

## Abila Lecture

On Oct. 25, Timothy Snow, Instructor at Mid-South Christian College, in Memphis, TN presented an illustrated presentation for the Horn Museum lecture series entitled *Abila at the Time of Jesus*. Abila is a 25-acre site located about 5 km south of the Yarmuk River. Although the site is not mentioned in the NT, the Decapolis, or ten cities, is mentioned three times (Matt 4:25; Mark 5:20, 7:31). In the second century A.D. Abila is mentioned as one of the Decapolis cities (Ptolemy *Geo* 5.14). However, the list of cities varied over time, and since Abila is not mentioned in the earlier list, it may not have been one of them at that time.

Abila was visited by Seetzen in 1806 and by Schumacher in 1888, but it was not excavated until 1982, after a survey by Mare and others in 1980. It has been worked consistently since that time.

Roman period ruins found at Abila include two layers (basalt and limestone) of a Roman road that runs through the site in Area B, a plaza area, and a bath complex as well as arcosolia and loculi tombs with frescoed walls, *bas reliefs* and occasionally a sump. A torso and lower leg of a statue of Artemis with a quiver for arrows on its back illustrate the type of Roman period artifacts found at the site.

At least seven Byzantine churches (or basilicas) have been found attesting to the impact of Christianity at Abila. (Paul J. Ray, Jr.)



Timothy Snow.

