

that it is a lime-kiln, but there is no limestone at Megadim.

The Byzantine-period finds discovered earlier by Broshi include large paved areas, pottery, coins and glass. There does not appear to be anything distinctly from the Roman period at Megadim.

Broshi connected this site with a 4th-century AD account by the Bordeaux Pilgrim, who mentions a horse-trading station 9 Roman miles south of Shiqmona, which is located in modern Haifa. (Carrie Rhodes)



Barkay Lecture

On February 12, 2007 Dr. Gabriel Barkay, professor at Tel Aviv and Hebrew Universities and director of the Temple Mount Sifting Project, presented a lecture entitled "Artifacts from the Temple Mount" for the Horn Museum Lecture Series.

Dr. Barkay presented a detailed overview of the history of the Temple Mount. Jewish tradition says that the Temple Mount was created first and then the world around it. The site is the location of Abraham's attempt to sacrifice his son Isaac, and is called a mountain in the area of Moriah. King Solomon later built the temple on Mt. Moriah. When Mt. Zion is mentioned it is referring to the Temple Mount, though it no longer is a mountain following the building efforts of Herod the Great, who doubled the area of the Temple Mount by cutting off the top of the mount and walling it in, creating a flat artificial platform.

The Canaanites were the first to make the Temple Mount holy in worshiping their god Shalem (or Shulam) on top. This name is mentioned several times in the OT as the name of the city Salem, which would later become Jerusalem. David conquered the city of Jebus and purchased the threshing floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, in order to build an altar. His son Solomon built the temple on this site, which remained for 400 years. The sec-



Gabriel Barkay.

ond temple was built by the returnees from the Babylon captivity, in 515 BC. The third temple was built by Herod. It is usually called the second temple because there was no gap in the sacrificial administration on the site. Titus destroyed the temple in AD 70 while quelling the Jewish revolt, which began in AD 66. The Romans built a temple to Zeus on the location of the former Jewish temple. During this time Jews would gather once a year to wail for the destruction of the temple at the perforated rock, which is now covered by the Dome of the Rock. During the Byzantine period the site was left in ruins, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher became the site favored by Christians. Most scholars believe that there was no activity on the Temple Mount at this time; however, the Temple Mount Sifting Project has found a lot of evidence of occupation from this period, leading Barkay to suggest that history books need to be rewritten on this matter.

In the year 638 Jerusalem was conquered by Omar and the army of the Prophet Mohammed. There were several Jews in the army who told Omar of the significance of the Temple Mount. Omar built a wooden mosque on the site, but it wasn't until the late 7th century that an Umayyad caliph who was not in control of any of the holy sites of Islam (Mecca

or Medina) made the Temple Mount a holy site. Literature praising Jerusalem was printed, and in 691 Abdu-Malek built the Dome of the Rock and his son built the El-Aqsa Mosque. The name of Jerusalem doesn't appear in the Quran at all, but tradition connects the night journey of the prophet from the "near mosque" to the "far mosque" (el-Aqsa) as being in Jerusalem, where the prophet ascended into heaven. The Dome of the Rock was built as a shrine, replacing the Jewish temple, not as a mosque, though it was later turned into one. Only since the 16th century has the western (Wailing) Wall become the most venerated site by the Jews. Since the Mamluk period no buildings have been added to the Temple Mount.

This has been the status quo on the site until the 20th century. Major changes took place in the 1990s due to a change in policy, which led the Waqf (the Islamic Temple Mount authority) to build a new mosque in Solomon's Stables. There are also over 50 ancient subterranean openings (cisterns, tunnels, storage areas) and many of these were penetrated by the digging of the Waqf. Most of the debris (400 truck loads) was discarded in the Kidron Valley. Barkay says this is an archaeological crime of global proportions. One of Dr. Barkay's students showed him a collection of sherds he had collected from the dump site that extended from the 1st Temple through the Islamic periods. This discovery convinced Barkay that it was worth sifting through the material. A team of approximately 100 volunteers a day has been wet-sifting the dirt and debris since 2004. This is the first time that all the debris from a site is being fully sifted. More than 1,500 ancient coins from the Persian period through modern times (including Hasmonean, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader, and Islamic) have been found along with hundreds of pieces of jewelry, objects of war such as arrowheads, spearheads, and blades, and many other unique finds. (Owen Chesnut)

