

Tel-Hazor



Description

Tel Hazor is the site of the conquest of Joshua over the Canaanite city, Hazor. *This is one of the sites Eitan helped to excavate.* Tel Hazor is located in the Hula Valley, at the foot of the Galilean mountains. It is located along an ancient road that linked Israel to Babylon. Another road, to the northwest, led to Phoenicia. The fertile land and springs in the area gave this city the natural resources needed to develop it into a great city in the land of Israel and one of the most important in the Canaanite period.

The city covered an area of 190 acres and consisted of an upper city as well as a lower city. The upper city rises about 131 feet above the Hazor Stream and covers about 25 acres. The lower city is surrounded by a dirt wall or rampart for protection.

Hazor's History: The history of Hazor is divided into two periods. The first period is the Canaanite period, the second is the Israelite period. The Canaanite Hazor covered both the upper and the lower cities, while the Israelite Hazor was confined to the upper city.

Not much is known about the beginning of Hazor. The name Hazor is first mentioned in the 18th century B.C., in Egyptian documents. By the end of this period, Hazor had become a great city with a population of approximately 15,000. The finds of Hazor reveal its greatness during the Canaanite period. It was fortified by an earthen rampart and walls. Palaces, temples, and houses have been found, along with pottery, statues, weapons, jewelry and many artistic items. The finds show that it had links with Syria, Egypt, the Hittite kingdom, Babylon and the

lands of the Mediterranean, Crete, Greece, and Cyprus. These connections are the reason why Hazor became known as “the head of all those kingdoms” (Joshua 11:10) and the king of Hazor as “the king of Canaan” (Judges 4:2).

The Bible tells us that King Jabin of Hazor formed an alliance to fight against the Israelite tribes, led by Joshua. The Israelite victory led to the complete destruction and burning of the city. Eitan will point out the charred remains (Joshua 11:11).

After Hazor was destroyed, it was abandoned for 100 to 150 years. In the 11th century B.C., the Israelites settled Hazor again, but inhabited only the upper city. During this period of the Judges, Hazor was poor. In the 10th century B.C., Hazor became one of the most important cities and was fortified by Solomon. In the 9th century B.C., King Ahab doubled the size of the city. Public structures were built, including a water system, a citadel, and storehouses.

Hazor was again destroyed in 732 B.C. during the military campaign of Tiglath-pileser III. After this, there was only limited settlement of Hazor. The last mention of it was in the Apocrypha, I Maccabees 11:67 which describes the war of Jonathan against Demetrius.

The Irish scholar, Leslie Porter was the first to identify biblical Hazor at Tel el-Qedah in 1875. In 1928, John Garstang conducted a short excavation of the site. Yigael Yadin began to extensively excavate the site in the 1950's and again in the late 1960's. Excavations were renewed in 1990 headed by Amnon Ben-Tor.

Scripture

Bible References in Context

- The conquest of Hazor by Joshua (Joshua 11:1-3)
- King Solomon builds Hazor (I Kings 9:15)
- The Assyrian Tiglat Pileser destroys Hazor (II Kings 15:29)

Joshua 11:1-13

And it came to pass, when Jabin king of Hazor had heard those things, that he sent to Jobab king of Madon, and to the king of Shimron, and to the king of Achshaph, And to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, and in the valley, and in the borders of Dor on the west, And to the Canaanite on the east and on the west, and to the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon in the land of Mizpeh. And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many. And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel. And the LORD said unto Joshua, Be not afraid because of them: for to morrow about this time will I deliver them up all slain before Israel: thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire. So Joshua came, and all the people of war with him, against them by the waters of Merom suddenly; and they fell upon them. And the LORD delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon, and unto Misrephothaim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none

remaining. And Joshua did unto them as the LORD bade him: he houghed their horses, and burnt their chariots with fire. And Joshua at that time turned back, and took Hazor, and smote the king thereof with the sword: for Hazor beforetime was the head of all those kingdoms. And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe: and he burnt Hazor with fire. And all the cities of those kings, and all the kings of them, did Joshua take, and smote them with the edge of the sword, and he utterly destroyed them, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded. But as for the cities that stood still in their **STRENGTH** (see footnote on previous page), Israel burned none of them, save Hazor only; that did Joshua burn.

Judges 4:2, 17

And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. (Judges 4:2)

Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. (Judges 4:17)

I Kings 9:15

And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and **MILLO**, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer.

II Kings 15:29

In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglathpileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abelbethmaachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

Jeremiah 49:28

Concerning Kedar, and concerning the kingdoms of Hazor, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon shall smite, thus saith the LORD; Arise ye, go up to Kedar, and spoil the men of the east.

Joshua 11:13 (NIV)

Yet Israel did not burn any of the cities built on their **MOUNDS**—except Hazor, which Joshua burned.

(**mounds= strength**)

I Kings 9:15 (NIV)

Here is the account of the forced labor King Solomon conscripted to build the Lord's temple, his own palace, the **TERRACES**, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer.

Points of Interest



King Solomon's Gates and Walls

This was a six-chambered gate at the entrance to the city. In front of the chambers were two towers. The gate has been dated to the 10th century B.C. I Kings 9:15 mentions Solomon's construction at Hazor, "And this is the reason of the levy which king Solomon raised; for to build the house of the Lord, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Meggido, and Gezer."

The following photo shows the eastern walls from King Solomon's period (10th C BC) on the south side of the gate. It is a double wall «casemate» type, which extends north and south to the gate, and actually around the whole walled city.



Points of Interest



The Palace of the Canaanite Kings of Hazor

The ceremonial palace that served the kings of Hazor during the 14th and 13th centuries B.C. are now protected by a roof. This area was definitely destroyed by a huge fire. This is where we find evidence of burning.

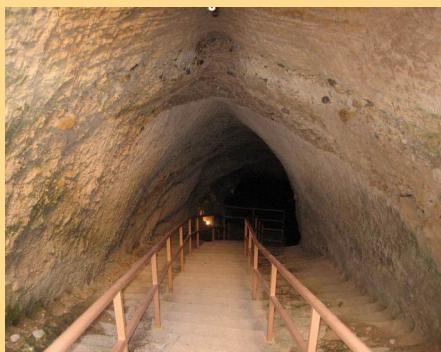
Points of Interest



Hebrew Water System

A huge system to supply fresh water is located in the south west side of the upper city. This system was built in the 9th C BC, during the time of King Ahab. It was designed after similar inner-city water systems, such as in Tell Megiddo, Gezer, Lachish, and possibly the «conduit» («gutter») the King David captured in Jerusalem (2 Samuel 5:8).

The builders dug into the ground, going through earlier Iron age levels, and supporting the dig with large walls. They dug down 46M deep in a square vertical shaft - until reaching bedrock.



Points of Interest



Citadel

In the western side of the upper city are the ruins of an Israeliite Citadel from the 9th C BC, destroyed in 734-732BC by the Assyrians. A monumental gate protected the citadel.

It was built over several layers of previous periods: A 11th C BC high-place is seen on the foreground. On the right are the remains of the double wall «casemate» type from Solomon's city, the western section of the gate and walls seen above.

The following is a view of the western side of the upper city. Notice the height difference of 40M above the ground, making the city a defendable site. The highway bypasses the Tell from the south, while a new highway is constructed to bypass on the west side. In the background is Mount Canaan, and the sea of Galilee is hidden beyond the left horizon.



Points of Interest



Northern Wall

The excavations of the North walls, overlooking the lower city, reveal a mix of 3 periods. Solomon's wall (10th C) is seen on the left side, and was the north-east corner of the fortifications. The later period structures (9th C) are located at the center and right side, and beneath it is a Canaanite period staircase (14-13C) that connected the lower and upper cities. A paved area contains a podium.