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The Ancient Church at Megiddo: The Discovery and an Assessment of its Significance¹



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This article discusses the recently reported discovery of an ancient Christian structure at Megiddo in northern Israel and the controversy surrounding it. It begins with an account of the archaeological finds, in particular the mosaic floor and the inscriptions in it. A summary of the debate over dating follows, which focuses on the excavator's dating and the grounds on which it is reached, and challenges to that chronology. The rest of the article assesses the potential significance of the discovery at Megiddo for the archaeology of early Christianity, for the study of early ecclesiastical architecture, and for our knowledge of early Christian belief and Church life.

KEYWORDS

Church, Christian Architecture, Constantine, Eucharist, Inscriptions, Megiddo

In early November 2005, it was announced that excavations at the high-security Megiddo Prison in northern Israel had brought to light the material remains of an early Christian place of worship.² Archaeologists had unearthed a mosaic floor, with Greek inscriptions in the room of a large building. One of the inscriptions is dedicated to 'God Jesus Christ'. The find was hailed as the oldest church building in Israel, and perhaps anywhere.³

¹ I am grateful to Professor Larry Hurtado for reading and commenting on a prior draft of this article. I would also like to thank Ray Bruce of CTVC for sharing information with me.

² See, e.g., www.guardian.co.uk/israel/Story/0,2763,1635817,00.html; www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/11/06/AR20051106004.html.

³ In June (2008), it was reported (e.g. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/jordan/2106752/World's-oldest-Christian-church-discovered-in-Jordan.html>) that the world's oldest church had been uncovered in a subterranean cave in Jordan. The cave was discovered underneath the Church of St George in the city of Rihab. (This church is claimed to be an early third-century CE building, but it is very clearly a basilica of the Byzantine era.) A circular area with stone seating was found inside the cave. The archaeologist who discovered the cave dates its use as a place of Christian worship to the period, 33 to 70 CE. The astonishing claim, however, has been received with almost total scepticism by experts. Judging from the press release, no evidence deriving from the cave itself has been offered to indicate Christian use of the site in the first century CE.

The discovery immediately generated a great deal of excitement, with much of the discussion revolving around the inscriptions and what they might reveal about early Christian belief and cultic practice and the social make-up of the developing Church.⁴ But the discovery has also courted controversy as some experts have questioned the early dating assigned to it.

A preliminary report on the excavation that uncovered the structure, written by Yotam Tepper, the archaeologist who directed the excavation on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, and Leah Di Segni, the renowned epigraphist, who worked on the inscriptions in the mosaic, has since been published.⁵ The present article, drawing on this report, gives an overview of the find and an assessment of its potential significance.

1. *The Discovery at Megiddo*

The dig carried out at Megiddo Prison was what is known as a salvage excavation. Archaeologists were

⁴ See esp. Philip Harland's Megiddo Christian Mosaics Series: www.philipharland.com/Blog/category/archeology/megiddo-christian-mosaics.

⁵ Tepper and Di Segni (2006). All factual information in this article, relating to the site, the building with the Christian meeting room, and the mosaic floor with its inscriptions, is taken from this source.

called in after initial work on an extension to the jail exposed archaic remnants. Inmates from Megiddo and Zalmon Prisons participated in the excavation work. It was one of the prisoners who uncovered the edge of the mosaic floor.

The site at which the structure was discovered had previously been identified as Kefar 'Othnay (rendered in Latin as Caparcotani), a Jewish village in existence by the mid-first century CE.⁶ To the east of the village, a Roman army camp was established where the Sixth Legion Ferrata and other legions were stationed, giving rise to the name Legio by which the site was commonly known in Rome times (conserved in its Arabic name, El Lajjun, used until the mid-twentieth century). The Jewish village was later incorporated into the Roman city Maximianopolis, named in honour of the Emperor Maximian (286–305 CE). A Bishop from this city is known to have attended the Council of Nicea in 325 CE.

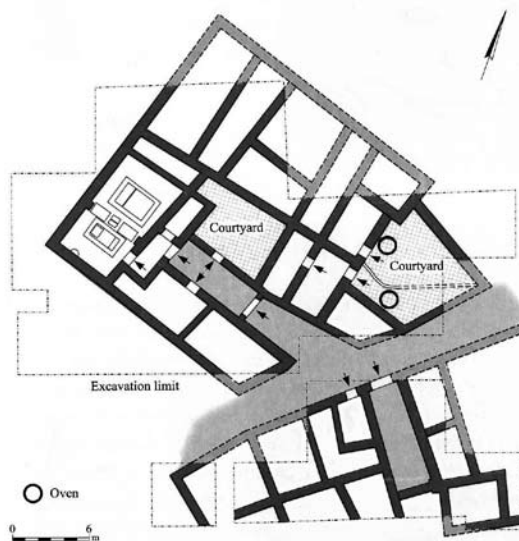
I.I. The Building with the Christian Assembly Room

The building containing the Christian meeting room was uncovered in an area designated Area Q on the outskirts of the ancient Jewish village.⁷ Only foundations, floors and parts of walls survive. The building, located on the north side of an alley,



Area Q, looking west. (Used by kind permission of Israel Antiquities Authority.)

measured at least 20 × 30 m. It had a long entrance corridor leading to four wings with twelve main rooms, a number of smaller rooms and an inner and outer courtyard. In the latter, the larger of the two courtyards, a couple of clay ovens were found.



Plan of the third-century CE remains in Area Q (Christian Prayer Hall, p. 21). (Used by kind permission of Israel Antiquities Authority.)

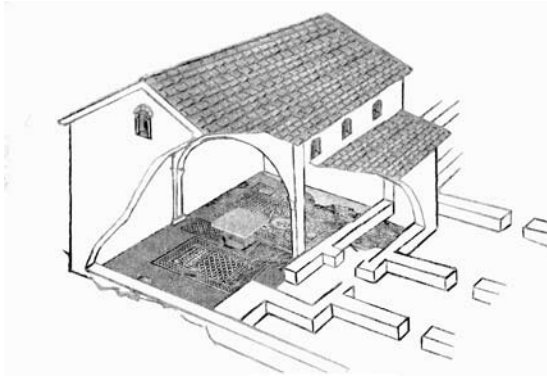
Excavations in the northern wing revealed jugs, cooking pots and jars, attesting to the domestic nature of the building. The western wing, at the end of the long corridor, consisted of an antechamber that led into a small service room and into a rectangular room, measuring 5 × 10 m, lying (more or less) north to south, which was paved with a mosaic floor. That this room served as a place of Christian worship is evident from the mosaic inscriptions.⁸

The floor has been remarkably well preserved. It was covered by a layer of debris containing sherds of pottery and fragments of fresco, which served to protect it. The fresco remnants indicate that the walls of the room were colourfully painted. Monolithic pilasters projected from the western and eastern

⁶ On the site, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 8–16.

⁷ On the building, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 22–24.

⁸ On the room and its architecture, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 24–26.



Reconstruction of the Christian prayer hall (Christian Prayer Hall, p. 25). (Used by kind permission of Israel Antiquities Authority.)

walls. These pilasters may have supported an arch. In the centre of the floor stand two raised stones, which probably served as the base for the podium of the Eucharistic table referred to in one of the inscriptions.

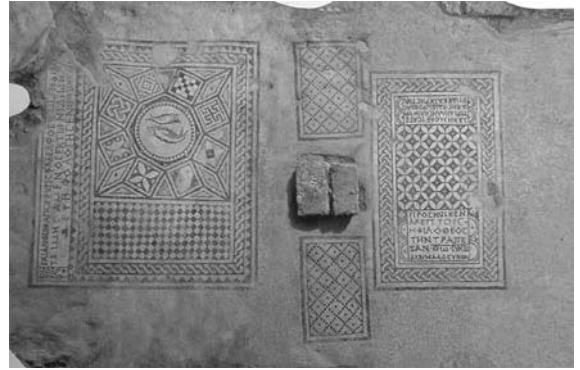
The mosaic is made up of limestone tesserae of ten different colours.⁹ It comprises four panels on each of the four sides of the central podium. The panel to the north is the most ornate. It contains a dedicatory inscription (the Gaianus inscription) and a rectangle with geometric designs enclosing an octagon with a central disc featuring two fish. The panel to the south bears two Greek inscriptions opposite each other. The panels on the west and east sides have no inscriptions, consisting only of rhomboid patterns. The mosaic exhibits a style consistent with it being the craftsmanship of one artist (as indicated in the Gaianus inscription).

The complex as a whole appears to have been a residential building connected with the Roman army.¹⁰ Military artefacts, including two Roman bread stamps, were found in the building. The bread stamps were inscribed with the names and military statuses of the bakers. The excavator concludes that the building served as a residence for Roman army officers who did not live in the army camp nearby, probably because they had families.¹¹ Part of the

⁹ On the mosaic, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 31–34.

¹⁰ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 29–31.

¹¹ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 50–51.



The Christian prayer hall mosaic, general view. (Used by kind permission of Israel Antiquities Authority.)

building seems to have been used for the production of bread for the army. Tepper doubts that the building was privately owned; he thinks that it was the property of either the army or the state.

1.2. *The Mosaic Inscriptions*

Of the three Greek inscriptions in the mosaic floor,¹² the largest is the Gaianus inscription, which reads:

Gaianus, also called Porphyrius, centurion, our brother, has made the pavement at his own expense as an act of liberality. Brutius has carried out the work.

The epigraph identifies the donor of the paved floor as a Roman centurion.¹³ The wording of the inscription is typical of epigraphs recording public benefactions,¹⁴ from which we may conclude that Gaianus was not the owner of the building (he would hardly have recorded an act of generosity toward himself!).¹⁵ He is referred to as ‘our brother’, indicating that he was a member of an association. The language of brotherhood was not exclusive to Christians in the Graeco-Roman world,¹⁶ so this in

¹² On the inscriptions, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 34–42. I reproduce here the translations given by Di Segni.

¹³ The word ‘centurion’ (*hekatontarches*) is represented by the chi-rho symbol, an established abbreviation for the term.

¹⁴ See, for instance, the famous Erastus inscription related (probably wrongly) to the Erastus of Romans 16:23: Kent (1966), pp. 99–100 (no. 232).

¹⁵ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 35.

¹⁶ See Harland (2005).

itself does not indicate that he belonged to a Christian congregation. However, it carries this significance when taken in conjunction with the overtly Christian nature of the Akeptous inscription. The craftsman, Brutius, identifies himself separately, a practice not known before the third century CE.¹⁷

It is the Akeptous inscription, on the west side of the mosaic panel south of the podium, that has attracted the most interest. This epigraph provides the clearest evidence that the room was used for Christian cultic activity. The text runs:

The God-loving Akeptous has offered the table to
God Jesus Christ as a memorial.¹⁸

All three words, 'God Jesus Christ' (*Theo Iesou Christo*), are written as *nomina sacra* (sacred names), abbreviated and with a line placed above them.¹⁹ The name Akeptous is unusual. That the bearer is a woman is apparent from the feminine form of the definite article attaching to the word 'God-loving' (*philtheos*). Most likely, Akeptous is the Greek form of the Latin female name, Accepta.²⁰ Akeptous was obviously a woman of financial means. The table (*trapeza*) donated by her was almost certainly a table that served for the celebration of the Eucharist.²¹

The third inscription, which is in the eastern side of the southern mosaic panel, has been labelled the women inscription. It reads:

Remember Primilla and Cyriaca and Dorothea, and
moreover also Chreste.

Primilla is a Latin name; the other three are Greek. The women were evidently deceased members of the Christian community.²² There is nothing specifically to indicate that they were martyrs.

Di Segni notes that the male names are located at one side of the room and the female names at

other. She suggests that this may reflect the pattern of assembly followed in the congregation, with men separating from women for the celebration of the Eucharist.²³

1.3. *The Date of the Building and the Christian Meeting Room*

The field archaeologists have dated most of the potsherds discovered on top of the mosaic floor to the third century CE, and few to the fourth century.²⁴ Finds in the northern wing of the building were mainly dated to the third century CE, with a few dating to the early fourth century CE.

Coins recovered from Area Q mostly range from the second to the fourth centuries CE, with the bulk dating to the fourth century. All of the (twenty-eight) coins collected specifically from the building with the Christian meeting room date to the second and third centuries CE. The latest coin dates to the reign of Diocletian (284–305 CE). Tepper believes that the building was abandoned in the late third century CE,²⁵ coinciding with the presumed relocation of the Sixth Legion Ferrata.²⁶ There is no evidence of violent destruction. Tepper thinks that the building was deliberately dismantled, and the floor covered over, when the army left.²⁷

Di Segni dates the Greek inscriptions in the mosaic to the third century CE, on the basis of the style of lettering and the language used.²⁸ Tepper provisionally dates the construction of the building, including the Christian meeting room, to the first third of the third century CE, specifically 'about 230 CE', in an alleged brief period of peace for the Church broken by the accession of Maximinus in 235 CE.²⁹

Other experts, however, have contested the proposed dating. Reacting to the initial announcement, Joe Zias, a former curator of the Israel Antiquities Authorities, doubted whether the mosaic could be pre-Constantinian. In his view, the building is most likely a Roman building adapted for Christian use at a later date.³⁰ In a recent article, Vassilios Tzaferis

¹⁷ Dunbabin (1999), p. 276.

¹⁸ *Proseniken Akeptous hē philtheos tēn trapezan Th(e)ō I(esou) Ch(rist)ō mnēmosunon*. As Larry Hurtado pointed out to me, these words could also be read: 'Akeptous, the God-loving, has offered the table to/for God, a memorial to/for Jesus Christ.' There does appear to be a space between *Th(e)ō* and *I(esou) Ch(rist)ō*. Even so, it seems more natural to take all three words together as Di Segni has done.

¹⁹ On *nomina sacra*, see Hurtado (2006), pp. 95–134.

²⁰ Tepper and De Segni (2006), p. 41.

²¹ The fish symbol is found in connection with early Christian fellowship meals and the Eucharist: see Snyder (2003), pp. 30–35.

²² Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 42.

²³ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 42.

²⁴ On the pottery and coins, see Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 26–29.

²⁵ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 28.

²⁶ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 43.

²⁷ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 43.

²⁸ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 34.

²⁹ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 50.

³⁰ www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=22093

argues for a date in the second half of the third century, during a period of peace that continued until the Great Persecution (303–313).³¹ During this time, he points out, there was an increase in the number of Christians serving in the Roman army.

Gaianus' benefaction is felt to be problematic for a pre-Constantinian dating of the church. Zias doubts that a Roman army officer of the third century CE would have been so foolish as to advertise his Christian faith in this way. One must not imagine that Christians in the Roman army (and Christians generally) were continually persecuted throughout the second and third centuries. Many Christians served in the army before the early fourth century and apparently met little trouble, except during the Great Persecution.³² Yet, 'the Christian in the army was caught in a religious net of exceedingly fine mesh'.³³ Roman military religion was so pervasive, it would have been impossible for Christian soldiers to avoid it completely. Most seem to have got along by performing their army religious obligations (whenever such duties could not be eluded), while keeping their Christianity a private matter, so as to prevent any outright clash between the two.³⁴ By making (what amounts to) a public declaration of his allegiance to Christ on army or state owned property (as Tepper has it), Gaianus would be inviting the kind of religious conflict, with potentially fatal consequences, that others took care to avoid.³⁵ Gaianus' profession of faith would thus be unusually daring for a military officer of this period, which seems to make it a difficulty for a third-century dating of the church.

2. The Potential Significance of the Discovery

The significance of the discovery at Megiddo is to a large extent dependent on the date assigned to it, which as we have seen is debated. On the dating

advanced by Tepper, the Megiddo church would be extremely important archaeological evidence for the early Christian movement. The house converted into a church building, the remains of which were discovered at Dura Europos in modern Syria in 1931, is generally regarded as the earliest example of a Christian structure. The house was built around 231 CE and its adaptation for use as a church can be securely dated to 240/241 CE. The Megiddo church would be contemporaneous with this building. Indeed, its construction, on the chronology suggested by Tepper, would predate the Christianizing renovation at Dura Europos by about a decade. The earliest Christian inscriptions that can be dated with some level of confidence stem from the third century CE and later.³⁶ The floor inscriptions at Megiddo would thus rank among the oldest epigraphic data for Christianity.³⁷ The Akeptous inscription would probably offer the earliest epigraphic occurrence of *nomina sacra*,³⁸ and one of the earliest inscriptional references to Jesus Christ.³⁹ And the mosaic floor itself would be a very rare instance of a pre-Constantinian Christian mosaic.⁴⁰

If dated towards the end of the third century CE and especially after 313 CE, its significance would diminish, but it would still constitute valuable material evidence for ancient Christianity.

2.1. The Megiddo Church and Early Christian Architecture

Tepper believes that the discovery at Megiddo has significant implications for our knowledge of the evolution of Christian architecture.⁴¹ Michael White's detailed study of the origins and early development of church buildings is the key treatment of this topic in recent years.⁴² White charts the progression as follows.

³¹ Tzaferis (2007).

³² See Helgeland (1979); Helgeland, Daly and Patout Burns (1985).

³³ Helgeland, Daly and Patout Burns (1987), p. 51.

³⁴ Helgeland (1979), p. 819.

³⁵ Eusebius tells of a believer named Marinus who was about to be appointed to the rank of centurion when a rival informed the magistrate that Marinus was a Christian, and as such would not sacrifice to the Emperors. Marinus' Christianity, about which he had hitherto kept relatively quiet, then became an issue of religious conflict. He refused to renounce his faith and was swiftly executed. It is notable that this incident occurred in Palestine precisely during the period of 'peace' after the decree of Gallienus in 260 CE.

³⁶ See Hurtado (2006), p. 2.

³⁷ The earliest Christian inscription may be the Aberkios inscription, if dated to around 200 CE. See Kearsley (1992). Cf. Snyder (2003), pp. 247–49.

³⁸ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 36. The earliest evidence for *nomina sacra* is in manuscripts: see Hurtado (2006), pp. 95–134.

³⁹ So Tzaferis (2007). The words 'Jesus Christ (be) with you' are found in one of the graffiti in the *domus ecclesiae* at Dura Europos: White (1997), p. 132 (no. 37a).

⁴⁰ Snyder (2003), pp. 73–75.

⁴¹ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 45–54.

⁴² See White (1996); (1997); and the summary article (2000).

The earliest Christians met primarily, though not exclusively, in houses of church members (cf. Acts 2:46; 5:42). The evolution toward a specifically Christian architecture began when Christians started to adapt domestic structures for ecclesial use. The Christian building at Dura Europos is the best example of a *domus ecclesiae* ('house of the church').⁴³ This structure was a two-storey dwelling that had been renovated to serve the needs of the church. From the outside it looked like any other large house in Dura, but internally, it had undergone fairly extensive renovation. The wall between two rooms had been demolished to create a large meeting hall, which could seat about fifty or sixty persons. Another room had been converted into an elaborately decorated baptistery, yet another into a vestry.

A second major step in Christian architectural development was the *aula ecclesiae* ('hall of the church').⁴⁴ This phase marked the second half of the third century CE, though it extended into the fourth century. Buildings of the *aula ecclesiae* type were larger and more elaborate than the more basic *domus ecclesiae*, and were distinguished from the latter by their inclusion of some kind of large hall.

Finally, after the Edict of 313 CE, under Constantine's patronage, the Church adopted the basilical style of architecture.⁴⁵ Civic and imperial basilicas served as models for the new construction programme. However, the earlier patterns, the *domus ecclesiae* and the *aula ecclesiae*, continued well after the basilical churches were being built.⁴⁶ The developmental stages were thus overlapping rather than chronologically distinct.

The structure at Megiddo is obviously not a basilica. According to Tepper, the Megiddo church is a unique ecclesiastical form. It could not have resembled the church buildings of the late third century. Nor can it be classed as a *domus ecclesiae*, like the structure at Dura-Europos. The church at Megiddo was a room within a larger residential building. Also, the building as a whole was not privately owned like the Dura Europos church, but was probably the property of the army or the state.

Tepper calls the Christian meeting place at Megiddo a 'Christian prayer hall', to distinguish it from the *domus ecclesiae* type. He views it as a domestic chapel in the tradition of the Roman *lararium* (domestic shrine).⁴⁷

However, in the latter respect the Megiddo church is not entirely unique. The Roman villa at Lullingstone, Kent (a hidden gem of Britain's Christian heritage), also exemplifies the model of a large residential building with a functionally separate Christian wing.⁴⁸ The Lullingstone structure was a large country villa, built around 90 CE, which underwent several renovations and continued in use until it was destroyed by fire and abandoned in the early fifth century CE. Around the middle of the fourth century CE, a Christian chapel was installed in one of the rooms in the north wing of the building.⁴⁹ Another room was converted into a vestibule. The design, with chapel, anteroom and separate entrance, allowing for Christian gatherings in one part of the house that did not get in the way of activities in the rest of the house, is quite similar to what we find at Megiddo.

The comparison with the Lullingstone Christian chapel could perhaps lend weight to the view that the Megiddo church is a later (post-313 CE) Christian addition to an older Roman dwelling (though Tepper is confident that the Christian room was built at the same time as the rest of the building).

2.2. Early Christian Belief and Early Church Life

What light does the Megiddo church shed on early Christian belief and worship and the social composition of the developing Church? Again, a lot depends on the dating, but even on Tepper's proposed dating, the Megiddo church would not tell us very much about Christianity at that time that we did not already know.⁵⁰

The Akeptous inscription, which speaks of the 'God Jesus Christ', has been cited by some as proof against the 'Da Vinci Code' thesis that Jesus was

⁴⁷ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), pp. 50–51.

⁴⁸ White (1997), pp. 243–57. Cf. de la Bédoyère (2001), pp. 130–31; Fulford (2003).

⁴⁹ The Christian chapel was built above a room (known as the 'Deep Room') with a pagan shrine, which continued in use even after the chapel was installed (Fulford (2003), p. 6).

⁵⁰ So also L. Brink, 'Discoveries at Megiddo Prison' (*sic.*), Sightings, December 15, 2005; marty-center.uchicago.edu/sightings/archive_2005/1215.shtml.

⁴³ Krautheimer (1975), pp. 27–28. White (1997), pp. 123–31; (2000) pp. 711–14.

⁴⁴ White (1996), pp. 127–39; pp. 717–24.

⁴⁵ A building discovered in Aqaba, southern Jordan, could be a pre-Constantinian basilica: see Parker (1999).

⁴⁶ White (2000), pp. 715, 722.

not considered as God before Constantine.⁵¹ This claim, made by one of the characters in Dan Brown's book, is of course utterly preposterous, though it seems to have taken hold to some extent at a popular level. The term 'God' (*theos*) is applied to Jesus several times in the New Testament (John 1:1; 20:28; possibly Tit. 2:13), and his divine status is expressed in various other ways by New Testament and early Christian writers.⁵² Writing early in the second century, Ignatius freely applies the term *theos* to Jesus, using the formulae 'our God Jesus Christ' (Ignatius, *Eph* 18.2; *Rom* 3:3; *Poly.* 8:3) and 'Jesus Christ the God' (*Smyrn.* 1.1).⁵³ Around the same time, the Roman writer, Pliny (*Epistles* 10.96–97), speaks of Christians singing to Christ 'as to a god'. The divinity of Jesus was taken for granted in the mainstream Church (and even among so-called 'Gnostic' groups) during the second and third centuries CE, with debates focusing on *how* he was divine, and how to reconcile his deity with his humanity. Even so, the Akeptous inscription, as dated by Tepper, would be an important epigraphic attestation to belief in the divinity of Jesus in the first half of the third century CE.⁵⁴

The Megiddo church reflects a worship setting in which the Eucharist was central. In earliest Christian worship, the Lord's Supper was celebrated within the context of a shared communal meal (cf. 1 Cor 11:17–34). But already by the beginning of the third century CE, the Eucharist had become separated from the communal meal,⁵⁵ though undoubtedly practices still varied quite widely. The Megiddo chapel, as Tepper dates it, would provide material evidence for this development. But the *domus ecclesiae* at Dura Europos also points to a separate assembly for the Eucharist with no communal dining.⁵⁶

The women inscription and the Akeptous inscription add to mounting evidence for the prominence

and place of women in the early Church.⁵⁷ It is worth noting that the Megiddo inscriptions do not specifically indicate that any of the women mentioned was an office-bearer (such as deacon or presbyter) in the congregation. The role of Akeptous is that of benefactor, a function that Paul ascribes to Phoebe (along with that of *diakonos*) in Romans 16:1–2.⁵⁸

We know from literary sources that Christians served in the Roman military from the end of the second century onward.⁵⁹ And there are at least eight tombstone inscriptions of Christian soldiers that are pre-Constantinian.⁶⁰ But there is nothing that compares to Gaianus' benefaction for the period before Constantine so this would be important new information about Christians and the Roman army, as indeed would be the presence of a Christian shrine in army residential quarters.

3. Conclusion

The Megiddo chapel is a stunning archaeological discovery but one that will continue to be debated. Tepper and Di Segni make clear at the outset that their published report is a preliminary publication prior to a more comprehensive study and 'is not intended to exhaust all discussions and historical and other interpretations'.⁶¹ However the dust finally settles, it is evident that we have a very ancient Christian shrine. Obviously, its overall significance reduces the later it is dated, but as a structure it is sufficiently interesting and distinct (though perhaps not as unique as the excavator thinks) to count as an important addition to our knowledge of church architecture in the first five centuries of the Christian era.

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⁵⁷ See now, Madigan and Osiek (2005).

⁵⁸ See the discussion of Phoebe's roles in Winter (2003), pp. 194–99.

⁵⁹ See, e.g. Tertullian, *Apology* 42. Cf. Cadoux (1925), pp. 417–22.

⁶⁰ See Helgeland (1979), pp. 791–93.

⁶¹ Tepper and Di Segni (2006), p. 5.

⁵¹ D. Brown (2003), p. 233.

⁵² See Hurtado (2003).

⁵³ See further Hurtado (2003), pp. 637–38.

⁵⁴ The formula 'God Jesus Christ' is striking since ancient Christian inscriptions normally speak of the 'Lord Jesus Christ'. However, there are some notable epigraphs that refer to Jesus as 'God' (*theos*), e.g. Feissel (1983), pp. 200–1 (no. 237, dated fourth to fifth century CE). See also Marucchi (1912), pp. 91–96; note especially, the sepulchral inscription, 'Hail in God Jesus', from Salona in Dalmatia (p. 95).

⁵⁵ Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.2; Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition* 21–26.

⁵⁶ White (2000), p. 715.

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The Creator who brings forth all from nothing
Is revealed to the heart, but not to the eye ...

From 'Who is Like Thee?', Jehudah Halevi