

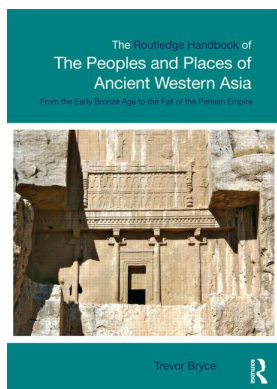
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The Near East from the Early Bronze Age to the Fall of the Persian Empire

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Jaffa (Joppa) (map 8) Port-city on the coast of Palestine, located today in Israel in a suburb of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. The site's history of occupation is represented by eight archaeological strata, extending from Middle Bronze Age II to the Roman imperial period. It was excavated by P. L. O. Guy from 1945 to 1950 for the Israel Dept of Antiquities, by J. Bowman and B. S. J. Isserlin in 1952 for the University of Leeds, and by J. Kaplan from 1955 to 1974 for the Museum of Antiquities of Tel Aviv-Jaffa. There are material remains of all periods of its history, the most significant of which are a large Middle Bronze Age fortified enclosure with earth rampart, and a C13 citadel gate system with mudbrick walls and sandstone door jambs, the latter inscribed with titles and an inscription of Ramesses II (1279–1213).

Jaffa was conquered by the pharaoh Tuthmosis III in C15. It thenceforth became an important Egyptian stronghold and administrative centre, as attested in the mid C14 Amarna letters (see glossary), in the so-called Papyrus Anastasi I, dated to the reign of Ramesses II, and in a letter from Ugarit, found at Aphek, which refers to the city as the seat of an Egyptian official. In *OT* tradition it was allotted to the tribe of Dan (Joshua 19:46). *OT* sources also record its role as a port through which cedars from Lebanon were shipped for the construction of both the First and the Second Temples at Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 2:16, Ezra 3:7). In C8 Jaffa was apparently subject to the city of Ashkelon, until it was captured by the Assyrian king Sennacherib (according to the king's 'prism stele') in 701. In C6 it came under the control of the Persians, one of whose kings presented it, along with the city of Dor, to Eshmunazar, king of Sidon. During the Hellenistic period Jaffa was settled by Greeks. It was captured by the Seleucids in the Hasmonean period (c. 175–163), and fell to the Romans during Pompey's conquest of Palestine in 64.

In Greek mythological tradition, the sea off Jaffa was the setting for the story of Perseus and Andromeda.

Dessel (*OEANE* 3: 206–7).

Jawa (map 8) Early and Middle Bronze Age site in northeastern Jordan. Excavations were carried out in the 1970s by S. Helms for the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. The Early Bronze Age site consists of upper and lower settlements, both walled. The upper settlement had the more substantial fortifications, with access through them provided by a large, chambered gateway. Houses in the lower settlement were made of mudbrick on stone foundations, with mud and straw roofs on a timber framework. In the Middle Bronze Age, settlement took place within the fortifications of the Early Bronze Age upper area. The chief building of this period was a so-called citadel, consisting of a series of interconnected cells, and occupying the centre of the settlement. One of the main features of the site and its surrounding area is a complex water storage and distribution system, built in the Early Bronze Age and consisting of a network of canals, dams, and reservoirs. Ceramic ware found at Jawa in



Figure 55 Jaffa harbour-front.

both phases of its existence reflects cultural and commercial contacts with Syria and Palestine.

Betts (*OEANE* 3: 209–10).

Jaxartes r. (*Syr Darya*) (map 16) Central Asiatic river flowing northwestwards into the Aral Sea and forming part of the northeastern boundary of the Persian empire. In mid C6 Cyrus II, founder of the empire, established a series of fortified settlements along the river, including Cyropolis (Cyreschata), as part of his kingdom's frontier defence system. Warmington and Spawforth (*OCD* 794).

Jebus A town in Canaan according to biblical tradition, equated on three occasions with Jerusalem (Joshua 15:8, 18:28, Judges 19:10), which is called a city of the Jebusites in Judges 19:11. A number of scholars have suggested that Jerusalem was in fact called Jebus before David's alleged conquest in C10. However, the name Jerusalem (Urusalim) occurs already in the mid C14 Amarna letters (see glossary). An alternative proposal locates Jebus near mod. Sha'fat. In any case, Jerusalem appears to have been under Jebusite control in the pre-Davidic period, to judge from *OT* sources. There are numerous biblical references to Jebusites among other tribal groups (Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, and Hivites) inhabiting the hill country of central Palestine (e.g. Exodus 3:8, 13:5, 23:23, 33:2). But neither Jebus nor Jebusites are otherwise attested in anc. sources. Reid (*HCBD* 483–4).

Jemdet Nasr (map 17) Early Bronze Age settlement-mound in southern Mesopotamia, c. 26 km northeast of Kish, with occupation dating from M5 through to M3

(the Ubaid, Middle and Late Uruk, Jemdet Nasr, and Early Dynastic I periods). The site was excavated in 1926 and briefly in 1928 by a team led by S. Langdon, based at Kish. Excavations were resumed in 1988 by R. J. Matthews on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Iraq, with subsequent seasons being conducted in 1989 and 1990. The name of the site has since been applied to the distinctive material culture assemblage which was first defined there, spanning the phase between the Late Uruk and Early Dynastic I periods (c. 3100–3000) in southern, central, and eastern Mesopotamia and corresponding to the Ninevite 5 phase in northern Mesopotamia (see under **Nineveh**). The Jemdet Nasr period is associated with distinctive types of polychrome painted pottery and seals, as well as archaic tablets of a kind also found in Level III at Uruk.

The site consists of three mounds, designated A, B, and C. The early excavations uncovered a substantial building measuring some 95 m × 40 m on the largest mound, B. However, its precise location and layout were never recorded with any satisfactory degree of accuracy. The excavations of this building recovered around 200 economic tablets of the Jemdet Nasr period (as subsequently defined); other, similar tablets deriving from illicit excavations have been thought to come from the site, but their provenance inevitably remains uncertain. On top of Mound A – a smaller mound to the southwest of Mound B – was a baked brick structure, possibly a fort of Parthian date. Beneath it, occupation of Middle Uruk date was attested. Surface finds of Ubaid pottery and artefacts were also recovered on Mound A. Mound C, which lay some distance to the east of Mound B, has not been investigated and appears to be unrelated, with surface sherds of Islamic date.

(H. D. Baker)

Matthews (1989; 1990; 2002).

Jemmeh, Tell (map 8) Settlement-mound in southern Palestine, 10 km south of Gaza. According to B. Mazar, it is to be identified with the town of Yurza, referred to twice in the mid C14 Amarna letters (see glossary) and also in New Kingdom Egypt topographical lists, and with Arsa, referred to in the inscriptions of the C7 Assyrian king Esarhaddon (see below). The site has a history of occupation beginning in the Chalcolithic period (M5–4), followed by abandonment during the Early Bronze and Middle Bronze I periods before settlement was resumed in Middle Bronze II–III. It continued thereafter until the early Hellenistic age.

Following earlier investigations in 1926 and 1927 by W. F. M. Petrie, the site was comprehensively excavated by G. Van Beek from 1972 to 1978, with subsequent ‘problem-solving digs’ in 1982, 1984, 1987, and 1990. Regular trade with Cyprus was a feature of the town’s Middle Bronze Age phase. Its following Late Bronze Age phase was, according to Van Beek, an extraordinarily active period, as indicated by debris accumulated to a depth of 6 m. The most important architectural remains of this phase belong to a large C13 house, built on the western ‘elite’ side of the settlement. The house contained a public area with cobblestone floor and mud benches along the walls, and a domestic area with courtyard and ovens. An Iron Age Philistine settlement followed upon the Late Bronze Age phase. A casemate wall system, new buildings constructed on an Assyrian plan with vaulted mudbrick ceilings, and ceramic ‘Assyrian Palace ware’, all dated to C7, together with the obvious importance of the town in the Assyrian period, have provided circumstantial evidence for identifying Jemmeh with

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Arsa in the texts of Esarhaddon. The town may have served as a military base for Assyrian troops. An enormous structure dated to C5–late C4 has been identified as a Persian fort. Twelve large circular storage buildings without house remains, dated to late C4–C3, have led the excavators to conclude that in the Hellenistic age, during the period of Ptolemaic rule, Jemmeh was converted into a vast grain storage depot, with most of the town's population relocated off the mound in the surrounding fields.

Van Beek (1984; *NEAEHL* 2: 667–74).

Jericho (*Tell es-Sultan*) (map 8) Settlement located in the Jordan valley, long identified with the 4 ha mound Tell es-Sultan 11 km northwest of the Dead Sea, c. 250 m below sea level. Its history of occupation extends from the Mesolithic (Epeopalaeolithic) period to the Iron Age (i.e. from c. 10,000 to 600), with numerous periods of abandonment in between; there is, for example, no evidence of settlement in the Chalcolithic period (M5–4). Well supplied by waters from a nearby spring called Elisha's Well or 'Ain es-Sultan (hence the site's mediaeval name Tell es-Sultan), it provided itself with a wide variety of crops and vegetables, and became famous for its gardens. Since mid M1 CE, the site's biblical associations have attracted a constant stream of travellers, many of them on religious pilgrimages. In *OT* tradition, Jericho was the first site west of the Jordan captured by the Israelites after they had crossed the river from the east and camped in the plains outside the city (Joshua 4:13). Under Joshua's command, the Israelites besieged the city for seven days, marching each day around its walls, blowing their trumpets, until on the seventh day the walls collapsed. The city and its inhabitants were destroyed, and Joshua placed a curse upon anyone attempting to rebuild it (Joshua 6).

The first excavations of the site were undertaken by C. Warren for the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1868. A second excavation was conducted from 1907 to 1909 and in 1911 for the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft by E. Sellin and C. Watzinger, who uncovered part of the Early Bronze Age city's walls, much of the Middle Bronze Age fortifications, and a number of the city's Iron Age domestic buildings. Further excavations were conducted from 1930 to 1936 by J. Garstang for the University of Liverpool and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. These were partly intended to throw further light on questions concerning the dating and nature of the alleged Israelite conquest of the city. Although Garstang originally supported the *OT* tradition that the city had fallen to the Israelites, he later took the view that the city's destruction had occurred much earlier. The whole matter was revisited by K. M. Kenyon, who carried out new excavations on the site between 1952 and 1958 for the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, the Palestine Exploration Fund, and the British Academy, in collaboration with the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem (currently known as the Albright Institute) and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. Kenyon's extensive excavations brought to light large areas of the city's Mesolithic and Neolithic phases, already revealed by Garstang, and contributed substantially to an overall understanding of the site's stratigraphy. As a result of Garstang's and Kenyon's excavations, it is clear that Jericho is one of the world's oldest settled communities. Already in 12,000 it was used as a campsite by hunters who erected a clay platform there, perhaps as the basis of a shrine. But there were numerous gaps in the site's history of occupation, thought to be due either to enemy destruction of the irrigation system, or to earthquake.

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The Early Bronze Age phase of Jericho's existence began in late M4, when a new people arrived in the region. Their presence is reflected in the construction for the first time of rock-cut tombs (a practice which continued until much later times) and new pottery types. The settlement was protected by two parallel mudbrick walls, which enclosed a settlement of circular and oblong houses (the latter with curved ends), and later rectangular houses and mudbrick grain silos. It was in this period that the first artificial irrigation system was constructed, ensuring that the city's inhabitants enjoyed a constant and abundant food supply. None the less, for reasons unknown, the city was abandoned c. 2300. It was partially reoccupied from c. 2100 to 1950, in the transitional period between the Early and Middle Bronze Ages, before a Middle Bronze Age city was built, and substantially fortified. Much information about this level has come from the well-preserved tombs in its necropolis. The violent destruction of the city at the end of the Middle Bronze Age has been attributed either to earthquake or to enemy attack. Kenyon suggested that its destruction may have been due to the disturbance that followed the expulsion of the Hyksos (q.v.) from Egypt c. 1560. The site was then abandoned, and remained unoccupied for most of C15, before reoccupation, by 1400, in the Late Bronze Age.

Late Bronze Age Jericho (c. 1400–1325) has aroused the most interest and controversy of all the site's levels, because of its association with the attack and destruction by Joshua in *OT* tradition. Kenyon argued that there is no archaeological support for the tradition, since there is no evidence that Jericho had walls at this time. This has been disputed by several later scholars. But in any case, the destruction of the city in the last decades of C14 seems too early to associate it with the Israelites' arrival, though the following period of abandonment would not be inconsistent with biblical tradition.

There is a small amount of evidence for some reoccupation of Jericho in C11 or C10, during the Iron Age I phase. *OT* tradition ascribes its resettlement and fortification to Hiel the Bethelite, who lived in the reign of the C9 Omride king Ahab (1 Kings 16:34). But there was no major Iron Age settlement on the site until C7, a period in Jericho's history which has left quite extensive remains, including on the eastern slope of the mound a massive building with tripartite plan typical of a number of Iron Age II structures. Ceramic evidence indicates that this phase of Jericho's existence persisted until the Babylonian exile in 586. There is no trace of any further occupation after this, perhaps due partly to erosion. But settlement did continue from the Persian through the Byzantine periods on two nearby mounds.

Bartlett (1982), Bienkowski (1986), Kenyon (*NEAHL* 2: 674–81), Holland (*OEANE* 3: 220–4).

Jerusalem (map 8) City in the land of Judah, southern Palestine, 56 km from the Mediterranean coast. Its name is generally thought to have been derived from that of the Canaanite deity Salem, known from C14 Ugaritic texts, and to mean 'Salem is its founder'. The site's history of occupation extends from a Chalcolithic settlement on the Ophel ridge (located to the south of the 'Old City's' eastern side and stretching between the Kidron and Tyropoeon valleys) through all succeeding ages until the present day. Its first written attestation is in the Middle Bronze Age Egyptian Execration texts (see glossary), where it appears as *Urusalimum*. The site has been excavated by a succession of archaeological teams from 1864 onwards, one of the more recent excavations being conducted by Y. Shiloh between 1978 and 1985 for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the City of David Society. Shiloh identified twenty-five

occupational strata extending from the Chalcolithic to the mediaeval period. From an archaeological perspective, the city consists of three main sectors: the biblical City of David (on the hill of Ophel), located south of the Old City and the Temple Mount; the Old City, enclosed within C16 CE Ottoman walls; and the areas outside the walls, including the Mount of Olives.

Tombs and ceramic ware unearthed on the Ophel reflect occupation during the Early Bronze I and IV periods. However, it was not until the Middle Bronze II period (C18–17) that Jerusalem assumed the character of a city, when the settlement on the Ophel was fortified by a city wall. Excavations conducted by R. Reich, University of Haifa, in the 1990s have confirmed Jerusalem's status as a major city in the Middle Bronze Age. The city appears to have flourished also during the Late Bronze Age, when it is attested in a number of letters from the Egyptian mid C14 Amarna archive (see glossary), in the form *Urusalim* (*EA 287, 289, 290). In this period it was the seat of a local king, appointed by the pharaoh, who received envoys from Egypt and sent gifts and tribute to his overlord. Although it was one of the lesser of the Syro-Palestinian states subject to Egypt, it became involved in the intrigues and power-plays of these states, and appears to have sought to expand its territories at the expense of its neighbours. One of the most notable material remains of the Late Bronze Age city is a monumental structure built on top of the southeastern hill in the City of David, and consisting of a series of terraces forming a large artificial mound. This is considered to be the work of Canaanite kings (though the ethnic composition of Jerusalem's population in this period is not altogether clear), who probably erected a citadel or palace on the podium thus created. In the period which *OT* tradition assigns to the reign of King David (C10), the podium supported an enormous stepped building, presumably the citadel of the City of David (referred to in 2 Samuel 5:7). It is the best-preserved structure of the Iron Age I city, whose material remains are otherwise very meagre.

According to *OT* sources, David's son and successor Solomon shifted the city's administrative centre north to the Temple Mount. No trace of this centre has been found because of the impossibility of excavation in the Temple Mount area. And no trace has been found of the most famous building of Solomon's period – the temple of Solomon, described in 1 Kings 6. It became the repository of the Ark of the Covenant (1 Kings 8) for an uncertain period of time – perhaps until the temple's destruction in 586 (see below), though this has been much debated (see Cline, 2007: 121–52). A description of Solomon's palace, constructed between the temple and the City of David, but also now completely lost, follows in 1 Kings 7. Two water systems are among the Iron Age city's most important material remains. Both involve the use of tunnels to bring water to the city from nearby springs. The first is conceivably of early Iron Age I date, and has been connected with the *OT* account of the entry of David's men into the city via a water shaft (2 Samuel 5:8). The second, dating to Iron Age II, has been associated with the late C8 Judaeen king Hezekiah (though the evidence for the association is purely circumstantial), and thought to have been constructed in preparation for an attack on the city by the Assyrian king Sennacherib. The construction of a city wall in this period is also attributed to Hezekiah. He built it in response to the need to provide adequate defences for the city, at a time when its population had been expanded by refugees from the Assyrian conquests in Israel, and the city's limits had been extended by newly settled areas to its west. In 701 Sennacherib laid siege to Jerusalem (*CS II: 302–3), blockading Hezekiah within it after allegedly conquering

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forty-six of his walled cities and surrounding towns. Jerusalem's new fortifications may have proved strong enough to withstand the Assyrian siege; contrary to the Assyrian record, the *OT* account of the conflict in 2 Kings 19:35 claims that the Assyrian army was defeated, and Sennacherib was forced to call off the siege and return to Nineveh.

According to 2 Kings 24:10–17, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Jerusalem (in 597), and deported to Babylon its king, Jehoiachin, along with 10,000 of its inhabitants, leaving behind only the poorest people of the land, and installing a puppet ruler Zedekiah on the kingdom's throne. But when eleven years later (586) Zedekiah rebelled against his overlord, Jerusalem was again attacked, and this time destroyed by the Babylonian forces; almost the entire population of Judah was removed from the land (2 Kings 24:20–25:21). Thus began the period of the Israelite 'exile', lasting almost fifty years. It came to an end in 539, when the Persian king Cyrus II conquered Babylon. In the following year, the Israelites living in exile were allowed to return to their homeland, and Cyrus issued a decree permitting them to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem (Ezra 1:14, 6:2–5). The process of reconstructing Jerusalem thus began. The rebuilding of its walls is recorded in Nehemiah 3, and is generally dated to the reign of the Persian king Artaxerxes I (465–424), if this is the Artaxerxes referred to in Nehemiah 2:1. But the biblical account has yet to be confirmed by archaeological evidence. Almost nothing more is known of Jerusalem, from either written sources or the archaeological record, until the time of the Maccabean rebellion against Seleucid rule in mid C2.

Biblical sources used in attempted reconstructions of Jerusalem's history begin with the city's alleged capture by Joab for his nephew David (2 Samuel 5:6–8, 1 Chronicles 11:4–6). *OT* tradition relates that the city was seized from its then occupants, the



Figure 56 Terrain between Jerusalem and Jericho.

Jebusites, and was in fact called Jebus at that time (but see **Jebus**). Seven years later, David transferred his royal capital from Hebron to Jerusalem. He also brought there the Ark of the Covenant, thus making Jerusalem the spiritual as well as the administrative and political centre of his kingdom. The name 'the City of David' came to be used of Jerusalem's citadel. *OT* sources report the massive building projects undertaken in the city by David's son and successor Solomon, and the hostility which Solomon's policies provoked, particularly among his northern subjects, who resented the centralization of power in Jerusalem. And all subjects alike resented the heavy burden of taxation made necessary by their king's grandiose building programme. The partitioning of the kingdom on Solomon's death saw a substantial reduction in the status of Jerusalem, which now became merely the capital of the tribal lands of Judah and Benjamin. *OT* accounts of the city's subsequent history are closely linked with the history of Israel and Judah as a whole. Biblical sources are complemented by Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian sources contemporary with the events which they relate. The most notable of these events are the Assyrian and Babylonian conquests, the period of exile in Babylonia, and the repatriation of the Israelites to their homeland by the Persian king Cyrus II.

B. Mazar *et al.* (*NEAEHL* 2: 698–804), Bahat (1996), Bahat and Hurvitz (1996), Bahat (*OEANE* 3: 224–38), Geva (2000), Cline (2004).

Jezireh (Jezira, Jazira) Large grassland and semi-desert region located between the Euphrates and Tigris rivers, and extending through parts of northwestern Iraq, northeastern Syria, and southeastern Turkey. The name literally means 'island'. Watering by the Balih and Habur rivers makes the northern part of the region an agriculturally productive area.

Akkermans and Schwartz (2003: 5–6).

Jezreel, Tel (map 8) Settlement located in the eastern part of the Jezreel valley, overlooking a major route which passed from Egypt through Syria to Mesopotamia. There is evidence of occupation of the site from the Early Bronze Age through to the present day. Following earlier salvage operations by the Israel Dept of Antiquities in 1987 and 1988, the site was excavated from 1990 to 1996 as a joint enterprise by D. Ussishkin and J. Woodhead on behalf of their respective institutions – the Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem. Pottery sherds dating to the Early, Middle, and Late Bronze Ages indicate the existence of a Canaanite settlement on the site during these periods. However, the most substantial remains are of Iron Age date. During this period, Jezreel reached its peak under the C9 Omride dynasty (see glossary) when, according to the excavators, the city became a royal centre of much importance in the kingdom of Israel. It has been suggested that Jezreel served as Israel's winter capital, complementing Samaria as the 'summer' capital. Its chief architectural feature is what the excavators describe as a 'royal enclosure', surrounded by a casemate wall, supported by a massive earthen rampart, with projecting towers at the corners. This fortress-settlement encompassed c. 6 ha. The excavators believe that the fortress was built by Omri (876–869) or his son and successor Ahab (869–850) (if we accept the dates traditionally assigned to these rulers) as a central military base for the royal Israelite army.

The Jezreel fortress is of major significance since it shows not only the expected close

similarities with the architecture of Samaria, but also close similarities with monumental structures (gateways and public buildings) at Megiddo, Hazor, and Gezer, traditionally attributed to King Solomon. Since Jezreel is firmly anchored to the Omride dynasty, the supposedly Solomonic levels at these sites have had to be redated from C10 to C9, a process that has cast serious doubt upon the historical reality of an Israelite 'united monarchy', at least in C10 (see under **Israel**). Following the destruction of the fortress, perhaps at the end of the Omride dynasty, settlement continued on the site through the succeeding ages, as illustrated by remains from the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman periods, and evidence of a densely populated city on the site in the Byzantine era. These post-Iron Age occupations have destroyed almost all trace of the buildings within the Iron Age fortress.

Jezreel appears in a number of *OT* sources – for example, in the story of Naboth who owned a vineyard in Jezreel close to the palace of Ahab (1 Kings 21). It is not attested in extra-biblical written sources.

Williamson (1991; 1996), Ussishkin and Woodhead (1994), Ussishkin (*OEANE* 3: 246–7), Negev and Gibson (2001: 270).

Jokneam see **Yokneam**.

Judah Iron Age kingdom in southern Palestine. See under **Israel**.

Judeideh, Tell el- ([map 8](#)) 2.5 ha hill settlement located in the Shephelah, southern Palestine, perhaps to be identified with biblical Moreshet-Gath (Micah 1:14), home of the prophet Micah. It was partly excavated by F. J. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister in 1899–1900, with sponsorship provided by the Palestine Exploration Fund. Most of the material remains date to the Hellenistic and Roman periods, when the settlement, oval in shape, was enclosed by a 228 m long wall. The meagre evidence brought to light from earlier periods indicates settlement dating back to the Bronze Age, followed, perhaps, by a period of abandonment, with subsequent occupation during the Iron Age, when the site was apparently unfortified.

Broshi (*NEAEHL* 3: 837–8).