

Megiddo

Byron Holtsclaw

In northern Israel stood the fortified city of Megiddo. This fort would have served as the northern gate of Solomon's kingdom during the golden age of the united monarchy. This site was first occupied by Canaanites before the invading army of Israel led by Joshua conquered the region.

Archaeologist Israel Finkelstein excavated a large Canaanite temple at this site less than 25 years ago. To date it is one of the greatest archeological discoveries from the Bronze Age as well as in the region. The site is of the oldest ever excavated and studied in the Levant. Many of the documented artifacts are on display at Jerusalem in the Rockefeller Museum as well as the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures.

Pharaoh Thutmose III took his army north in the 15th century BC and conquered this site defeating a coalition of Canaanite forces. This battle of Megiddo is one of the first documented battles in all of history; recorded by Egyptian annals. After an initial battle, Thutmose besieged the city for 7 months before the city's surrender.

During the divided monarchy, King Jeroboam II and Hoshea reigned over Megiddo. In 609 BC, King Josiah of Judah fell to the invading Egyptian army under the command of Pharaoh Necho II. Josiah had ruled Judah for 31 years, starting at the age of 8 years old. He had restored temple worship in Jerusalem. All of this is documented well in the book of II Kings in the Old Testament. The city later fell to the Arameans dissolving the kingdom of Israel before the Babylonians later exiled Judah.

In 1918, World War I featured a battle at Megiddo between the Allied troops and the Ottoman Empire who occupied the region. The success of the Allies during this conflict put in motion the reality of the nation of Israel once again forming in this land years later.

Megiddo is translated Armageddon in the Greek language. Revelation Chapter 16 names this site as the apocalyptic battlefield between good and evil when God will intervene and Christ will conquer all. The term Armageddon is infamous in literature and apocalyptic genre.