

1 Esdr 8:29), the father of Hattush (cf. 1 Chr 3:22) although the text of this passage also has textual difficulties (Myers *1 Chronicles* AB, 67n).

5. In Ezra 8:5 Shecaniah is listed as the son of Jahaziel of the sons of Zattu, if we include the reading in 1 Esdr 8:32. He was apparently a family leader (Ezra 8:1).

6. A layman mentioned in Ezra 10:2 (also 1 Esdr 8:92) who suggested that those in the postexilic community who had married foreign women send them and their children away. This led to the formation of a covenant among the men of Judah and Benjamin to do just that. This covenant is the topic of the entire last chapter of the book of Ezra.

7. The father of Shemiah, a priest who was the guardian of the East Gate and who helped repair the wall in the time of Nehemiah (Neh 3:29).

8. The son of Arah and the father-in-law of Tobiah the Ammonite (Neh 6:18). Tobiah was one of the ring leaders in opposition to Nehemiah's successful attempt to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem in the Persian period.

RUSSELL FULLER

SHECHEM (PERSON) [Heb *šēkem*; *šekem*]. **SHECHEMITE**. 1. Hamor's son, who raped Jacob's daughter Dinah (Gen 34:2). After the sexual encounter Shechem came to love Dinah and wanted to marry her (v 3). He proceeded to speak feelingly to the girl to persuade her to become his wife. Dinah seems to have remained in Shechem's house (v 26) while he and his father obtained from her family its consent to a marriage (vv 8–17). Hamor proposed that his people and Jacob's intermarry and offered to let the Israelites settle in his territory. The sons of Jacob countered by requiring that all of the city's males be circumcised. Davidson (*Genesis* 12–50 CBC, 195) says circumcision for the Shechemites would have been a mark that they now belonged to Yahweh's chosen community. Von Rad (*Genesis* OTL, 333) however believes that only at a much later period did circumcision receive conscious theological significance and that the acceptance of faith in the God of Abraham was not suggested in the demand of Jacob's sons. See also **CIRCUMCISION**. In either case Shechem and his fellow citizens regarded circumcision as a trivial price to pay for an alliance which would have potentially increased their own power and wealth (v 23). But on the third day Simeon and Levi massacred the town's men, who lay incapacitated with fever, and fetched their sister (25–26). According to Von Rad (p. 335) the narrative depicts a prehistoric conflict of the tribes Simeon and Levi in the region around the town Shechem, which means "shoulder of mountain." The Shechemites appear anomalously in Jdt 5:16 in a list of peoples dispossessed from the Promised Land. This inclusion may represent the author's hostility to Samaritans and especially to Shechem, which Samaritan refugees rebuilt in the Hellenistic period and which John Hyrcanus I may have taken by the time the book was written (Moore *Judith* AB, 160). Or the addition of Shechem could be in anticipation of Judith's denunciation (9:2) of him for raping Dinah and recollection (vv 3–4) of the subsequent taking over of his territory (Enslin 1972: 90).

2. A son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh

the Shechemite clan within the tribe of Manasseh. Noth (*Numbers* OTL, 207) thinks that the reference to Shechem was to the well-known town of that name—an indication that it had been incorporated as a clan into the Manasse tribe. It should not be overlooked that contrary to Numbers 26, which calls Shechem the fourth of Gilead's six sons, Josh 17:2 considers Shechem to be one of Manasseh's sons, on a par with Machir. This latter arrangement might possibly have arisen to more neatly explain the division of Manasseh on the E and W sides of the Jordan River.

3. A son of Shemida, who was a descendant of Joseph's son Manasseh (1 Chr 7:19). If however this Shechem is the same as the preceding one, he is here listed incorrectly as Shemida's second-born son rather than his brother. Fellow siblings Likhi and Aniam may be equal to Helek of Num 26:30 and Noah of v 33, respectively (Braun *1 Chronicles* WBC, 111). The names of Shechem and Shemida as well as Noah and Helek appear along with relatives, Abiezer and Hoglah, as names of persons, tribes, or places in the Samaria ostraca (Myers *1 Chronicles* AB, 54–55).

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EDWIN C. HOSTETTER

SHECHEM (PLACE) [Heb *šēkem*]. A city and its environs in the central highlands of Israel.

- A. Modern and Ancient Name
- B. Topography
- C. Archaeological Excavations
 - 1. German Expeditions
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 - 1. Earliest Settlement
 - 2. Middle Bronze Age
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 - 4. Iron Age
 - 5. Persian and Hellenistic Periods

A. Modern and Ancient Name

About 65 km N of Jerusalem, in the territory occupied in biblical times by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh and known as Mt. Ephraim, is a low, flat-topped mound called Tell Balāṭah (M.R. 176179) with a surface area of about 2.4 hectares. It takes its name from the Arab village of Balāṭah, which covers most of the S half of the mound. The site stands at the end of a narrow pass between the two highest mountains in central Palestine, Mt. Gerizim (881 m) on the S and Mt. Ebal (940 m) on the N.

In 1903, Hermann Thiersh and a party of German scholars examined the mound and found along its NW face a wall of massive stone construction, 3 m in height, which they traced for over 37 m. It was obviously part of a powerful defensive wall appropriate to a major city. Prior to this discovery, there had been considerable controversy as to whether the site of ancient Shechem was identical with that of Neapolis (modern Nablus), or was situated some distance from it. Jerome's statement, "Shechem,

sites, but Eusebius stated that Shechem was "in the suburbs of Neapolis," and the Madaba mosaic map, which depends on Eusebius' *Onomasticon*, shows Shechem a short distance SE of Neapolis. Thiersh's discovery of a major ancient fortification system at Tell Balāṭah seemed to establish Tell Balāṭah, rather than Nablus, as the site of ancient Shechem, and the identification has not since been seriously questioned.

The Hebrew word *šēkem* probably means "back" or "shoulder," referring to the location of the ancient city on the col between Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim. Fifty-four of the 67 occurrences of the word in the OT refer to the city or its surrounding district. The remaining thirteen are the personal name of a prince of that city, the son of Hamor, its reputed founder. See **SHECHEM (PERSON)**. The Gk equivalent (*Sychem*) appears twice in the NT (Acts 7:16), both times in the speech of Stephen, where the martyr refers to the burial of Joseph's remains near the city. There are also a substantial number of references to Shechem and its inhabitants in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, as well as a smaller number in non-biblical sources. The biblical passages and the non-biblical material will be discussed in the context of the archaeological period which provides their background. Passages in which the word Shechem is the personal name of the son of Hamor will be mentioned only in passing.

B. Topography

Ancient peoples built their cities in militarily strategic locations where there was an abundant supply of water, sufficient agricultural land to meet the basic needs of the population, and access to roads or other channels of communication. These requirements are all met at the site of ancient Shechem.

Shechem has a guaranteed water supply. The water table is far beneath the surface, but can be reached by deep, hand-dug wells, such as Jacob's Well about 400 m SE of Shechem. In the village of Balāṭah, approximately where the S wall of the ancient city would have been, there is a copious spring. It is the best of many such springs in the plain of 'Askar, and provides water not only for the village of Balāṭah but also for neighboring communities in times of drought when their own springs have dried up.

The Shechem area possesses agricultural potentialities favorable to the development of a major city. The underlying rock is limestone, formed about seventy million years ago when the region was at the bottom of the Tethys sea. Subsequent periods of folding and uplifting of the land produced the mountains and the network of flat-bottomed valleys which characterize the Shechem area today. Limestone weathers at the rate of about one centimeter in 1000 years to form a fertile red-brown soil, *terra rosa*. Erosion brought soil down from the hills and left a deep deposit of rich earth in the valleys. Vineyards and fig and olive orchards flourish on the slopes, especially when they are terraced. Grain and vegetables grow well in the valleys. The annual rainfall of about 50–60 cm is sufficient to sustain these crops.

At Shechem both valley-bottom land and hillsides were available for cultivation. See Fig. SHE.01. A broad fertile valley, the Plain of 'Askar, runs E from Shechem toward the Jordan River, which is about 10 km distant. The

ambushed the Shechemites who came out to do battle with him (Judg 9:42–44). The Plain of 'Askar, together with the et-Tahtani and el-Gharbi Plains, provide the city with an area of valley-bottom land about ten km long and 2.4 km wide. The Plain of Mukhna, actually a long rift valley, enters the 'Askar Plain from the S. Along it runs the road from Jerusalem.

The mountain slopes and valleys not only served the purposes of agriculture, they also provided grass for the pasturage of sheep and goats. Jacob sent his sons from Hebron to Shechem to pasture their flocks, but they preferred the still more luxuriant grassland near Dothan, about a day's journey N of Shechem (Gen 37:12–14).

A network of roads converges on and funnels through the pass between Ebal and Gerizim. See Fig. SHE.01. A N–S highway from Egypt through Beer-sheba and Hebron runs from Jerusalem along the watershed to Shechem. A N extension of this road passes through the Wadi el-Abrad to the Wadi Fari'a where it connects with the main road to the Jordan Valley and so reaches the principal trans-Jordanian thoroughfares leading to Damascus and Phoenicia.

In Judg 21:19 the Jerusalem-Shechem section of the road provides a reference point for the location of Shiloh and in Jer 41:5, it is the route by which pilgrims from the N reached Jerusalem. Along its course the road runs through a number of dark, narrow defiles where robbers often lay in wait for unwary travelers (Hos 6:9).

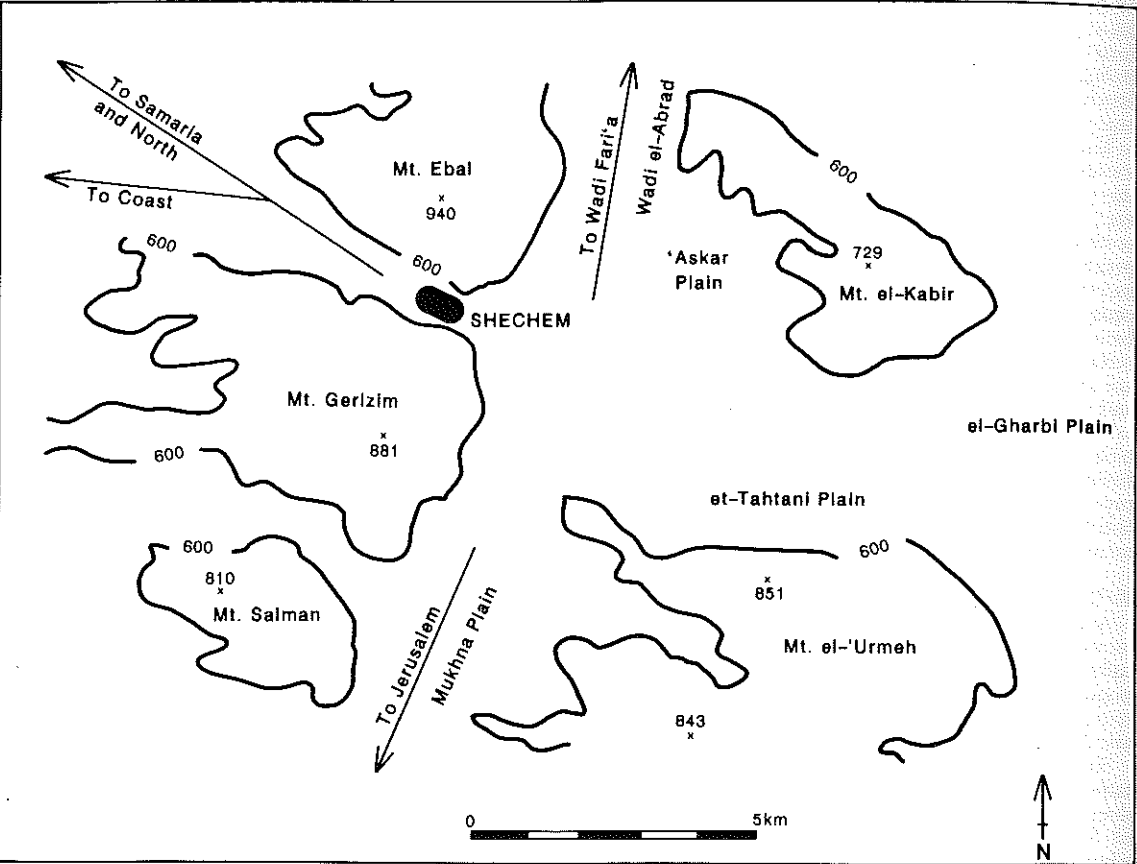
The road which emerges from the W end of the Shechem pass divides and subdivides giving access to most of the main centers of population in the country and to the great coastal highway, the Way of the Sea (*Via Maris*).

The location of Shechem at the E entrance to the pass thus allows it to dominate and control all commercial and military traffic through the region.

C. Archaeological Excavations

1. **German Expeditions.** Just ten years after Thiersh's identification of the site, full-scale excavations began at Shechem. A German expedition under the direction of E. Sellin, who had previously excavated at the important sites of Taanach and Jericho, conducted its first season of excavation in 1913, followed by a second campaign the following year.

World War I brought this first phase of the excavations to an end, and the post-war economic conditions in Germany prevented resumption of the work until 1926. Between the spring of 1926 and the spring of 1928, Sellin directed five additional seasons of excavation at the site. During the spring season of 1926, G. Welter, an archaeologist with considerable experience in Greece, joined the expedition. His work in the summers of 1926 and 1927 drew praise from Sellin, but evidently tensions were building beneath the surface. Welter came to be regarded as the "archaeological expert" and Sellin as the "theological" director. Sellin's critics accused him of bad excavation techniques, inadequate recording, poor reporting, and dubious interpretation of the finds. In the summer of 1928, the German Archaeological Institute, which was responsible for the scientific integrity of the expedition, removed Sellin from the directorship and replaced him with Welter.



SHE.01. Area map of Shechem indicating the mountain and valley system and the principal roads. (Courtesy of L. E. Toombs)

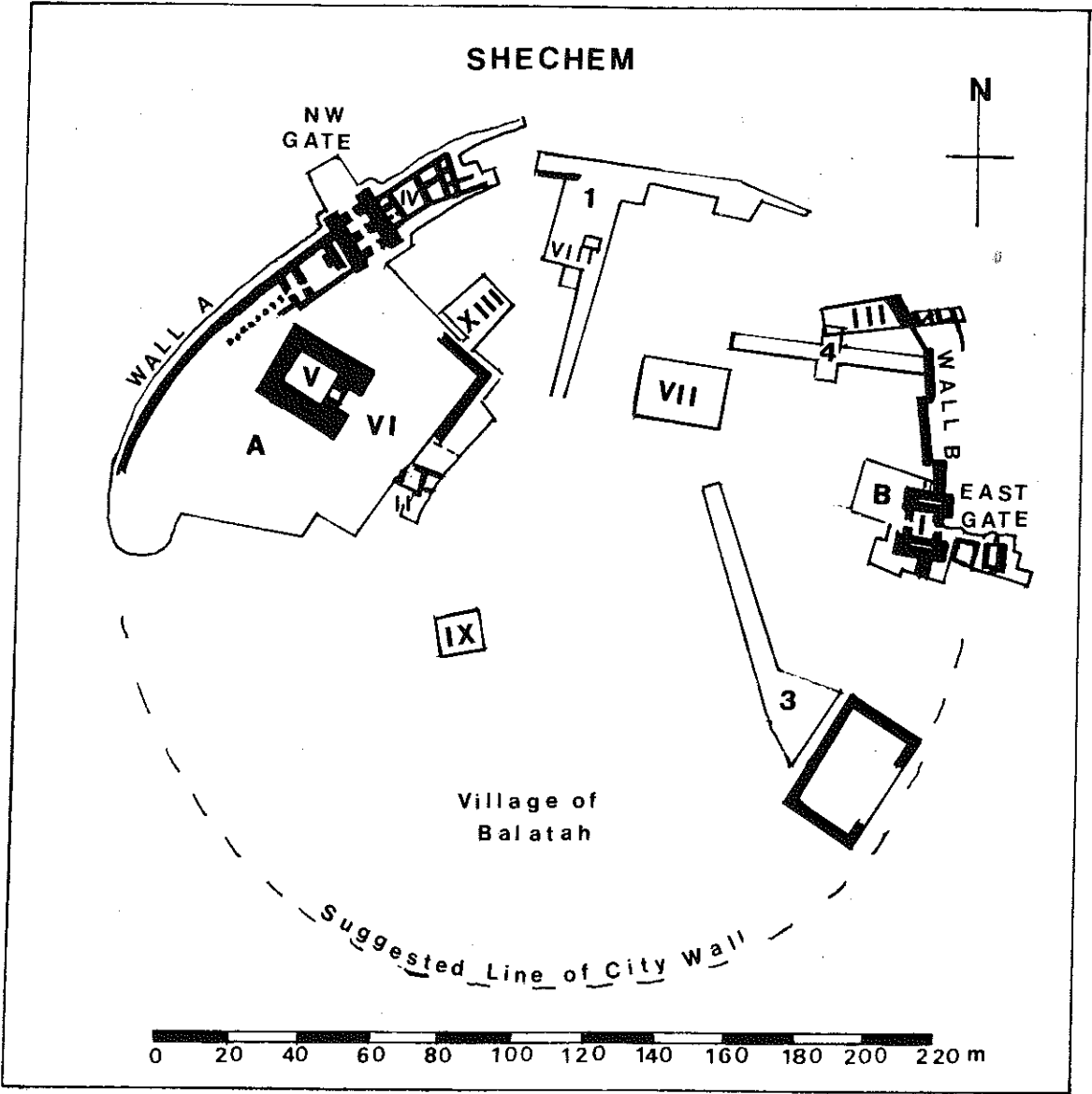
campaigns, each of about three months duration, in the summers of 1928 and 1931, but the pace of the work slowed dramatically. Welter's reports were brief and lacking in precision and detail, and his revisions of Sellin's conclusions were in most cases unfortunate. It is to Welter's credit, however, that he prepared excellent plans of the principal remains uncovered by the German expedition and drew the first sections produced at the site.

In 1933, Sellin was reinstated as director and given the assistance of an architect with Egyptian experience, Dr. Hans Steckeweh. What Sellin aptly called the expedition's "unlucky star" continued to shine. After a summer season in 1934, a shortage of funds and the troubled political scene in Palestine prevented resumption of the work until the Second World War made it completely impossible. Sellin had faithfully published informative, though brief, preliminary reports for each season, but the manuscript of the final report together with the field records of the

expedition were destroyed when Sellin's home in Berlin was demolished by a bomb in 1943.

Under Sellin's direction the German expedition employed three excavation methods; exploratory trenches, tracing of fortification walls, and area clearances.

Four huge trenches were dug into the tell. A N-S trench 52 m long by 5 m wide (1 on Fig. SHE.02) was cut into the mound near the center of its N side. In the search for the city wall this trench was extended and widened at its N end. Two N-S trenches were laid out to explore the area S of the wall observed by Thiersh. These were later swallowed up in the large area clearances around the NW gate and the Temple (IV, V and VI on Fig. SHE.02). A fourth trench (3 on Fig. SHE.02), later widened at its S end, ran from a building called "the house of Sheik Selim" NW at a width of 5 m for a distance of about 80 m. The fifth trench (4 on Fig. SHE.02), 5 m wide, ran from the slope of the mound on the NE side westward for about 60 m. These



SHE.02. Site plan of excavations at Shechem. The German excavations are shown in capital letters and Arabic numbers; the American fields are indicated by Roman

trenches were too narrow to reveal the full extent of any structures encountered, and were dug without cross balks along their lengths to provide stratigraphic control.

The tracing of the major defensive walls naturally began with the exposed portion of Thiersh's cyclopean wall. See Fig. SHE.02, wall A. This led to the discovery of the NW Gate, and what Sellin called the W and E "palaces," abutting the gate on either side. A later wall, with offsets and insets along its length (Wall B), appeared in Trench 4, and tracing it southward led to the discovery of the E Gate of the city.

The discovery of the NW gate with its associated structures led to a huge area clearance in that sector of the mound (A on Fig. SHE.02). A smaller area clearance at the E Gate uncovered the N two thirds of the structure (B on Fig. SHE.02).

Numerous other trenches and small area clearances yielded rich and important finds, but the reports of these are given only in very general terms.

2. American Excavations. In 1954, G. E. Wright and B. W. Anderson planned renewed excavation at Shechem. They believed that the important advances in the knowledge of Palestinian pottery chronology, in field method, and in recording and interpretative techniques which had taken place in the twenty years since the last German expedition would make possible the recovery of much of the lost information and would add new dimensions to the archaeological history of the site.

Under the direction of Wright the Drew-McCormick Archaeological Expedition (later called the Joint Expedition) went into the field in the summer of 1956, and continued with approximately six week seasons in the summers of 1957, 1960, 1962, 1964, 1966, and 1968. In 1968, R. Boling reexamined a large building on the N slope of Mt. Gerizim about 300 m from the tell which had been excavated by Welter in 1931. In the summer of 1969, J. D. Seger directed an investigation of the MB remains adjacent to the Temple area. Sellin's "palaces" were the focus of a summer campaign in 1972 conducted by W. G. Dever. Extensive cemeteries of the LB and the Roman-Byzantine Period were discovered on the S slopes of Mt. Gerizim by persons unconnected with the Joint Expedition.

The Joint Expedition planned its work with two aims in view; to reevaluate and supplement the results of the German expedition by excavation adjacent to or within areas already exposed, and to open new areas in order to fill in gaps in the data provided by the earlier expedition.

To accomplish the first of these aims seven fields were excavated during the life of the expedition. (In the terminology used by the expedition a "Field" is a system of interconnected 5 m by 5 m squares. The individual squares within a Field were called "Areas".) The Fields referred to below are indicated by Roman numerals on Fig. SHE.02.

Field I uncovered the portion of the E Gate not excavated by the German Expedition and examined the structures in front of, beside, and behind the gateway. Field II was sited on the SE edge of the huge German clearance on the sacred area. See A on Fig. SHE.02. Field III was a trench over the fortification system on the E side of the tell, just to the N of Trench 4 of the German Expedition.

mans in Area A on the NW side of the tell constituted Field V.

Less extensive excavations designed to clarify the German results were Field IV in one of the rooms of Sellin's Eastern Palace, Field VI.2 on the NE side of German Area A, and Field VIII on the bottom and S side of German Trench 1.

Of the new excavations, Field VI penetrated below the levels reached in the German Area A to expose and elucidate the earlier structures in the citadel area. Field VII, near the center of the tell, explored the housing of the city from the latest remains to the MB III period. In an effort to determine the overall stratigraphy of the site an 11 x 11 m area (Field IX), located about 40 m S of the citadel area, was excavated from the preserved surface to bedrock. Field XIII, adjacent to the NE side of the citadel area, reached LB levels and exposed rich Canaanite remains. Field XV attempted (with ambiguous results) to locate the MB city walls on the S side of the city.

The expedition undertook some work in the environs of the tell. The most important projects were a survey of the Shechem region, conducted by E. F. Campbell, Jr., and the excavation of a Roman and Byzantine temple site on Tell er-Ras, a spur projecting from the N slopes of Mt. Gerizim (Field XII). Field X designated a largely futile search for tombs on the S slopes of Mt. Ebal. Field XI was a salvage operation to investigate a Byzantine building partially exposed when municipal workers dug a trench to lay a water pipe. Field XIV, an exploratory trench in the compound of the Tomb of Joseph, produced entirely negative results.

D. Archaeological History

Combining its own findings with those of the German excavators, the Drew-McCormick Expedition isolated 24 strata of occupation (from latest to earliest Strata I-XXIV). The accompanying table gives these results in a simplified form. The dates are, of course, approximate.

The Stratigraphy of Shechem (dates approximate)			
Period	Strata	Dates	Characteristics
Chalcolithic	XXIV-XXIII	4500-3200	Village occupation
	[Gap in occupation during Early Bronze Age]		
MB I	XXII-XXI	1900-1750	Earliest urbanization
MB II	XX-XVII	1750-1650	Hyksos Period
MB III	XVI-XV	1650-1550	Prosperous urban center
	[Gap in occupation during LB IA]		
LB IB	XIV	1450-1400	Complete rebuilding
LB IIA	XIII	1400-1310	Amarna Period
LB IIB	XII	1310-1200	Post-Amarna decline
Iron IA	XI	1200-1125	Israelite dominance
	["Abimelech" destruction and gradual resettlement]		
Iron IB-IIA	X-IX	975-810	Early monarchy
Iron IIB	VIII-VII	810-724	Divided monarchy
	[Destruction by Assyrian armies]		
Iron IIC	VI	724-600	Assyrian domination
Persian	V	600-475	Cultural decline
	[Abandonment 475-331]		
Hellenistic	IV-I	475-331	Samaritan sacred city

1. Earliest Settlement (Strata XXIV-XXIII). During the Chalcolithic Period (ca. 4500-3200 B.C.), settlers, attracted by the abundant water supply, moved into the area later occupied by the city, which was then virtually a level valley floor (Stratum XXIV). They built roughly circular huts with cobblestone floors and superstructures probably of hides or compacted earth. Field IX contained the remains of three such huts in close proximity to one another. The compact nature of the occupation suggests an agricultural village of the type common in the Chalcolithic era. In Field VI a beaten earth surface, covered by occupational debris and fragments of pottery represents a second phase of occupation, still within the Chalcolithic Period.

2. Middle Bronze Age. a. MB I (Strata XXII-XXI). Urban occupation at Shechem began in Middle Bronze I (ca. 1900-1750 B.C.). Because of deep excavation for later construction the remains are disappointingly scanty, but are sufficient to show the presence of a large and well-organized community. The period began with a massive leveling and filling operation, designed to prepare the site for subsequent building operations. No fortification walls can be assigned to the period. In the interior of the city, there were two levels of housing (Strata XXII-XXI) with a period of temporary abandonment between. The buildings are substantial structures with mudbrick walls on stone foundations and typical furnishings and artifacts of domestic occupation.

The most imposing structure belonging to the period is an earthen platform held in place by a sloping stone wall. A scree of stones and pottery had fallen down the outer face of the platform, but whatever structure surmounted it had been removed by later construction. The W wall of the platform was traced for a distance of 10 m when it turned at right angles to the S. Excavation in 1964, which located the NE corner of the platform fill, discounted earlier suggestions that the structure was the corner tower of a city wall or an altar analogous to the large stone-supported structure at Megiddo. Probably the platform was a rectangular podium near the N limits of the city, topped by a large public building (sacred or secular).

Two Egyptian texts mention the city just described. An inscription on the stele of Khu-Sebek, a noble of the court of King Sesostri III (ca. 1880-1840 B.C.), describes how the king campaigned in a foreign country of which the name was Sekmem (Shechem), and how "Sekmem fell, together with the wretched Retenu (a general Egyptian term for the inhabitants of Syro-Palestine)." The Execration Texts were devices by which the Pharaohs of the 12th Dyn. (20th-19 centuries B.C.) guaranteed the overthrow of their enemies by placing their names and appropriate curses on potsherds or clay figurines which were then ceremonially broken. One of the texts gives the name of Ibish-hadad of Shechem. These texts indicate that by the mid-19th century Shechem was an important strategic and political center, a leader of resistance against Egyptian expansionist policies and probably the head of a city-state confederacy.

b. MB II (Strata XX-XVII). The second phase of the MB began in Stratum XX with the city enclosed within a simple, free-standing mudbrick wall 2.5 m wide, set on a stone foundation, a direct continuation of the defensive

EB Age, ca. 3300-2400 B.C.). A 43 m long segment of this wall was uncovered on the NW side of the city. See Wall D on Fig. SHE.03.

As the period developed (Stratum XIX), the fortifications underwent dramatic change, due partly to the introduction of the battering ram in siege warfare and partly to the appearance in the area of a new people, the HYKSOS. The city was surrounded by a huge mound of earth over 30 m wide at the base with a slope of between 30 and 40 degrees and surmounted by a defensive wall, the typical "Hyksos rampart."

In Stratum XX a large rectangular area on the inner (W) side of the defensive wall was isolated from the rest of the city. An especially massive wall formed the S side of the enclosure nearest the city. See Wall 900 on Fig. SHE.03. The walled-off area served a double purpose: it provided an enclosed space for public buildings, and a fortified last line of defense in case the outer walls were breached.

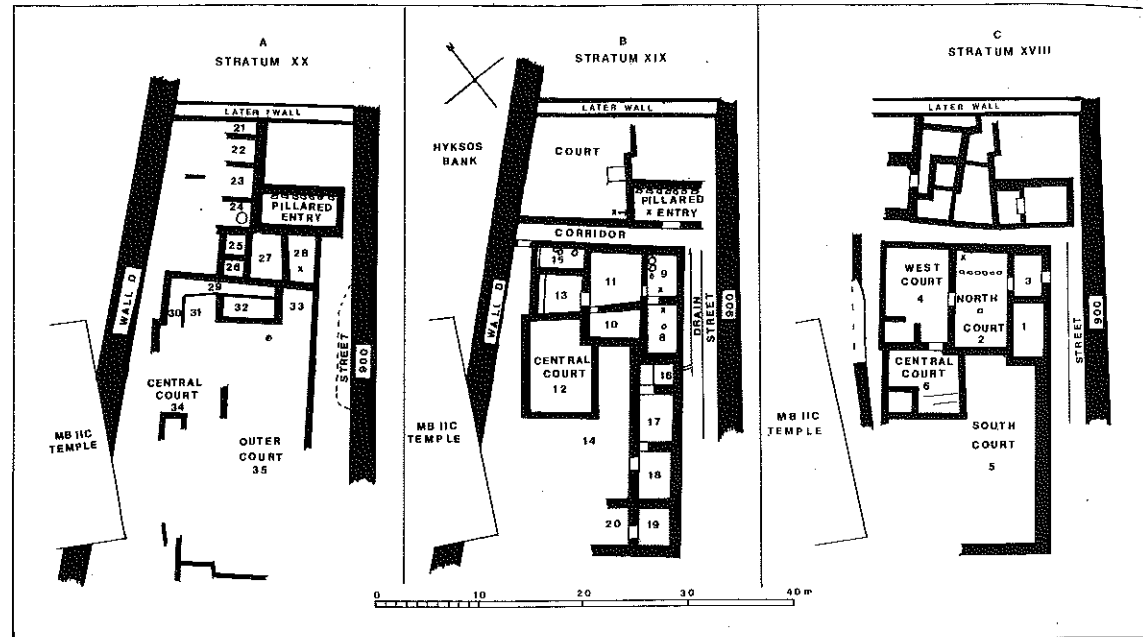
Along the inner face of Wall 900 ran a cobbled street with a drain along its edge. Beyond the street lay two groups of buildings, a S and a N block, separated at some stages by a heavy wall and at others by a paved corridor. The S block was dominated by several large courtyards with adjacent smaller rooms. The N block had for most of the period a residential and storage function. This general plan of the citadel area continued throughout the period, but the layout of the individual rooms and courtyards underwent four distinct phases of modification and rebuilding.

In the earliest of these phases (Stratum XX, Fig. SHE.03A) the N block, approached through a pillared entryway, contained two groups of small rooms, one for storage (Rooms 21-24) and one for domestic purposes (Rooms 25-28). The principal features of the S block were two large courtyards (34 and 35) with a range of three smaller rooms (31, 32 and 33) on the N side.

In the 2d phase (Stratum XIX, Fig. SHE.03B), a corridor separated the two parts of the complex. A courtyard replaced the storage chambers of the previous phase. Three courtyards (Rooms 10/11, 12, 14) dominated the S block. Around these open spaces on the E and S sides lay a range of small rooms. Judging by the number of silos and ovens, most of these subsidiary rooms were cooking or grain storage areas. However, one of them (Room 16) had a low partition in its center and was provided with a drain. Copper slag on the floor of the room suggested the possibility that it was used for casting bronze objects.

Extensive modifications during the third phase of the citadel (Stratum XVIII, Fig. SHE.03C) resulted in the elimination of the small industrial rooms, and the production of four courtyards; a large L-shaped courtyard to the S and E (Room 5), a central court with a small, rectangular room provided with a drain in its SW corner (Room 6), a W court with a small room similarly located (Room 4), and a N court (Room 2).

The N court had a row of column bases stretching across its N end, and an isolated column base near its center. The colonnade probably supported the (wooden?) columns for a canopy. An isolated column base was found near the center of the court. If the complex was a palace, this room



SHE.03. Schematic of the three main phases of the acropolis building at Shechem—MB IIB. This building has been variously identified as a "Courtyard Temple" or a royal palace. The subfloor burials are marked x. (Courtesy of L. E. Toombs)

placed under the protection of the canopy. The W court would then have been the waiting room for those seeking an audience and their retainers. The central court may have been the palace shrine with the cult room tucked away in the corner.

The final phase of the citadel (Stratum XVII) is poorly delineated, because most of its structures and all of its floors were removed by the German excavators. It extended beyond the W limits of the earlier phases, over the stump of the disused Hyksos embankment.

Considerable debate has centered around the function of this important complex. Its isolation from the rest of the city, the size and solidity of its buildings, the numerous courtyards, and the frequent use of solidly-founded pillars demonstrate that the area served a public function. At first the expedition tentatively identified it as a palace (Toombs and Wright 1961: 16, 22–28). In 1962, G. E. Wright suggested that the structures had a religious function, and called the complex the "Courtyard Temple" (Toombs and Wright 1963: 11–18; G. E. Wright 1965: 104–9). Paul Lapp argued that the identification of the complex as a temple was "dubious" (1963: 129–30). The evidence and the arguments based on it were later summarized and evaluated by L. E. Toombs (1985: 42–60). The most likely conclusion seems to be that the complex was a palace in all its phases, and that its central courtyard, located throughout the history of the structures almost directly beneath the later

Special interest attaches to a series of burials within the complex. The earliest is the skeleton of a child, lying in a flexed position on the Stratum XX floor of Room 28 (Fig. SHE.03A), without burial jar or grave furnishings.

The best preserved of the series was found beneath the floor of the Stratum XIX pillared entryway (Fig. SHE.03B). The body of a six or seven year old child lay inside a large storage jar, placed on its side in a shallow trench, protected by flat stones. The skeleton, flexed on its right side, wore a necklace of crystal and agate beads. Pottery vessels, probably once containing grave offerings, and scattered bones of an indeterminate nature were found inside the jars and in the trench. A very similar jar burial, with the bones in disarray, was found under the floor of Room 9. Beneath the floor of the adjacent room (Room 8) was the deliberate burial of a sheep or goat on a bed of small stones. Under the W wall of the entryway (Fig. SHE.03B) a deposit consisting entirely of pottery, a storage jar with two smaller vessels inside, came to light.

A Stratum XVIII burial under the floor of the N courtyard was somewhat different. A jumble of bones, including fragments of at least four skulls, rested within an upright storage jar, protected by fragments of a second jar. The jar stood in a specially prepared shallow niche in the base of the wall. Two smaller vessels were associated with the burial.

The burials (human, animal, and ceramic) were made

ated. They seem clearly to have been foundation offerings, but the evidence is not sufficient to establish whether or not the human burials were child sacrifices.

c. MB III (Strata XVI and XV). Extensive building activity, high quality construction in both domestic and public architecture, and an abundance of luxury items among the artifacts show that Shechem reached a peak of prosperity in the last phase of the MB. But the presence of three major destruction levels, the last a veritable holocaust, indicates the troubled and dangerous nature of the times.

At the beginning of the period (ca. 1650 B.C.), the defensive system of the city was completely rebuilt on a new plan. The outer revetment wall of the Hyksos embankment was used as the base for a massive wall of huge boulders. See Wall A on Fig. SHE.02. Earth obtained in the main from cutting down the embankment was deposited behind the wall, so that it backed up against solid earth and was virtually impregnable to the battering ram. Eight m inside this outer wall ran a slighter circumvallation. The two walls were connected at intervals by cross walls to form a casemate system, the chambers of which were used for domestic and storage purposes.

On the NW side of the city a monumental gateway, 18 × 16 m, pierced the two walls. See Fig. SHE.02. Massive towers, projecting beyond the entryway both inside and outside the city, flanked the paved roadway through the gate. Three pairs of projections jutting out from the towers narrowed the roadway to only half its width and effectively divided it into two chambers. Each projection consisted of two huge flat stones (orthostats) set on the long edge 75 cm apart. Three gates, swung between the orthostate pairs, probably closed off the entry in time of war or disorder.

Enigmatic structures, which Sellin identified as the two wings of a palace (1926b: 304–7), stood between the outer and inner walls on either side of the gate. G. E. Wright (1965: 61) identified the structures as storage rooms. Dever's reexcavation of the buildings (1974) raises the strong possibility that Sellin was correct. Immediately S of the gate, Dever identified a tripartite temple, probably the oldest example in Palestine. It consisted of an antechamber leading into a shrine room with a podium at the N end and through the shrine room to a small chamber abutting the gate. Access to the temple could only be had through a long, narrow room with a colonnade along its central axis. The layout suggests an audience hall and a palace shrine. A substantial building, consisting of a central court with a range of rooms at each end, situated N of the gateway, may have been, as Dever suggests, a barracks for troops. Alternatively, it may have constituted the living quarters of the palace.

The effect of this construction was to shift the palace to the space between the walls in order to leave room for a great public temple and its courtyard. Indeed, the public temple seems to have been built *before* the palace, since the E wall of the palace was inset to avoid the NW corner of the temple. The acropolis of the MB II city was filled over to a depth of almost 4 m to create a level platform. On this filling, a building with walls 5.1 m thick made of well-dressed masonry with a mudbrick superstructure and with its entrance flanked by two large towers was erected. See Fig. SHE.02, building V. The massive nature of the struc-

axis of the building ran NW to SE, and the entrance, with a standing stone (*massēbah*) on either side, was in the SE wall, where it would catch the rays of the rising sun.

The open area in front of the building was occupied by an altar and a huge limestone slab set in a stone socket, but sufficient space remained to accommodate a large gathering of worshippers.

The temple can hardly have been involved in the visits of Abraham (Gen 12:6) and Jacob (Gen 35:4) to the sacred place at or near the city, nor in Jacob's purchase of a piece of ground from the "sons of Hamor" on which to pitch his camp. The temple had a clear function in relation to the urban population, and the oak and altars referred to in the text, if they existed at all, must have stood outside the city. An intriguing possibility is that the compilers of Genesis were attempting to appropriate the site of the Canaanite shrine on Mt. Gerizim as an Israelite sacred place (see below).

The Wall A fortification system seems to have provided inadequate backup defenses behind the great outer wall, and survived for only about 25 years. The new fortifications used the lower courses of Wall A as a stone scarp for the outer face of the mound, a precaution against sappers and the battering ram. On the relatively level area 11 m back of the scarp a powerful new wall of mudbrick on stone foundations 3.5 m wide was constructed with offsets and insets to permit enfilade fire along the wall. See Wall B on Fig. SHE.02. A new gateway (the East Gate, Fig. SHE.02) gave access to the fertile plain, the breadbasket of the city. It conformed to the plan of the Northwest Gate, but had only four pairs of orthostats, forming a single chamber within the gateway. From inside the city a flight of five steps led up to the roadway through the gate. In its initial phase the gate had a cobbled entranceway between the flanking towers. Toward the end of the city's life the surface of the roadway was raised and the orthostats were moved up to the new level and placed on rather flimsy foundations of smallish stones. The public temple and the Northwest Gate remained in use, but what happened to the "palaces" beside that gate is uncertain because most of the relevant evidence was removed during the German excavations.

If the identifications proposed above are correct, the MB city possessed at least two sacred structures, a public temple and a palace shrine. A third building, possibly also of a sacred nature, stood on the N slope of Mt. Gerizim about 300 m from the city. It was first excavated by Welter in 1931 and reexcavated by Boling in 1968. It is a square structure 18 × 18 m, consisting of an unroofed court 9 × 9 m surrounded on all four sides by smaller chambers, probably used for storage. The court had in its center a stone pedestal, which may have served as the base for a sacred pillar, and in its SE corner an altar-like platform of stone. Incense burners, a libation bowl, and a foundation deposit of bronze weapons were found near the "altar" and, in a side chamber, a stone phallus. Campbell and Wright (1969: 111) suggested that the building was a shrine used by semi-nomadic clans in covenant unity with one another. However, the shrine could hardly have functioned in plain sight of the city without the approval and support of its governing authorities. If the building was indeed a tribal shrine, its presence indicates a cordial

The nature of the domestic structures at Shechem is not well known. In Field XIII a large, multi-roomed building, probably the house of a nobleman or extremely wealthy citizen, yielded many luxury items including numerous fine scarabs and the ivory inlay for two boxes. Such houses as were excavated in Fields VII and IX were well constructed of mudbrick on stone foundations and the fine pottery and artifacts, including several scarabs, confirm the impression of a high level of prosperity.

The final destruction of MB III Shechem displays a calculated ferocity and an intent to cause complete destruction of the city. Everywhere there is evidence of intense fire. Half-destroyed buildings were looted and then deliberately pulled down and the bodies of their inhabitants thrown into the street. When the destruction was complete a layer of debris covered the city to a depth of up to 1.6 m. There is little doubt that the Egyptian armies of Ahmose I or Amenhotep I brought this disaster upon the city as they followed up the triumph of Egyptian arms over the Hyksos. Shechem lay in ruins for about a century until its rebuilding in LB IB as a Canaanite city under the domination of the Egyptian Empire.

3. Late Bronze Age. a. LB IB (Stratum XIV). The LB engineers who reconstructed Shechem seem to have done the entire rebuilding in a single, well-planned operation, using the surviving stumps of the walls of major structures as a guide for their work. The old Wall A still served as the facing of the slope of the mound. Behind it, the main defensive wall of mudbrick on a stone foundation followed the line of the Wall B system. A rebuilt Northwest Gate probably remained in use, although the evidence for this is not conclusive. The East Gate was reconstructed with a significant modification. A building, consisting of two chambers, the outer of which had a paved floor, was built on the S side of the gateway, probably to accommodate the guards on duty at the gate. The corresponding guardroom on the N side of the gate, if it existed, was removed by the German excavations.

Under the lowest floor of the outer guardroom the body of a quadruped, probably a donkey, had been buried. The head was missing. It had been severed from the body prior to the burial. Near the neck was a clump of bones from a smaller animal. The deposit appears to be a foundation sacrifice. It is particularly interesting since Gen 33:19 refers to the Shechemites as *bēnē hāmôr*, "sons of a donkey."

In the acropolis area (Fields V/VI) a shrine, of which only portions of the cella were preserved, stood on massive foundations of the MB III temple. Its walls were only about one third the width of those of its predecessor. The cella was a room 16 × 12 m with the entrance on the long E side. The axis of the building was shifted five degrees to the S, possibly to bring it more accurately into line with the rising sun at the summer solstice. A cement covered podium, approached by a flight of steps, occupied part of the W wall of the cella opposite the entrance. It probably provided a base for the statues of the deities worshipped in the temple. A large altar stood in the broad forecourt. This temple, which continued in use throughout the LB and into Iron I, is a strong candidate for the Temple of *ēl-bērit* where the Shechemites made their last stand against Abimelech (Judg 9:46).

ture in LB Shechem. In Field IX, part of a building with substantial walls, contained a brick platform (altar?) and a monolith, the base of which had been dressed to fit into a stone socket. This building went through several stages of reflooring during the LB Age. It may have been a satellite of the main temple or a private shrine associated with a large tripartite house adjacent to it.

An impressive LB structure filled the whole of Field XIII and extended beyond it in all directions. The W side of the complex consisted of two large courtyards. The E side was occupied by a range of three rooms used for cooking and storage, and E of these rooms the edge of what appeared to be a large courtyard disappeared tantalizingly out of the excavated area. The function of the complex is unknown. Its exceptional size and its location next to the temple area raise the possibility that it was a royal palace, but it may have been the residence of an exceptionally wealthy citizen.

The historical occasion for the LB rebuilding of Shechem was probably the establishment of the Egyptian Empire. The earliest 18th Dyn. Pharaohs would have had a vested interest in keeping the hill country depopulated and without fortified cities. The overwhelming interest of these Pharaohs would be to avoid recurrence of the Asiatic intrusions which had put the Hyksos in control of the Delta region and had cost the Pharaohs blood and treasure to repel. Fear of the Asiatics would urge the creation in the Palestine area of a defenseless buffer zone against the still powerful states to the N. However, to create such a zone would run counter to another vital Pharaonic interest, that of holding the coastal strip as an advance line into Asia and as an artery of trade. A workable compromise of these conflicting interests would be to hold the coastal road by means of a chain of fortified bases and, at the same time, to discourage the rebuilding of strong points in the hills, which would be potential threats to communication along the coast.

With the warrior king Thutmose III, Egyptian obsession with defense gave way to imperialist ambition, and an empire without cities is a contradiction in terms. When, after his victory at Megiddo, Thutmose felt that he was master of Asia he may have encouraged the rebuilding of the hill cities, Shechem among them, ruled, of course, by his puppets. A tentative date for the founding of LB Shechem is, therefore, shortly after the battle of Megiddo (i.e., about 1465 B.C.). It ended with the decline of Egyptian control in Palestine and the establishment of the mini-empire of Lab'ayu, king of Shechem (ca. 1400 B.C.).

b. LB IIA (Stratum XIII). This stratum is the high point of LB culture at Shechem. The rising level of prosperity is best seen at the East Gate, where the guardrooms were strengthened and paved with flagstones. Just S of the gateway an open area, also paved with flagstones, provided a place for the mustering of troops and for public meetings.

The building complex in Field XIII underwent alterations and improvements. The W courtyard was subdivided into four interconnecting chambers where domestic activities took place. The range of rooms to the E followed the lines laid down in the previous phase, but their functions became more clearly defined. The S chamber was a cook-

with storage pits. Under the central room was a sub-floor storage chamber 2 m deep and surrounded by heavy stone walls. Toward the end of the period, this chamber was filled in with material taken from a midden. The fill contained a great many restorable pottery vessels which constitutes a unique ceramic collection, datable to LB IIA. The N room housed a plaster lined silo. The houses in Field VII are of excellent construction.

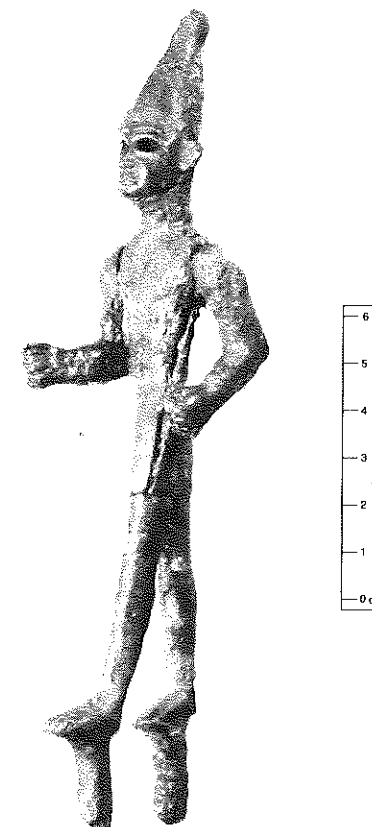
The flourishing of LB IIA Shechem can be associated with the slackening of Egyptian control over its Asiatic empire in the latter years of Amenhotep III and during the reign of Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton). Taking advantage of the power vacuum, Lab'ayu, king of Shechem extended his control from the Valley of Jezreel to the environs of Jerusalem. The Amarna Letters show him as a shrewd, calculating ruler, skilled at setting his sails to the prevailing wind. He professed allegiance to the Pharaoh, but his neighbors refer to him as the ring-leader of opposition, the head of a coalition of rebels and a predator on his neighbors. Lab'ayu was captured by his enemies and killed, but for a time his two sons continued the policy of their father. The fruits of conquest and the profits from the caravan trade would account well for the prosperity of Shechem during the Amarna period.

In the end, the enemies of Lab'ayu's family, whether the Canaanite cities which he had threatened or despoiled, troops sent from Egypt, disgruntled allies or some combination of these, evidently had their way. Destruction by fire brought an end to the city of Lab'ayu. Its debris covers almost every quarter of the city.

c. LB IIB (Stratum XII). The city, quickly rebuilt, retained most of the features of its forerunner. The defensive system, the temple on the acropolis, the shrine in Field IX, and the housing in Field VII underwent little modification. The guardrooms at the East Gate remained, but the paved courtyard behind them went out of use and a narrow alley separated the guardrooms from the houses of the city. The principal feature of the period is a marked decline in the prosperity of the city. Walls founded in this period and rebuilds of surviving walls are of shoddy construction.

Two interesting finds are associated with this phase of the city's life. A figurine of the god Ba'al in cast bronze overlaid with silver came from the floor of a house in Field VII. See Fig. SHE.04. The deity, wearing a conical crown, strides forward on his left foot and holds some object (now lost) in each hand. Figurines of the fertility goddess found in several of the houses show that the consort of the Ba'al was an even more popular object of veneration than her male counterpart. The second object, recovered from the fill under an Iron I wall in Field XIII, is a fragment of a cuneiform tablet which contains part of the opening lines of an Amarna period letter.

If the story of the rape of Dinah and the subsequent plundering of Shechem by Simeon and Levi (Genesis 34) is not the vague memory of a tribal skirmish inflated and attached to the city of Shechem and the family of Jacob, there seem to be only two points at which it could conceivably fit into the archaeological history of Shechem. While the powerful walls of MB and LB Shechem stood, two semi-nomadic tribes would have been powerless to breach



SHE.04. Figurine of the god Ba'al found on the floor of a house at Shechem—LB. (Courtesy of L. E. Toombs)

the destruction of the MB Age city, when the ruins may have housed a small village or have been the headquarters of a tribal group, or the period of decline at the end of the LB Age are the only likely contexts for the story.

A persistent tradition associated with Shechem is that Jacob bought a piece of land near the city from Hamor, the king of Shechem (Gen 33:19), and that in fulfillment of Joseph's death bed command (Gen 50:25, 26), the Hebrews on leaving Egypt carried with them the bones of Joseph (Exod 13:19) and buried them in this plot of ground (Josh 24:32). A garbled form of this tradition appears in Stephen's defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:16). The martyr states that Abraham bought the land from Hamor, and that, not only Joseph, but all who had died in Egypt were brought to Shechem for burial. This is the only reference to Shechem in the NT.

4. Iron Age. a. Iron I (Stratum XI). No general destruction layer marks the end of the LB at Shechem. The temple on the acropolis, the defensive walls, and the East Gate with its guardrooms remained in use. This evidence indicates a relatively peaceful passage of the city into Israelite hands, and may account for its absence from the

is named as a "city of refuge" (Josh 20:7; 1 Chr 6:67) and as a Levitical city in the "hill country of Ephraim" (Josh 21:21).

Shortly after the initial intrusion of the Israelites into the region, the city was the scene of a covenant-making ceremony, conducted by Joshua (Judges 24). The ceremony took place in or near a shrine (v 26) where the representatives of the people "presented themselves before the Lord" (v 1). G. E. Wright has argued convincingly that the shrine was the temple on the acropolis, called in Judg 9:4 the "Temple of El-Berith," the God of the Covenant (1965: 134-36).

During Iron I, a great deal of building activity of poor quality went on in the city. In Field XIII the LB complex was replaced by several less impressive buildings. Poorly-constructed houses crowded up against the guardrooms of the East Gate. Many of the buildings in Fields VII and IX show traces of destruction by fire. The impression of disorder and economic decline conveyed by the archaeological remains supports the picture of political unrest and turmoil provided by Judg 8:23-35.

The instability of the period culminated in the brief and abortive reign of Gideon's son, Abimelech (Judges 9). Boling (1969: 103) makes the interesting suggestion that Jotham stood on the site of the ruined tribal shrine on Mt. Gerizim when he uttered the parable of the trees and cursed Abimelech (Judg 9:7-21). It would have been an appropriate place from which to protest in the name of the tribal tradition against the royal pretensions of Abimelech.

When the Shechemites rebelled against the upstart king, Abimelech's revenge was swift and complete. The topography of the region and the archaeological remains illuminate his four-stage campaign against the city. The following reconstruction assumes that the Beth-millo ("the building on the artificial fill," Judg 9:20) and the Tower of Shechem (Judg 9:47, 49) are one and the same and refer to the temple and its ancillary buildings on the acropolis. The rebel chief Gaal, deceived and taunted by Abimelech's agent Zebul, brought his troops out of the city into the Plain of 'Askar. See Fig. SHE.01. Abimelech's forces, which had slipped down from Mt. el-'Urneh during the night, ambushed the rebels and drove them back into the city through the East Gate with heavy losses. Abimelech then feigned withdrawal, and the Shechemites, thinking themselves safe came out to work in the fields in the 'Askar Plain. Abimelech's troops cut them off from the city and massacred them in the plain. Following this success, they breached the East Gate and in a day of street fighting captured the lower city, burning and looting as they went. The surviving defenders made a last stand in the temple, but their defenses were burned to the ground and they themselves were slaughtered. The heaps of debris covering the Iron I city are silent witnesses to the completeness of Abimelech's vengeance.

The city recovered only slowly from the disaster. The beginning of the recovery was marked by the digging of unlined, bag-shaped pits through the acropolis and adjacent areas. Because of the absence of a lining the pits were unsuitable for storage. Their fill was rich in organic matter and destruction debris, containing pottery of the 12th

soon after the Abimelech destruction. Their most obvious use was to dispose of some of the masses of debris which covered the site. The organic matter may have come, as Campbell suggests (unpublished communication), from garments and utensils burned to prevent the spread of disease.

After the pitting phase, the most significant feature is a layering of black bands of very fine composition and rich in organic matter, found in Fields I, VII, and XIII. They were probably deposits from agricultural plots and threshing floors. Houses of poor quality stood among these plots, and in Field XIII, a roadway paved with small stones ran diagonally across the field. The once powerful city had reverted to the status of an agricultural village.

b. Iron IB-IIA (Strata X-IX). Political stability in the reigns of David and Solomon accelerated the pace of Shechem's recovery. By the time of division of the monarchy, the city had been reestablished. Drawn undoubtedly by Shechem's long tradition as the principal sacred place of the N tribes, Solomon's son Rehoboam went to Shechem to be crowned (1 Kgs 12:1). His brutal rejection of the demands of his prospective subjects led to the establishment of the independent N Kingdom under Jeroboam I. 1 Kgs 12:25 states that Jeroboam "built" Shechem and made it his capital, but whether this refers to the construction of the fortifications *de novo* or to a strengthening of existing structures is not clear.

Unfortunately, the archaeological evidence for the period is sparse and ambiguous. The fortifications were rebuilt along the lines of the LB defenses. The preserved fragments indicate that they were of casemate construction. Building activity went on also at the East Gate where the towers were reconstructed.

By Stratum IX a steep slope ran from the acropolis area downward toward the East Gate. This slope was terraced to facilitate the construction of houses. One of the terraces and fragments of two others ran across Field VII. The remains of the housing constructed on these terraces show an improvement in the economic condition of the city.

Strata X and IX are separated from one another by a destruction level which has been attributed to the invasions of the Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak (ca. 918 B.C.). Stratum IX also ends in a destruction, possibly one of the unhappy events in the recurrent war between Israel and Damascus (e.g., 1 Kings 20).

c. Iron IIB (Strata VIII-VII). Shechem lost some of its status when Jeroboam moved his capital to Tirzah, but the city flourished as capital and tax collection center of the district of Mt. Ephraim. One of the Samaritan ostraca names Shechem as a source of taxes in wine. On the former acropolis area a rectangular building, approximately 18 m wide by 16 m deep, was built on the stumps of the old temple walls. Its lower walls were constructed of unhewn boulders. A corridor ran the width of the building at the front and gave access to three long, narrow storage rooms. The floor was a very thick layer of heavy plaster which lapped up over the base of the walls. The plan of the structure suggests a granary and the flooring may be an early example of rodent-proofing a building. The building probably housed grain collected as revenue from the district.

throughout the period with frequent rebuilding and repair. The middle terrace of Stratum VII supported a fine Israelite courtyard house, almost completely preserved. The open central court was a work area where domestic activities and home industry went on. In the center of the court was a cylindrical stone 90 cm in diameter. Its surface was covered with irregularly spaced, shallow grooves, leading to a deeper circular groove around the edge. A lip allowed liquid collected in the circular groove to run off into a storage jar, set into the ground beside the installation. Abutting it was a stone vat 55 cm deep. A number of large grinding stones were found in the courtyard. The installation was probably an olive press. Some of the supply of olives kept in the vat would be transferred to the flat stone and abraded against the grooves with a grinder. The oil expressed from the fruit would run off into the jar. In a later phase of the building an oval hearth 2 m long, the rim of which was coated with lime, replaced the press. The hearth was most likely a kiln for slaking lime used in the preparation of plaster, although its use as a pottery kiln cannot be ruled out. A saddle quern against the N wall of the court indicates that grain was ground there.

The N and S walls of the courtyard were flanked by two small rooms. Considerable water must have been used in the two S rooms, since they were drained by two stone-filled sumps. A long room with a silo ran the full length of its E side. It seems to have been the main living room of the house, and was connected by a corridor to the kitchen. In a later enlargement of the building, additional rooms were added on the N and S sides.

The destruction which ended Stratum VIII may be attributed to the campaign of Menahem after his successful seizure of the throne from Shallum (2 Kgs 15:13-16). The Assyrian invasion of 724 B.C. brought about the total destruction of Stratum VII. The city was reduced to a heap of ruins, completely covered by debris of fallen brickwork, burned beams and tumbled building stones. The Assyrian destruction of the N cities, of which Shechem is a typical example, made a profound and lasting impression on the people of Judah. Ps 60:6-8 (= Ps 108:7-9) is an obscure oracle of uncertain date which predicts the deliverance of the N regions. Shechem is the first place name mentioned.

d. Iron IIC (Stratum V). The impoverished reoccupation at the end of the Israelite period at Shechem shows a marked decline in every aspect of culture. The Iron II defense system and the East Gate underwent shoddy repairs. Flimsy houses covered the area once occupied by the LB guardrooms. In Fields VII and IX some advantage was taken of existing foundations, but mainly the houses were not much more than shanties. The presence of many imitations of Assyrian vessels in local clay indicates the dominance of the Assyrian overlords.

5. Persian and Hellenistic Periods (Strata V-I). Shechem remained in an impoverished state during the Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods (Stratum V) and toward their end, had declined to such a degree that the site was abandoned for almost a century and a half. At the beginning of the period a delegation from Shechem and two other N towns came to Jerusalem to mourn the destruction of the Temple, only to be murdered by Ishmael,

Religious factors brought Shechem back into prominence about 330 B.C. Following their break with the Jewish community, the Samaritans built a temple of their own on Mt. Gerizim. At the foot of the mountain on the ruins of ancient Shechem they designed a city to rival the Holy City of Jerusalem. They constructed a defensive wall on the line of the MB fortifications and laid down a plastered glacis in front of it. The orthostats at the East Gate had long ago been buried in debris, but the Samaritan engineers cleared out the old roadway to form a sunken approach to the gate. A small building, erected over the remains of the LB and Israelite guardrooms housed a wine or olive press.

House construction of the period is of excellent quality. The foundations on which the mudbrick superstructures rested are made of an outer and inner face of dressed stone with a rubble core between. Broad streets separated the blocks of houses. A destruction ended this phase of the city's life.

In the succeeding phase (Stratum III) the concepts of defense and housing remained essentially unaltered. A particularly fine specimen of a Samaritan house came to light in Field II. Its door and window frames were of drafted masonry. The plastered walls were painted a different color in each room. The iron key to an interior room of the house and a clay seal from a papyrus document, showing a kneeling archer, were found in the remains of the building. Judging by the number of loom weights in the debris, a small-scale weaving industry went on in the building. From the remains of a house in Field VII came a small jar which contained a hoard of 35 silver tetradrachmas, minted by the Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt. It was probably left behind by a refugee fleeing the city at the time of the destruction of Stratum III. A possible historical context for this destruction is the wars between the Ptolemies of Egypt and the Seleucids of Damascus for the control of Palestine, which culminated in the victory of the Seleucid Antiochus III at Paneas in 198 B.C.

The development of increasingly efficient siege equipment rendered the defenses of Shechem obsolete. Ballisti could now hurl their missiles into the city from the slopes of Mt. Ebal or Mt. Gerizim. The fortification system was, accordingly abandoned and the walls robbed for building stone. At the foot of the slope below the East Gate a rectangular tower and a narrow screening wall provided a checkpoint at the entrance to the city.

Shechem was already in its final decline when in 107 B.C. Jewish forces, carrying out the expansionist policies of John Hyrcanus, destroyed Shechem completely. This time there was no recovery. In A.D. 72 the Emperor Vespasian built the city of Flavius Neapolis about 1.5 km W of ancient Shechem on the site now occupied by the Arab city of Nablus. Nablus became the urban center of the region, and Shechem remained in ruins, visited on occasion by pilgrims to the nearby traditional locations of Jacob's Well and the Tomb of Joseph.

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LAWRENCE E. TOOMBS

SHECHEM, TOWER OF (PLACE) [Heb *migdal-šchem*]. Apparently some sort of fortified place in the city of Shechem; together with its stronghold (Heb *šeriah*) named "the house of El-berith" (Heb *bēt 'ēl bērit*), it was destroyed by Abimelech (Judg 9:46–49). The word "tower" (Heb *migdal*) has a wide range of meanings, the most common of which is a building fortified for military purposes (Gen 11:4–5; 2 Kgs 9:17; 17:9) and a part of a fortification system of a town (Jer 31: 38). Mazar has shown that Migdal may have had a cultic meaning as well, taking into account the origin of the term from the Bronze Age traditions (*EncMiqr* 4: 633–36, in Hebrew). This interpretation is based upon names composed with *migdal*, such as Migdal-El, Migdal-Gad, Migdal-Penuel, etc., places which bore cultic traditions prior to the Israelite period (cf. also names composed with *bēt*: Bethel, Beth-shemesh, Beth-shean, etc.).

During Sellin's 1913–14 and 1926–27 excavations at ancient Shechem (Tel Balatah), a series of four fortified temples were unearthed. These consisted of consecutive stages of buildings (Tower-Temple 1-a to 2-b), dated from "Temenos 6" phase (ca. 1650–1600 B.C.E.) to "Temenos 9" (ca. 1200–1100 B.C.E.). The tower-Temples of Shechem were located in the NW part of the city, approximately 40 m S of the N gate. It was a stone building whose external measurements were 26.3 × 21.2 m. It had very thick walls (5.2 m) and a narrow, straight single entrance with two flanking frontal towers. The single cella contained six column bases and a niche for the god's statue (which was

were put in the courtyard in front of the temple. This building, unquestionably a temple that was in continuous use for 400 years, has been identified with the Tower of Shechem ever since its discovery. The existence of similar tower-temples at Megiddo, also dating to the LB (strata VIII–VIIb, ca. 1479–1150 B.C.E.) and probably at Hazor (area A) strengthened the opinion that this was a common type of temple in LB Canaan. Taking into account the dating of Gideon's family in the 2d half of the 12th century B.C.E., it seems highly probable that the temple destroyed by Abimelech was Temple 2-b, the last in the series. The excavators dated this destruction to 1150–1100 B.C.E., which correlates well with Abimelech narrative.

But this raises questions about the meaning of the stronghold (*šeriah*) of the house of El-Berith. The word *šeriah* can be interpreted as a natural cave rather than part of a fortification (1 Sam 13:6), a meaning also evident in three Nabatean inscriptions from Petra, as well as in Safaitic and modern Arabic. These considerations may associate the Bronze Age Tower-Temple structure excavated at Shechem with the "house of El-Berith," while the whole fortified acropolis of Tel Balatah would be associated with the "tower of Shechem." Nevertheless, this solution seems difficult, since it seems to refute the regular meaning of the term "tower" (*migdal*).

This led Milik (1959: 560–62) and Na'aman (1986) to suggest that the Tower of Shechem was not located within the city. Milik supposed that the *šeriah* of El-Berith was a cultic cave on the neighboring Mt. Ebal. Na'aman suggested that the recently discovered Iron I cultic site on Mt. Ebal (Zertal 1986–87) should be identified as the Tower of Shechem, a suggestion based on the fact that the gathering in the Tower of Shechem (Judg 9:46) followed and came after the final destruction of the city by Abimelech (v 45), which might mean a separation between the two. The main obstacles with this hypothesis are that the architectural elements of the Mt. Ebal structure can hardly fit a temple, and the site had never been destroyed and/or burned, a crucial feature of the Abimelech narrative. On the contrary, the Mt. Ebal site was abandoned complete and was deliberately covered by a stone cover, presumably to protect it against secular use.

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ADAM ZERTAL

SHEDEUR (PERSON) [šēdē'ūr]. The father of the chief (*nāš*?, Num 2:10) Elizur of the tribe of Reuben. Each of the five times that Shedeur is mentioned in the OT occurs in a tribal list where his mark of distinction is his status as the father of Elizur. Under the leadership of Shedeur's son Elizur, the tribe of Reuben participated in the census of Israelite fighting men carried out by Moses (Num 1:5, 20–21), presented its offerings on the fourth day of the

7:30, 35), took its proper place on the south side of the tabernacle in the Israelite camp (Num 2:10–11), and assumed its position in the order of march at the Israelites' departure from Mt. Sinai (Num 10:18).

The name "Shedeur" could mean either "Shaddai is fire" or "Shaddai is light." The Masoretic vocalization favors the former interpretation, where the deity bears the ambiguous character of either warming or destroying those who draw near (cf. Isa 47:14). However, Noth (*IPN*, 168) contends that the original form of the name meant "Shaddai is light," a characterization of the deity which is also found in Ps 27:1. Both interpretations should be maintained in view of Isa 10:17, where "the light of Israel will become a fire and his Holy One a flame."

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SHEEP, SHEPHERD. Shepherding was one of man's earliest occupations. Flocks and herds, always a prominent feature in Palestine and other Near Eastern societies, consisted specifically of cows, sheep, and goats, but could also include horses, asses, and camels; the principal animal, however, owing to size, abundance, and usefulness, was the sheep.

Possession of these animals indicated power and wealth; Job had thousands of sheep, camels, oxen, and she-asses (42:12), and Abraham's flocks, herds, camels, and asses were counted among his blessings (Gen 24:35). At the dedication of the temple, Solomon sacrificed innumerable sheep and oxen (1 Kgs 8:5).

The owner himself was sometimes the shepherd of his flock. Abel was a "keeper of sheep" (Gen 4:2, 3) and Jacob cared for his own flocks (Gen 30:40). God is pictured as a shepherd who seeks out his own scattered sheep (Ezek 34:12). The work might be delegated to the owner's children; Rachel looked after Laban's sheep (Gen 29:6), and David, though the youngest of Jesse's sons, was given this responsibility (1 Sam 16:11; 17:15).

The principal duty of the shepherd was to see that the animals found enough food and water (cf. Psalm 23); and it was important that he guard the sheep, since they were easy prey for wild animals (1 Sam 17:34–35; Amos 3:12). There was also a danger that thieves might sneak among the sheep and carry them off (John 10:1).

The good shepherd was especially concerned for the condition of the flock, careful that the animals not be overdriven (cf. Gen 33:13–14); and would sometimes carry helpless lambs in his arms (cf. Isa 40:11), or on his shoulders (e.g., the Arcadian god Hermes Criophorus, shepherd and protector of livestock). At night, sheep were often kept in simple walled enclosures made from tangled bushes, providing a minimum of protection from weather and enemies (Num 32:16; Judg 5:16; 2 Chr 32:28; Ps 78:70; Zeph 2:6; John 10:1), or caves might have been used, affording the best protection (1 Sam 24:3). The work of the shepherd was essentially to keep the flock intact, counting each animal as it passed under his hand (Jer 33:12–13; Ezek 20:37; cf. Jer 31:10–11; Pss 49:15—Eng v 14; 77: 21—Eng v 20).

From this routine of daily life an extensive and complex stock of shepherd and flock imagery developed through-