

plays an important role in the life of Abimelech, the son of Gideon. Shechem later became the first capital of Jeroboam, who led the secession of the northern tribes (1 Kings 12). For some reason he did not keep his capital there long, but instead moved it to Tirzah (1 Kings 14:17).

German excavators unearthed portions of Shechem early in the present century. Unfortunately, their material was never fully published. The more recent excavations naturally can use better methods and have considerably more funds available, but what was dug up by the Germans is of course not available for further excavation.

Every time a new place is excavated much is learned about the general life of antiquity and also about methods of successful excavation. At the same time much evidence is unavoidably destroyed. Large works of art and inscribed tablets are of tremendous importance, but sometimes even more is learned from bits of pottery, from the type of houses and artifacts, and from the relation of different material objects to one another. Once they are dug up this relationship has been destroyed and all that remains is what has been observed by the excavators and photographed or written down. Thus archaeologists are anxious that excavation proceed as rapidly as possible, in order to increase their knowledge and improve their methodology, and yet they wish that all of the important sites could be left to be excavated after methods have reached their greatest improvement, in order that the utmost possible could be learned from them.

Hazor has been under excavation for a number of years by the Department of Antiquities of the State of Israel. The other three