hittite plaque is one of the most stunning imported ivories found at Megiddo. The features of the iconography are so completely Hittite in nature and execution that it is very unlikely that a local artisan could have produced the piece. The plaque features three registers of “bull-men” who support two kings beneath winged sun disks at the top of the plaque. The sun disks are in turn supported by double-headed monsters. Other features include two sphinxes with lions’ heads at their throats (third row from bottom, right and left), and a row of bulls at the bottom of the plaque. The figures on the plaque find their closest parallels at the Hittite sanctuary of Yazılıkaya, located in the vicinity of Hattusa.

**FIGURE 9.**

*Reconstruction of the ivory Hittite plaque (OIM photograph P. 61345)*





31.

32.

**ROBED FIGURE PLAQUE**

Ivory with Glass Eyes

Late Bronze IIB

1300-1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

1.5 cm

OIM A22258

THIS IVORY PLAQUE OF a robed figure remarkably features a preserved glass eye. Long-robed figures are typically considered to be a characteristic motif of the southern Levant. Unlike many of the ivories from Megiddo which show Egyptian, Hittite, and Mycenaean influence, the design of this plaque would appear to be locally derived.

During the 1930s, the Oriental Institute conducted excavations at the site of Tell Fakhariyah in northern Mesopotamia. Those excavations yielded a collection of ivories that would have been contemporary with the Megiddo hoard. Rather than emphasizing local Middle Assyrian motifs, however, the Tell Fakhariyah collection features many pieces with southern Levantine Canaanite designs. These include long-robed figures similar to this and other pieces in the Megiddo collection.







33a.



33b.



33c.

33.

**THRONE MODEL**

Ivory

Late Bronze IIB

1300–1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

2.8 x 1.9 cm

OIM A22251

THIS TINY CARVED IVORY from the treasury hoard at Megiddo, among the smallest in the collection, is in fact a three-dimensional model of a throne. While the ruler was situated on a seat in the center of the throne, he would have been guarded on either side by winged sphinxes. Similar thrones are depicted elsewhere in the Megiddo ivories as well, including a series of chair back panels depicting a military battle and the victory feast which followed (see no. 28).

The royal throne guarded by mythical sphinxes was a common motif in the ancient Near East. The sarcophagus of the Phoenician king Ahiiram, for example, features a bas-relief depicting the king situated on just such a throne.<sup>4</sup> According to the Bible, in the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, the Ark of the Covenant served as the foundation for the throne of Yahweh who, in the First Temple Period, was believed to physically dwell within the Holy of Holies of the structure. Cherubim were placed on either side of the ark with their wings extended toward each other.

The priests brought the Ark of Yahweh's Covenant to its place underneath the wings of the cherubim, in the Shrine of the House, in the Holy of Holies; for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim shielded the Ark and its poles from above. — 1 Kings 8:6–7

Scholars believe that the biblical cherubim, described as winged creatures with both human and animal features, were a type of winged human-animal hybrid comparable to the winged sphinx.

4. Dates for the manufacture of the Ahiiram sarcophagus range from the thirteenth through tenth centuries BC, depending upon which scheme of Phoenician chronology is utilized (Markoe 1990).

34.

**INCISED BOX**

Ivory

Late Bronze IIB

1300-1200 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIIA

0.3 cm

OIM A22221

THIS UNIQUE PIECE FROM the Megiddo ivory corpus was carved from a complete hippopotamus tooth. Although the ancient function of the piece is not entirely clear, it features an exterior compartment carved into the surface of the tooth which appears to have at one time been covered by a lid. Although elephant tusk is generally identified as the raw material for most Near Eastern carved ivories, there is some suggestion that hippopotamus tooth was more common than once thought. The canine teeth of male hippopotami can reach 50 cm in length, thus making them large enough to serve as the raw material for many carved ivory pieces.

In the modern world, Africa is generally thought of when one considers the natural hippopotamus habitat. In fact, there is strong evidence that hippopotami inhabited the Nile region of Egypt during the pharaonic era, and even the southern Levant during the Late Bronze Age. Hippopotamus teeth contemporary with this piece from Megiddo have been found in Cyprus, Mycenae, Ugarit and even among the remains of the Ulu Burun shipwreck, off the coast of Turkey.



34.

# The Iron I Period

(CA. 1200-975 BC)



The Iron I period (1200–975 BC) marks a major transitional period in the history of the southern Levant. During the Bronze Age (3500–1200 BC), the dominant cultural group in the southern Levant and at Megiddo had been the Canaanites. Although not forming a unified political entity, the Canaanites shared characteristic pottery types, religious practices, and building styles. During the Late Bronze Age, the Canaanite populations of the southern Levant had been under the imperial control of Egypt, following the conquest of the region by Thutmose III. Megiddo and the rest of the southern Levant passed from Egypt's control at the close of the Late Bronze Age as the great powers of Egypt, Mycenae, and Syro-Anatolia experienced a widespread collapse. In the resultant power vacuum, new cultural groups began to emerge and evolve.

With the transition to the Iron I period, the Canaanites began to rebuild the cities of the southern Levant, including Megiddo. At the same time, a large number of small villages sprouted up in the central highlands region. Many scholars believe that these were the villages of the earliest Israelites, although it is very difficult to identify the ethnicity of a population group based only upon their material remains. The Iron I period is usually associated with the book of Judges of the Bible and such charismatic Israelite leaders as Gideon and Deborah. Also at this time, various groups of Sea Peoples settled in the Levant's southern coastal regions. Following the collapse of the Mycenaean world in the Aegean, groups of water-borne migrants made their way across the Mediterranean to the coastal regions of the Levant. A portion of these Sea Peoples settled in a pentapolis of five cities (Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath) along the southwestern coast of the southern Levant and are collectively known in the Bible as the Philistines.

Although not a fortified center, Megiddo does seem to have been a modest town with well-built structures during the Iron I period. Artifacts from this stratum at Megiddo (Stratum VI) demonstrate the wide range of cultural influences that were present at the site at this time. They include bowls and jars typical of local Canaanite population groups, scarabs and amulets crafted by Egyptians, and painted pottery brought by Sea Peoples colonizing the coast. The dynamic and fluid interactions of these cultures during the transitional age are reflected in the diverse remains at Megiddo.

## WHERE DID THE ISRAELITES COME FROM?

Perhaps no question has perplexed scholars of early Israel more than the problem of where the Israelites came from. A literal reading of the Bible tells of an exodus by the Israelites from Egypt and the conquest of the Promised Land under Joshua. However, Egyptian official records provide no clear evidence of a Hebrew enslavement in Egypt. The only recorded event which seems to be a possible source for the biblical exodus is the expulsion of the Hyksos from the Nile Delta at the end of the Middle Bronze Age. Unfortunately, the term “Israelite” for this group is never used in Egyptian records and the event occurred too early to neatly fit into the historical scheme of the Bible. A second problem with the literal exodus account is that the key archaeological sites in Israel that are listed in the biblical book of Joshua as targets of Joshua and his armies upon entering the southern Levant do not always support a conquest by the Israelites. At Jericho, for example, there would have been no walls at the site to come tumbling down as described in the Bible. The Bible no doubt preserves part of what was in fact a very complex story.

According to extra-biblical sources, we first begin to hear of a people called Israel living in the southern Levant sometime around the beginning of the Iron Age (1200 BC). The earliest extra-biblical written record comes from the reign of the Egyptian pharaoh Merneptah (1208/1207 BC). On the Merneptah victory stela commemorating a campaign through the southern Levant appears the statement: *Israel is laid waste, his seed is not*. In contrast to other conquests inscribed on the stela, the hieroglyphs for Israel denote a people rather than a city. Aside from this inscription, no other extra-biblical sources mention Israel or the Israelites during this key formative period, compounding the problem of sorting out the origins of the Israelites.

So the question remains, where did the Israelites come from? The process during this period was probably a very complex one. Some local Canaanite city dwellers moving away from the urban centers and into the highlands of the southern Levant probably blended with groups that had been living on the margins of the region as pastoral nomads. The exodus story most likely preserves the tradition of a foreign origin for at least some part of the Israelite population as well. Over time, these people came to share the idea of a common ancestry, religion, and identity as Israelites. By roughly 975 BC, the Israelites had taken control of the southern Levant as a dominant political force, unified by their common worship of Yahweh. At this time, the remaining Canaanite cultural elements were largely isolated to the Mediterranean coastal region known from Greek sources as Phoenicia, today primarily in Lebanon.

This stela from Egypt contains the earliest non-biblical reference to a people called “Israel.” It commemorates the military victories of the Pharaoh Merneptah (1208/1207 BC). On it the pharaoh writes: *Israel is laid waste, his seed is not.* In contrast to other conquests inscribed here, the hieroglyphs for Israel denote a people rather than a city. The original resides in Cairo.



FIGURE 10.  
The Merneptah Stela



“Israel”

EXCAVATIONS OF THE EARLIEST Iron Age levels at Megiddo have yielded a number of religious artifacts, helping to shed light on this critical period of transition from Canaanite to Israelite religion. The term “kernos ring” for this type of religious vessel is borrowed from Greek archaeology. Scholars believe that kernos rings were likely used as libation vessels during religious ceremonies. Structurally, these vessels generally consist of a hollow clay ring supporting a number of hollow attachments. Wine or water would have been poured into one of the hollow attachments and then circulated throughout the remaining elements of the vessel. There is some suggestion that kernos rings may have originated in Cyprus and been introduced to the region by the Sea Peoples.

The hollow base of this particular kernos ring supports eight attachments, seven of which have been preserved. These include one gazelle head, two amphorae, two pomegranates, two doves, and one cup. The doves are positioned so that they drink from the cup. The pomegranate, gazelle, and doves all suggest that this piece may have been used in association with fertility rituals. Kernos rings are common throughout the southern Levant, but very few examples are as elaborate as this one.

35.  
**KERNOS RING**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron I  
 1200–975 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIA  
 22.0 x 13.0 cm  
 OIM A18835







36.

36.  
**PILGRIM FLASK**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron IA  
 1200-1025 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VIA  
 21.9 x 12.6 x 8.9 cm  
 OIM A20700

TWO POPULAR THEORIES SUGGEST the origin of the term “pilgrim flask” for this type of vessel. Pilgrim flasks were so named by archaeologists for their resemblance to later vessels produced during the Byzantine period for pilgrims traveling through the Holy Land. Others suggest the term originates from the fact that a great many of the vessels were found in temple contexts. The particular form is known as a “cup-mouthed flask,” and features a lentoid body. It was probably used for pouring liquid offerings. The flask was built in several steps with the potter placing two plates rim to rim to form the body and then attaching the separately formed neck and handles. The flask form originated in the Aegean,

Mycenaean wares, and was imitated in the Levant during the Late Bronze Age, developing a more lentoid form.

During the Iron I period the pilgrim flask continued to be a local Canaanite form, but the painted decoration on this example may suggest “Sea Peoples” or Philistine influence. The local painted tradition for pilgrim flasks in the Iron I period throughout the region tended to comprise of patterns of concentric circles. On this example from Megiddo we see instead a style quite common to Philistine pottery, with the center point of the vessel being used as the focal point from which wavy lines emanate, enclosing geometric patterning. This pilgrim flask therefore is a unique testament to the rich cultural interactions taking place at Megiddo during the Iron I period.

37.

**CYLINDRICAL BOTTLE**

Ceramic

Iron IA

1200–1025 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VIB/A

17.3 x 6.1 cm

OIM A20721

AT THE TIME OF their settlement along the southwestern coast of the southern Levant, the Philistines brought with them numerous characteristic Mycenaean ceramic traits. This cylindrical bottle from Megiddo is a style of vessel that was produced by the Philistines that shares a common morphological ancestry with the Mycenaean pyxis form. The bottle has been treated with a red slip and burnish, thus producing a surface that resembles copper.





38.  
JUG AND BOWL

a.  
JUG  
Bronze  
Iron I  
1200-1025 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VIA  
14.0 x 7.9 cm  
OIM A20603

b.  
BOWL  
Bronze  
Iron I  
1200-1025 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VIA  
8.4 x 26.0 cm  
OIM A20605

WITH THE COLLAPSE OF the Late Bronze Age, the tremendous internationalism that had defined the period also experienced a significant decline. Although some imported goods continue to be found in Iron I strata throughout the southern Levant, the massive quantities of Cypriot, Mycenaean, Egyptian, and other luxury goods that had been such a significant portion of the corpus in the earlier period now become much less prominent. In light of this collapse of the age of empires, scholars often looked upon the Iron I period as a dark age, void of both the tremendous social organization and high level craftsmanship of the Late Bronze Age.

Recent work to reevaluate the nature of Megiddo in the Iron I period, identified as Stratum VI, has demonstrated that the site was more substantial than was formerly believed and was in fact a well-built and culturally dynamic town. These bronze vessels — a jug and bowl — are two pieces from a larger group of bronze vessels attributed to Stratum VI. As a group, they indicate that metalworking craftsmanship was still actively taking place at the site, including the smelting of bronze which required the import of tin.



38a.



38b.

39.

**STRAINER JUG**

Ceramic

Iron I

1200-975 BC

Megiddo, Tomb 37

18.4 x 15.9 cm

OIM A13044

INSIDE THE SPOUT OF this vessel a strainer has been created by making perforations in the clay. The decorative style and basket handle on this example both belong to the ceramic tradition of the Canaanites of the southern Levant. The form continued to develop during the Iron Age as part of the Phoenician ceramic repertoire. Strainer jugs were also a common form among Philistine groups. Philistine examples typically feature ornate bichrome painted decoration applied over a white slip. A number of locales have been suggested for the point of origin of the vessels; however, Rhodes seems to have been where the form was first manufactured.

In earlier scholarship, strainer jugs were often referred to as “beer jugs” due to their popularity at Philistine sites and the biblical accounts of the Philistines as great drinkers. According to this model, the filter would have removed any husks that were present in the beer. Some scholars have suggested instead that the jugs were used for draining the dregs from wine. Others have pointed to alternative functions including use as a watering can, pitcher, or “teapot” for straining the leaves from hot beverages. Regardless of the specific function, what is clear is that a cultural attribution of the vessels to the Philistines alone is unfounded.





A SUBSTANTIAL AND VERY complex portion of the law codes of the Hebrew Bible is concerned with the practice and rituals surrounding various forms of sacrifice. These two offering stands from the early Israelite period at Megiddo reflect the tremendous importance of sacrifice in ancient Israelite religion. The larger stand (no. 40b) was built in two pieces that would have been held together by a pin. The smaller stand (no. 40a) is quite compact and was likely meant to be portable. Both stands are described by scholars as being “fenestrated” due to the windows cut into their bodies.

40.

**OFFERING STANDS**

Ceramic

Iron IA

1200–1025 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VI

a.

OIM A28114

Reconstructed

21.8 x 14.9 cm

b.

OIM A20830A-B

68.0 x 30.5 cm

Sacrifice had a central and complex role in ancient worship. A number of offering stands dating to the late Canaanite and early Israelite eras were found at Megiddo. They were used in households and small shrines and were often meant to be portable. In official worship, priests alone were allowed to use the altar for offerings of animals, oils, or grain. Offerings would be wholly or partly burnt, with the aroma ascending to the deity to whom the sacrifice was dedicated. Sacrifices usually included the offering of the first fruits of animals and crops, which were generally believed to be the most desirable. Much like the temple offering stand, household stands held various offerings for the deity, including incense, water, oil, or food. Families would typically sacrifice a portion of an animal before eating the meat.



40 a.



40b.

41.  
**ZOOMORPHIC VESSEL**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron IA  
 1200–1025 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VI  
 16.5 x 9.2 x 17.0  
 OIM A20637

AMONG THE RITUAL OBJECTS commonly found in Israelite contexts in the southern Levant are zoomorphic figurines, so called for their resemblance to animals. A range of animals could be portrayed, although most tended to be quadrupeds such as cows, bulls, or horses. This vessel from Megiddo most likely represents a cow. Although the horns have not been preserved one can clearly see where they have been broken from the head. This piece dates to the earliest phases of Israelite settlement in the southern Levant.

Zoomorphic figurines become particularly popular in the eighth and seventh centuries BC, especially in tomb deposits and domestic shrines in the regions occupied by the southern kingdom of Judah. At that time, the Mesopotamian astral cults appear to have exerted some measure of influence on Israelite religion and brought about the popularity of figurines of horses with riders as well as quadrupeds supporting sun disks. In 2 Kings 23:11, we read of King Josiah cleansing the Jerusalem temple of these zoomorphic figurines.

The function of the zoomorphic figurines and vessels in Canaanite and Israelite ritual is somewhat enigmatic; however, some seem to have been used for pouring liquid offerings. Some smaller versions may have been used as feeding bottles. The body of this vessel is hollow. An opening upon its back is framed by a cup to which a handle, drawn from the animal's hindquarters and replacing the tail, is drawn. A spout is drilled into the snout, allowing the liquid to be poured from the vessel in much the same manner as a modern decorative creamer.



# The Iron II Period

(CA. 975-586 BC)

During the Iron II period (ca. 975–586 BC), the tribes of Israel came together as a unified political state in the southern Levant for the first time. According to biblical accounts, during the earliest part of the period, the Iron IIA (ca. 975–925 BC), a kingdom that unified all the Israelite tribes existed briefly under kings David and Solomon. Following the death of Solomon, the kingdom split into two — Judah in the south with its capital in Jerusalem, and Israel in the north with its capital at Samaria. The era of the United Monarchy is remembered in the Bible as the apex of Israelite political history, the time when all twelve tribes of Israel were united under one ruler. The reign of Solomon is further remembered as a golden age during which the first Israelite temple was built in the city of Jerusalem.

Megiddo was an important administrative center both during the United Monarchy under King Solomon and later as a part of the northern Israelite kingdom. According to 1 Kings 4, Solomon divided up the country into administrative districts for the purposes of taxation. Megiddo is listed as regional center in one of these districts. During the subsequent period of the Divided Monarchy, Megiddo continued to function as an important administrative center, now for the kings of the northern kingdom.

The earliest part of the Israelite royal period at Megiddo, traditionally identified by scholars as Stratum VA/IVB, is usually attributed to King Solomon and featured several palaces, a city gate and wall, and a large administrative building and sanctuary. Historically, the stratum is considered to be of utmost importance because of its connection to the high point of Israelite statehood when all the tribes were united for a brief period of time. Soon after the death of Solomon, an Egyptian raid in 925 BC by the pharaoh Sheshonq (the biblical Shishak) destroyed the city. The Sheshonq raid is recorded at the Amun Temple at Karnak in Egypt, as well as in the Bible, and on a stela discovered at Megiddo. The layer of destruction that ended Stratum VA/IVB at Megiddo is therefore often used as a chronological anchor point for dating Israelite strata.

Stratum IVA, correlating with the Iron IIB period (ca. 925–732 BC), reflects Megiddo as an administrative center under the kings of the northern kingdom of Israel. Megiddo was an important northern center, and among its more famous features is a series of stable-like buildings, in the past often erroneously referred to as “Solomon’s Stables.” It also featured a thick city wall, massive gate, and a large, concealed, underground water system. At this time, the northern kingdom of Israel gained a presence on the global stage. Artifacts found at Megiddo during this period include items reflecting high-status international trade,



among them Egyptian amulets and scarabs, and fine black-on-red pottery from Cyprus. Cosmetic spoons, palettes, and craftsmen's stones indicate a refined level of arts and crafts at Megiddo.

Royal Israelite control over the city of Megiddo drew to a close with the coming of the Assyrian armies at the beginning of the Iron IIC period (ca. 732–586 BC). In 738 BC, the Assyrian king Tiglath Pileser III invaded the kingdom and imposed a tribute. Under his successor, Shalmaneser V, the king of Israel, Hoshea, allied himself with Egypt and suspended all tribute payments. The Assyrians responded with a siege of the Israelite capital Samaria. While the city was still under siege, Shalmaneser died and the Assyrian throne was passed to Sargon, who in 722 BC swiftly destroyed Samaria and sent many thousands of Israelites into exile. Megiddo was rebuilt as a provincial capital within the Assyrian empire and laid out on a grid plan (identified as Stratum III). When the Assyrians departed, the city declined. The southern kingdom of Judah, able to withstand incursions by the Assyrian army, would maintain its independence for another century before falling prey to the Babylonians. The destruction of the Jerusalem temple at the hands of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC marks the end of the Iron Age in the southern Levant.

## WHO BUILT ROYAL MEGIDDO?

One of the most controversial questions being debated by archaeologists of the southern Levant today is whether the biblical accounts of King Solomon's reign can be demonstrated by archaeology. According to the Bible, the prosperous reigns of kings David and Solomon mark the period when the Israelite tribes first came together as a single state. As such, biblical archaeologists have long sought to find the remains of this golden era through the excavation of important sites that appear in the biblical narratives relating to Solomon.

In 1 Kings 4, the Bible describes Megiddo as one of Solomon's administrative district capitals. Archaeologists generally assign the palaces, administrative building, city gate and wall, and sanctuary from Stratum VA/IVB to the period of Solomon's rule. This stratum was destroyed by fire and scholars have associated the destruction with a raid by the Egyptian pharaoh Sheshonq I. Sheshonq appears in the Bible as Shishak, and his campaign is described as having occurred in the fifth year of the reign of King Rehoboam who ruled the northern kingdom of Israel immediately after the death of Solomon. An inscription from the Amun Temple at Karnak lists the cities conquered by Sheshonq, among them Megiddo. In the early days of the Oriental Institute project at Megiddo, a fragment of Sheshonq's victory stela was found at the site among unstratified debris.

Dissenting scholars argue that the period of Solomon, if it in fact existed, actually coincides with earlier remains (Stratum VI) at Megiddo, normally attributed to the Iron I period (1200–975 BC). This stratum features a more modest city, with no substantial public or royal architecture. In this view, Solomon was a king of relatively little power. These scholars believe that later kings of the northern kingdom of Israel built the royal structures of Stratum VA/IVB. This argument is based upon data from more recent, and more scientifically rigorous, excavations at Megiddo and other sites in the region, the new availability of radiocarbon dates, and more comprehensive ceramic data. These scholars also point to problems with using the highly glorified biblical accounts of Solomon as a reliable historical source, as well as the lack of non-biblical inscriptions relating to Solomon's reign as evidence that he was at most a minor character.

Hundreds of articles have been published, but consensus has not been reached in the academic community. Those that wish to change Megiddo's stratigraphy to reflect these arguments are said to be in support of "down dating" or the "low chronology." For our purposes, we have elected to utilize the traditional dating of Megiddo's royal Israelite strata.

42.

**FOUR-HORNED ALTAR**

Limestone

Iron IIA

975-925 BC

Megiddo, Stratum VA/IVB

6.80 x 2.95 x 2.90 cm

OIM A13201

SACRIFICE HELD A CENTRAL and complex role in ancient Israelite worship. Within the Priestly Code of the book of Leviticus, a significant legal corpus preserves the complexity of the rituals that were associated with the practice of sacrifice. Leviticus 1-7 includes an extensive accounting of the regulations that governed different types of sacrifice, as well as the priestly functions associated with the performance of sacrificial duties. Archaeological excavations of Israelite centers throughout the southern Levant have confirmed the central role of sacrifice in ancient religious practice. Stone altars, as well as more portable clay offering stands, have been found in numerous archaeological contexts. Sacrificial altars with four corners, such as this example from Megiddo, are quite common and are described in a number of places in the Bible. The horns were the most sacred part of the altar and their removal was considered a desecration. Despite the sacred nature of the horns, however, their function is unknown.

A number of different words appear in the Hebrew Bible to describe different types of offerings, specifying the particular item being offered, the manner in which it was given, or the purpose the sacrifice was meant to serve. While some sacrifices marked particular events such as a harvest, others would be offered for atonement, religious purification, or celebration. This altar from Megiddo is too small to have been used for animal sacrifices and was likely used for the sacrifice of grains, wine, or incense. The text of Leviticus outlines in detail the rituals associated with the grain offering (or *minbâ*). According to Leviticus 2, only a small part of a grain offering was given as a burnt offering. Instead, the majority of the offering was intended for the temple priests as a form of temple donation. This income would have been essential to the ancient Israelite priesthood, a unique class within Israelite society that did not possess any land holdings and thus did not produce its own agricultural output. As grain offerings were within the economic grasp of virtually all classes within Israelite society, they were quite common and served a wide range of sacrificial functions.



43.  
**PROTO-AEOLIC COLUMN  
 CAPITAL AND COLUMN  
 CAPITAL FRAGMENT**

a.  
**COLUMN CAPITAL**

Limestone  
 Iron IIA-B  
 975-732 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IV  
 102.5 x 43.5 x 46.0 cm  
 OIM A13394

b.  
**COLUMN CAPITAL  
 FRAGMENT**

Limestone and Painted Plaster  
 Reconstruction  
 Iron IIA  
 975-925 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum VA/IVB  
 34.0 x 15.6 cm  
 OIM A18359

ACCORDING TO THE BIBLICAL accounts provided by 1 Kings, Solomon's reign is remembered as the high point of Israel's monarchic history. According to the narratives, he oversaw numerous massive building projects in Jerusalem including the construction of the temple. In addition, regional centers throughout his domain were developed as royal cities, featuring massive public architectural works. Scholars have long sought to identify the archaeological remains of this prolific building activity at various sites throughout the southern Levant, including Megiddo which is identified as a district capital in 1 Kings 4.

This type of column capital is often called "Proto-Aeolic" by scholars based upon its similarity to later Greek styles; however, it is important to note that there is no direct developmental connection. A more correct designation would be the term "palmette capital." The design was derived from the ancient Near Eastern sacred palm tree motif with two curling volutes. These capitals were one of the hallmarks of the Israelite architecture that proliferated throughout the royal cities of the Iron II period.

Although these capitals are often tremendous in size, such as the structural capital depicted here from Megiddo (no. 43a), the fragmentary example (no. 43b; completed by a plaster casting) is smaller and was likely used as an architectural detail. The smaller piece also preserves pieces of exterior painted treatment in blue and terra-cotta red.



43a.



43b.





44a.



44b.



44c.

44.  
BLACK-ON-RED JUGLET  
AND BOWL

a-b.  
JUGLET  
Ceramic  
Iron IIA  
975-925 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VA/IVB  
8.3 cm  
OIM A13472

c.  
BOWL  
Ceramic  
Iron IIA  
975-925 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum VA/IVB  
7.4 x 22.5 cm  
OIM A20762

THE SOUTHERN LEVANT, EGYPT, Syro-Anatolia, Mycenae, and Cyprus all experienced a significant period of decline at the end of the Late Bronze Age. During the subsequent Iron I period, waves of Sea Peoples migrations from the Aegean brought a range of Mycenaean traditions to the southern Levant and Cyprus. Also at this time, the Phoenicians, looking to exploit the rich Cypriot copper and timber resources, came to occupy Kition on the southern coast of Cyprus. A renaissance of urban culture was in turn ushered in on the island.

Numerous Cypro-Phoenician vessels have been found in Iron Age deposits at Megiddo, attesting to Cypro-Phoenician commercial activity in the southern Levant at this time. This juglet and bowl belong to a ceramic tradition known as Black-on-Red Ware, the most ubiquitous of the Iron Age Cypro-Phoenician exports. Black painted decoration was applied over a red base, generally featuring a mix of horizontal bands and concentric circles. Although these vessels are attributed to the Iron IIA date range at Megiddo, this type of Black-on-Red ware is typically dated to the late tenth to eighth centuries in the southern Levant.

THIS PARTIALLY RESTORED OFFERING stand was constructed in the form of a model of a religious shrine. Its features include rectangular windows in each side and horizontal bands of decoration around the perimeter. The inner ledge around the top rim would have supported a roof. Offering stands created to mimic the shape of houses or other buildings are only a part of the number of variants on the cultic form that were created during the Iron Age. Other types included, among others, the four-horned stone altar, the ceramic cylindrical or cone-shaped stands with bowls on top, and squared or tripod-shaped bronze stands. As noted elsewhere in this volume, sacrifice was a central element of ancient Israelite worship, and the numerous stands from Megiddo attest to this fact.

45.  
**SHRINE MODEL**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron IIA-B  
 975-732 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IV(?)  
 39.0 x 47.8 cm  
 OIM A32273





46.

46.  
**FEMALE FIGURINE**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron IIA-B  
 975-732 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IV  
 12.8 cm  
 OIM A19023

DESPITE THE EMERGENCE OF state-sponsored official Israelite religion during the Iron II period in the southern Levant, there is evidence to suggest that certain aspects of the domestic cult continued to be practiced (compare no. 23, p. 44). Frequently, these practices appear to be at odds with the highly codified and centralized religion that has been transmitted via the biblical law codes. Among the most widespread phenomena was the continued worship of female deities. Goddess figurines have been found in Israelite contexts throughout the Iron Age, suggesting that despite the emergence of official monotheistic Israelite religion, the Israelites continued to practice fertility cults.

The female figurines can most likely be identified as the same goddess worshipped in earlier periods: Astarte or Asherah, the consort of the old Canaanite god Ba'al. Both biblical and extra-biblical textual sources support this notion that Asherah worship did not disappear during the Israelite royal period. A controversial inscription found on an ostrakon at the site of Kuntillet 'Ajrud in the Sinai Desert reads "I bless you by Yahweh of Samaria and his Asherah." Although scholars argue over the correct translation of the text, many believe the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscription to be evidence of at least some element of folk religion assigning Yahweh a consort. Furthermore, in 2 Kings 23 we find a description of the purge of impure elements from the Jerusalem temple by King Josiah as part of a renewal of the Israelite covenant with Yahweh. Among the items removed from the temple were all the objects made for Ba'al and the goddess. Thus, even the central shrine was not immune from the creep of impurity.

47.  
**SAMARIA WARE BOWL**  
 Ceramic  
 Iron IIB  
 925-732 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IVA  
 16.0 x 13.0 cm  
 OIM A35327

SAMARIA WARE IS A general term used to describe a particular group of bowls found at sites within the northern kingdom of Israel in strata dating to the Iron II period. The ware is named after the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, founded by Omri in the ninth century BC, where it was first identified in excavations. Samaria Ware is often considered to be emblematic of the luxurious lifestyle that the elite classes enjoyed in the Israelite royal centers.

Samaria Ware is used to describe two subtypes of bowls, those with thin walls and those which were thicker, that have been found in Iron II contexts. In general, both the thick- and thin-walled types were very finely made and were treated with a highly burnished exterior and interior slip. This example from Megiddo is of the thin-walled type and features an eggshell-thin body, red-burnished interior, and red and yellow concentric circles on the exterior base.



Despite the name that has been adopted for the ware, fabric analyses have demonstrated that Samaria Ware was most certainly produced in two different locales. While the thick-walled type seems to have been produced locally, the thin-walled variety was in fact produced in Phoenicia and imported into Israel. After the fall of Israel to the Assyrians, the Phoenicians continued to manufacture Samaria Ware at least as late as the seventh century BC.





DURING THE IRON IIC period (732–586 BC), the city of Megiddo came under the control of the Assyrian empire. After laying waste to much of the northern kingdom of Israel, including the capital city of Samaria, the Assyrians sent thousands of Israelites into exile and settlers were brought in from outside the region to repopulate the land. Megiddo became a provincial capital and the city was completely rebuilt upon a new grid plan (identified as Stratum III). The town was divided into regular blocks, or *insulae*, and occupied by identically planned dwellings.

Despite this radical shift in population and organization, the material culture from Assyrian Megiddo does not display the degree of foreign influence that one might expect. In fact, true Assyrian pottery is quite rare at the site. When it does appear, Assyrian pottery is clearly different from locally manufactured forms, featuring different conceptions of shape and manufacturing technique. This form is typically referred to as an Assyrian bottle.

48.  
**ASSYRIAN BOTTLE**  
Ceramic  
Iron IIC  
732–586 BC  
Megiddo, Stratum III  
12.3 x 7.4 cm  
OIM A28493



48.



49.

49.  
**COSMETIC PALETTE**  
 Limestone  
 Iron IIB-C  
 925-586 BC  
 Megiddo, Stratum IVA-III  
 3.7 x 10.2 cm  
 OIM A18987

COSMETIC PALETTES WERE USED to mix the ingredients for makeup. Various minerals and mixtures of pigments would have been used including red ochre, malachite, and kohl. While ochre would have obviously produced a red color, malachite yielded green and kohl yielded black. The mineral color base would have been crushed into a powder and then mixed with oil. Numerous examples of “kohl sticks” have been found, identified as cosmetic sticks with small spoons at one end and a spatula applicator at the other. In addition to serving a cosmetic function, ointments applied in the area of the eyes helped to protect against disease and damage and acted as an insect repellent. Both cosmetics and the palettes created for their use were part of the luxury trade. The use of makeup by women appears several times in the biblical narratives, including 2 Kings 9:30, which describes the much maligned Jezebel applying eye makeup:

Jehu went on to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard of it, she painted her eyes with kohl and dressed her hair, and she looked out of the window.

The Southern Levant  
from the Fall of  
Jerusalem to the  
Roman Era

(CA. 586 BC-AD 324)

After the fall of Israel at the hands of the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BC, and the fall of Judah and destruction of the Jerusalem temple, these particular areas were left in a state of ruin. The Assyrian settlement at Megiddo was destroyed, and in the surrounding region almost a complete archaeological gap has been observed. Significant portions of the ruling and educated elite were displaced and sent into exile in Mesopotamia. With the fall of Jerusalem and the exile of the population came a tremendous era of religious change. Among the major developments of the exilic period was the formation of the understanding that Yahweh was in fact everywhere, and not only present within the Jerusalem temple. Many scholars also believe that much of the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Hebrew Bible) was drawn together at this time.

It was not until the coming of the Persians that the former territories of Israel and Judah would once again begin to flourish. In 539 BC, Cyrus of Persia initiated a massive resettlement of the exiles and set about the reconstruction of a temple in Jerusalem. The Persian empire was organized into satrapies, with the southern Levant as part of a satrapy called "Beyond the River." Internally, the region was divided into several smaller provinces which were then further divided into districts and half-districts. Some traces of Persian occupation have been uncovered at Megiddo, identified as Stratum I.

The Persian period drew to a close in the region in 332 BC with the coming of the Greeks under Alexander the Great. At this point, settlement on the mound of Megiddo effectively came to an end. After the death of Alexander, his empire was split among his two primary generals with Ptolemy taking control of Egypt and the southern Levant, which was called Judea. Tradition holds that it was Ptolemy himself who oversaw the translation of the Bible into Greek, resulting in the production of the Septuagint. In 198 BC, Judea was conquered by the Greek Seleucids led by Antiochus III. Under Antiochus IV, all Jewish religious ceremonies and customs were banned, Torah scrolls were seized and burned, and a shrine to Zeus was installed within the Jerusalem temple.

In 167 BC, the Maccabean revolt was sparked by the oppressive religious policies instituted by Antiochus IV, ushering in a period of Jewish self governance under the Hasmoneans. Although the Hasmoneans had fought to free the Jews from foreign rule, the public quickly turned against them. The kings surrounded themselves with the riches of Greek royal civilization, emulating a lifestyle that was very much contrary to the biblical texts. Several new religious sects emerged at this time including the Pharisees, a group whose main concern was the

precise observance of biblical law. An alternative group, the Sadducees, associated their beliefs and practices with the biblical figure of Zadok, the high priest under David and Solomon. The Sadducees were typically wealthy and influential people seeking to maintain their privileged position within society.

Under the rule of the Hasmonean dynasty, the Jewish population of the southern Levant maintained its independence until the coming of the Romans, marked by Pompey's seizure of Jerusalem in 63 BC. Under Augustus Caesar, complete control of the region was taken and Judea became a vassal of Rome. As a reward for his loyalty to Rome, Herod was granted kingship of the region. Herod rebuilt the Israelite royal city of Samaria, placing a temple to the Roman emperor there. He also built the port city of Caesarea and employed thousands of workmen to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Not completed until AD 64, the Roman-period Jewish temple became the religious focus of the nation. Upwards of 150,000 people now inhabited Jerusalem and hundreds of thousands more pilgrims came to the city each year. The temple platform was the largest platform in the ancient world and a major center for commerce.

After Herod's death, his territory was divided among his three sons; however, due to their incompetence, the Romans replaced them with provincial governors who controlled the region from ca. 10 BC to AD 70. Internal strife began to emerge within the Jewish community as only those directly from the region around Jerusalem were granted high positions within the temple. The Zealot movement emerged in the north around the Galilee region, concerned with national and religious freedom and the culture of corruption that was developing around the temple in Jerusalem. The most outspoken proponent of reform was Jesus of Nazareth who preached against religious and secular corruption and who predicted that another fall of Jerusalem was imminent. The followers of the Zealots believed that change would come at the hand of a messianic figure, and Jesus is believed by his followers to have been this messiah.

Revolts against Roman rule began first in AD 66, sparked by the desecration of a Jewish synagogue in Caesarea. Vespasian was appointed by the Roman emperor Nero to crush the rebellion. As the rebellion crumbled, civil war broke out among the Jewish population. Vespasian became emperor in AD 69 and his son, Titus Flavius, was appointed to deal with a protracted siege of Jerusalem that was still underway. The walls were eventually breached and the entire city, including the temple, was burned to the ground. The last Jewish stronghold was the city of Masada, located on a hilltop near the western shore of the Dead Sea. When the Roman armies finally breached the defenses, they discovered that the city residents had committed mass suicide, rather than surrender to the invading force.

Following the Jewish Revolt and the destruction of Jerusalem, friction between the Romans and the Jewish inhabitants of the southern Levant continued. Under the emperor Hadrian, Jerusalem was rebuilt as a pagan city and renamed Aelia Capitolina. The name of the country was changed from Judea to Palaestine in order to suggest that the Philistines were the first owners of the land. The region remained under the control of Rome until AD 333 when Constantine was named emperor and the focus of the empire was shifted to the new capital city Constantinople, thus ushering in the Byzantine period.

The Oriental Institute has not conducted major excavations in the southern Levant that have emphasized the Persian, Greek, Hasmonean, or Roman periods; however, a number of significant artifacts dating to the Roman period are a part of the Israel collection. These include a rare fragment of a Dead Sea Scroll, an inscribed Jewish ossuary, and a stamp seal featuring a passage from the biblical book of Jeremiah.

50.  
DEAD SEA SCROLL  
FRAGMENT AND JAR

a.  
FRAGMENT  
Parchment and Ink  
First century AD  
Wadi Qumran, Cave IV  
Purchased in Jordan, 1956  
6.4 x 4.2 cm  
OIM A30303

b.  
JAR  
Ceramic  
First century AD  
Wadi Qumran, Cave I  
Acquired from the Rockefeller  
Museum (formerly the Palestine  
Archaeological Museum,  
Jerusalem), 1950  
71.7 x 24.7 cm (vessel)  
6.4 x 18.7 cm (lid)  
OIM A29304A-B

THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS were first unearthed near the shore of the Dead Sea in 1946. Representing the earliest known copies of the books of the Hebrew Bible, many consider the scrolls to be the most important manuscript discovery of the twentieth century. Bedouin shepherds found the first scrolls stored in ceramic jars in a long-hidden cave. In subsequent years, hundreds of documents were found in eleven caves in and around the Wadi Qumran near the Dead Sea. This fragment, purchased by the Oriental Institute in Jordan in 1956, preserves part of a non-biblical psalter, or collection of prayers or psalms. Also from the Institute's permanent collection is a complete example of the type of jar in which many of the scrolls were found.

The Dead Sea Scrolls represent an enormous body of documents — a library of contemporary Jewish thought. In addition to outlining the rules and beliefs of a strict religious community, they also include fragments of every book of the Hebrew Bible except for Esther (it is noteworthy that this is the only biblical book that does not include the name of God). Among the most famous scrolls is a complete copy of all sixty-six chapters of the book of Isaiah. Frequently, the biblical texts contain passages or language that are no longer a part of the Masoretic text (that is, the canonized version of the Hebrew Bible compiled from the seventh through tenth centuries AD and in use today).

A number of theories have been developed to explain the authorship of the scrolls and their subsequent placement in the Qumran caves. Until





50a.

the 1990s, most scholars hypothesized that the scrolls were the work of the Essene community who were believed to have lived at the nearby settlement of Khirbet Qumran. Numerous problems have been identified with this model, among them the fact that the Qumran settlement was very small, yet hundreds of different handwriting styles can be identified in the texts.

Norman Golb of the University of Chicago has provided compelling evidence that the scrolls were in fact hidden in the Judean desert by residents of Jerusalem around AD 70 in order to protect them from Roman hands. In other words, the Dead Sea Scrolls represent the remains of various Jerusalem libraries. Golb's theory is supported by the almost exclusive nature of the scrolls as scribal copies, suggesting that they were assembled from library collections, rather than having been written locally. The presence of conflicting ideologies within the texts themselves suggests that they were not necessarily composed by a cohesive religious community. Finally, a list of hidden treasures that appears in one scroll, known as the "Copper Scroll," could only have originated in Jerusalem.



50b.



51a.

51.  
INSCRIBED OSSUARY  
AND LID

Limestone

70 BC-AD 70

Jifna, Jordan

Gift of Dr. Harold H. Willoughby,  
1953

67.0 x 23.5 x 29.0 cm (box, at top)

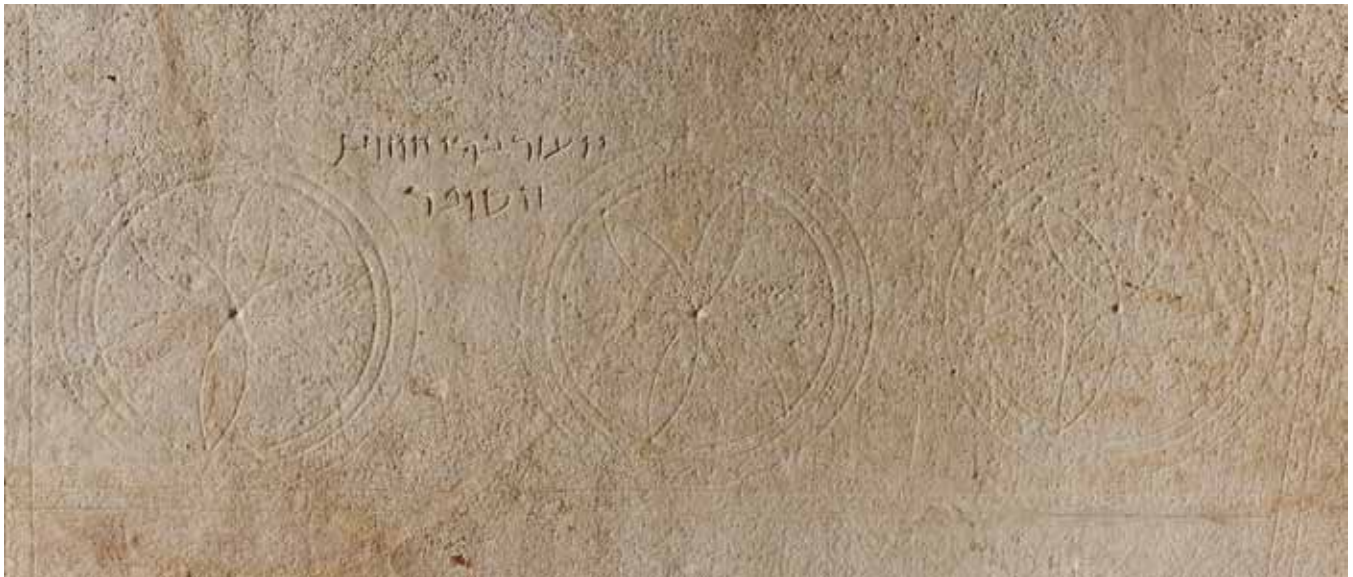
67.0 x 22.0-22.5 x 4.5 cm (lid)

OIM A29791A-B

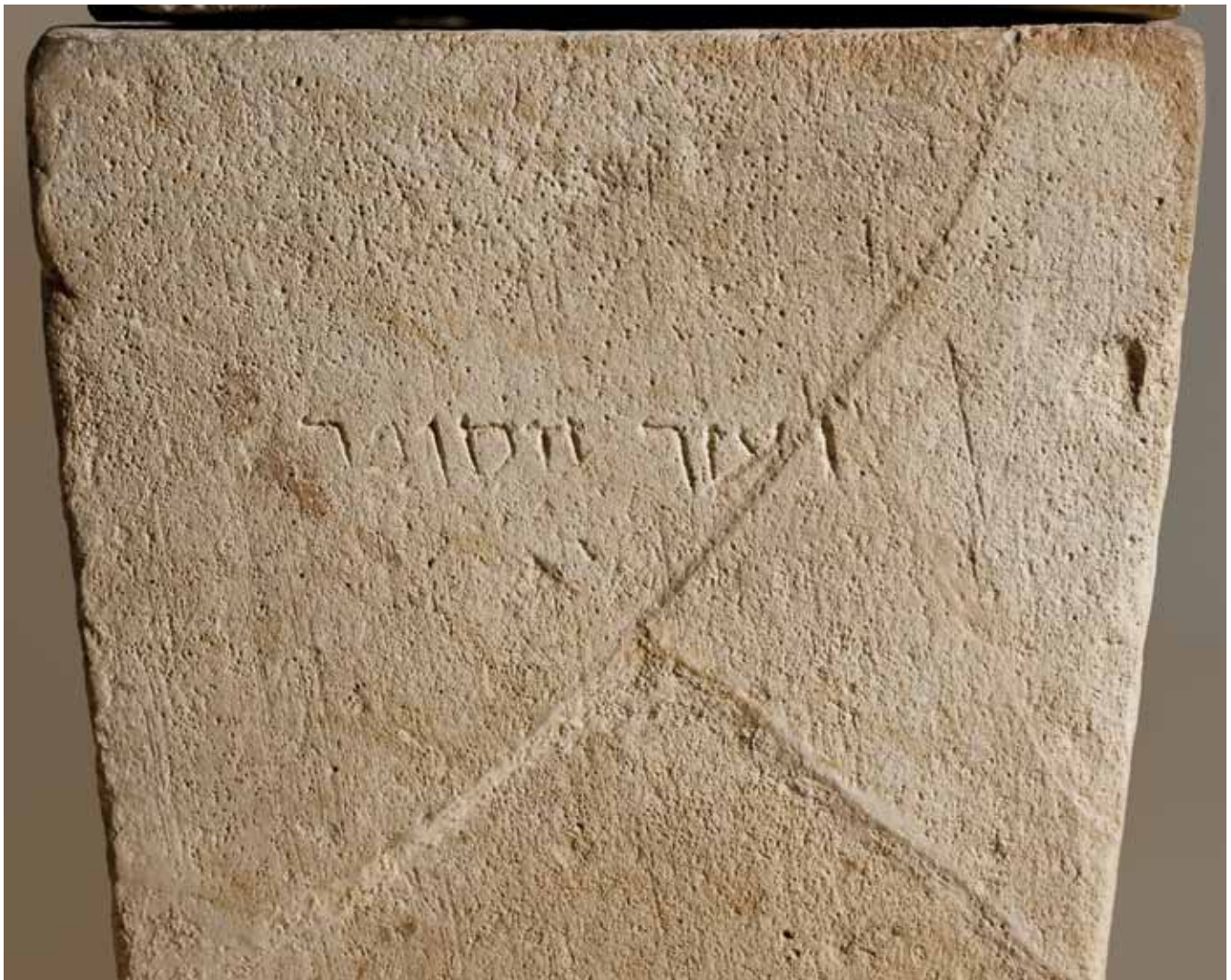
THE USE OF OSSUARIES, or “bone boxes,” has a long history in the southern Levant, dating as far back as prehistoric times. During the Chalcolithic period (ca. 4500–3500 BC) the bones of deceased family members were put into ceramic ossuaries and then placed inside caves. Ossuaries in this period were often embellished with feet, noses, or were shaped like houses or animals. It is believed that the ossuaries were used by semi-nomadic groups who practiced secondary burials. The bones of the deceased could be carried in the ossuary until the period in the annual cycle of transhumance when the group returned to its traditional burial place, at which point the ossuary was deposited.

Sometime around the end of the first century BC, ossuaries began to be incorporated into Jewish burial practices. Prior to this time, the dead had been placed in wooden coffins for burial. With the adoption of the ossuary, the body was first interred in a pit and allowed to decompose until only the bones remained. The bones were then collected together into an ossuary, which was in turn placed into a rock-hewn communal tomb. According to the inscription on the side (51b) of this ossuary, which was found in the West Bank (at that time part of Jordan), it belonged to “Yo-ezer, son of Yehohanan, the scribe.” The name and profession are repeated on the end (51c).





51b.



51c.

52.

**STAMP SEAL**

Ceramic

Early centuries AD

ca. 1.4 cm

Purchased in Iraq by J. H. Breasted,  
1931

OIM A7357

THE ORIGIN AND PRECISE date of this large stamp seal are unknown, but the style of the Hebrew text suggests a date in the early centuries AD. The text is written in nine lines and has been identified as a biblical passage from Jeremiah 48:11:

Moab has been secure from his youth on —  
He is settled on his lees  
And has not been poured from vessel to vessel —  
He has never gone into exile.  
Therefore his fine flavor has remained  
And his bouquet is unspoiled.

The letters have been written in reverse so that when stamped onto the soft clay sealing a jar, they would appear with the proper orientation. The ancient kingdom of Moab encompassed the region east of the Dead Sea (today in modern Jordan) and was a direct neighbor of Israel and Judah during the Israelite royal period. Conflict and competition between the Moabites and the Israelites is expressed in the biblical narratives as the origin of Moab is described as the result of the incestuous union between Lot and his eldest daughter.

It appears that this seal sought to advertise the quality of the products that were contained within. By reciting the text of Jeremiah, the seal draws attention to the fact that the viticultural produce from the Moabite region, which was never disrupted by significant political upheavals and population movements that had plagued the Israelites, was thus superior.



52.



# The Southern Levant in the Byzantine Period

(CA. AD 324-638)

In AD 333, Constantine was crowned the emperor of Rome, thus heralding a new era in the history of the southern Levant. Under Roman rule, both Jews and Christians had experienced significant persecution. In contrast, upon his ascension, Constantine first permitted the practice of Christianity and eventually came to adopt the faith himself, proclaiming Christianity the primary religion of the empire. As the Roman empire declined in the west, attention shifted to the small village of Byzantium selected by Constantine to become his new eastern capital Constantinople (modern Istanbul). A new culture emerged as well, blending together aspects of Roman, Middle Eastern, and Christian cultural traditions. Jews continued to be persecuted, however, enduring programs of forced conversions and near complete banishment from the city of Jerusalem.

Many believe that it was Helena, Constantine's mother, who was the driving force behind the empire's Christian mission. Identifying Jerusalem as the location where the most important events in the life of Jesus occurred according to Christian tradition (the Last Supper, crucifixion, burial, and resurrection), Helena traveled to the city in order to identify and mark key points of pilgrimage. Among the results of her efforts is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, an important site for Christian visitors to Jerusalem today.

Under Byzantine rule, the eastern Roman empire was able to maintain its control of the southern Levant for approximately three centuries. Then, in the early seventh century AD, the Byzantine empire came into conflict with a new Persian group, the Sasanians. The Sasanian king Khusrau II conquered the southern Levant, exploiting Jewish hatred of the Christian rulers of the region in order to entice thousands to join the Persian armies. Some fifteen years later, the Byzantine armies managed to retake the region. At that point, any last traces of a Jewish presence in Jerusalem were completely eradicated as punishment. The major Islamic thrust into the southern Levant began shortly thereafter with the fall of Caesarea in AD 640. The first major Muslim dynasty to rule the region, the Umayyads, was founded in AD 661.

Byzantine materials from the southern Levant were excavated by the Oriental Institute during the 1952–1953 campaign at Khirbet el-Kerak (Beth Yerah), under the direction of Pinhas Delougaz. Although the mound, located on the southwest shore of the Sea of Galilee, is known primarily as an Early Bronze Age urban center, excavations uncovered the remains of a sixth-century Byzantine church at the site. We thus present a large mosaic fragment and glass vessel uncovered during the Khirbet el-Kerak excavations.



53.

53.  
**MOSAIC FLOOR**  
Stone  
AD 528  
Khirbet el-Kerak, Byzantine Church  
385.0 x 50.0 cm  
OIM A30490F

AMONG THE REMAINS OF the Byzantine church uncovered in the 1952–1953 Oriental Institute campaign at Khirbet el-Kerak was a large mosaic floor, found in the hall of the diaconicon which adjoined and ran lengthwise along the northern side of the structure. Mosaics were created by arranging tesserae (small pieces of stone, glass, or other materials) into patterns. While this piece comes from a floor, mosaics were often used to decorate walls and ceilings in Byzantine churches.

This particular mosaic, measuring almost four meters in length, included three lines of text, translated as follows:

[Christ help] Theodore Magister and Theophilus and Basil.  
[Gloriously] was executed the paving of the communicating hall  
and of the diaconicon under [the pious] presbyters Elijah and Basil  
in Indiction 7, year 591.<sup>5</sup>

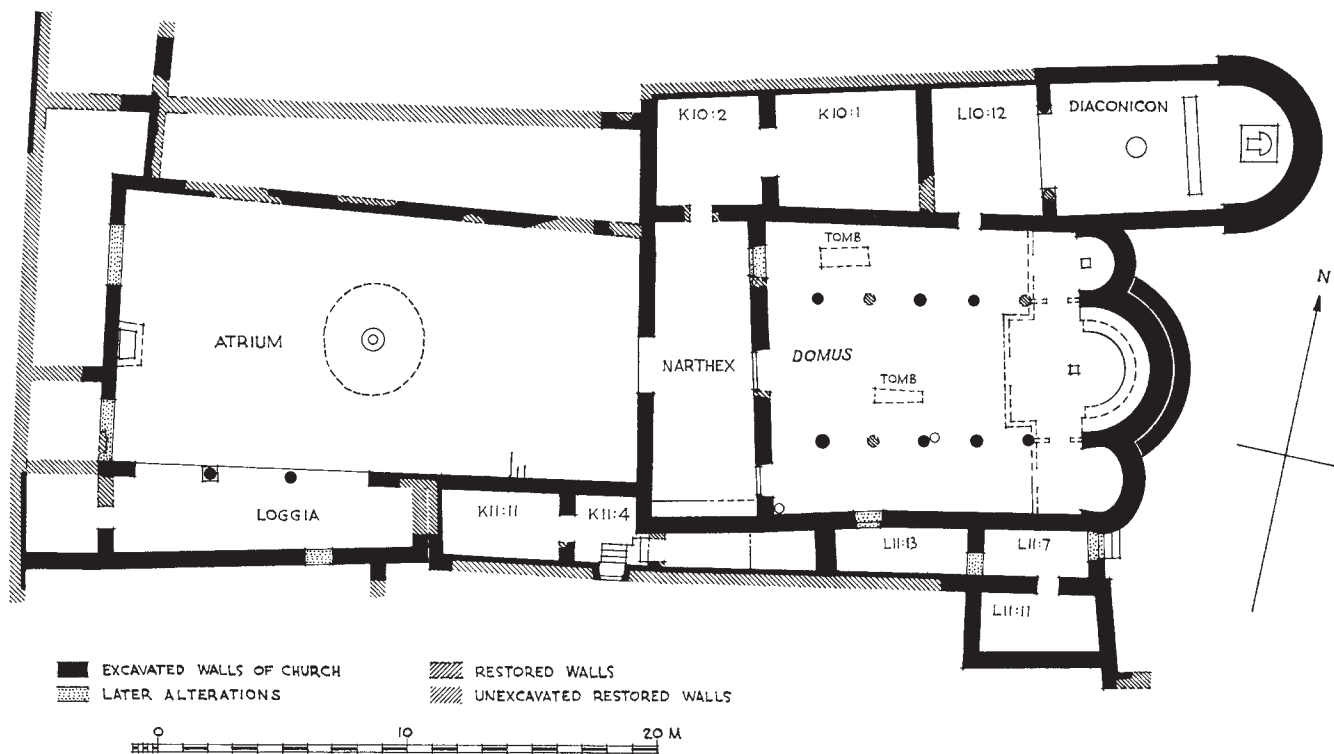
5. Translation follows that of Kraeling (Delougaz and Haines 1960, p. 53).



FIGURE 11.  
Reconstruction of the complete mosaic (after Delougaz and Haines 1960, pl. 51A)

The text celebrates the completion of the mosaic paving of two areas of the church, a communicating hall and the diaconicon. While the former likely refers to the antechamber of this part of the church, the latter refers to a vestiary where the vessels and other implements of the sacrifice were prepared for their use in the liturgy, and also where deacons provided assistance in robing the clergy officiating over the service. The calendar in use at the time is assumed to have been based upon the Pompeian dating system, believed to have been in use throughout the Byzantine era in the southern Levant. According to this system, year 1 began in 63 BC, the year that Pompey established Roman supremacy in the region. The year 591 would therefore be equivalent to AD 528/29.

FIGURE 12.  
The excavators' reconstruction of the architectural plan of the Byzantine church at Khirbet el-Kerak (Beth Yerah) (after Delougaz and Haines 1960, pl. 16)



ALTHOUGH THERE IS EVIDENCE for glass production in both ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, it was not until the Roman era that the technique of glass blowing was discovered. With the advent of blown glass came a tremendous proliferation of forms and functions for glass, spread by the expansive influence of the Roman empire. This glass vessel was found within one of a number of tombs discovered several hundred yards west of the mound of Khirbet el-Kerak. The excavators believed the tombs to have been contemporary with the Byzantine church on the mound. Featuring two barrels, the vessel was constructed using a transparent, blue-tinted glass and was uncovered in a nearly complete state of preservation. The excavators identified the vessel as an unguentarium, a very popular glass form associated with the luxury trade. Unguentaria were used for holding perfumes, ointments, or salves and appear in a myriad of forms and styles.

54.  
**UNGUENTARIUM**  
 Glass  
 Fifth–sixth centuries AD  
 Khirbet el-Kerak, Tomb 7  
 17.6 cm  
 OIM A30463



54.

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# APPENDICES

# 1. OBJECTS BY ORIENTAL INSTITUTE REGISTRATION NUMBER

A7357	Stamp Seal no. 52	A22221	Incised Box no. 34
A13044	Strainer Jug no. 39	A22251	Throne Model no. 33
A13122	Cypriot "Milk Bowl" no. 15	A22254A-B	Gaming Board no. 26
A13201	Four-Horned Altar no. 42	A22258	Robed Figure Plaque no. 32
A13394	Proto-Aeolic Column Capital no. 43	A22269	Inscribed Plaque no. 27
A13472	Black-on-Red Juglet no. 44	A22270	Chair Back Feast Scene no. 28
A14117	Female Figurine no. 23	A22292	Hittite Plaque no. 31
A16415	Biconical Krater no. 17	A22310	Plaque of the Egyptian God Anubis no. 30
A16497	Spouted "Teapot" Jar no. 6	A22467	Figurine of the Canaanite God Ba'al no. 22
A16554	Chocolate-on-White Jug no. 12	A22494	Inscribed Paving Stone no. 1
A18308	Large Offering Stand no. 24	A23815	Hyksos Scarab and Modern Impression no. 10
A18316	Figurine of the Canaanite God El no. 21	A23839A-B	Dagger Blade and Pommel no. 9
A18359	Column Capital Fragment no. 43	A23851	Red Burnished Jug no. 7
A18522	Mycenaean Bull Figurine no. 16	A23878	Twinned Vessels no. 3
A18585	Headband no. 20	A23921	Zoomorphic Figurine no. 5
A18622	Egyptian Statuette of Djehutyhotep no. 11	A23952	Cypriot White-Painted VI Jug no. 8
A18835	Kernos Ring no. 35	A28014	Bilbil Jug no. 15
A18987	Cosmetic Palette no. 49	A28114	Offering Stand no. 40
A19023	Female Figurine no. 46	A28493	Assyrian Bottle no. 48
A20603	Jug no. 38	A29304A-B	Dead Sea Scroll Jar no. 50
A20605	Bowl no. 38	A29791A-B	Inscribed Ossuary and Lid no. 51
A20637	Zoomorphic Vessel no. 41	A30303	Dead Sea Scroll Fragment no. 50
A20700	Pilgrim Flask no. 36	A30463	Unguentarium no. 54
A20721	Cylindrical Bottle no. 37	A30490F	Mosaic Floor no. 53
A20762	Black-on-Red Bowl no. 44	A32273	Shrine Model no. 45
A20830A-B	Offering Stand no. 40	A35327	Samaria Ware Bowl no. 47
A20900	Astarte Pendant no. 19	A118464	Gray Burnished Ware Bowl no. 2
A20928	Mitannian Cylinder Seal no. 18	A118465	Khirbet Kerak Ware Pot Stand no. 4
A21119	Mitannian Cylinder Seal no. 18		
A21161	Bichrome Jug no. 13		
A22212	Griffin Plaque no. 25		
A22213	Female Sphinx Plaque no. 29		

## 2. PRIOR ORIENTAL INSTITUTE PUBLICATION OF CATALOG OBJECTS

1. Inscribed Paving Stone A22494 OIM digital photograph 5492  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 276
2. Gray Burnished Ware Bowl A118464 OIM digital photograph 5524  
Unpublished
3. Twinned Vessels OIM A23878 OIM digital photograph 5496  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 5:5, 106:2
4. Khirbet Kerak Ware Pot Stand A118465 OIM digital photograph 5523  
Unpublished
5. Zoomorphic Figurine A23921 OIM digital photograph 5497  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 244:11
6. Spouted “Teapot” Jar A16497 OIM digital photograph 5433  
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University of Chicago Press, 1938, plate 92:1
7. Red Burnished Jug A23851 OIM digital photograph 5495  
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Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 17:7, 118:3
8. Cypriot White-Painted VI Jug A23952 OIM digital photograph 5500  
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Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 34:4, 125:13
9. Dagger Blade and Pommel A23839A–B OIM digital photograph 5494  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 178:3
10. Hyksos Scarab A23815 OIM digital photograph 5493  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 149:34
11. Egyptian Statuette of Djehutyhotep A18622 OIM digital photograph 5449  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 265
12. Chocolate-on-White Jug A16554 OIM digital photograph 5435  
Guy, Philip L. O. *Megiddo Tombs*. Oriental Institute Publications 33. Chicago:  
University of Chicago Press, 1938, plates 46:14, 144:5
13. Bichrome Jug A21161 OIM digital photograph 5470  
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Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 51:8, 56:1, 133:19
14. Cypriot “Milk Bowl” A13122 OIM digital photograph 5419  
Unpublished
15. Bilbil Jug A28014 OIM digital photograph 5501  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 67:20, 139:3
16. Mycenaean Bull Figurine A18522 OIM digital photograph 17456  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62.  
Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 246:25

17. Biconical Krater A16415 OIM digital photograph 5427  
Guy, Philip L. O. *Megiddo Tombs*. Oriental Institute Publications 33. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938, plate 134
18. Mitannian Cylinder Seals A20928 & A21119 OIM digital photographs 5464 & 5468  
Loud, Gordon. *Megiddo 2. Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 160:9, 7
19. Astarte Pendant A20900 OIM digital photograph 5463  
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20. Headband A18585 OIM digital photograph 5448  
Loud, Gordon. *Megiddo 2. Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, figure 342, plate 227:5
21. Figurine of the Canaanite God Ēl A18316 OIM digital photographs 5438, 5442, & 5444  
Loud, Gordon. *Megiddo 2. Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plates 237–38
22. Figurine of the Canaanite God Ba'al A22467 OIM digital photograph 5491  
Loud, Gordon. *Megiddo 2. Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 235:22
23. Female Figurine A14117 OIM digital photograph 5425  
Guy, Philip L. O. *Megiddo Tombs*. Oriental Institute Publications 33. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938, plate 155:9  
Fisher, Clarence S. *The Excavation of Armageddon*. Oriental Institute Communications 4. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929, page 71, figure 49
24. Large Offering Stand A18308 OIM digital photograph 5436  
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25. Griffin Plaque A22212 OIM digital photograph 5473  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 9:32  
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26. Gaming Board A22254A–B OIM digital photograph 5480  
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The Oriental Institute. *A Guide to the Oriental Institute Museum*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1982, page 21
27. Inscribed Plaque A22269 OIM digital photograph 5482  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, page 12, plate 63:379
28. Chair Back Feast Scene A22270 OIM digital photograph 5483  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 32:160
29. Female Sphinx Plaque A22213 OIM digital photograph 5474  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 7:21
30. Plaque of the Egyptian God Anubis A22310 OIM digital photograph 5489  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 8:25
31. Hittite Plaque A22292 OIM digital photograph 5488  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, page 10, plate 11
32. Robed Figure Plaque A22258 OIM digital photograph 5481  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 38:173



33. Throne Model A22251 OIM digital photographs 5478, 5479, & 5477  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 4:3
34. Incised Box A22221 OIM digital photograph 5476  
Loud, Gordon. *The Megiddo Ivories*. Oriental Institute Publications 52. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939, plate 24:129
35. Kernos Ring A18835 —  
May, H. G. *Material Remains of the Megiddo Cult*. Oriental Institute Publications 26. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935, plate 16  
Harrison, Timothy. Megiddo 3. *Final Report of the Stratum VI Excavations*. Oriental Institute Publications 127. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2005, plate 23:3
36. Pilgrim Flask A20700 OIM digital photograph 5458  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 80:7  
Harrison, Timothy. Megiddo 3. *Final Report of the Stratum VI Excavations*. Oriental Institute Publications 127. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2005, page 134, plate 19:5
37. Cylindrical Bottle A20721 OIM digital photograph 5469  
Loud, Gordon. Megiddo 2. *Seasons of 1935–39*. Oriental Institute Publications 62. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948, plate 73:9  
Harrison, Timothy. Megiddo 3. *Final Report of the Stratum VI Excavations*. Oriental Institute Publications 127. Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 2005, page 136, plate 3:5
38. Jug and Bowl A20603 & A20605 OIM digital photographs 5455 & 5456  
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