

Lachish (Lakhish)

Lachish was a strategic palace, fortress city in the Shephelah Hills overlooking the coastal plain to the west, Azekah to the north and Judean Hills to the east. Canaanites had settled here by 3,000 BC. When Joshua entered the land in 1400 BC the king of Lachish joined a coalition of 5 kings defeated at Gibeon. Joshua moved toward Lachish and took it in a



matter of days during his central campaign. Archaeology has shown that Lachish was not fortified at this time. Later the city became a fortification for Judah when Rehoboam made it his southern fort in a line of cities protecting invasion from the West. Lachish became the most important city in Judah next to Jerusalem and was built up with a palace/fort on a podium behind a double line of walls on the hill where it stood. It fell to Sennacherib in 701 BC. His palace in Nineveh depicts the battle in carved reliefs that covered his wall. These can still be seen today. In 587 Nebuchadnezzar's Babylonians took the city after defeating Azekah. A hastily written ostraca was found in a guardroom reporting watching the Babylonian invasion. It said, "We are watching over the beacon of Lachish...Azekah is not to be seen." Excavation uncovered gates, walls, palace, moat, temples, well, etc.

In the Bible: **Jos.10:1**, Joshua takes Lachish; **2 Chr.11:5**, Rehoboam fortifies Lachish; **2 Kn.14:19** Amaziah (769 BC) strengthened it and fled there from Jerusalem during a rebellion, but was killed there; **Amos1:1**; **Zec.14:5**, in 760 BC an earthquake destroyed part of the city which was rebuilt; **2 Kg.18:13-17;19:8**, Sennacherib invades Judah, takes Lachish and made it his base to attack Jerusalem; **Jer.34:7**, Jeremiah says Azekah and Lachish would be the last cities to fall before Jerusalem.



Sennacherib's siege ramp 230' wide made of 15,000 ton of stone. 1,000 arrowheads were found in this ramp which is depicted in reliefs with 5 battering rams on it.



Israelite's wall and gate into the city of Lachish.