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- 1 In Memoriam: Miriam Tadmor
- 4 ELAT MAZAR, WAYNE HOROWITZ, TAKAYOSHI OSHIMA and YUVAL GOREN: A Cuneiform Tablet from the Ophel in Jerusalem

Abstract: A small fragment of a Late Bronze Age letter in Akkadian was discovered in the Ophel excavations in Jerusalem. Its sign forms suggest that it is a rough contemporary of the Amarna letters, including the letters of Abdi-Hepa, the ruler of Jerusalem. The analysis of the tablet by optical mineralogy, supported by INAA and by XRF spectrometer, reveals that its raw material is typical of the *Terra Rossa* soils of the Central Hill Country. It is suggested, therefore, that it was a local product of Jerusalem scribes, made of locally available soil. This, coupled with the fact that its find site is close to what must have been the acropolis of LB Jerusalem, makes it likely that the letter fragment does in fact come from a letter of a king of Jerusalem. It may well be an archival copy of a letter from Jerusalem to the Pharaoh.

- 22 YITZHAK PAZ *ET AL.*: Excavations at Tel Rekhes

Abstract: Tel Rekhes, a site identified as the Canaanite *Anaharath*, has been excavated since 2006. The primary results of the first four seasons of excavations enable the reconstruction of a flourishing Iron I settlement that covered the entire area of the site—the upper mound as well as its lower terrace. The Iron I architecture includes public buildings, installations and what appears to be cultic finds. It was preceded by LB, MB IIB and EB II-III settlements, detected in various excavated areas. The next season will focus on some questions that arose during the first four seasons.

- 41 JOE UZIEL and YUVAL GADOT: The ‘Cup-and-Saucer’ Vessel: Function, Chronology, Distribution and Symbolism

Abstract: Many scholars have discussed the cup and saucer vessel, its function and source. The vessel was most common during the Late Bronze II- Iron Age I periods, although it appears earlier and later as well. This paper discusses the *chaîne opératoire* of C&S production, when it was used, the geographic and contextual distribution of the vessels, and the likely function of the vessels, in

order to further understand the C&S and its function. It is suggested here that C&S was cultic in nature, used both for light and for the spread of scents. While the vessel and the practice it was used for were common in the lowlands, C&S does not appear in the highlands in the Iron Age I. We suggest that this was due to cultural preferences, shunning not just the form, but also the cultic practice and believes the vessels had connotations with in the lowlands.

58 SHLOMO BUNIMOVITZ and ZVI LEDERMAN: A Unique Philistine Fish Motif from Tel Beth Shemesh

Abstract: In the 14th season (2005) of the renewed excavations at Tel Beth-Shemesh a small Philistine bell-shaped bowl with a unique fish motif depicted inside was discovered in Iron I context (Level 6). Investigation of the motif – an 'X-rayed' fish – showed it to differ conspicuously from other Philistine fish images and to have drawn its inspiration from Mycenaean pictorial pottery. However, the Beth-Shemesh fish is unique in its artistic attributes and placement.

72 DAVID AMIT and YONATAN ADLER: *Miqwa'ot* in the Necropolis of Beth She'arim

Abstract: Three stepped water installations were discovered within the grounds of the Beth She'arim necropolis during excavations in the 1940s and 1950s, directed by Benjamin Mazar and Nahman Avigad. A reexamination of these installations has revealed that they served as ancient ritual baths (*miqwa'ot*), which functioned as an integral part of the third--fourth-century CE Jewish cemetery. This reevaluation was aided by an inspection of the plans of the original excavations, published here for the first time. The practice of situating ritual baths adjacent to tombs, which prima facie would appear to run counter to standard halakhic norms, is, in fact, well grounded in the halakhic tradition reflected in the Talmudic literature.

89 ZVI URI MA'OZ: Jews and Christians in the Ancient Golan Heights

Abstract: It is commonplace among scholars that the three major groups of population - Jews, Christians and pagans - coexisted in the principal cities of Palestine. Whether this was the situation in the countryside as well is a much debated question. Ancient Golan is the best test case for this question since some ten sites are claimed to have a Jewish presence within the overwhelming Christian population. This article examines the evidence for the purported Jewish existence

in these villages. Since no archaeological basis is found for this claim, it is concluded that Jews did not live among Christians in the ancient Golan Heights.

VARIA

94 RAFAEL FRANKEL: Lever-and-Screw Olive Presses: A Note

Abstract: Y. Magen 2008 provides us with an invaluable addition to the corpus of oil presses in Judaea and Samaria. Two minor comments are, however, warranted. The first is that his maps of oil presses from the Early Islamic period includes many presses not dated to the Early Islamic period by the archaeologists who excavated them; the second is that his reconstruction of the lever-and-screw press is unwarranted.

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