

68 Megiddo

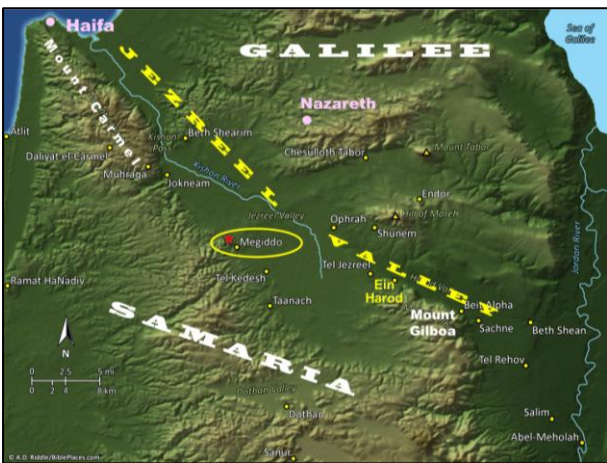
Names (also known as)

Tell al-Mutesellim, Megiddon (Zech. 12:11)

Etymology

Hebrew: מגידו - Strong's H4023 – From H1413 - *gādad* – rendezvous – crowd together; hence, Unger's – “place of troops”; BDB – “place of crowds”.

Location/Description



Megiddo overlooks the Valley of Jezreel. It lies about 30 kms southeast of Haifa in northern Israel. It was strategically located at the crossing of two military and trade routes between Egypt and Mesopotamia, and it also stood along the northwest-southeast route that connected the Phoenician cities with Jerusalem and the Jordan River valley. This gave the city an importance far beyond its size. A number of important battles were fought near and over this city.

Scriptural references

Old Testament

Joshua 12:21 - the kings/towns smitten by Joshua.

Joshua 17:11; Judges 1:27; 1 Chron. 7:29 - the possession of Manasseh.

Judges 5:19 – Deborah/Barak defeat Sisera by the waters of Megiddo.

1 Kings 4:12; 9:27 – Solomon made Megiddo a regional capital (under Baana, the son of Ahilud).

1 Kings 9:15 – Solomon fortifies Megiddo by a levy.

2 Kings 9:27 – Ahaziah fled to Megiddo (from Jehu) and is slain there.

2 Kings 23:29,30; 2 Chron. 35:22 – Josiah died in battle with Pharaoh Necho near Megiddo.

Zechariah 12:11 – prophetically likening the time when Messiah is revealed to the mourning of the Jews in the Land at the death of Josiah.

New Testament

None



The tel of Megiddo

Famous characters

Deborah/Barak

Solomon

Ahaziah

Josiah

Brief history

Archaeological excavations have shown that the first town was built on the site of Megiddo in the early 4th millennium BC. Deborah and Barak defeated Sisera at the nearby waters of Megiddo.

Solomon rebuilt the city and made it a regional capital. A number of the stables excavated at Megiddo date from this time.



The Megiddo city gate

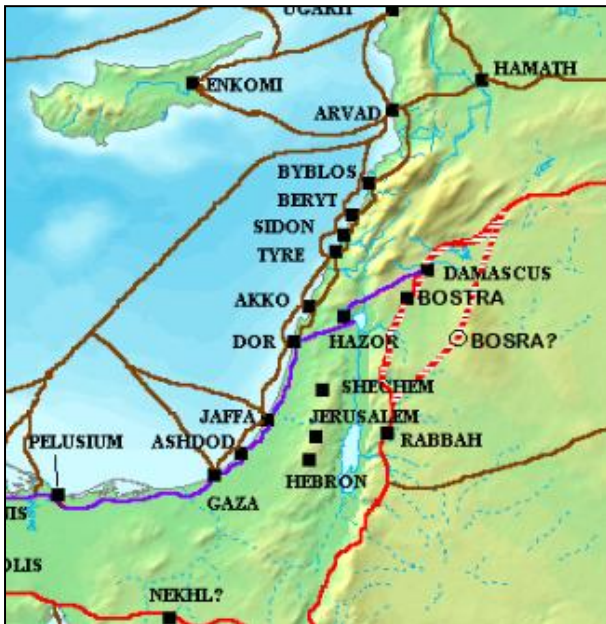
It was destroyed by Pharaoh Shishak in the time of Rehoboam (ca. 922 BC).

The city was rebuilt magnificently by either Omri or Ahab in the middle of the 9th century BC. King Ahaziah of Judah died at Megiddo being pursued by Jehu about 842 BC.

It fell to Tiglath-Pileser III king of Assyria in 732 BC. The Assyrians made Megiddo the capital of the Assyrian province of Galilee. The town's street plan was the first known to use the "modern" grid system.

King Josiah of Judah also died there (609 BC) while opposing the advance of Pharaoh Necho II toward Assyria.

Megiddo was on the route from Egypt to Damascus called the 'Way of the Sea' (Isa. 9:1), it became an important military artery of the Roman Empire and was known as the Via Maris (shown in purple on the map below).



Other famous battles fought here include:

Battle of Megiddo (15th century BC): fought between the armies of the Egyptian pharaoh Thutmose III and a large Canaanite coalition led by the rulers of Megiddo and Kadesh.

Battle of Megiddo (1918): fought during World War I between Allied troops, led by General Edmund Allenby, and the defending Ottoman army.

In 1964, during Pope Paul VI's visit to Israel, he visited Megiddo and this was the site where he met with Israeli dignitaries, including the Israeli President Zalman Shazar and Prime Minister Levi Eshkol.

Megiddo is incorrectly said to be the site of Armageddon

Megiddo is popularly proclaimed as the site of Armageddon apparently due to the similarity in sound and structure of the two names.

Bro. John Thomas has this to say concerning Armageddon, the location of God's future annihilation of the armies of Gog ...

The headquarters of this storm cloud invasion from the north are between the Sea of Sodom and the Jordan on the east side, and the Mediterranean on the west; and surrounding Jerusalem; as indicated in Dan. 11:45, to wit, "he shall pitch the tents of his entrenched camp between the seas in the mountain of the glory of the Holy". In other words, he shall besiege Jerusalem; and to do this, he must occupy the Valley of Jehoshaphat, a narrow glen which runs from north to south, between the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and Mount Moriah, and through which flows the Kidron. Of this valley, it is said in Joel 3:2,12, "Yahweh will gather all the nations (that is, the forces of the nations) into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there". Jehoshaphat, in Hebrew, signifies the judgment of Yah. Joel also styles the glen, the Valley of Threshing: "Multitudes, multitudes," says he, "in the Valley of Threshing: for the Day of Yahweh is near in the Valley of Threshing". Apocalyptically, the same locality is styled ARMAGEDDON — "And he gathered them together in a place called Hebraistically, Armageddon". Yahweh gathered them together without their perceiving the Hand that led them on to the slaughter — "I will," saith he, "gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle". Various derivations have been given of this mystical name; for such it is, inasmuch as there is no such name of a place in the land of Israel. (John Thomas – Eureka vol. 5 pg. 256).

Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tel_Megiddo

(Compiler – John Tierney)