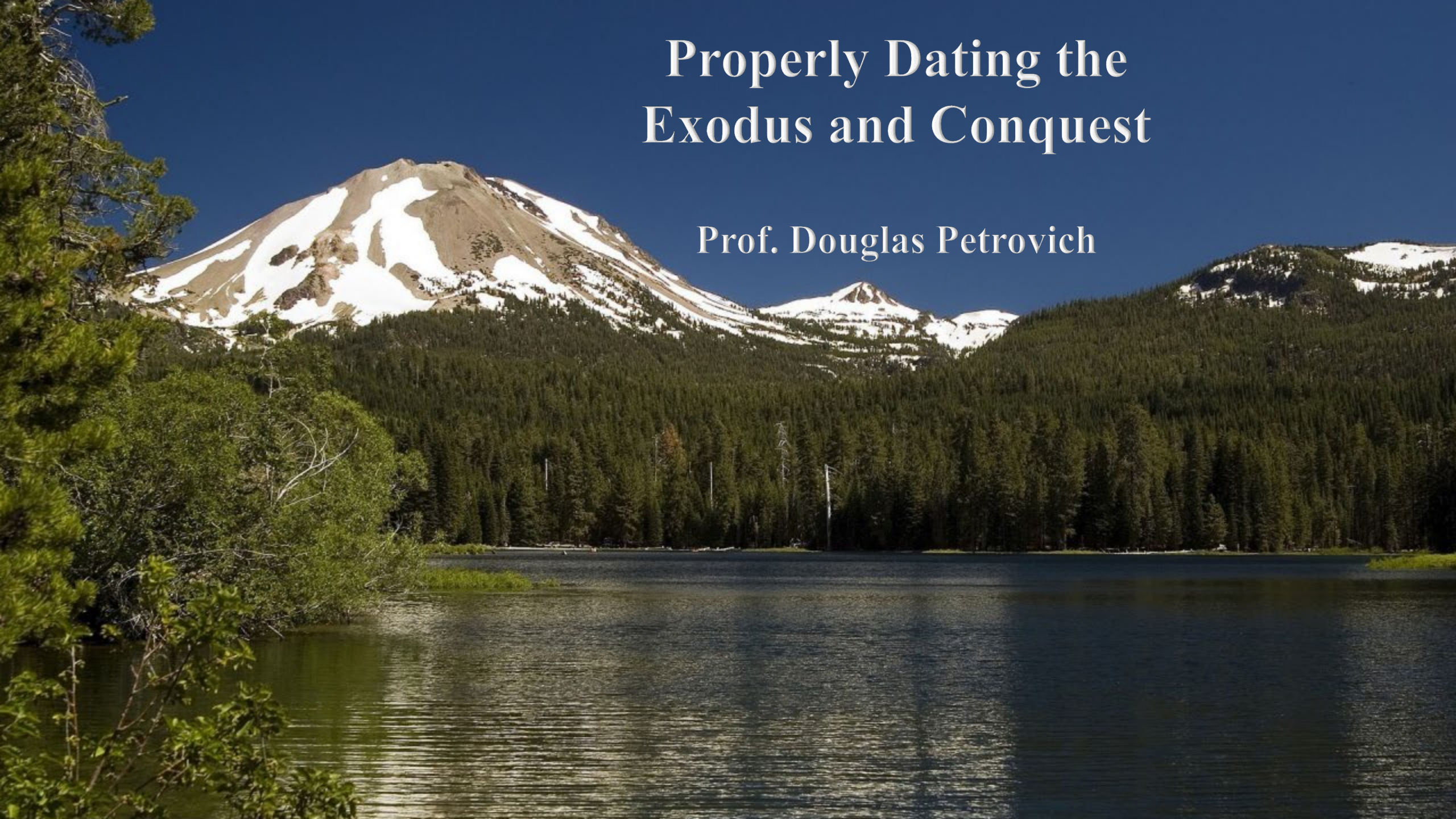


# Properly Dating the Exodus and Conquest

Prof. Douglas Petrovich





# **Chronology and Synchronization**

**Topic: Chronological Framework for  
Synchronizing Israelite and Egyptian History**

**(Review of Israelite and Egyptian Chronology)**



# Israelite Chronology

**Topic: Israelite Chronological Scheme**

**(Review of Relevant Chronologies)**



# Basic Israelite Chronological Scheme

- 2166 BC – Birth of Abram (Mesopotamia)
- 2091 BC – Abram Enters Canaan (from Ur)
- 2066 BC – Isaac born to Sarah in Gerar
- 1876 BC – Jacob Moves Family to Egypt
- 1805 BC – Joseph Is Buried at Dahshur
- 1446 BC – Israelite Exodus from Egypt
- 1406 BC – Israelites Cross into Canaan
- 967 BC – Construction on the First Temple
- 587 BC – Jerusalem Falls to Babylonians



# **Egyptian Chronology**

**Topic: Egyptian Chronological Scheme**

**(Review of Relevant Chronologies)**



# Basic Egyptian Chronological Scheme

- 2170–2025 BC – First Intermediate Period
- 2025–1674 BC – Middle Kingdom (Dyn. 11–13)
- 1668–1560 BC – Second Intermediate Period
- 1560–1069 BC – New Kingdom (Dyn. 18–20)
- 1069–633 BC – Third Intermediate Period  
(Dynasties 21–25)

Dating Tool for Dynasty 12: Lahun Papyrus 10012

Dating Tool for Dynasty 18: Ebers (Medical) Papyrus



# Properly Dating Israel's Exodus

**Topic: Evidence for Dating  
the Exodus to 1446 BC**

**(Dynasty 18 in Egypt's New Kingdom)**



# **Israelite Exodus from Egypt**

**Reason #1: Textual support from the Bible and from extra-biblical sources**

**(Reasons for Dating the Exodus to 1446 BC)**



# Textual Support for Exodus in 1446 BC

(1) The chronological reference in 1 Kings 6:1 is clear. The MT reads “480th year” and is supported by the Vulgate, against the LXX’s reading of “440th year”. Solomon’s building of the First Temple undoubtedly began in 967 BC.

(2) The Jubilee dates are precise only if the priests began counting years when the Israelites entered the land of Canaan in 1406 BC (Lev 25:2–10). The Talmud (*‘Arakin 12b*) lists 17 cycles from Israel’s entry into Canaan until the last recorded Jubilee in 574 BC, if using the Tishri calendar. A similar statement is found in chapter 11 of *The Seder ‘Olam*, an early rabbinical writing that predates the Talmud (see Rodger Young’s 2006 article in *WTJ*).



# Textual Support for Exodus in 1446 BC

(3) In Judges 11:26, Jephthah stated in a letter to the king of Ammon that “for 300 years Israel occupied Heshbon, Aroer, the surrounding settlements and all the towns along the Arnon.” Although it is impossible to calculate precise dates for Jephthah’s judgeship, it probably lasted from *ca.* 1088–1083 BC. (Steinmann, *From Abraham to Paul* [2011], 107). Using these dates, the end of the conquest would be in 1388 BC, but the “300 years” likely is a rough number. The tribe of Reuben thus had been occupying the disputed area from the Wadi Hesban to the Arnon River since *ca.* 1400 BC (see Bryant Wood’s 2005 article in *JETS*).



# Israelite Exodus from Egypt

**Reason #2: Amenhotep II meets exodus  
pharaoh's biographical requirements**

**(Reasons for Dating the Exodus to 1446 BC)**



# Amenhotep II as the Exodus Pharaoh

(1) After synchronizing Israelite chronology with Egyptian chronology carefully (high chronology view), Amenhotep II (1453–1416 BC) is the Egyptian king on the throne in 1446 BC.

(2) Amenhotep II, not a firstborn son, did not die during the 10th plague, legitimizing him as a candidate for exodus pharaoh. His brother, Amenemhat, was “the king’s eldest son.”

(3) Amenhotep II’s eldest son, probably Prince Thutmose, never became king. Prince Amenhotep, who lived to Year 30–35 and never was called “the king’s eldest son,” died while heir to the throne. Amenhotep II’s successor, Thutmose IV, clearly was not “the king’s eldest son.” Amenhotep II remains a candidate.



# Amenhotep II as the Exodus Pharaoh

(4) Amenhotep II is 1 of only 2 kings of Dynasties 18 and 19 to succeed a king who ruled for over 40 years. Moses fled from the exodus pharaoh's predecessor, who sought to execute him for killing an Egyptian (Exod 2:15), departing from Egypt when "he was fulfilling the age of 40" (Acts 7:23). Only "after 40 years had passed" did the angel speak to Moses at the burning bush (Acts 7:30, based on Exod 3:2), which immediately follows the event that "in the course of those many days, the king of Egypt died" (Exod 2:23). Thus, **the king who preceded the exodus pharaoh must have ruled beyond 40 years.** This criterion is not met by the relatively modest reign of Seti I (*ca.* 1305–1290 BC).



# Amenhotep II as the Exodus Pharaoh

(5) Amenhotep II's 2nd Asiatic campaign was a glorified slave-raid, with the claim that his human booty topped 100,000.

(6) Among the prisoners were 3,600 Apiru/Habiru, the first mention of Apiru captured by an Egyptian king. In Thutmose III's reign, Apiru were depicted working as vinedressers. The Apiru/Habiru are none other than Hebrews. Abram was called a Hebrew.

(7) Avaris, biblical Ramses where Jacob settled, was abandoned during Amenhotep II's reign (see Petrovich's 2013 article in *JAET*), at the height of Egypt's imperial power. This makes sense if their military base of operations was depleted of its army when they drowned in the Sea of Reeds in 1446 BC.



# Israelite Exodus from Egypt

**Reason #3: Avaris provides evidence of Israelite presence in the 18th Dynasty**

**(Reasons for Dating the Exodus to 1446 BC)**



# BIBLIO-HISTORICAL EXAMINATION

## BIBLICAL TEXT:

“So they [the Egyptians] appointed taskmasters over them [the Israelites] with hard labor. Then they built for pharaoh **storage cities**: Pithom and **Raamses**. . . . Now it came to pass in those days, after Moses had grown up, that he went out to his brethren and looked on their hard labors. Then he saw an Egyptian **killing/striking down** a Hebrew, one of his brethren.” — Exodus 1:11; 2:11

## HISTORICAL OBSERVATION:

If the Hebrew word *miskenoth* does not refer to an armory—which would have stored bows, arrows, spears, etc.—sizable storage facilities should be visible at the biblical cities of Pithom and Ramesses. At Avaris, **large storage silos** were built during Phase D/1.2 (Stratum e/1.2). If Hebrews were killed by their Egyptian taskmasters at these sites during the lifetime of Moses, some of their bodies—if found—could show signs of this brutality. At Avaris, non-Egyptian burials of this phase reveal signs of **vicious murder**. These deaths/burials occurred between 14 and 34 years before Moses was born, possibly making them Israelite.



# Phase D/1.2 (Areas H/I–VI): 1560–1535 BC

Ahmose I's conquest of Avaris was followed by a rebuilding and reoccupation of the city soon after its liberation. Phase D/1.2 featured a large enclosure wall that was used until Amenhotep II's reign, a palace with a large paved hall, and at least 30 circular granary silos built safely within the enclosure walls. The silos (5.25 m in diameter) could store an enormous quantity of grain.

In Area H/III, a foundational deposit (L1057) and an execration pit (L1055) were found between the Hyksos palatial compound (below) and a huge, newly-constructed Egyptian storage complex (above) that was used during Phase D/1. The foundational deposit, a ritualistic pit placed beneath or alongside the foundation of a building to dedicate a



## Phase D/1.2 (Areas H/I–VI): 1560–1535 BC

structure, included a ring-based bowl, a model hoe, and two sieves. The execration pit contained three male (human) skulls and three right hands. One of the skulls had a hole on its right side, probably resulting from a violently piercing blow that damaged the right temple. Datable potsherds accompanied the remains.

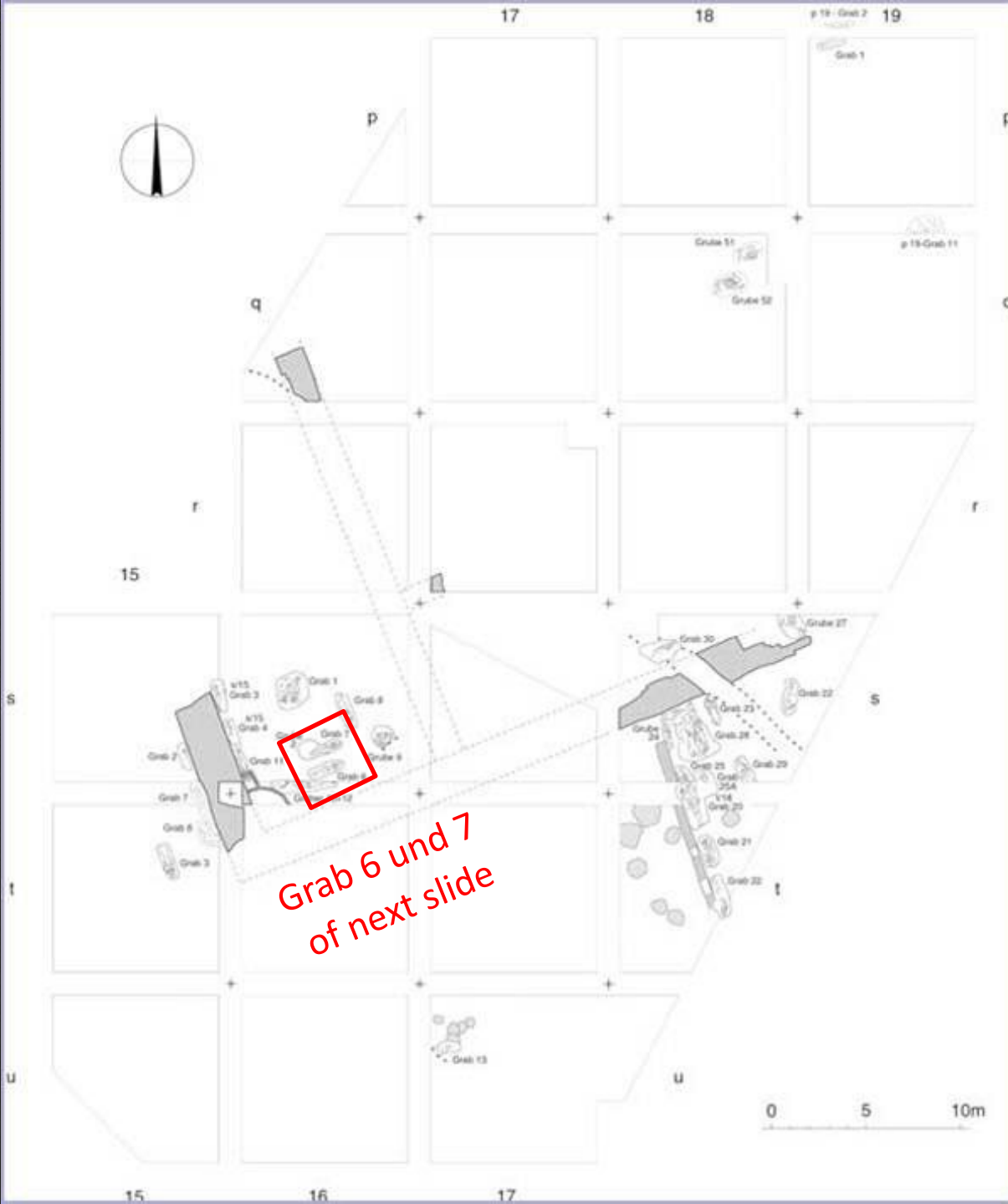


# Egyptian Occupation of Avaris (D/1.1)

Moses was born in 1526 BC. The most distinctive feature of Phase D/1.1 (1535–1506 BC) at Avaris is pit graves without any offerings, consisting of single or multiple burials of people lying face down on their chests or in haphazard positions. The majority of these burials occurred in a special complex, but almost all contained the remains of young men approximately 18–25 years of age, with some having been executed ritually.

Some of the executions seem to have been brutal, a type unattested in Egypt. Skeletons of two men buried face down were found in execration pit L1016, partly atop one another, one headless. About 380 smashed pottery vessels were broken over their skeletons. Normal Egyptian practice was for clay figurines of enemies to be substituted for the actual enemies, with their names inscribed on them, before being smashed into pieces.





# Pit Graves without Burial Offerings

Phase D/1.1  
(Stratum e/1.1)

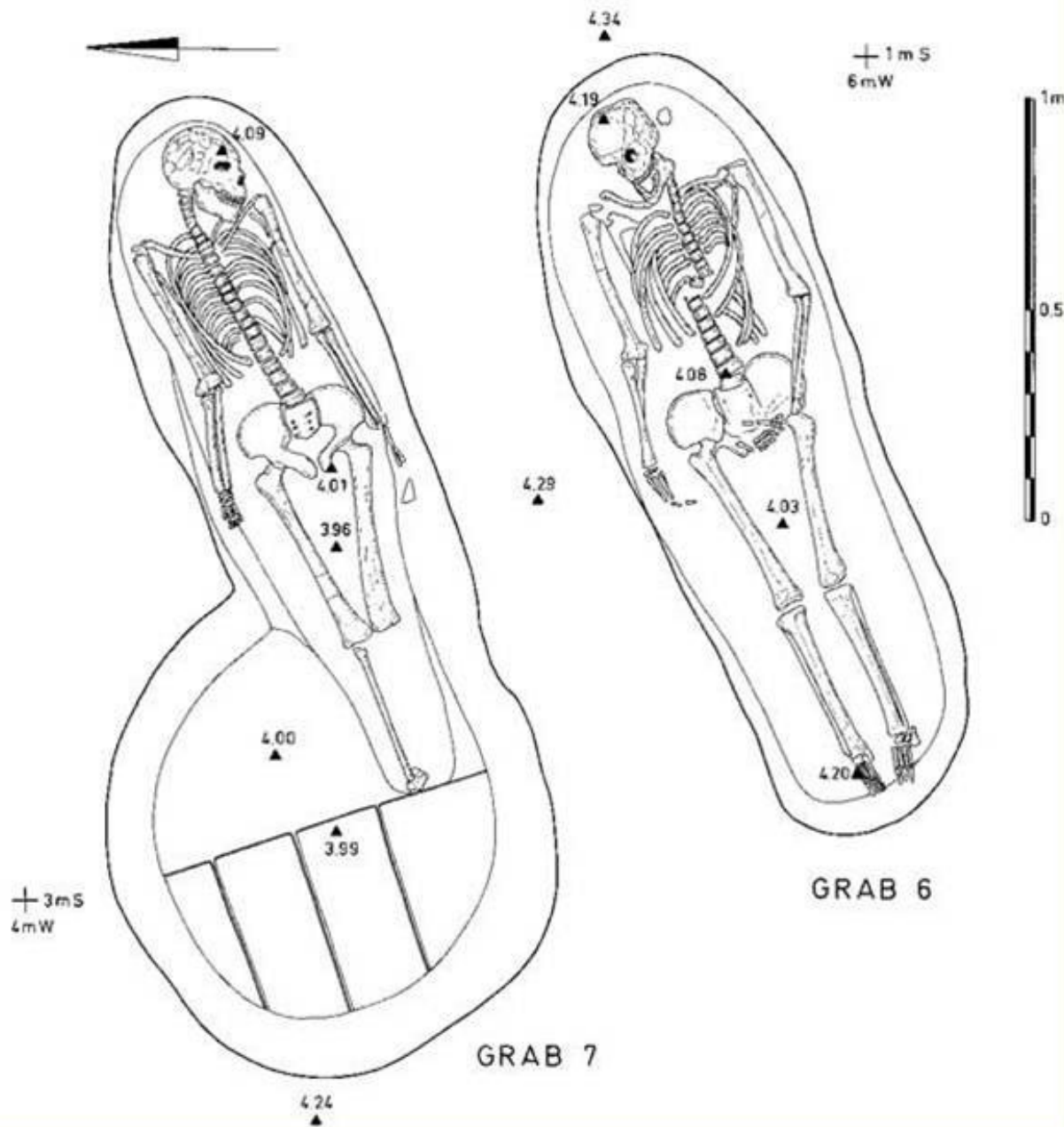
1535–1506 BC

Note: Moses was 20  
years old at the end of  
this occupational phase.

(Exod 2:11)



# Pit Graves without Burial Offerings

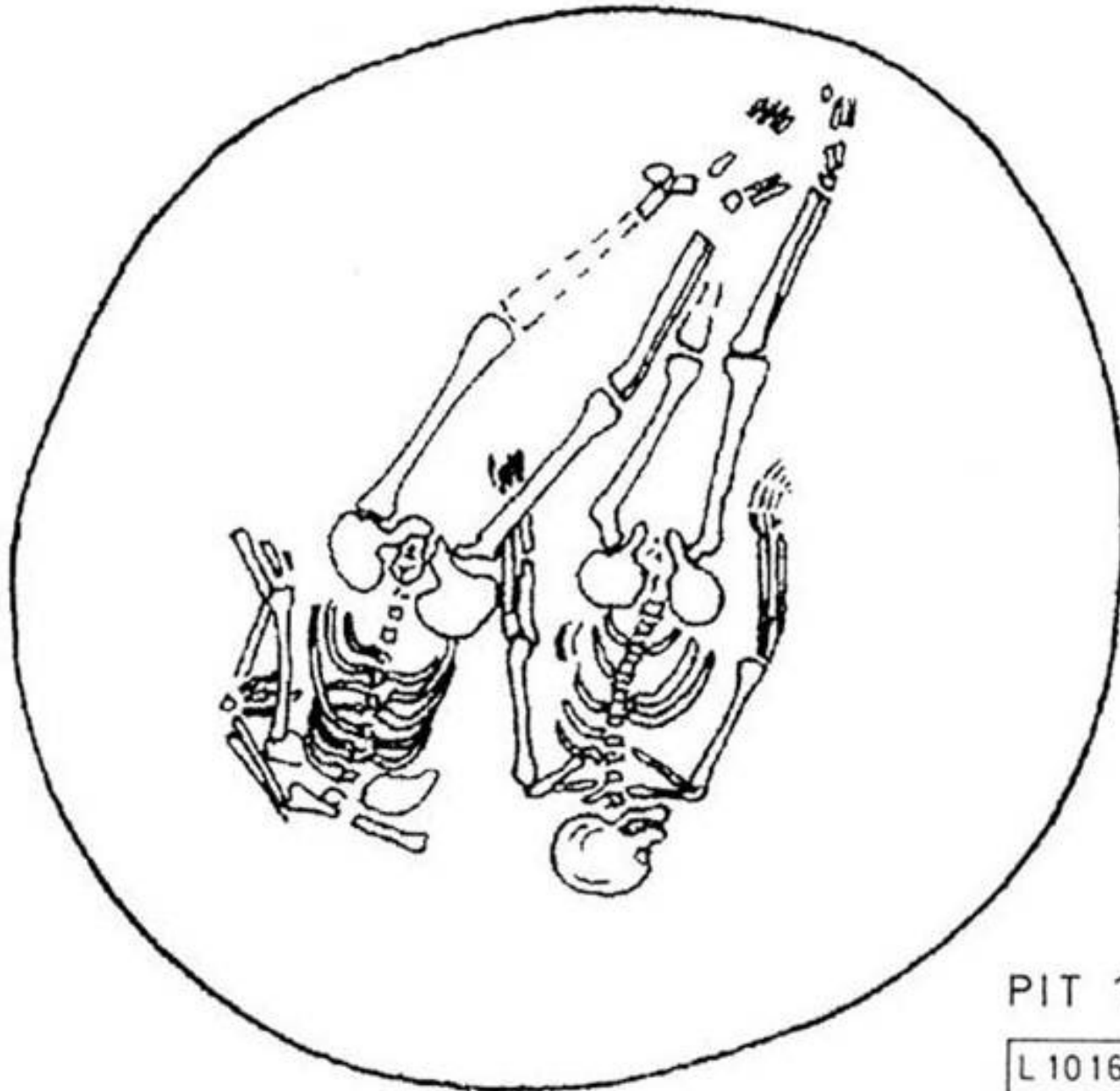


Phase D/1.1  
(Stratum e/1.1)

1535–1506 BC



# Execration Pit L1016



PIT 1

L 1016

The deceased were buried facedown, with one body headless and atop the other body. Over them were pottery, chips, and stone and quartzite fragments. Even more burials of this type were found outside the compound (some containing up to 3 victims apiece).



Biblical Hebrew Transcription:

אָנָה תִּזְצַח שְׁפִי רִבְנוֹ  
צִבְנוֹ מִשְׁעָר כְּמוֹ  
לְבַעַל־תְּלִי  
אֲחִינוֹ זָלַל [וְ]  
עָשָׂה אִימָה עַל  
אֲשָׁפָם וְעָשָׂה צַעֲקָה

Petrovich Translation:

“He sought occasion to cut away to barrenness our great number, our swelling without measure. They yearned for Hathor, but the quiver of our brothers was thoroughly despised, [so] he performed terror against their quiver and brought about a cry of wailing.

# Sinai 349 Serâbîṭ el-Khâdim



- אָנָה<sup>1</sup> = seek occasion
- תִּזְצַח<sup>2</sup> = cut away
- שְׁפִי<sup>3</sup> = barrenness
- רִבְנוֹ<sup>4</sup> = number
- צִבְנוֹ<sup>5</sup> = swelling
- מִשְׁעָר<sup>6</sup> = measure
- זָלַל<sup>7</sup> = yearn

<sup>1</sup>see 2 Kgs 5:7

<sup>2</sup>see Isa 18:5

<sup>3</sup>see Jer 12:12

<sup>4</sup>see 2 Chr 32:5

<sup>5</sup>see Num 5:21

<sup>6</sup>see Gen 26:12

<sup>7</sup>see Psalm 63:1

© 2015 Douglas Petrovich

Dynasty 18 (ca. 1480 BC)

JE 52511



# Workshop W1

In Workshop W1, Bietak's team found two lumps of arrowheads, with a total of over 140 bronze arrowheads of Aegean style.

These arrows demonstrate that the workshops were used for the production of weapons for military purposes and explain the pumice, which was used in antiquity as an abrasive for polishing bronze.







Clump of Arrowheads from Workshop W1





Several Cleaned Arrowheads from Workshop W1



# BIBLIO-HISTORICAL EXAMINATION

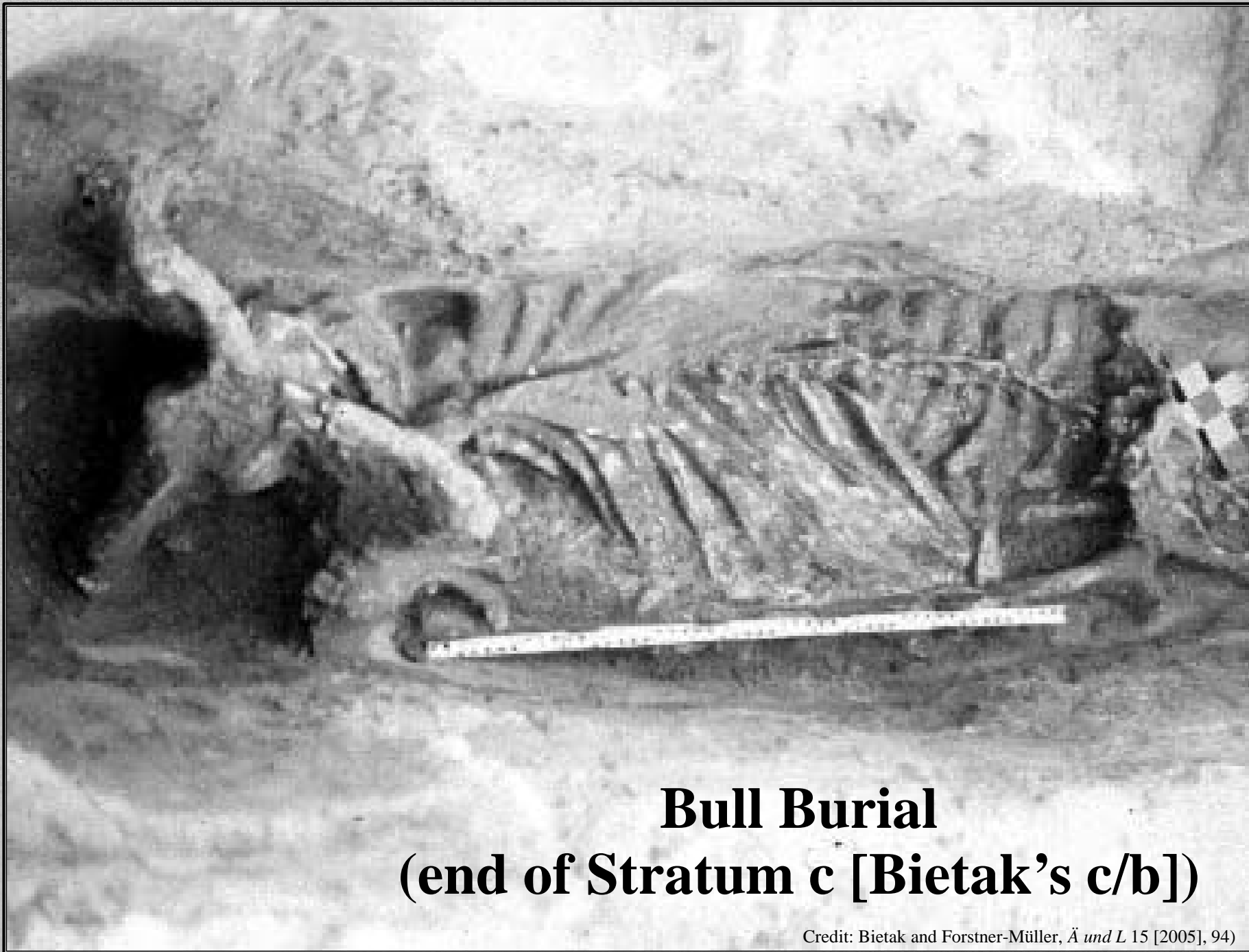
## BIBLICAL TEXT:

“But at any of the sons of Israel, a **dog** will not *even* bark, whether toward man or beast, . . . On the tenth of this month, each man must take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers’ households, a **lamb/sheep** for each household. . . . Your **lamb** must be an unblemished male, in its first year of age; you may take it from the **sheep** or from the **goats**. . . . Now it came about at midnight that He-who-is struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of **cattle**.” — Exodus 11:7; 12:3, 5, 29

## HISTORICAL OBSERVATION:

A large number of animal burials was found in the palatial precinct, though the timing of the burials is disputable. Bietak variously dated the burials to the Barren Phase (Stratum b/3) or the first phase of construction of the late-18<sup>th</sup>-Dynasty fortress (Phase C/1, = Stratum b/3, which immediately followed the Barren Phase). The burials include two **bulls** and two **dogs**, but the majority consisted of **sheep** and **goats**, with more than 30 such burials.





**Bull Burial**  
**(end of Stratum c [Bietak's c/b])**

Credit: Bietak and Forstner-Müller, *Ä und L 15* [2005], 94)



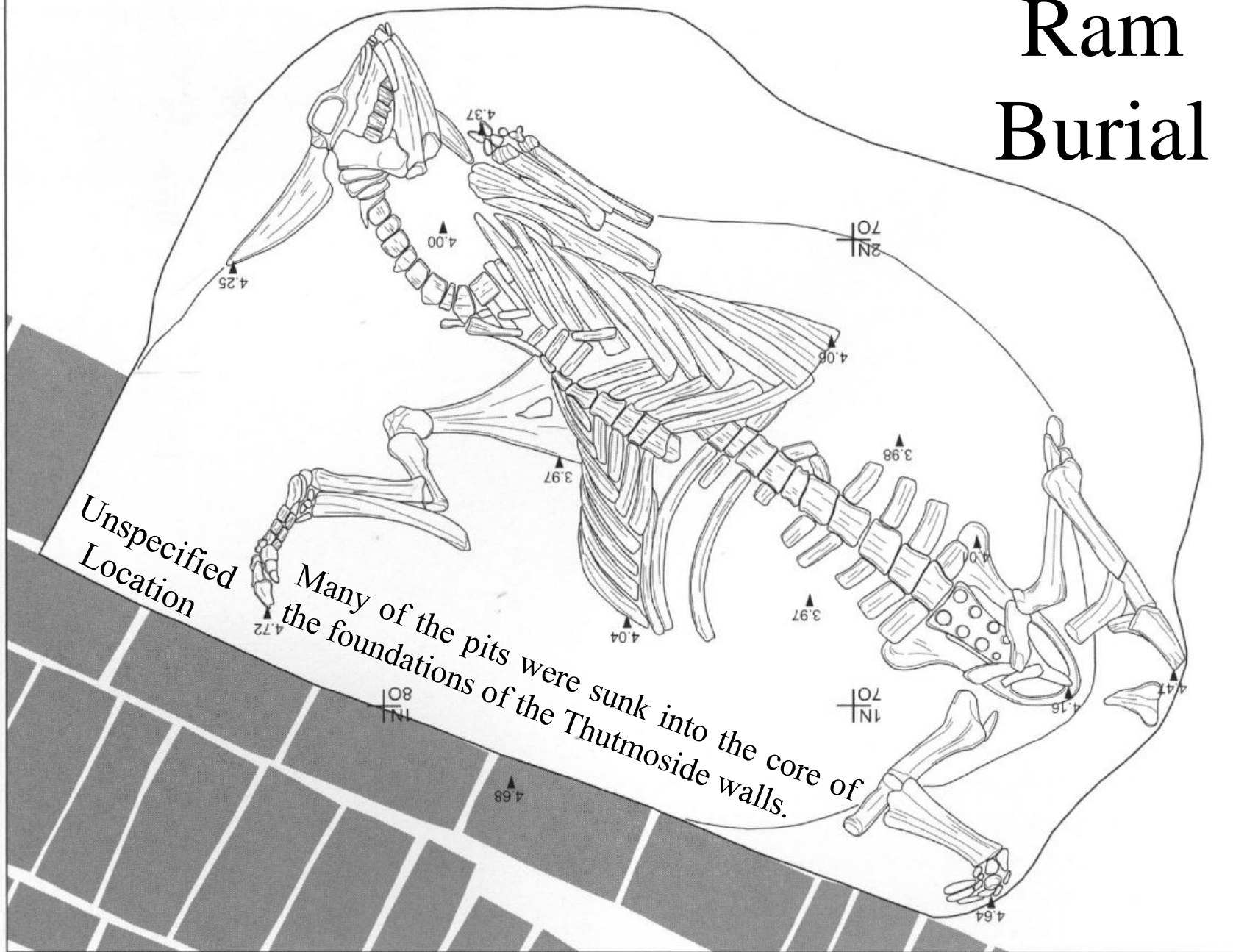
# Goat Burial

End of Stratum c





# Ram Burial





# End of Stratum C/2: Areas H/I–VI

The ceramic evidence reveals that these burials date to the final occupational phase under Amenhotep II, which actually fits well with Bietak's earlier opinion that the palatial district could have been abandoned by Amenhotep II's government (Bietak 2005: 93).

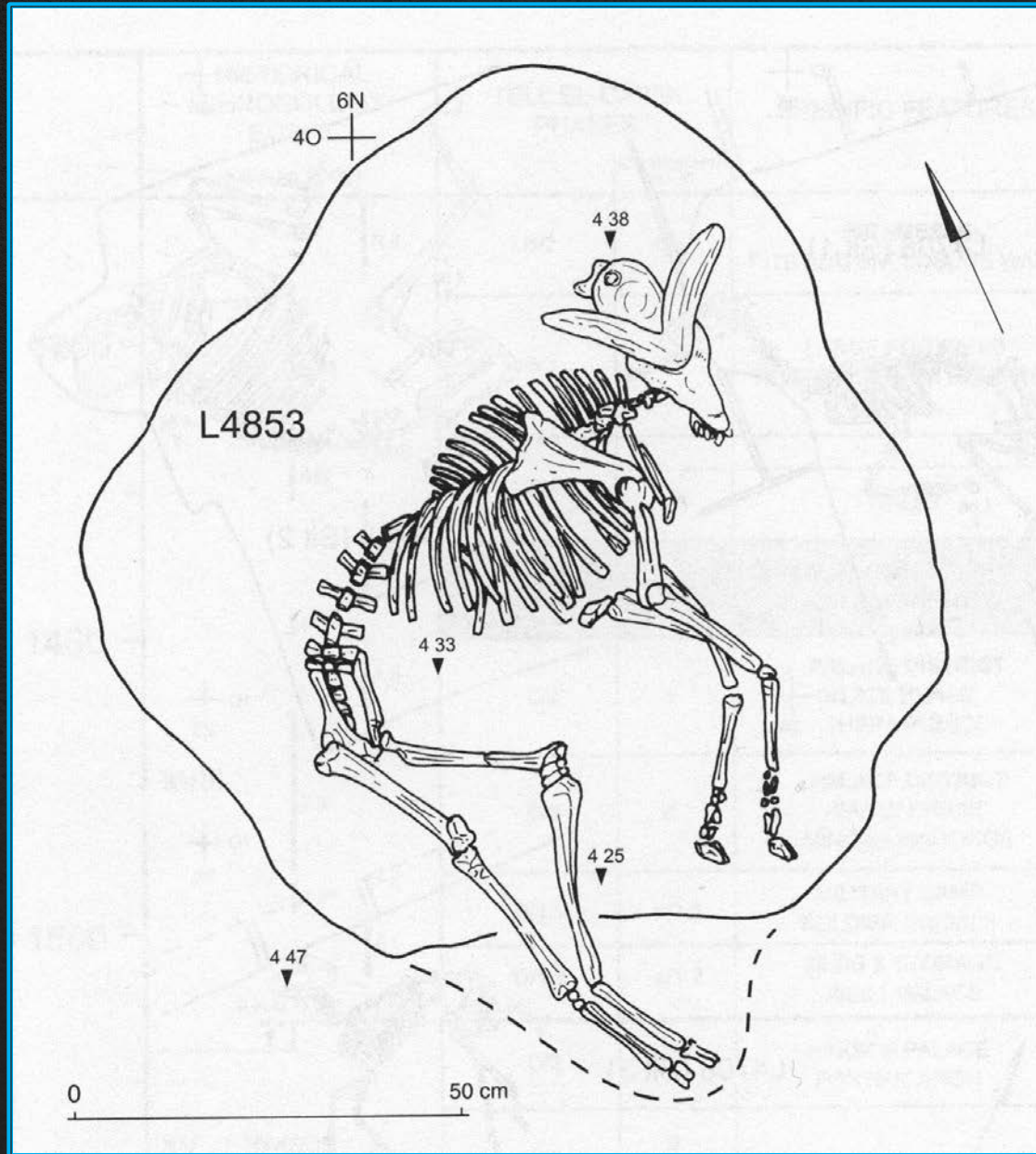
Perhaps the inexplicability of such burials along the very walls of the palaces at the time of the royal residence's occupation inhibited Bietak from connecting the burials to the proper dating based on the pottery. The graves display careful but brief burials, and the majority of them show that the sheep and goats were under a year of age when they died. At least one ram was killed intentionally, with a blow to the head by a chisel-shaped tool, which clearly was an unnatural death.



# Ram Burial

Burial L 4853: Ram  
Killed by a Blow to  
Back of Its Head

End of Stratum c





# End of Stratum C/2: Areas H/I–VI

The fill in the burial pits contained only a few potsherds, almost certainly demonstrating the brevity and speed with which the burials were performed. The excavators noted that “a long time span should not be assumed” for the duration of these burials (Bietak 2006: 123).

The rapidity of the burials also is reflected in the lack of any cultural context, and in the lack of a common orientation. All of the potsherds date exclusively to Strata d–c (Phases C/3–C/2), and thus no later than the reign of Amenhotep II, as “[n]ot a single sherd from the Amarna or Ramesside periods was found” in any of the burial pits (Bietak 2006: 123). The vast majority of animals found by the excavators was sheep and goats, which numbered about 30, many of which were buried in the same grave (i.e. multiple animals in graves).



# End of Stratum C/2: Areas H/I–VI

In 2001, the team stated that all of these sheep and goats died in the first year of life, but subsequent excavations uncovered the burials of several adults, such as the case where a ewe suddenly died while giving birth, with the lamb lodged halfway outside of the womb.

Each Israelite family was to take a sheep or goat from its herd and slaughter it at dusk (Exod 12:5b), meaning that they were permitted to sacrifice either a lamb or kid, whose first appearance in biblical history dates to Isaac's question to Abraham as to where was the *seh* ("lamb") that would be slaughtered for the burnt offering (Gen 22:7). God told Abraham that Isaac would be the offering, but when God relented from requiring this, Abraham said that "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering" (Gen 22:8).



# End of Stratum C/2: Areas H/I–VI

The majority of English translations of the Bible state that these sheep and goats were to be “a year old” (Exod 12:5a), which clearly appears to contradict with the age of the sheep and goats that Bietak found, nearly all of which died during their first year of life. In other words, the slaughtered sheep and goats of the biblical mandate were seemingly to be between one and two years of age, while the sheep and goats at the palatial compound were under one year of age.

The Hebrew text can resolve this apparent contradiction. The phrase *ben-shanah* in Exod 12:5a literally means “son of a year.” According to Holladay, *ben-shanah* in Exod 12:5 normally is taken as a one-year-old sheep or goat, though some take the similar expression *ben-shenatho* (also “son of a year”) in Lev 12:6 as “in his first year.”



# End of Stratum C/2: Areas H/I–VI

The context in Lev 12:6 is also the sacrificial slaughtering of lambs, although for the purpose of a burnt offering. Thus, there is no reason to take *ben-shenatho* in Lev 12:6 as “(in) its first year” but not take *ben-shanah* in Exod 12:5a as “(in its) first year.” The Israelites in Egypt were instructed to slaughter goats and sheep that were less than one full year of age, which corresponds perfectly with the vast majority of sheep and goat burials Bietak found in the palatial district.

All sacrificial slayings recorded in the HB had one object in mind: the Israelite’s act of faith that He-who-is would provide for every material need, even if one’s firstborn animals were counted as a total loss at the hand of that very Israelite animal-owner during the first year of the newborn animal’s life. Such is the nature of sacrifice.



# Properly Dating Israel's Conquest

**Topic: Evidence for Dating  
the Conquest to 1406–1400 BC**

**(Late Bronze Age IB in the Levant)**



# Israelite Conquest of Canaan

**Reason #1: The conquest of Jericho only fits at the end of the Late Bronze Age IB**

**(Reasons for Dating the Conquest to 1406–1400 BC)**



# JERICHO



(Credit: Holy Land Satellite Atlas, vol. 1)





**Dead Sea**

**Cypros**

**Tel  
Jericho**

**Herod's  
Palaces**





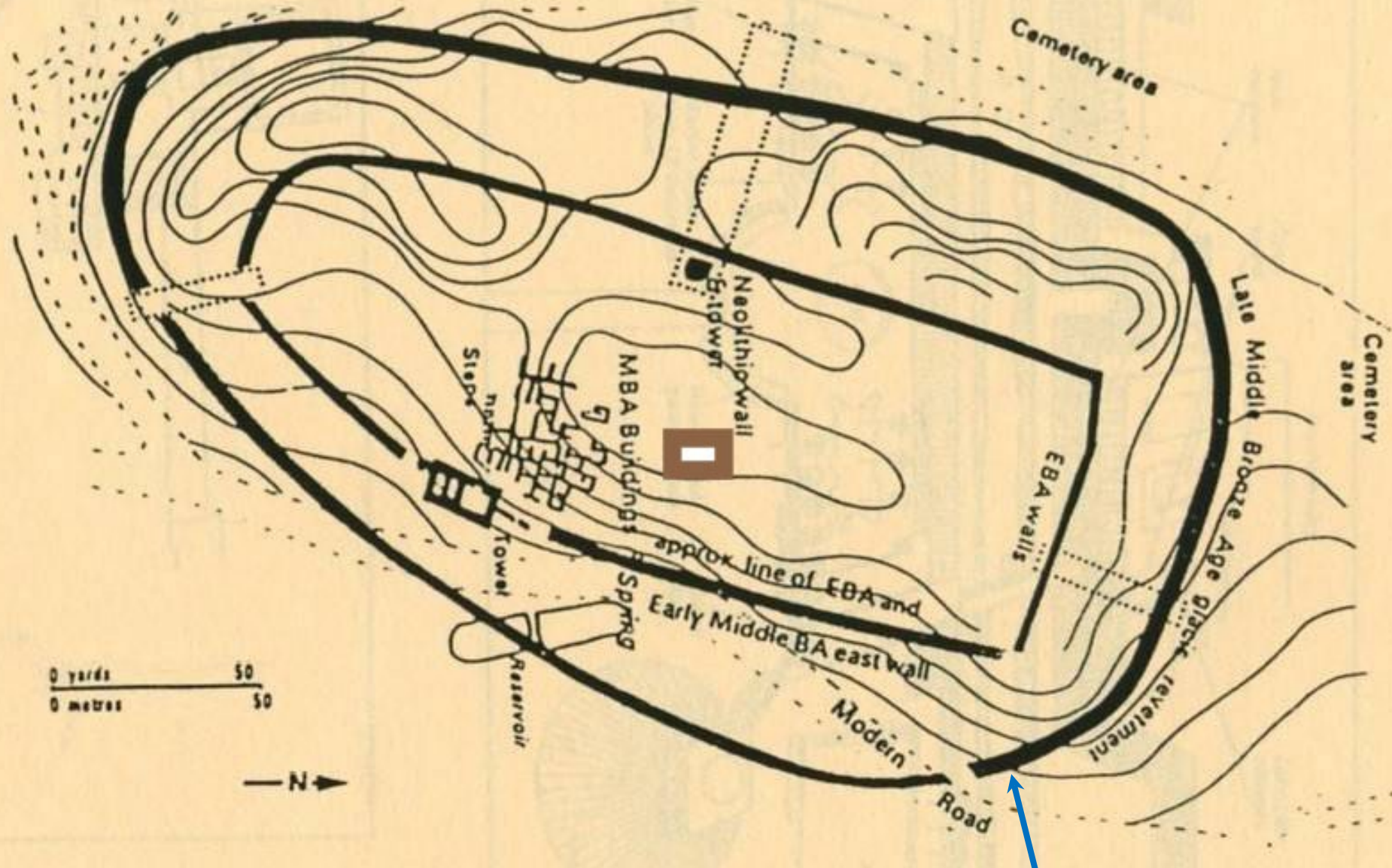
**Neolithic  
Tower**

**Exposed  
Revetment  
Wall**

**Elisha's  
Spring**

(Credit: Todd Bolen, Pictorial Library of Bible Lands)





Plan of OT Jericho

Revetment Wall, with Glacis below



# Revetment Wall of MBA

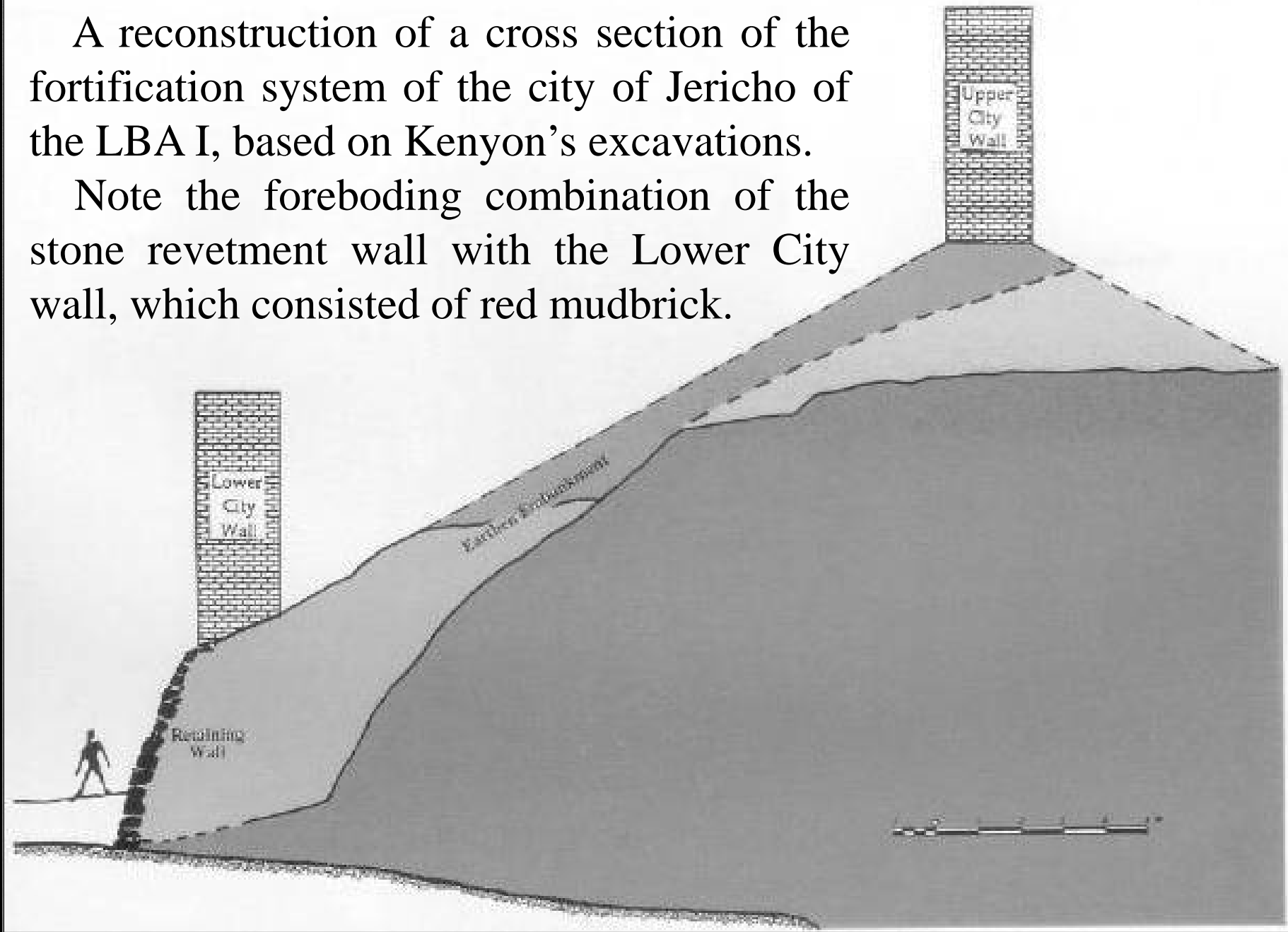


(Credit: Todd Bolen, Pictorial Library of Bible Lands)



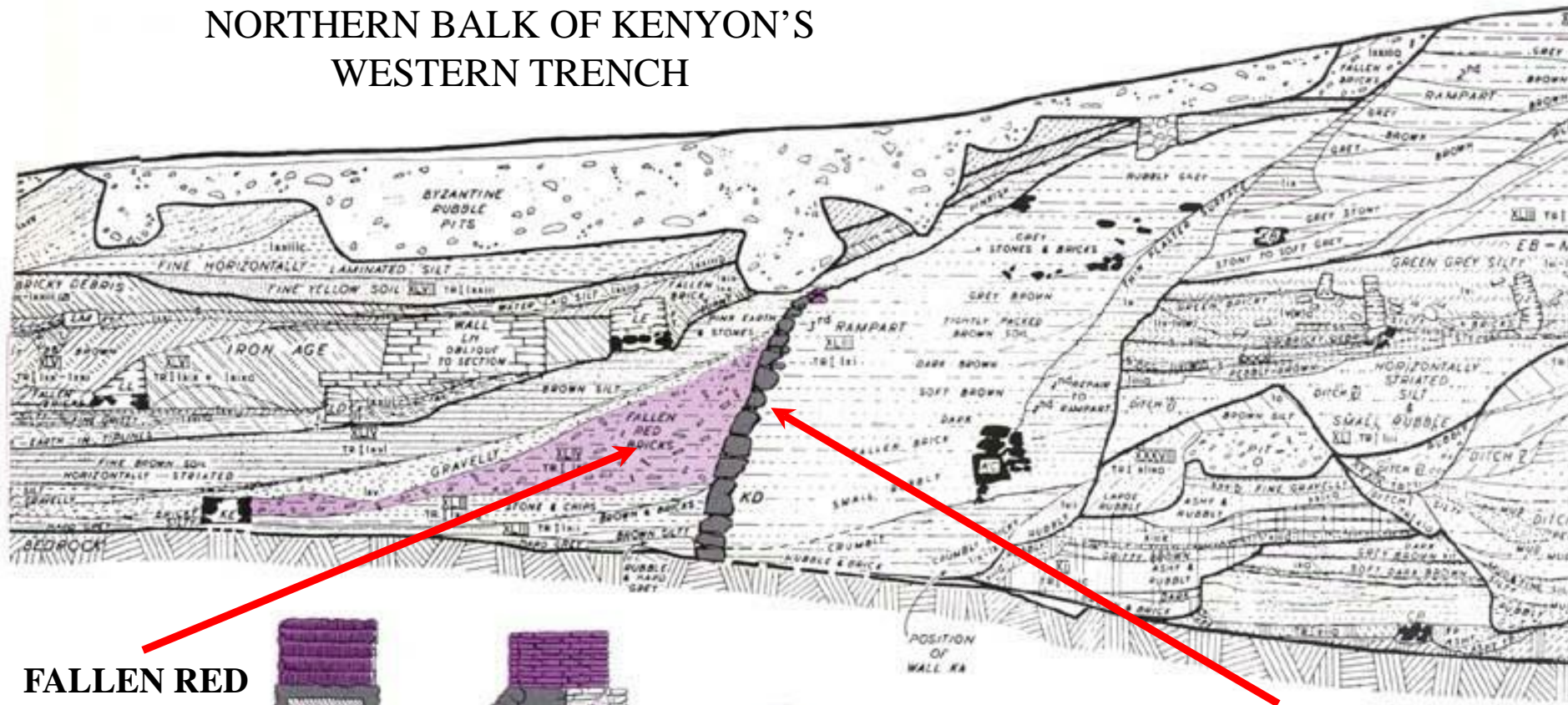
A reconstruction of a cross section of the fortification system of the city of Jericho of the LBA I, based on Kenyon's excavations.

Note the foreboding combination of the stone revetment wall with the Lower City wall, which consisted of red mudbrick.

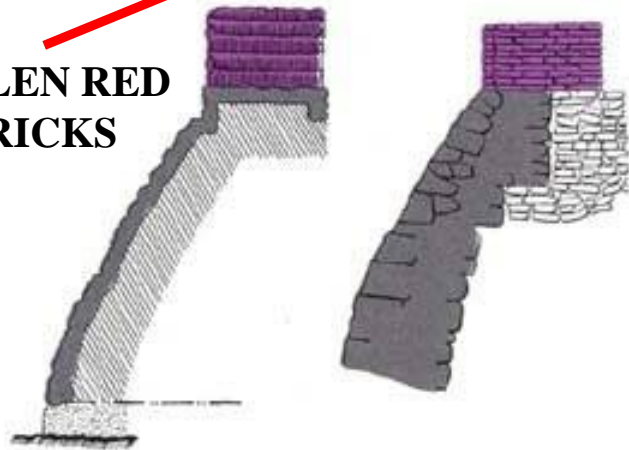




# NORTHERN BALK OF KENYON'S WESTERN TRENCH



**FALLEN RED BRICKS**



- Stone Revetment Wall
- Mudbrick Parapet Wall
- Fallen Mudbricks

**RETVEMENT WALL**



The northern balk of Kenyon's western trench reveals the fallen mudbrick residue from the collapsed city wall ("FALLEN RED BRICKS," to the left of the revetment/retaining wall).





**Revetment Wall**

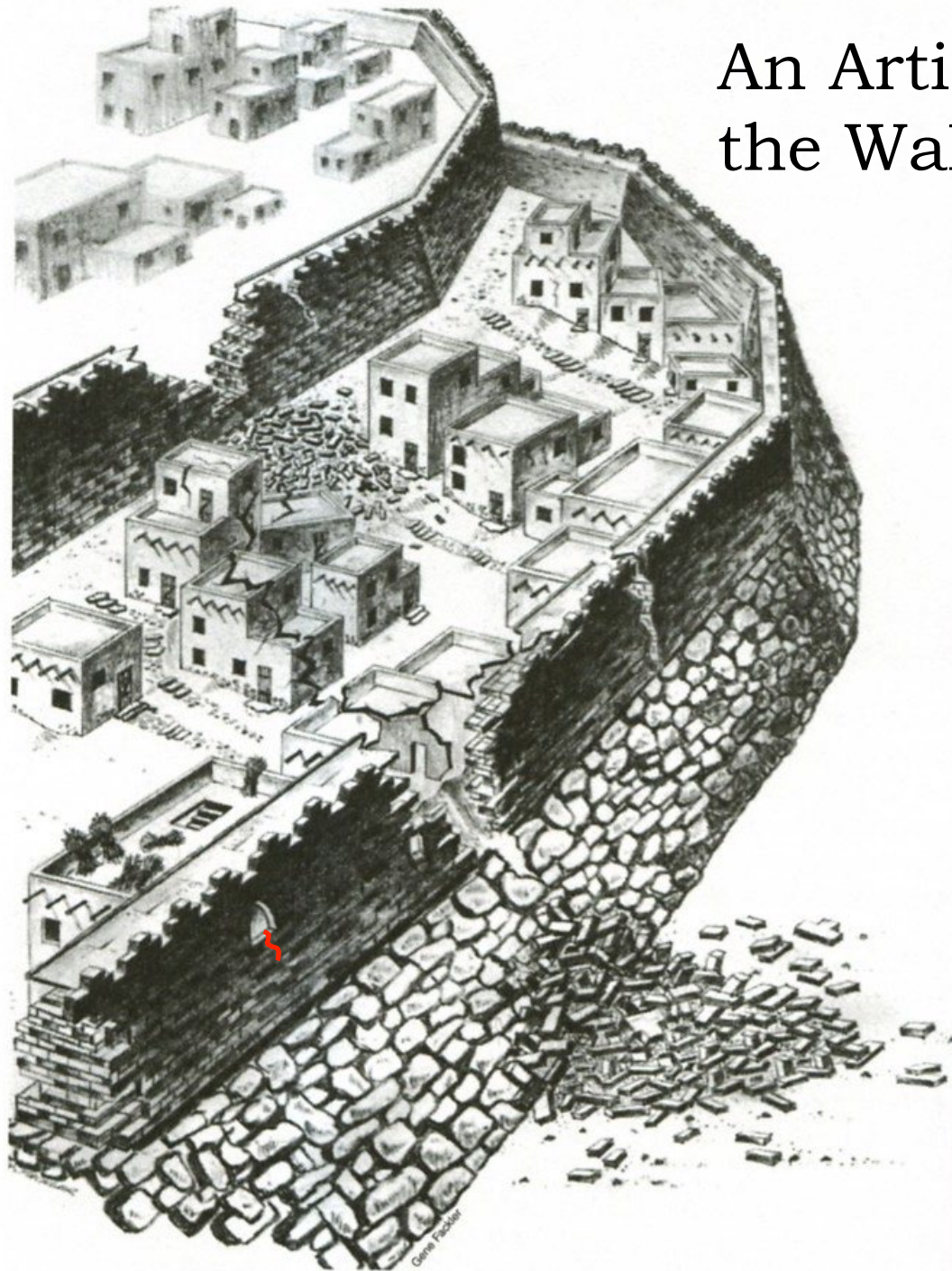
**Remains of Collapsed,  
Red-Mudbrick Wall on  
the Outer Side of the  
Revetment Wall**

**1997 Excavations of Italian  
team led by Lorenzo Nigro  
and Nicolo Marchetti**

**Collapsed remains of the red-mudbrick wall**



# An Artist's Reconstruction of the Walls of Jericho's City IV



The Jericho of the LBA I was defended by a slanted stone-revetment wall below, and a red-mudbrick wall immediately above it. To protect the citadel, another mudbrick wall rose up above the plastered rampart. Bryant Wood envisioned that Rahab's house stood above the stone revetment wall and was connected to the inside of the lower mudbrick wall (see cord of scarlet thread hanging out of the window [Josh 2:18]). City IV was destroyed by a massive fire, though parts of the wall seem to have collapsed prior to the city's being set ablaze.





## COLORED VERSION

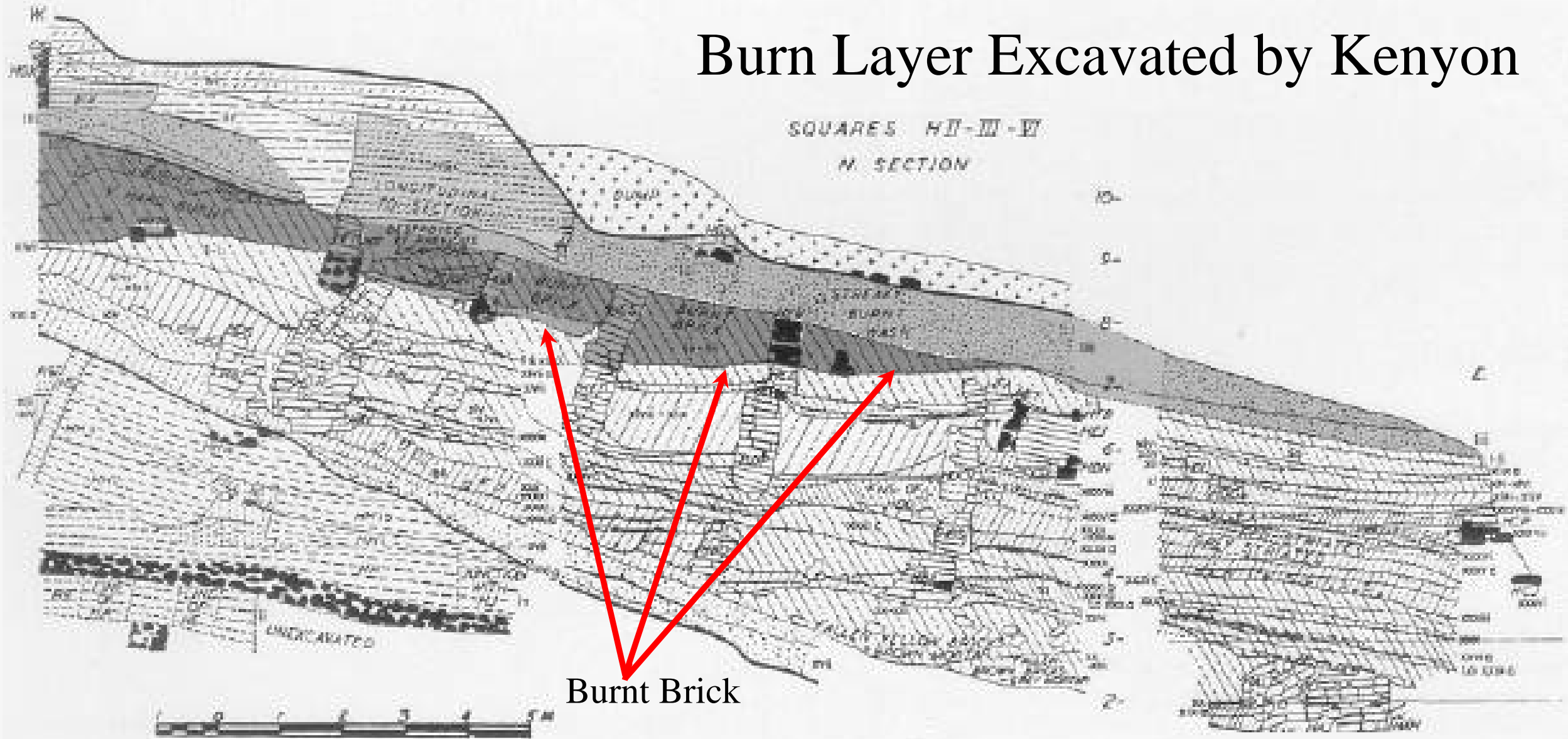
Real estate values here below the upper mudbrick wall must have been lower, since the houses were positioned on the embankment between the Upper and Lower City walls. This would not be the best place to live during time of war. This area, no doubt, was the overflow from the upper city: the poor part of town, perhaps even a slum district.

Drawing by Michael Carroll

Provided by Bryant Wood



# Burn Layer Excavated by Kenyon



A cross section of Kenyon's excavation, showing house-walls from City IV. The darkest shaded area is the burn layer, written "BURNT BRICK". Both excavators found that City IV was destroyed by a massive fire that left a layer of destruction debris 1 m or more thick across the entire excavational area.



# Spoils Banned from the Conquest of Jericho

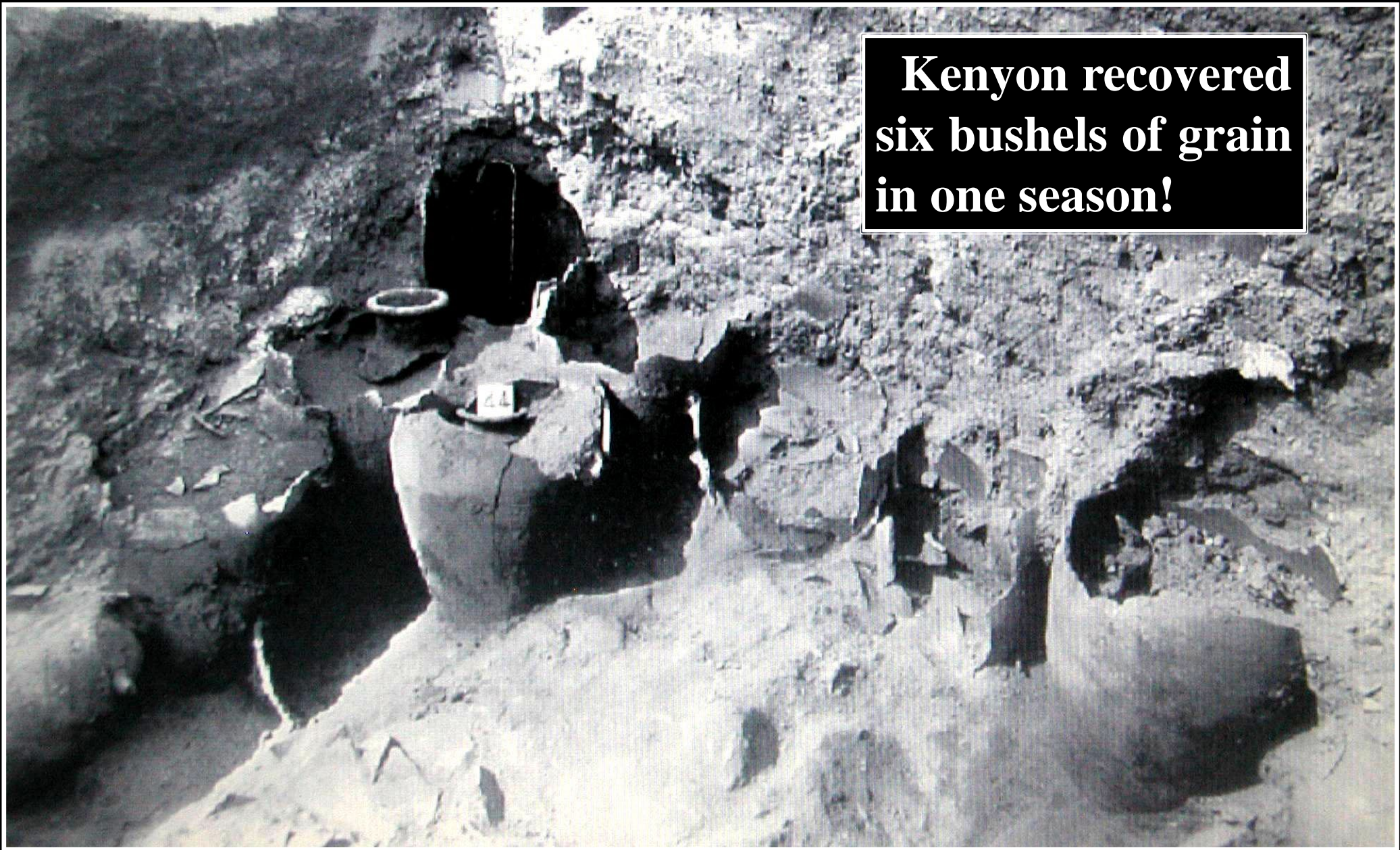
<sup>40</sup>“Now as for you, keep away from the banned objects, lest you covet the banned objects, and take *something* from the banned objects, and turn the camp of Israel into a banned object, and cut it off.”

– Josh 6:18

What were the Israelites supposed to take from Jericho?

Why were the people banned from having Jericho's spoils?

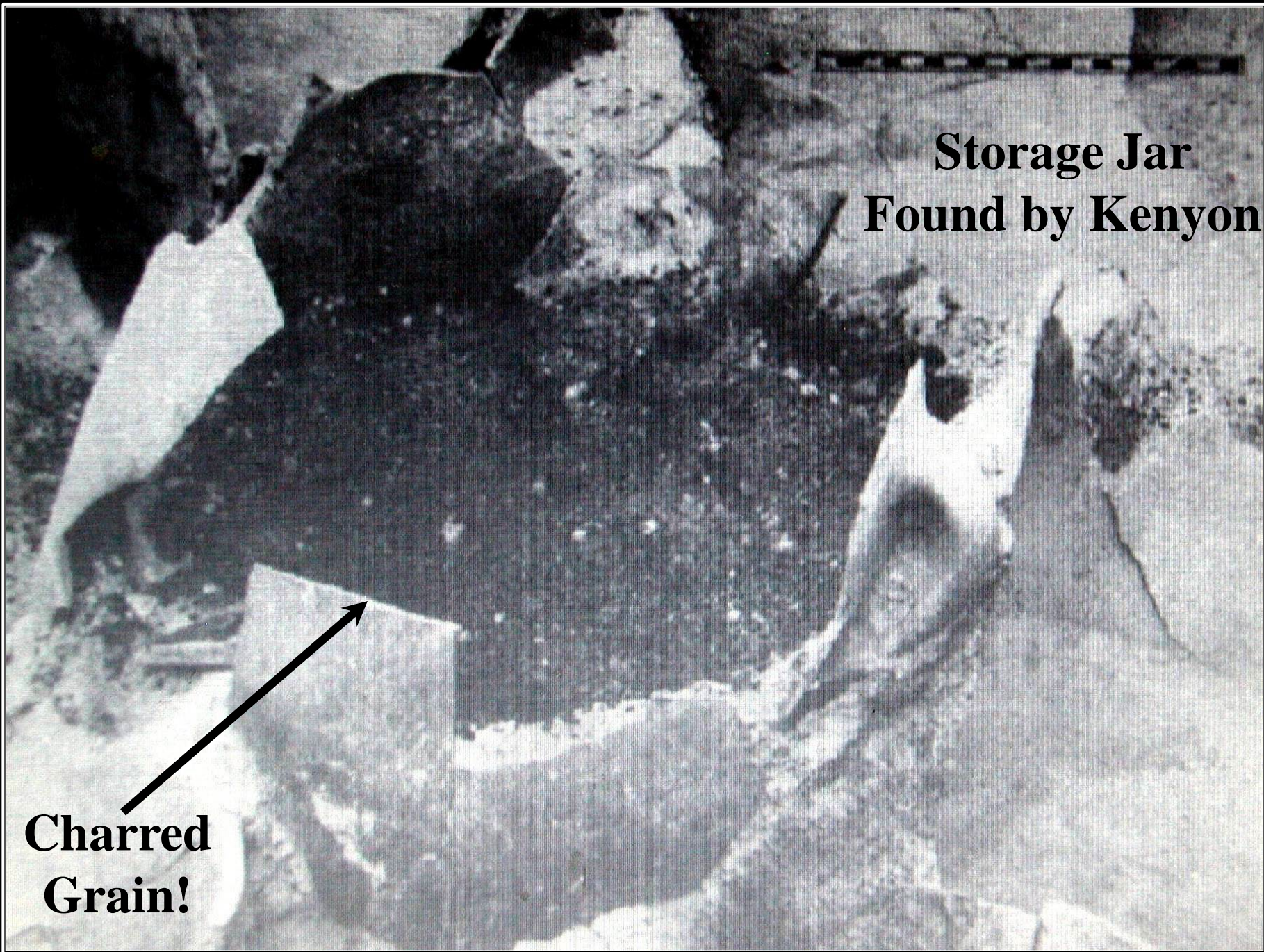




**Kenyon recovered  
six bushels of grain  
in one season!**

Garstang found these storage jars, charred in the fire set by the Israelites to destroy Jericho, **still full of grain** when he excavated the city of LBA I. Their discovery points to a destruction that followed the spring harvest.



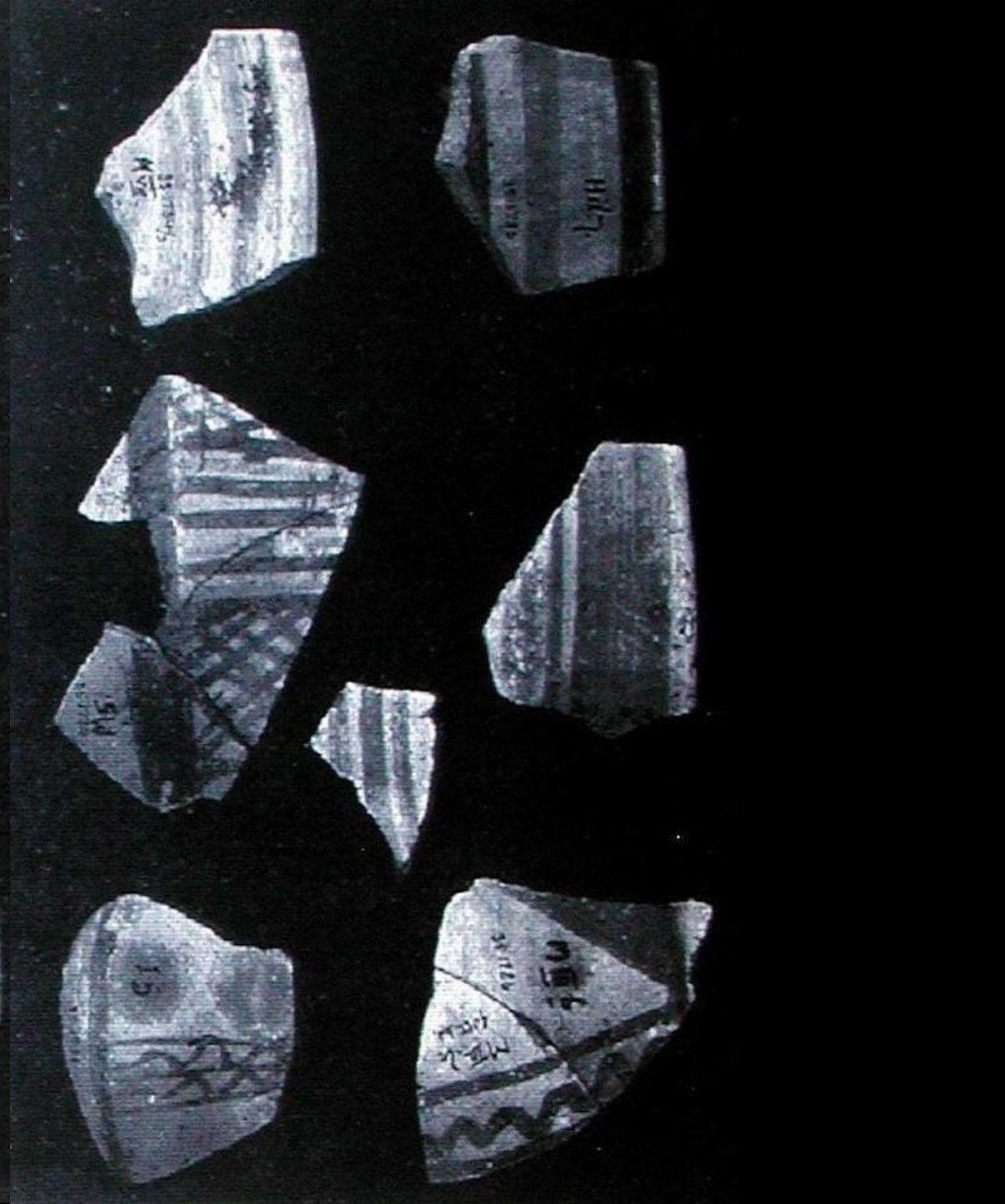


**Storage Jar  
Found by Kenyon**

**Charred  
Grain!**



# Garstang's Locally-Made Pottery (15th Century BC)



This distinctive pottery, decorated with red and black geometric patterns, was in use only in the 15th century BC, according to Dr. Bryant Wood.



# Garstang's Scarab Evidence

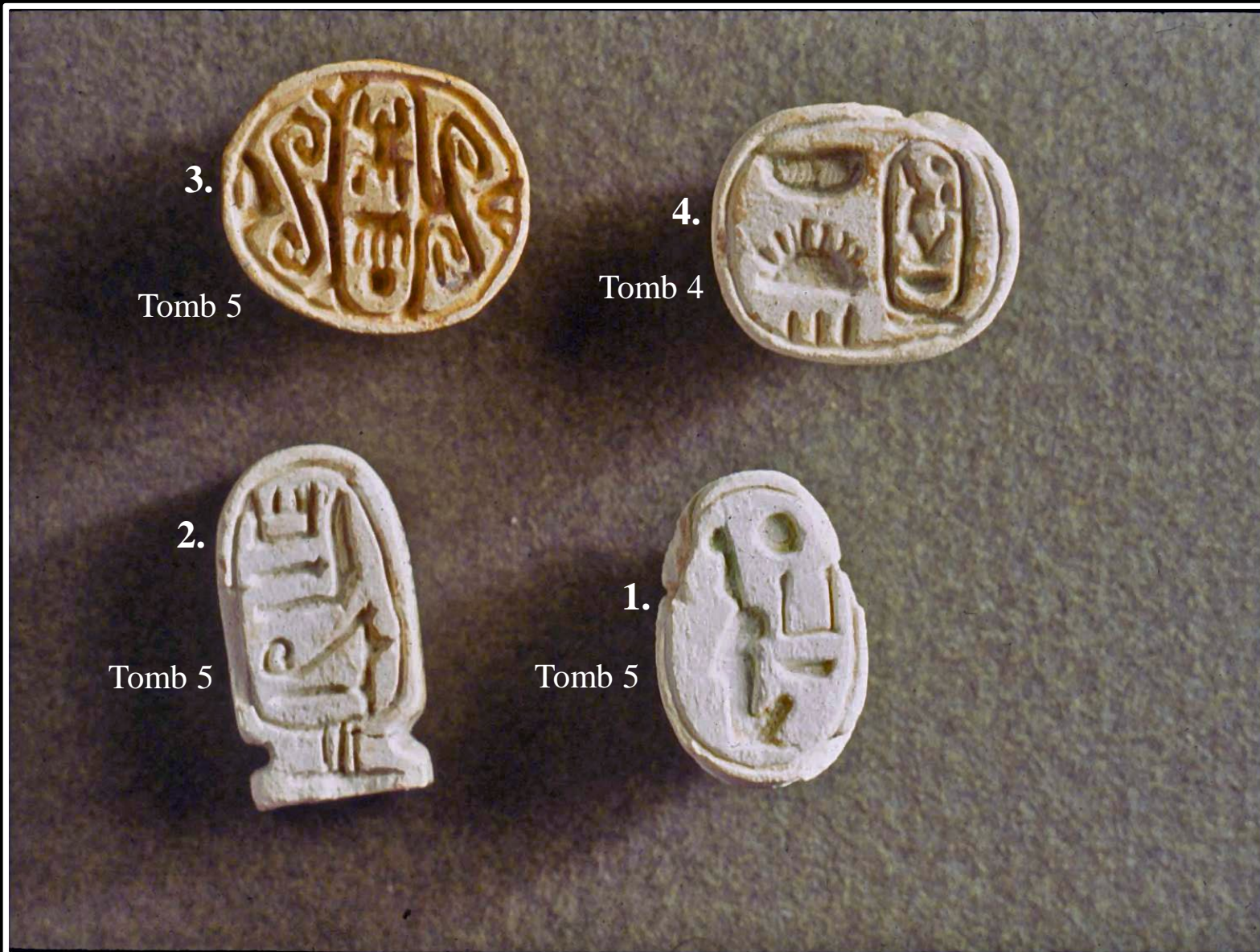
## PROPER PHARAONIC REGNAL YEARS

1. Hatshepsut (*ca.* 1504/2–1483 BC)
2. Thutmose III (*ca.* 1504–1450 BC)
3. Thutmose III (*ca.* 1504–1450 BC)
4. Amenhotep III (*ca.* 1407–1370 BC)

“Shown clockwise from upper left are scarabs bearing the names of Tuthmosis III (c. 1504–1450 B.C.E.), Amenhotep III (c. 1386–1349 B.C.E.) and Hatshepsut (c. 1503–1483 B.C.E.) and the reverse side of a seal, lower left, of Tuthmosis III.”

– Bryant G. Wood

Scarabs from two tombs to the northwest of the tel, all dating to the 15th century BC





# Israelite Conquest of Canaan

**Reason #2: The conquest of Lachish (LBA IB) includes a Hebrew inscription**

**(Reasons for Dating the Conquest to 1406–1400 BC)**



# Lachish Milk Bowl Ostrakon

Late Bronze Age IB

(ca. 1406 BC)



**B10969**



Credit: J. Dye and L. Webster, Austrian Academy of Sciences

Felix Höflmayer et al., “Early alphabetic writing in the ancient Near East: the ‘missing link’ from Tel Lachish,” *Antiquity* 95/381 (2021): 705–719



# Joshua's Defeat of Lachish

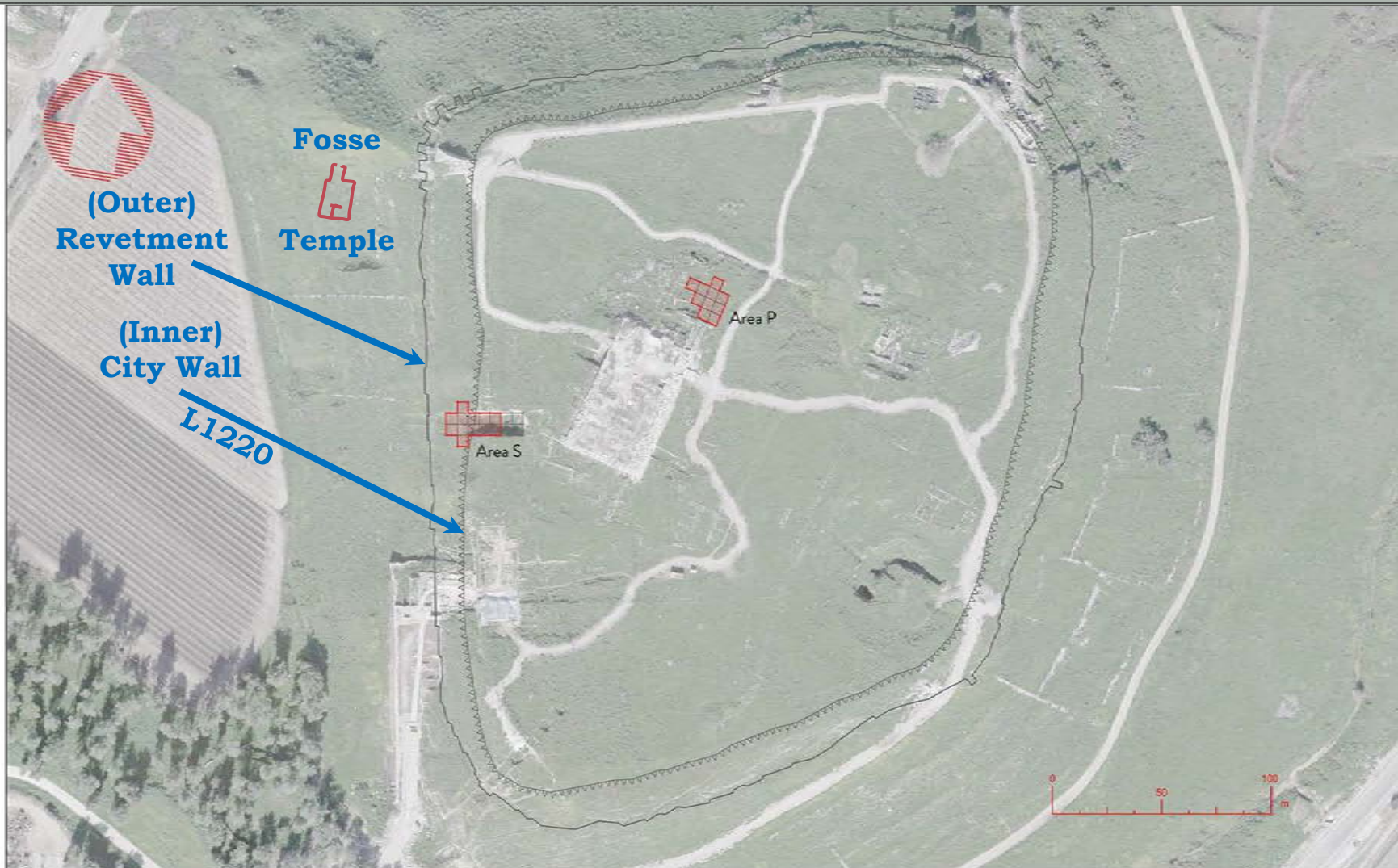
“Then Joshua and all of Israel with him moved on from Libnah to **Lachish**, and they camped by it and **fought against it**. He-who-is delivered Lachish into the hands of Israel, so he [Joshua] **captured it on the second day**, and **he struck it and every person who was in it with the edge of the sword**, according to all that he had done to Libnah.” —Joshua 10:31–32







# Findspot at Lachish: Area S



Credit: A. Woitznack, Austrian Academy of Sciences

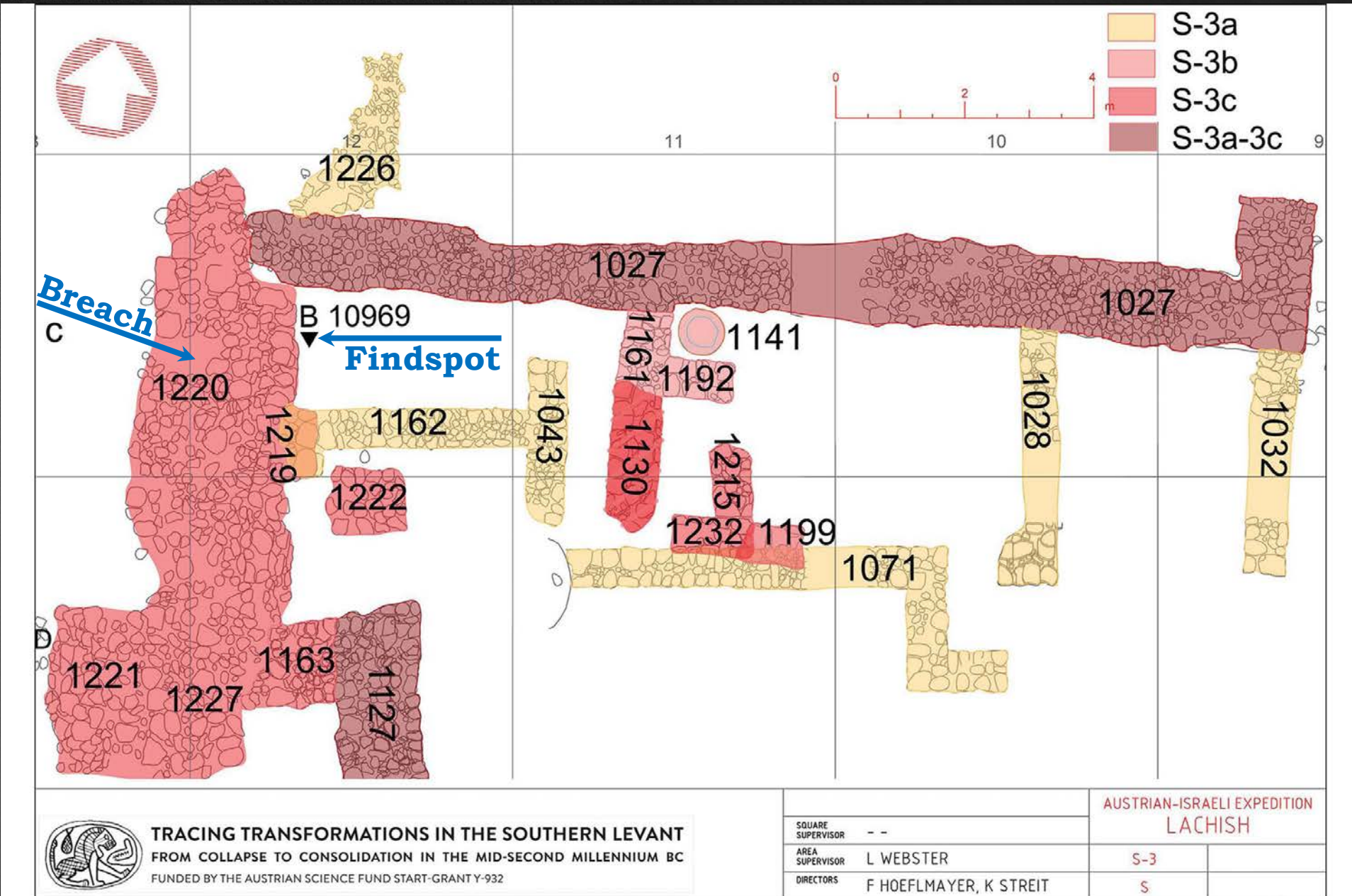


**TRACING TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN LEVANT**  
 FROM COLLAPSE TO CONSOLIDATION IN THE MID-SECOND MILLENNIUM BC  
 FUNDED BY THE AUSTRIAN SCIENCE FUND START-GRANT Y-932

SQUARE SUPERVISOR		AUSTRIAN-ISRAELI EXPEDITION LACHISH	
AREA SUPERVISOR	L. WEBSTER, A. K. JESKE		
DIRECTORS	F. HOEFLMAYER, K. STREIT	Areas S, P	

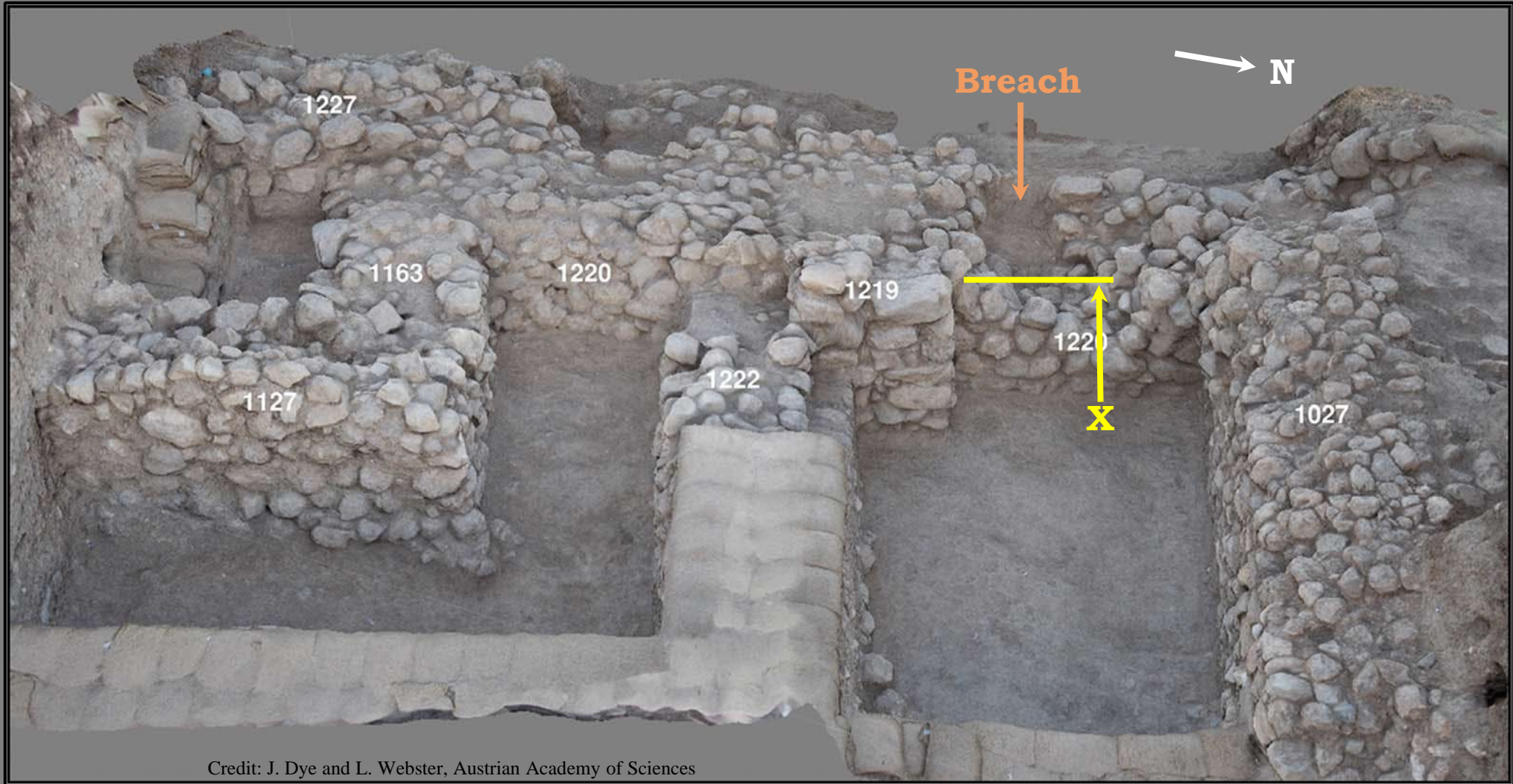


# Late Bronze Age I Fortification at Lachish





# Building 100: LBA IB (Stratum S-3b) at Lachish



**LMBO Findspot: south of Wall L1027, close to its corner w/city wall's (L1220) uppermost preserved stones**



# Dating of the Ostrakon

Period	Dates	Strata/-tum	Comment
Late Bronze Age IA	1560–1484 BC	P-3, S-3c	Meager remains, pits & fills, wall?
Late Bronze Age IB	1484–1406 BC	S-3b	City wall, Bld. 100, Fosse temple I
Destruction of settlement, elimination of population (Lachish Milk Bowl Ostrakon)			
Late Bronze Age IB	1406–1400 BC	S-3a	No city wall, portions of Bld. 100
Late Bronze Age IIA	1400–1305 BC	S-2, S-1	Frag. walls/floors, Fosse temple II
Late Bronze Age IIB	1305–1187 BC	P-1, VII	Domestic bldgs., Fosse temple III
Destruction of settlement			
Iron Age IA	1187–1130 BC	VI	Acropolis temple, Egyptian hegemony
Destruction of settlement, abandoned from Iron Age IB until early in Iron Age IIA			
Iron Age IIA	1000–841 BC	V	Initial Israelite occupation
Iron Age IIB	841–780 BC	IV	Judahites' main fortress city



# Dating of the LMBO

- ❑ By  $^{14}\text{C}$ -dating the burnt layer connected to the LMBO, the excavators dated its deposition to a median range of 1465–1455 BC. However, they failed to calibrate for the offset of 1400 BC and before (*OOTH*, 30–32).
- ❑ If  $^{14}\text{C}$  dates appear 100–150 years too old for organic material dated to *ca.* 1600 BC and 150–300 years too old for material dated to *ca.* 2000 BC, and if the offset begins with material dated to *ca.* 1400 BC, then the organic material from the burnt layer of the LBA IB (Stratum s-3b) at Lachish can be dated proportionally to about 25–35 years later.
- ❑ The adjusted radiocarbon range thus would be 1435–1405 or 1425–1395 BC ( $1\sigma$ ) and 1460–1400 or 1450–1390 BC ( $2\sigma$ ). The *terminus post quem* of the LMBO's deposition thus fits with a destruction in 1406 BC.



# Lachish Milk Bowl Ostrakon

Late Bronze Age IB

(ca. 1406 BC)



B10969

עבד<sup>1</sup> = servant  
על<sup>2</sup> = in charge of  
נפת<sup>3</sup> = honey

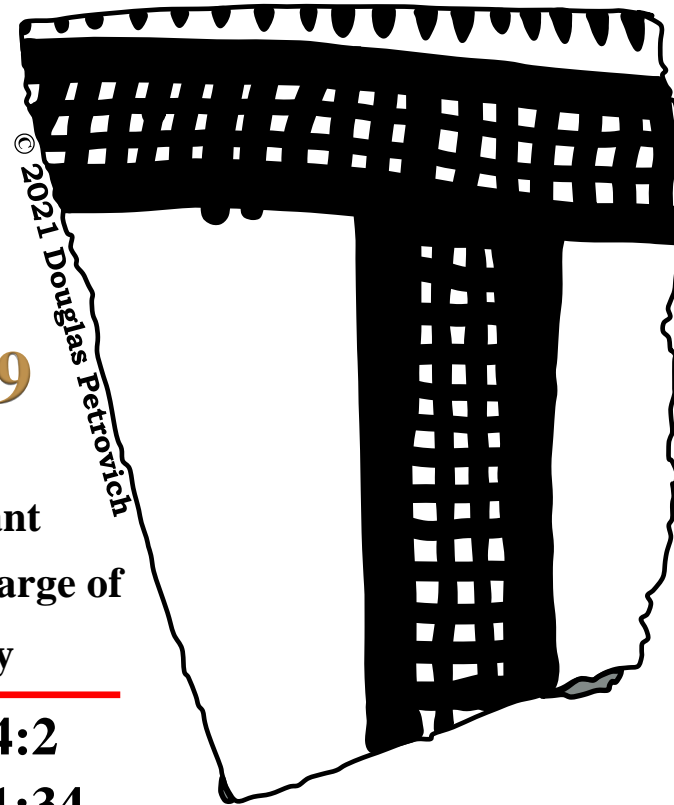
<sup>1</sup>see Gen 24:2

<sup>2</sup>see Gen 41:34

<sup>3</sup>see Prov 27:7

Biblical Hebrew Transcription:

עבד על נפת



Petrovich Translation:

“servant in charge of honey”



# Importance of the Word, “Honey”

- ❑ The Hebrew word for ‘honey,’ נֹפֶת (pronounced *nofet* or *nopet*), is unique to the Hebrew language.
- ❑ No other Semitic languages use the *npt* triconsonantal root for ‘honey’ (*NIDOTT&E*, vol. 3, 134).
- ❑ The common Ugaritic term for ‘honey’ is *nbt*, with a *b*→*p* shift.
- ❑ The term *nbt* also is attested in Punic, another Canaanite tongue.
- ❑ The Akkadian word *nūbtu* is used for ‘bee,’ but not for ‘honey.’
- ❑ As a result of the linguistic evidence, **this inscription cannot have been composed in any Semitic language except Hebrew.**
- ❑ The LMBO records a distinctively Hebrew inscription.



# Suggested Reconstruction of Events

- ❑ Joshua assigned titles to various Israelites such as “servant in charge of honey” by the time the Israelite campaign in Canaan commenced.
- ❑ The city wall at Lachish came down at various points on Day 2, which evidently included burning in places such as at Building 100.
- ❑ Israelite warriors advanced into the city and killed its inhabitants.
- ❑ On his way out of the city, the ‘servant in charge of honey’ either purposely or accidentally dropped his ostrakon atop the burnt debris.
- ❑ His occupational business card even reflects God’s pre-conquest statement that the Israelites would find Canaan to be a land flowing with **milk** and **honey** (Deut 31:20), as this proud **honey-keeper** painted his title on the inside of a potsherd from a ceramic **milk bowl**.



# Israelite Conquest of Canaan

**Reason #3: The conquest of LBA IB  
Hazor must be Joshua's destruction**

**(Reasons for Dating the Conquest to 1406–1400 BC)**



# HAZOR

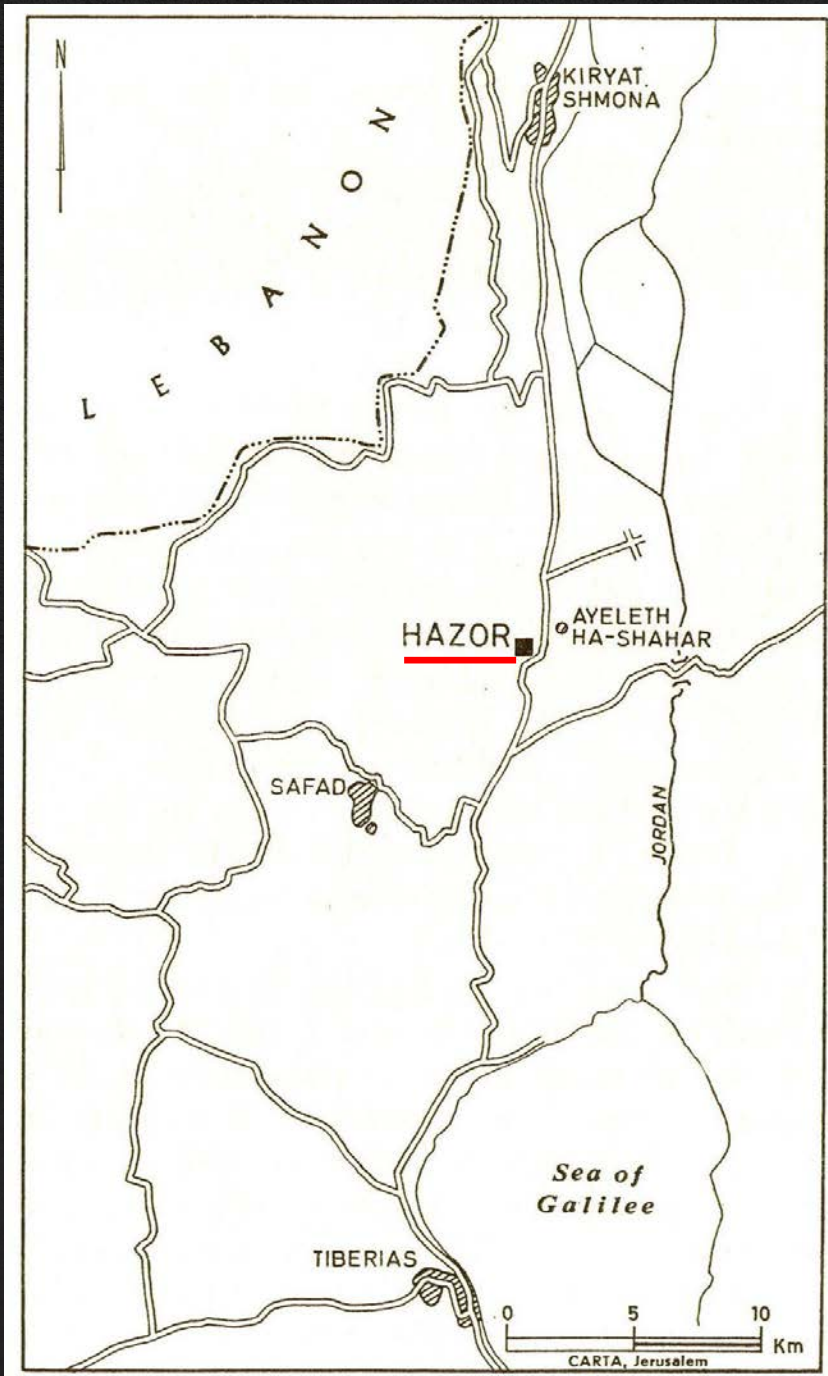
## Pre-Conquest Hazor

“Then Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, because Hazor formerly was the head of all these kingdoms.”  
—Joshua 11:10





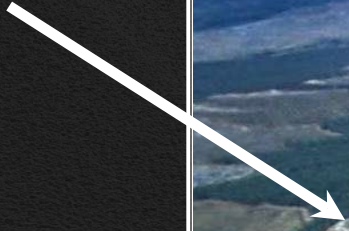
# Biblical Description of Hazor (pre-Israelite Conquest)



“Then Joshua turned back at that time and captured Hazor and struck its king with the sword, because Hazor formerly was the **head of all these kingdoms.**” —Joshua 11:10



Upper City



Lower City



Aerial View of  
Hazor from the  
East







**Revetment Wall at  
Gate Approach**

***(ca. 1725–1560 BC)***





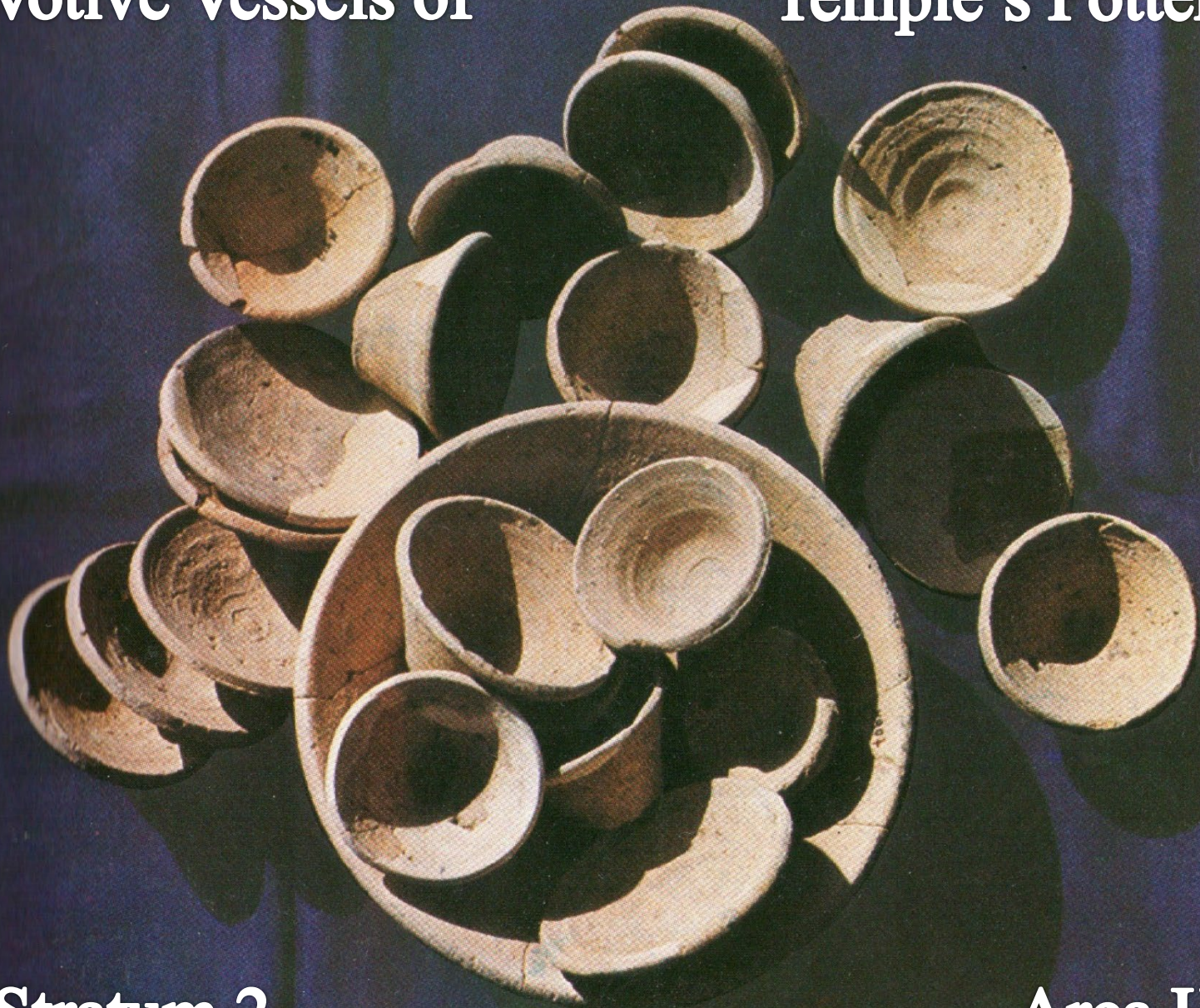
Temple of LBA I (Area H) w/*bamah* (“high place”) in center

Yadin: “[T]he temple of stratum 2 was destroyed by an enemy and the people abandoned it abruptly.”



Votive Vessels of

Temple's Potter



Stratum 2

Area H

Near the *bamah*, where the sacrificial animals were slaughtered, a single drainage channel was discovered that in part consisted of discarded incense stands. On the other side of the court was a pottery kiln that still contained a large number of votive bowls.



Area H

## Clay Cow's Liver, Used for Divination



Cuneiform Akkadian Inscription  
Mentioning a Foreign Attack

First Fragment:

“One king is bending down another. An enemy is attacking my country... Forgiveness (will be granted) to the men by the god. A servant will rebel against his lord.”

Second Fragment:

“Ishtar (goddess of war) will consume the land. Nergal (a solar deity) will . . . The gods of the city will come back.”



# Destruction of Hazor under Joshua (LBA I)

The end of this phase is highlighted by the destruction of the city under Joshua (Josh 11:10–11). The excavations of 1955–1958 showed that both the Upper and Lower Cities were settled in the LBA I. This is attested mainly by the floors and fragmentary walls in Area A, and by the considerable quantity of LBA I pottery, including Bichrome and Mycenaean II ware. The full significance of the highly developed culture of LBA I Hazor was realized only in 1968, when Yadin's team ascertained that the last phase of the Long Temple (Upper City) actually belonged to the LBA I. This temple was located adjacent to the king's palace, and all of its remains were found covered by a thick layer of brick debris, indicating that the temple never was reconstructed.



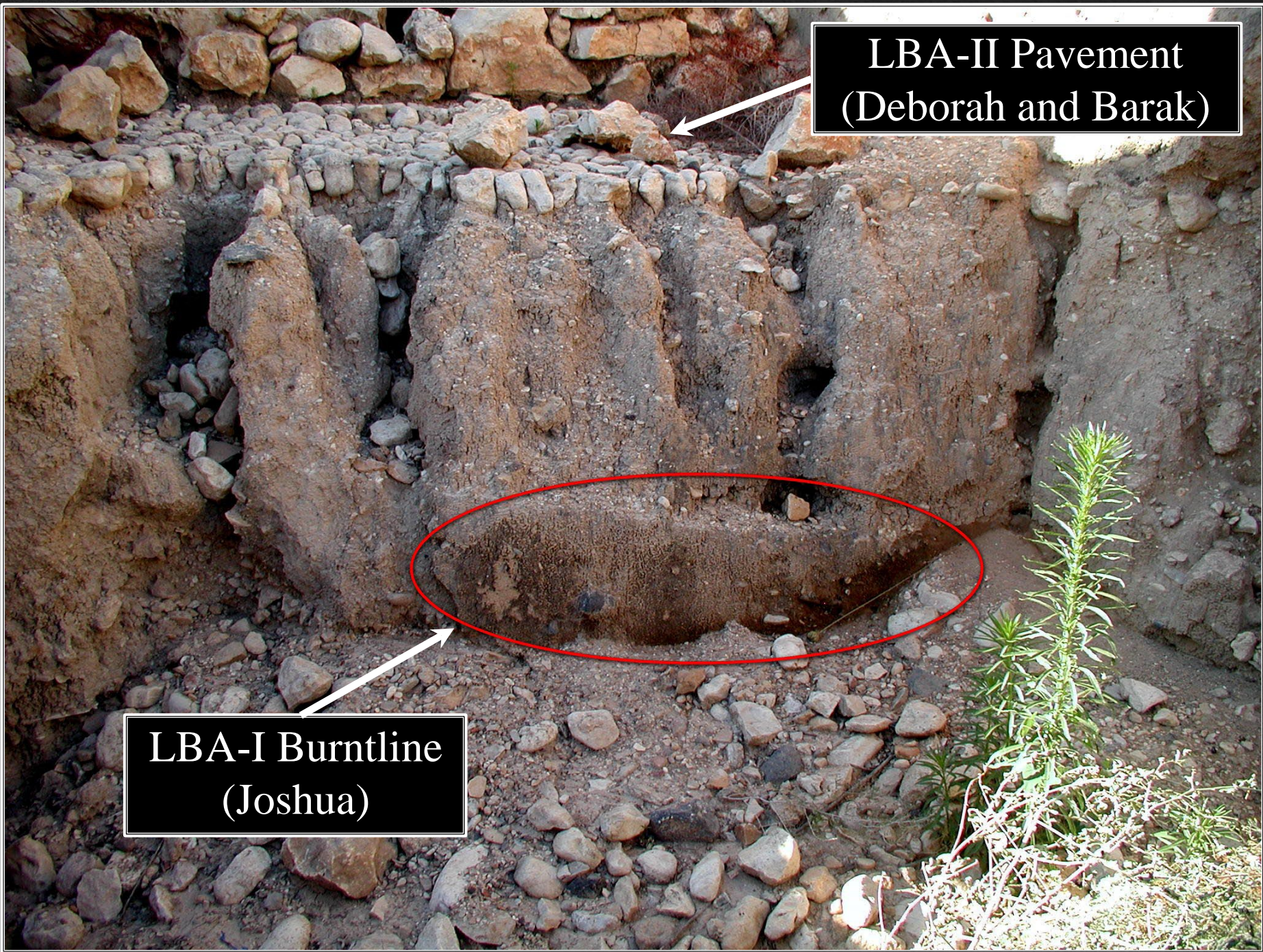
## Hazor's Excavation Report of 2000 (Area M):

“Two fragmentary walls built on top of the paved [Late-Bronze-IIB] street, which were found covered by the destruction layer marking the end of the entire architectural assemblage, indicate that the last phase of occupation here [during the LBA IIB] was of a rather poor nature. . . . The pit cut into an **earlier accumulation of fallen mud-bricks and ashes**: this is the only clear indication found so far for an earlier destruction, still in the Late Bronze Age, pre-dating the final destruction of the [last Canaanite] city. That earlier phase [i.e. of LBA I], extending beyond the excavated area, was apparently of a substantial nature, as indicated by an orthostat associated with it.”

## Hazor's Excavation Report of 2001 (Area M):

“**This earlier phase ended in a conflagration, similar to the one that brought an end to the later phase.** The ceramic assemblage associated with this earlier phase, albeit meager, seems to place the date of this earlier destruction somewhere in the Late Bronze Age I (15<sup>th</sup> century B.C.).”





LBA-II Pavement  
(Deborah and Barak)

LBA-I Burntline  
(Joshua)

LBA-I Burntline  
(Destruction  
under Joshua)

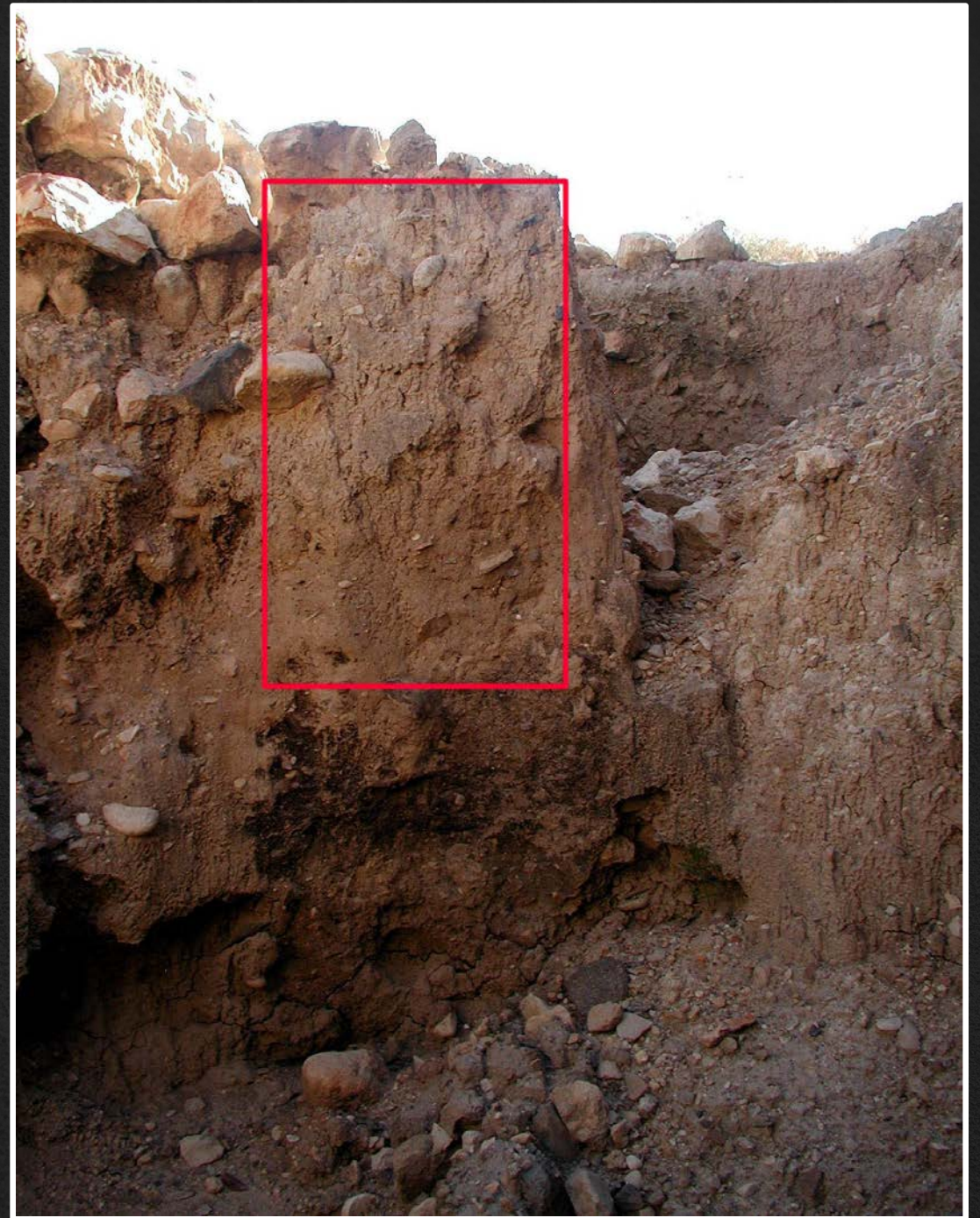
Area M



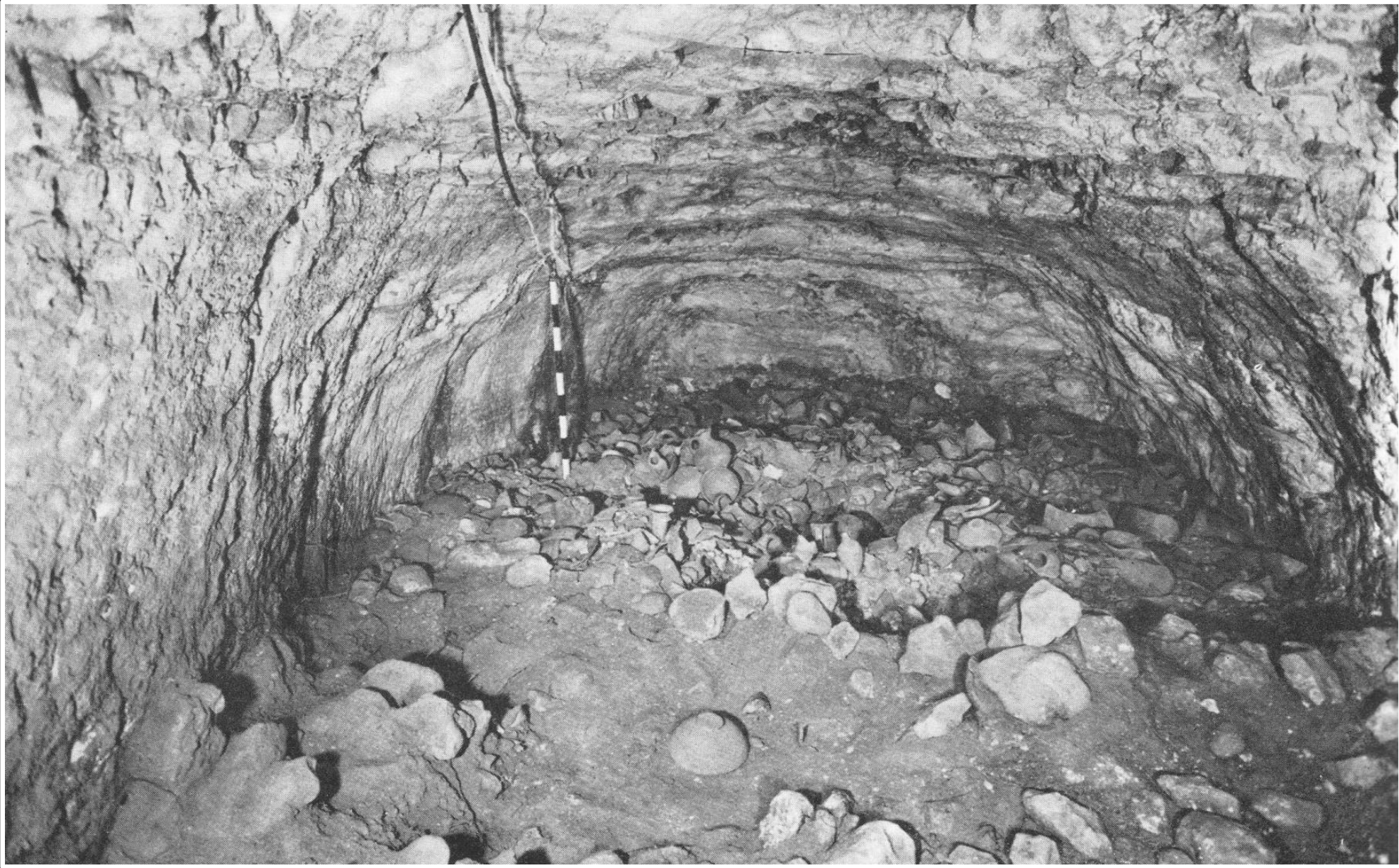
# OCCUPATIONAL GAP (Stone/Soil Fill)

Reflects the gap in  
occupation from  
*ca.* 1400–1370 BC

Pavement of Late Bronze  
Age II above, and burntline  
of Late Bronze I below





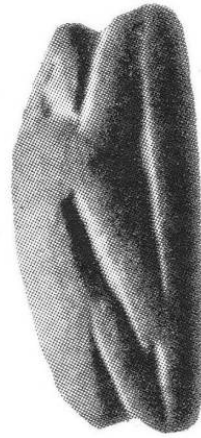


This cave (in Area F, facing northwest) contained hundreds of vessels from Hazor of the LBA IIA, including Mycenaean. In addition, it yielded an extremely important scarab from Thutmose IV's reign (*ca.* 1416–1407 BC).

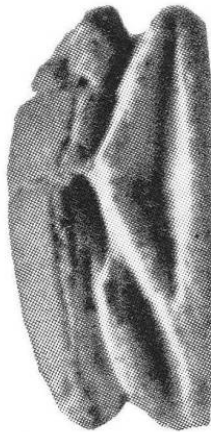
Tomb 8144



15



16

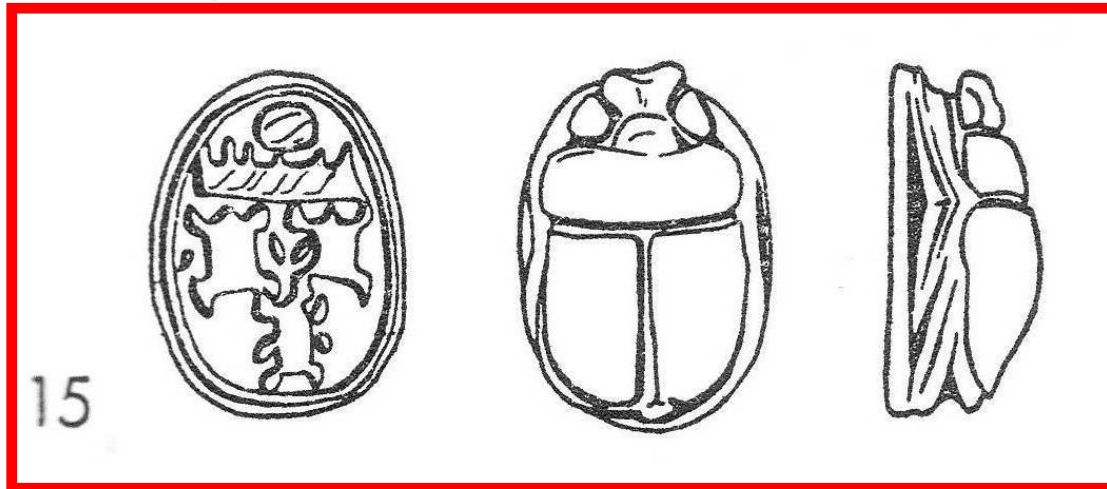


Royal Scarab of Thutmose IV (from Tomb 8144)



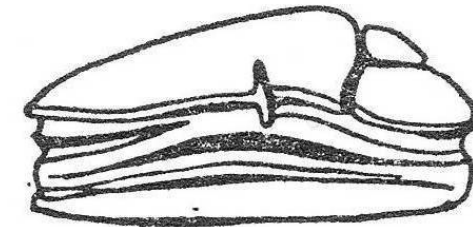
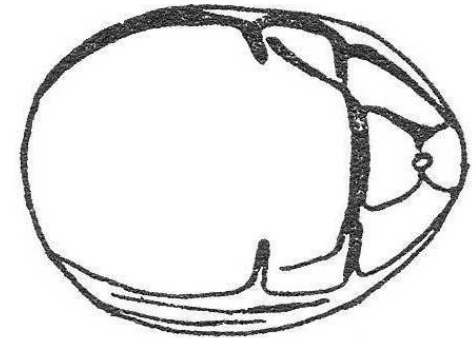
This stratified, royal scarab of Thutmose IV cannot be considered a later reproduction or a mere family heirloom that was passed down from one generation to the next. As Yadin explained, “All Thutmose IV scarabs are rare and a boon to archaeologists in this country because we know that they were made exclusively during his reign (the names of some Pharaohs continued to be inscribed on scarabs after their death, but the popularity of Thutmose IV was buried along with him). We can therefore conclude that the cave was first used sometime during his 8-year reign, . . . or immediately thereafter.”

## Royal Scarab of Thutmose IV



15

(Regnal Years: 1416–1407)



16