

tions the land seemed barren and desolate. It appeared empty. One might have thought that this prophecy about Babylonia would apply to the situation of Palestine as it then appeared, but such a conclusion would have been entirely wrong.

A few years before that time Dr. Albright had carried on a few weeks of excavation at Tell el-Ful. Before doing so he had inquired about securing permission from the owners of the land, and was told that the two acres on the flat summit of the hill were not divided into distinct properties but were held on the shareholding plan, as was often the case in the hills of Palestine. They were owned jointly by sixty-six shareholders, and sometimes a share would belong to several families. It would have been an extremely difficult task to look up all these people in order to bargain for the right to excavate there. Accordingly, Dr. Albright decided to use a different method. He hired a few men, went to the hill and started digging.

What then occurred was most amazing. As he stood on the hill prior to digging and looked around everything appeared simply like barren land. One could hardly think that anyone was living in the area. Yet when the men began to dig, people started almost immediately to come out of mud hovels and caves. Hundreds of people came rushing out, converging on the hill where he was digging, and demanding that he show evidence of any right to dig in their hill. He then dismissed the men whom he had hired for a day, and hired some of the partial owners to work for him in their places, saying, "We will ask the courts to decide on a fair price."

During the next few weeks Dr. Albright was able to spend less than half of his time digging in the mound. The other half was consumed with arguments in the courts. At first some of the owners insisted that \$2000 would be a fair rental for these two acres of very poor land. Since Dr. Albright had much less than this available for the entire cost of the excavation it was well worth the time spent arguing. In the end the court set a fair price of \$35 as a proper rental for