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- 129 **NAAMA YAHALOM-MACK, NAVA PANITZ-COHEN, TZILLA ESHEL and ROBERT MULLINS:
A Late Bronze IIB Silver Hoard from Tel Abel Beth Maacah**

ABSTRACT: During the first season of excavations at Tell Abil el-Qameh, identified with biblical Abel Beth Maacah, a fused clump of silver items inside a small pottery jug was found in a Late Bronze Age IIB context. This article presents the context and proposed date of the hoard, a description of its contents, chemical and isotope analyses and suggested provenance of the silver, as well as the significance of the find in the broader regional, chronological and cultural context.

- 154 **ANAT MENDEL-GEBEROVICH, YIFTAH SHALEV, EFRAT BOCHER, NITSAN SHALOM and
YUVAL GADOT: A Newly Discovered Personal Seal and Bulla from the Excavations of the
Giv'ati Parking Lot, Jerusalem**

ABSTRACT: This article reports on the finding of a seal and a bulla found in the Giv'ati Parking Lot excavations at the City of David ridge, Jerusalem. The two objects were found within the destruction debris of a public building that was heavily burnt during the 586 BCE Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem. The seal is scaraboid and reads: '(belonging) to 'kr son of Matanyahu'. The bulla (seal impression) reads: '(belonging) to Netanmelek Servant of the King'. On the basis of palaeographic considerations and their archaeological context, the two objects can be dated to the late seventh century BCE. Their finding adds to the known corpus of names from Judah dating from that era and contributes to our understanding of the Judahite royal bureaucracy and to the urban layout of Jerusalem.

STÉPHANIE E. BINDER, MICHAEL LAZAR and EMMANUEL NANTET: Measurements and Shape of the Dead Sea in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods: Confronting Greek and Latin Sources with Modern Physiographical Data

ABSTRACT: The Dead Sea is often described by authors in antiquity. Four of these authors, the first known to provide measurements for the body of water, are addressed here. Their reports, which are a wealthy source of information on the way the ancients grasped their surrounding maritime area, are examined. Considering the measurements obtained scientifically in recent studies concerning the period when the texts were redacted, one might be puzzled by the seeming discrepancy between the ancient and modern sets of data. Unfamiliarity with ancient units of measurement and their meaning, especially their use in a nautical context, may explain some of the confusion. The present paper presents a multi-disciplinary study combining philological, geological and metrological approaches, displays the differences and tries to account for them.

MICHAEL ZELLMANN-ROHRER: Ticket to Ride? A Greek Ostrakon from the Roman Fort at Arad Reconsidered

ABSTRACT: This article presents a re-edition of a Greek ostrakon from excavations at Tel Arad (ancient Arad) and advances a new interpretation of the text, which has been little noted since its first publication, in relation to the provision of mounts at the site's Roman fort. Specifically, though firm conclusions remain elusive, the document may have been a signed order granting a travelling party a change of mounts at the outpost at Arad.

DVIR RAVIV and BOAZ ZISSU: The Arumah Fortress (Khirbet al-‘Urma): A Fortified Sites from the Second Temple Period in Eastern Samaria

ABSTRACT: Khirbet al-‘Urma is situated on the top of a prominent conical hill in eastern Samaria, about 7 km south of Shechem (Nablus). Scholars generally identify the site as Arumah — the home of Abimelech son of Gideon the Judge. In addition to its biblical identification, the site is of interest due to the remains of a Hasmonean-Herodian fortress consisting of a fortification wall, rectangular towers built in the Hellenistic style, and a series of large-sized cisterns used to store rainfall runoff water. Such typical features, as well as the location on the top of a prominent hill, are characteristic of Second Temple period’ Judean forts and fortresses. This paper presents a renewed archaeological documentation undertaken by the authors in 2009, following antiquities looting and uncontrolled development operations. The new data, its significance and historical background is presented and discussed in light of previous surveys undertaken in the 1980s by H. Eshel and Z. Erlich.

TEHILLAH LIEBERMAN, AVI SOLOMON and JOE UZIEL: Rolling the Dice in Aelia Capitolina: On the Discovery of Gaming Pieces Beneath Wilson’s Arch and Their Function within a Theatre-Like Structure

ABSTRACT: Recent excavations exposed a theatre-like structure in Jerusalem, at the foot of the Temple Mount. This structure was built after the destruction of the temple by the Roman soldiers and residents who settled in the city, which eventually became the Roman colony of Aelia Capitolina. Inside the theatre-like structure a large assemblage of gaming and gambling pieces was discovered, particularly gaming dice. The unique concentration of dice within a theatre-like structure contributes to the understanding of the function of the building and supports the possibility that this area should be seen as a civic centre of the newly established colony. The cultural preferences of the residents of Aelia Capitolina, reflected through the archaeological

findings, correspond to the gaming and gambling activities that were commonly practiced throughout the Roman Empire.

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