CAESAREA (PLACE) [Gk *kaisareia* (καισαρεια)]. A seaport located ca. 50 km N of Tel Aviv and ca. 45 km S of Haifa on the Mediterranean coast (M.R. 140212); also known as Caesarea Maritima or Caesarea Palestinae.

A. Caesarea's History

For millennia before any permanent occupation occurred, the future site of Caesarea Maritima had been used as a roadstead for maritime trade between Egypt and the Levant. The founder of the first known settlement at the site was a Sidonian king named Strato, who lived during the 4th century B.C.E. His trading station came to be known as Strato's Tower.

The original village may have been located ca. 300 m N of the subsequent Crusader fortifications. It probably included a small harbor, private houses, some official buildings, magazines for storage, and perhaps a lighthouse or watchtower that may have given the settlement its name. Adjacent to the fertile Plain of Sharon, the site provided an excellent maritime outlet for the agricultural abundance of the region.

In 259 B.C.E., when the region had passed under Ptolemaic control, an Egyptian official named Zeno arrived at the site to inspect the estates and manage the financial interests of his employer, Apollonius, and his king, Ptolemy Philadelphus. His visit, recorded in the so-called Zeno papyrus, provides the first mention of Strato's Tower or of the site of Caesarea itself.

Near the end of the 2d century B.C.E., a petty ruler named Zoilus seized Strato's Tower and the nearby city of

Freedman, D. N., Herion, G. A., Graf, D. F., Pleins, J. D., & Beck, A. B. (Eds.). (1992). In *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday.
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Dor 12 km to the north. He transformed the coastal trading settlement into a fortified port city—a political imperative considering his tenuous hold on these coastal enclaves and the rise of the Hasmonean dynasty. In addition, he expanded his port's harbor capacity by creating an artificial, protected anchorage in the lee (N) of the site's highest promontory. This facility, which was literally carved from the coast and then flooded, augmented a harbor to the north that had served the original settlement. Both basins were now enclosed within the city walls, consistent with the tradition of harbor construction of the Hellenistic age.

Zoilus held Strato's Tower until it was taken by Alexander Jannaeus in ⚑ 103 B.C.E. Its fate after this date is not clear, although its fortunes clearly declined. It had fallen into a ruinous state by the time of Herod the Great (⚑40–4 B.C.E.).

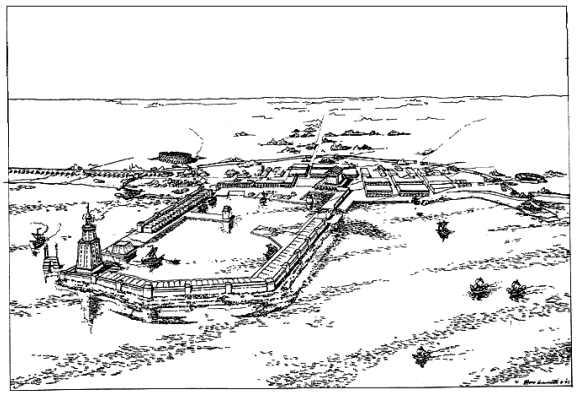
Having survived the tumultuous last years of the Roman civil wars, Herod continued as Rome's client king of Judea. A successful meeting with Octavian (later Augustus Caesar) led to reconfirmation of his status and to a grant of additional territory which included the coastal region embracing the ruins of Strato's Tower.

Herod decided to build a major international port in his newly acquired land to foster several policy goals. A grand city built in the style of a Roman provincial capital and named for his imperial patron would be a tangible demonstration of his loyalty and would manifest his commitment to the traditions of Rome. In addition, Herod, who was a Jew and who would eventually rebuild

the Second Temple in Jerusalem, could show his sympathy and support for his non-Jewish subjects through the construction of a great Greco-Roman urban center complete with pagan temples and other structures (a theater, hippodrome, and amphitheater) that were inimical to his Jewish constituency. This ambitious building program was a gentile counterpoint to his rebuiding of the Jewish temple.

Herod's dream for Caesarea had an economic dimension as well. He hoped that this port, with its great harbor complex called Sebastos, would challenge and perhaps supplant Alexandria as the great emporium of the eastern Mediterranean. Finally, the erection of such an elegant city from the ruins of Strato's Tower would confirm Herod's place in history as a great statesman and master builder. With so much at stake, work on the new city proceeded rapidly. In little more than a decade (⚑ ca. 22–10/9 B.C.E.), the city was completed and dedicated with spectacular games, with the Sebastos harbor complex finished perhaps a few years earlier. See Fig. CAE.01.

The primary source for Herodian Caesarea is the ancient historian Flavius Josephus (*JW* 1.408–14; *Ant.* 15.331–41). Although not a contemporary of the king, he knew Caesarea and its history well. We are fortunate to have not only his description of Herod's city at its inception but also an account of the actual building of the Outer Basin of Sebastos as well—a literary description that is unique in ancient texts.



CAE.01. Artist's reconstruction of Caesarea Maritima—Herodian Period. (*Courtesy of R. Hohlfelder.*)

From its inception, Caesarea contained all the principal architectural elements that distinguished contemporary pagan cities—a theater, temples, elaborate sewer and water systems, paved streets installed on the typical orthogonal urban design, etc.—plus some unique features as well. Josephus mentions that Herod erected a grand temple to Augustus and Roma that dominated the harbor and provided a monumental landmark for incoming ships. From archaeological data uncovered, we now know that it was constructed on an artificial podium adjacent to the earlier Inner Basin that itself had been refurbished, perhaps to serve as a limited-use royal harbor or a protected anchorage for Herod's fleet.

Josephus' description of the construction of the Outer Basin, long judged by many scholars as an exercise in inflated prose or even a conscious exaggeration, has been proven largely correct by recent underwater excavations. When completed, this facility was an engineering marvel of the age, incorporating such sophisticated and modern features as a siltation control system that used flushing channels, the extensive use of hydraulic concrete (a building substance that was poured liquid into the sea to harden *in situ*), and certain design elements to miti-

gate damage from wave energy.

This facility was but one element of the city's elaborate harbor complex known as Sebastos, or *Portus Augusti* (as it is identified on coins from the Roman occupation of Caesarea). Sebastos consisted of four harbors: the Inner Basin and Outer Basin that were connected by a channel, the South Bay anchorage, and the North Harbor (the original Hellenistic facility restored by Herod). Each may have had a distinct purpose. Their total working area was far greater than the immediate economic needs of the city or the Plain of Sharon required. Herod clearly planned for his seaport to assume a premier role in the maritime affairs of the Roman world. Caesarea was intended to be a major transshipment point on the busy maritime trade routes leading to Rome from the east. Although his city never surpassed Alexandria, it did achieve an international prominence and importance commensurate with Herod's dream.

Upon his death in 4 B.C.E., one of Herod's surviving sons, Archelaus, received his throne. Archelaus was judged incompetent by Augustus and was removed from power in A.D. 6. His kingdom, including Caesarea, was then absorbed by the Romans into their empire, and the new province was henceforth known as Judea. Herod's seaport became the new provincial capital. When Judea entered the empire, the Romans took a census in the country, directed from Caesarea, to determine tax liabilities. This was the same census recorded in Luke 2:2 (contrast Matt 2:1).

The city figured prominently

in the history of the early Church as recorded in the book of Acts. Philip, a deacon in the Jerusalem church, first brought Christianity to Caesarea (Acts 8:4–40). Pontius Pilate, who presided at Jesus' trial, governed Judea as prefect from this provincial capital. An important step toward fulfilling Christianity's destiny as a world religion occurred at Caesarea when Peter there converted the first gentile, Cornelius the centurion (10:3–48). Paul, who earlier had been safely spirited away to Tarsus from Caesarea (9:29–30), was imprisoned for two years (A.D. 57–59) in Caesarea before being sent to Rome for trial (Acts 23–26). Although incarcerated, he was not isolated from the rest of the Christian community. Caesarea's central position on the major maritime routes of the Roman Empire provided him with ample opportunity to continue his epistolary activities. Following these events, however, our knowledge of Caesarea's Christian history dims until the 3d century.

Caesarea also played an important role in the First Jewish War (A.D. 66–70). Events in the city triggered the onset of hostilities. Nearly 20,000 Jews were slaughtered at Caesarea in one hour. Vespasian, then his son Titus (after Vespasian had been declared emperor of Rome at Caesarea by his legions), conducted the war from there. Over 10,000 soldiers were quartered in the city at one point in the war. When the war was over, Titus held victory games in the amphitheater. There 2500 Jewish prisoners of war were forced to fight to their deaths as gladiators. Vespasian

honored Caesarea's loyalty by refounding the city as a Roman colony, *Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Caesarea*.

The emperor Hadrian, who visited the city at least once during his extensive imperial travels, patronized the city on a grand scale. Among the public works attributed to him are a new temple, a second aqueduct, and possibly the construction of a permanent stone hippodrome. Later emperors favored the city as well. New titles and honors accrued as time passed until the city achieved its most glorious (and ponderous!) recognition under Trebonianus Gallus (A.D. 251–53): *Colonia Prima Flavia Augusta Felix Concordia Caesarea Metropolis Provinciae Syriae Palaestinae*.

Throughout the centuries of Rome's rule, the city prospered on many levels, enjoying the benefits of its role as provincial capital and busy international seaport. Its geopolitical importance, its local prosperity, and its cosmopolitan character as a leading Mediterranean seaport attracted numerous intellectuals and religious leaders. It evolved into one of the leading centers for religious study in the Roman world.

By the beginning of the 3d century, the Jewish population had recovered from the disasters of two wars with Rome (the second in A.D. 132–35) and had grown once again to a considerable size. Prominent rabbis, including Rabbi Hoshaya, Rabbi Abbahu, and Rabbi Isaac Hapaha, taught and issued legal decisions at Caesarea. Their contributions to both the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds loom large. The scholar Origen came to Caesarea in A.D. 231 and almost single-handedly turned the city into a cen-

ter of Christian learning. During the next two decades he amassed a huge library that attracted serious scholars and students. His efforts were continued by Pamphilus, who educated another generation of Christians at Caesarea.

During the great persecution of Christians (A.D. 303–13), numerous individuals died as martyrs for their faith at Caesarea. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote *On the Martyrs of Palestine* in 311 to describe their sufferings. Slightly earlier, he had written the *Ecclesiastical History*, the first history of the Christian Church. Both works were subsequently revised.

As the Byzantine era dawned with the personal conversion of Constantine and the subsequent Christianizing of the Roman world, Caesarea became an even more important Christian center. As a provincial capital (a role it continued to play during the Byzantine era as well), its bishop, bearing the additional title of *metropolitan*, exercised a leadership role in the Christian Holy Land. This prestige and influence enjoyed by Caesarea's metropolitan bishops engendered a great rivalry with the bishops of Jerusalem until the issue was resolved in Jerusalem's favor in A.D. 451.

The city became a regular stop on Christian pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Numerous imperial visitors, including St. Helena, mother of Constantine, and famous churchmen like St. Jerome, visited Caesarea during its Byzantine era. Jerome's stay was prolonged because he took advantage of the city's famous library.

The prosperity of the city ebbed and flowed during the 4th–7th centuries, reflecting

both international and local conditions. Sometime in the late 4th century the city walls were extended to incorporate an expanded population and another aqueduct was constructed. Although its prosperity extended into the 5th century, Caesarea eventually declined, a victim of the general forces at work in that tumultuous century as well as of local drought and religious tensions.

Procopius of Gaza (not to be confused with Procopius of Caesarea, the famous historian of the era of Justinian [A.D. 527–65]), wrote of the restoration of the harbor under Anastasius (probably after A.D. 502) and the subsequent return of prosperity to the city and the region it served. In the reign of Justinian an ambitious rebuilding program was undertaken throughout Caesarea. It is quite likely that the city reached its greatest population during the last years of his reign. Perhaps as many as 150,000 people lived there, making this city one of the largest in the Mediterranean world.

With the dawn of the 7th century, Caesarea's fortunes changed again. The city surrendered without major resistance to the Persians in 614 and was held by them until 627–28 when the emperor Heraclius destroyed the Persian Empire and recovered the occupied territories. Only six years later, the first Muslim army invaded Palestine. Caesarea was first attacked in 634. With its defenses revitalized by Heraclius and its ability to be resupplied by the sea, it withstood Arab attacks until 640 or 641. It only fell then because a Jew named Joseph led the Muslim

besiegers into the city through a water "conduit," either the Byzantine aqueduct (described by archaeologists as the low-level aqueduct) or a sewer.

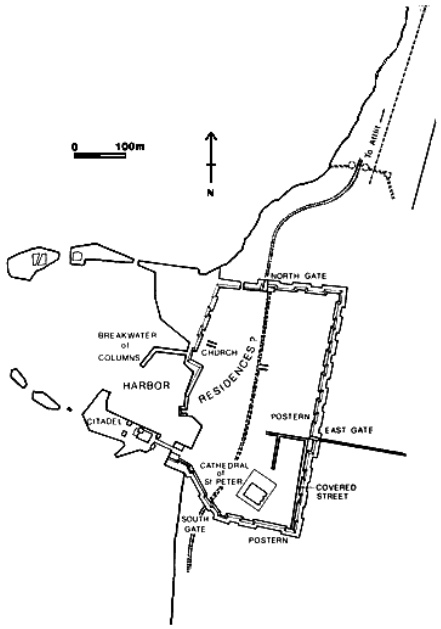
Many inhabitants fled, contributing to Caesarea's decline as a city. In addition, the geopolitical realities of the Mediterranean world changed with the Arab conquest. Caesarea no longer was on the major sea lanes of E–W trade. Its harbors, now allowed to decline because they were no longer required, served only local coastal trade. The economic ramifications were significant.

Caesarea survived, but as a less grand settlement. It lost its international and cosmopolitan urbanity and became an agricultural center on the fringes of a desert empire and a *ribat*, or coast guard station. It gained renown for its produce, its impregnable walls, its fountains, and its Great Mosque, constructed on the same podium where Herod's temple to Augustus and Roma had stood centuries before.

The advent of the Crusades saw another shift of fortunes. Although not taken in the first military actions in the Holy Land, Caesarea soon thereafter came under Western control. In ⚑May 1101, Frankish knights under Baldwin I supported by a Genoese fleet assaulted and took the Arab city. One of the prizes of war was a green cut-glass chalice, found in the Great Mosque and thought to be the Holy Grail. It was taken by the Genoese to their city where it still forms part of the treasury of the Cathedral of San Lorenzo.

During the next two centuries the city retrenched again and became a fortified settlement of slightly more than 12

hectares. See Fig. CAE.02. Its history was tumultuous, as it changed hands several times during this period. The fortifications that distinguish the site today were completed in 1252. King Louis IX himself worked on these walls after his failed efforts to take Egypt in the Sixth Crusade. Ultimately, these Crusader fortifications proved insufficient: the Mamluk sultan Baybars, ruler of Egypt, took the city in 1265 after a siege of six days, and the defenders were allowed to evacuate the city. In 1291, as the Crusaders were finally expelled from the Holy Land, Caesarea, along with other coastal fortresses, was destroyed to prevent any Christians from ever again gaining a foothold in the Holy Land.



CAE.02. Site plan of Caesarea Maritima—Crusader Period. (*Courtesy of R. Hohlfelder.*)

From that point to the late 19th century, the site was abandoned. Nature reclaimed much of it, but ancient Caesarea was never forgotten. In 1882 a small village of Bosnian Muslims was settled within its ruins by the Ottoman Empire. A small settlement developed within the precinct of the old Crusader city and survived until the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Kibbutz Sdot

Yam was founded on the site in 1940. Since 1954 the Caesarea Development Corporation has built more than 400 homes on a tract of land NE of the Crusader fortifications. The Department of Antiquities and the National Parks Authority have actively encouraged tourism at this site by promoting excavations by various national and international expeditions and by restoring numerous archaeological monuments. Caesarea annually attracts large numbers of visitors from throughout the world.

B. Archaeology at Caesarea

Various travelers visited Caesarea before the 20th century and left impressionistic records of their observations. The first scientific account of the site, however, was not produced until 1873 by C. R. Conder and H. H. Kitchner, who spent six days exploring the ruins. Actual excavations did not commence until 1951 after agricultural workers from Kibbutz Sdot Yam uncovered an imperial porphyry statue on what is now called the Byzantine esplanade. S. Yeivin, then director of the Israeli Department of Antiquities, conducted that first exploration.

In the next two decades, various excavations were carried out. Beginning in 1959, the Missione Archeologica Italiana, under the direction of A. Calderini, succeeded by L. Crema and A. Frova, carried out six seasons of field work. Several of the site's most important monuments—the aqueduct, the N wall of the Herodian or Hellenistic city, and the theater—were excavated by this team. Their final report was the first significant treatment of the archaeological evidence of Caesarea (Frova

1965).

In 1960, A. Negev and G. Foerster of Hebrew University, assisted by A. Wegman of Kibbutz Sdot Yam, began field work on behalf of the Israeli National Parks Authority. They excavated and restored the Crusader fortifications and many buildings within them. In 1960, one of the first underwater explorations of a submerged terrestrial site, in this case the ruins of the Outer Basin of Sebastos, was conducted by an American-Israeli team headed by E. A. Link. In 1962, M. Avi-Yonah, also of Hebrew University, excavated a synagogue located N of the Crusader fortifications and some adjacent structures.

In 1971, a consortium of universities and colleges known as the Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima (JECM), headed by R. J. Bull of Drew University, began field work at various sites in the ancient city. This group has worked at the site intermittently since then (Bull 1982; Bull et al. 1986). Another team from Hebrew University, directed by D. Bahat, E. Netzer, and L. Levine, excavated an important Byzantine building within the N sector of the Crusader fortifications and explored the promontory where Professor Netzer thinks Herod the Great's palace was located (see Levine 1975a; 1975b; Levine and Netzer 1986).

In 1980, another international consortium was formed to carry out maritime excavations at Caesarea. This group, known as the Caesarea Ancient Harbour Excavation Project (CAHEP), is headed by A. Raban of the University of Haifa and codirected by R. L. Hohlfelder of the University of Colorado, R. L. Vann of the University of

Maryland, and R. Stieglitz of Rutgers University, Newark. (J. P. Oleson of Victoria University was a codirector until 1985.) CAHEP resumed Link's underwater explorations and began investigating various coastal structures relating to the ancient harbors of Caesarea (see bibliography).

Despite the considerable archaeological effort since 1951, only a small part of Caesarea has been explored. At this writing, JECM has completed its last season of field work and will continue to work on final publication of its explorations. CAHEP is continuing its marine archaeological investigations. In 1989 a new land archaeological team, the Caesarea Land Excavation Project (CLEP), began field work on the temple podium and on the Byzantine fortifications. This consortium, headed by Professor K. G. Holum, plans to conduct field work in these and other areas of the city. In June 1989 the Israel Antiquities Authority announced that it would accelerate its efforts to excavate and restore Herod's city.

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