



**The Half Shekel Journal** by Ed Rice  
**Vol III Day 3 Thu 29 Jan:** *Carmel, Megiddo*

The whole land of Israel dwarfed to reality when Bev and I stood on Mount Carmel and looked across the Jezreel valley to see the town of Nazareth nestled in the foothills of Galilee, then looked back to see Caesarea on the coast and down the side of the Jezreel Valley to pick out the location of Megiddo. This condensing of the Holy land into a walkable, conceivable image seen from atop this height had as much an impact as reading Elijah's 63 word prayer which he uttered from this mountain, or hearing King Ahab and the people on their faces saying, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God." (1Kings 18:39) My mind's eye saw and heard these things on the third day of our visit to Israel. I saw the blood of those 400 prophets of Baal slain 2,906 years ago, and the sound of the abundance of rain that Elijah announced will never be driven from my ears. I was in God's Holy land, and I stood on Mount Carmel long viewed as only a dot at B-3 on map plate 9 of my Schofield reference Bible. The day presses us on and we need to be in Megiddo right after our lunch in the Druze village.

Our host served up our pita bread dipping dinner, with no individual plates or utensils but several dishes on one platter per table of five, wherewith we, the Cicanskys, and Marilyn while sharing one platter tried to dip from separate sides of the favorites because double dipping was the norm here. Our host was a secular Druze. He was still a Druze, but not living according to their very strict lifestyle. A Druze believes in reincarnation and the instant one dies, he is reincarnated in the birth of another Druze somewhere in the world. Therefore their numbers never change and the only way you can become Druze is by birth to a Druze father and mother. Their founder is supposed Jethro, the father in law of Moses, and it is taught that he will someday be reincarnated and born of a male, without female involvement. The male britches, of practicing Druze, must have a large pocket in the buttocks in case he should ever drop in, or 'out' as the case may be, unexpectedly. The Druze commune together with no entertainments and a strict set of rules taught by a father in their secret reading of their hand copied secret book. This reading is only done in the privacy of their own home and even secular Druze are very careful to maintain this secrecy. By choice or by ignorance, our host feigned the latter during the cross examination of 13 preachers. The Druze assimilate into many cultures and although they indulge in no entertainment they sure did put out an exceptional lunch for the 24 of us. They live peacefully in Israel, and even serve in the Israeli military. They are very sincere in their beliefs but 12 Baptist Preachers of the Gospel were all silently repeating John 14 in their minds: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also. <sup>4</sup> ¶ And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. <sup>5</sup> Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? <sup>6</sup> Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**" The tunnel at Megiddo closes at dark and we hurry to the bus.



The Bible says that Solomon built the walls of Megiddo (2Kings 9:15) but the archaeologist shovel tells us that Ahab, 70 years later<sup>1</sup>, was the king that did the major

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1 Our guide, being very cognizant in the latest tools of archeology, was quite insistent that a new carbon-14 dating method which uses atomic particle analysis can date dead plant life to within 2 years of it's dying. Therein the date of the oldest wheat grains, lodged back in the rock crevices of the excavated

constructions within Megiddo. (2Kings 9:27 tells us he died there 112 years after Solomon.) A 'tel,' Arabic for 'a hill or mound,' hides layer upon layer of conquests and victors which 'tells' a history and these 27 layers of conquests are indeed at the crossroads of empires. An ideal defense overlooking an ideal farming valley strategically placed at the intersection of three continents makes Megiddo an ideal site for archaeological discovery of our 4000 years of history back to Noah. It was almost embarrassing to focus all my interest on only a few kings of Israel when peeling back before our eyes was world history from Napoleon's failed 1799 middle east campaign all the way to the Canaanite peoples, the decedents of Ham, Noah's son, that stepped off the ark in 2448 BC. (Gen 10:6) But such is the necessity of a 3 hour tour. Discovering city gates and concluding which were built by kings of Israel, uncovering grain 'silos' and older Bronze Age temples, horse stables and homes, palaces and water systems, are all an archaeologist's dream and a Bible student's paradise. There was no time nor allowance to descend to the bottom of the grain 'silo' while picking and dating 2,958 year old grains of wheat still lodged behind rocks. No time to sit in the gate or measure to estimate the stable capacity nor estimate army sizes and population estimates. The water system tunnel that would exit us from Megiddo would close at 4 and there was little time to conceive the rock chiseling and bolder lifting, necessitated by our 182 step descent (35m) down the 'well' and then up the grade through the tunnel to exit at the once concealed and buried spring. The Megiddo visit enlivened a flavor for all history, and for Bible accuracy. This war laden tel at the cross roads of continents should occupy more of my time because it will once again be a battle field of epic proportion:

“Zeph 3:8 ¶ Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination *is* to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy. Zech 12:9 ¶ And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. 14:3 Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. 4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which *is* before Jerusalem on the east, and the Mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, *and there shall be* a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. 5 And ye shall flee *to* the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, *and* all the saints with thee. Re 14:19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs. Re 16:16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” (see also Isa 10:27-34, 24:21-23, 26:20-21, 34:1-8, 63:1-6, 66:15-16, Jer 25:29-33, Ezek 39:1-16, Joel 2:1-11, 3:9-16, Obd 1:15, Zeph 3:8, Zech 12:1-9, 14:1-5, Matt 24:27-28, Rev 14:14-20, 16:14-16, 19:17)

The cross section meticulously excavated into the tel exhilarated the mind for what remains yet to be discovered, but ancient history was but a passing fancy for this 10 days. I want to walk where my God, who was made flesh and dwelt among us, walked on this earth and we boarded the bus and headed toward Nazareth.

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grain silo at Megiddo, came to be 900 BC in Ahab's reign, and not 990 BC in Solomon's reign. Carbon-14 dating must still rely on the assumption that the C-14 levels 3,000 years ago were roughly equivalent to those found today. Today C-14 is formed when cosmic radiation strikes nitrogen, is about 1 part per trillion, and decays back into nitrogen through beta decay, with a half life of 5,730 +/- 40 years. At the death of a plant or animal the ingestion of carbon ceases and the levels of C-14 begins this measurable decay.