Shechem - The Canaanite City, Tel - Balata

Site description: The topography of the city's location, strategy, water, and other natural resources played a decisive and ideal role in its establishment and continuation as a central city from the dawn of history until the present era. The surrounding springs provided the needed water for the population, and the valley between the two mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, formed an accessible corridor for the movement of commercial caravans to become a point of intersection of the essential historical roads, linking the Jordan Valley to the ports of the Mediterranean and northern Palestine to its south. The plain of Askar village also provided sufficient areas to grow crops.The area of the hill is about 45 dunums. Still, it is not confirmed because of the extensions of the hill below the residential buildings of the neighboring village of Balata, so that this area may increase to 54 dunums. The oldest forms of housing on the hill go back to the Chalcolithic period of 4500 BC, then housing developed in the site as a small village in the ancient Bronze Age in the third millennium BC.However, the most critical development of the hill was during the Middle Bronze Age, during the second millennium BC, when it developed into a fortified city, and one of the most essential Canaanite city-kingdoms in Palestine. A semi-circular defensive wall surrounded this city, and it included two gates, the first in the northeast, which had three entrances and was protected by two towers on both sides, and guard rooms on the right and left sides. The second is located on the eastern side, the defensive gates and wall formed an advanced defensive system in that era, and they were built from huge rock blocks cut from the rocks of the foot of the nearby Mount Ebal.The construction of the fortified temple dates back to the same era as the city's fortifications in the Middle Bronze Age, and it is a model for the Canaanite temples in Palestine. It was called the Fortress Temple; because of the size and thickness of its walls. During that period, the city was destroyed and burned in 1550 BC by Ahmose I. The city was rebuilt and then destroyed many times due to the wars that were taking place between the Palestinian city-kingdoms, the most important of which was the defeat of Shechem, and the killing of King Labaw by the army of the Kingdom of Megiddo.Then, in 722 BC, the Assyrians invaded and imposed control over the city. After that, it became a small village that witnessed a limited urban presence in the Greek period 333 BC, and it remained until it was re-established in the Roman era to the west of its location in the year 72 AD. The city and some of its kings were mentioned in the Pharaoh's curse (which are pottery pots on which the names of the hostile cities and their kings were written in hieroglyphs, attached to curses, and then these pots were broken), thinking that this process would destroy these cities and eliminate their leaders.The city was mentioned during the reign of Pharaoh Senusret III 1843-1538 BC, in a text on an obelisk documenting his victories over the kingdoms of the Palestinians, including Shechem. It appeared again in the fourteenth century BC in the letters of Tel el-Amarna under the name of Shekmou and its king, Labaw. The hill received early attention from the archaeological missions in Palestine, as the results presented a description of a section of the city's fortifications on the northwestern side, and the northwestern gate, the eastern gate, and areas of the extension of the defensive wall were also discovered.It is worth mentioning that The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has restored and rehabilitated the site to become an archaeological park.

Sites & Attractions: Type

- Archaeological hill

- http://www.tellbalata.com
  Websitehttp://www.tellbalata.com

Address

The city of Shechem precedes the valley of Nablus from the eastern side at the midway between Mount Gerizim and Ebal, and connects to the east with the plain of Askar. It is bordered to the north by Amman Street and commercial buildings. From the wes...
Nablus - Faisal Street - Al Bareed Building (Government Departments Complex) - 2nd floor.
PS-NBS
Palestinian Territories

32.21376,35.28205
View in Google Maps

Booking On Site

Fee: Special Group Rate

No

Booking Online

No

Booking via Phone

No

Advance booking required

No

Agent Voucher Accepted

No

No

Handicap bathroom

No

Stairs

No

Wheelchair Friendly

No

Stroller Friendly

No