

THE CONSORTIUM FOR THE EXCAVATIONS OF BETHSAIDA
BETHSAIDA EXCAVATIONS PROJECT
LICENSE G-42/2010
REPORT ON THE 2010 EXCAVATIONS
SEASON



Figure 1, A Gold Coin of Antoninus Pius 138 CE

RAMI ARAV
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA

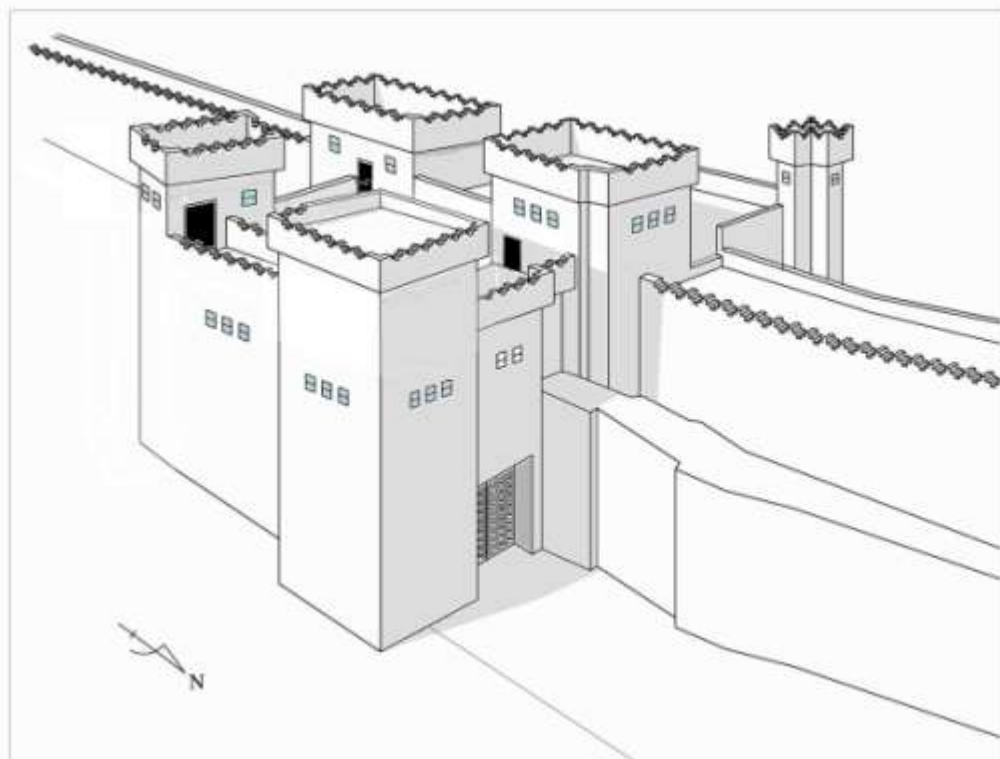


Figure 2, Isometric reconstruction of Stratum V city gate, 850 - 732 BCE

The Expedition

The excavation season of 2010 consisted of two sessions of two weeks each with an extended week at the end of the second session. Altogether the excavation extended from May 23 until June 25. Ninety-seven students and faculty members participated in the dig. As usual the expedition was housed in Kibbutz Ginosar. We are very grateful for the extraordinary hospitality that has been consistently shown to the expedition since 1994.

Faculty participants at the 2010 excavation season:

Dr. Rami Arav, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Senior Fellow, Zinnman Institute of Archaeology, Haifa University, Director of Excavations

Dr. Carl Savage, Drew University, Assistant Director of Excavations

Dr. Richard Freund, Hartford University, Project director

Dr. Fredrick Strickert, Wartburg College, co-director, Area A East supervisor

Dr. Kate Rafael, Hebrew University, Area A South supervisor

Dr Gregory C. Jenks, School of Theology, Charles Sturt University, St Francis Theological College, Brisbane, co-director

Dr. Nicolae Roddy, Creighton University, co-director, Area C supervisor
Dr. Elizabeth McNamer, Rocky Mountain College, co-director, Area C Supervisor
Dr. Marck Moak, co- director, Rocky Mountain College
Rhett Moak, Rocky Mountain College
Dr. Aaron Gale, West Virginia State University, Area A East Supervisor
Dr. John Kloppenborg, University of Toronto
Maha Darawsha, University of Connecticut
Hanan Shafir, Photography
Bernard Trams pottery reconstruction
Orna Cohen, conservation
DreAnna Hadash, artist
Christina Etzrodt, AutoCAD
Kristy Leahy, coordinator
Dr. Donald Ariel, IAA, numismatics
Prof. Dr. Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, University of Munich, Germany, co-director
Dr. Steffi Keim, University of Munich, Germany
Prof. Israel HersHKovitz, Tel Aviv University, physical anthropology
Dr. Toni Fisher, co-director, Engineering Corps, Zooarchaeology
Shai Schwartz, kibbutz Ginosar, recording, land surveying
Charlene Green, Pottery Reconstruction

Participating Students from the following institutions:

University of Nebraska at Omaha, Hartford University, Rocky Mountain College, West Virginia State University, University of Toronto, Creighton University, Tel Aviv University

Volunteers

We especially recognize the long time volunteers who year after year keep on coming to excavate at Bethsaida and who make enormous contributions to both the excavation of the site and to the understanding of the results: Celso Bitdinger, Gloria Epps, Sara Gay, Valerie Hemingway, Marcia Sandres, Rance Williams, Emmit and Kelen Wilson, Alexandra Untu,

The Consortium for the Excavations of Bethsaida, class of 2010

Dr. Carl Savage, Drew University

Dr. Fredrick Strickert, Wartburg College

Dr. Walter (Chip) Bouzard, Wartburg College

Dr. Elizabeth McNamer, Rocky Mountain College

Dr. Marck Moak, Rocky Mountain College

Rhett Moak, Rocky Mountain College

Dr Gregory C. Jenks, School of Theology, Charles Sturt University, St Francis Theological College, Brisbane,

Prof. Dr. Heinz-Wolfgang Kuhn, University of Munich

Dr. Steffi Keim, University of Munich



Figure 3, The July 2010 expedition

The Excavation

Area A

Stratum VII (Late Bronze IIb)

At the eastern section of Area A, dubbed Area A East, a few scattered remains were found under and east of the city wall (W160, squares O, N 44, 45). Four loci were excavated in this area 1800, 1801, 1802, and 1803. They reveal pottery and small architectural remains dating from the Late Bronze Age IIb and Iron Age I. The elevation of these loci was all more than 171. 21 m below sea level. These remains add to the Early and Middle Bronze Age finds providing more evidence that the mound was settled constantly from the Early Bronze Age to the end of the Roman period.

Finds

Finds include LB IIb and a few Iron Age I shards of pottery. Among the shards there are cooking pots, deep bowls, decorated handles and juglets with palm design and red bands (fig. 4). A folded handle of a

Middle Bronze Age I (or Intermediate Early Bronze Middle Bronze Age) jar was also found. Outstanding discoveries were an almost complete juglet (fig. 5), a jar and an intact bronze bowl.

List of Stratum VII loci

Locus	Grid	Elevation	Architecture	Major finds
1800	N 44, 45	171.21	Under the inner city wall W160	LB II and Iron Age I pottery, MBI folded handle
1801	O, N, 44,45	171.75	Under the inner city wall, W160	LB II and Iron Age I shards of pottery,
1802	N, 44, 45	171.7	Under the inner city wall W160	Bronze Bowl, jar, complete LB juglet
1803	N 45	171.04	Under the inner city wall W160	LBIIb and Iron Age I pottery shards
1804	N 45	171.9	Under the inner city wall W160	LBIIb and Iron Age I pottery shards
1805	O 45	172.24	Under the inner city wall	LBIIb and Iron Age I pottery shards



Figure 4, Stratum VII pottery, LB IIb and Iron Age I



Figure 5, Stratum VII juglet, LB IIb

Stratum VI, (950- 850 BCE)

The attempts to better understand the nature of Stratum VI continued this summer with some success. This stratum was excavated under the floor level of the Storage House in squares I, J 57 at and the eastern end of the eastern tower of the outer city gate. Consistent with that is found in all places on the mound, all Stratum VI architectural remains appear to be monumental in nature employing construction using heavy boulders (fig. 6).

The eastern wall that defines the eastern tower of the outer city wall was excavated in the ravine using a backhoe. Fine dirt that was plastered with crushed limestone reaches the lower courses of the tower creating a glacis. This same glacis has also been observed also in the north sections of the city wall. The foundation of the tower was laid in an elevation of 176.36 m below sea level and the top of the western preserved section is about 6 meters higher. This is the largest tower of the entire gate complex and measures 10.08 by 8.80 m. Three courses of stones, each course, about 0.4 m in height were discovered preserving about 1.2 m of the northeast corner of the tower. Undoubtedly this was the main bastion of the city; we dub it The Bastion on our ground plan.



Figure 6, The Northeastern Tower, the Bastion.

Locus 1101

Grid I, J, 58

Elevation: 169.36

The floor of the central room of the Storage House was excavated in order to find the remains of Stratum VI. The excavation revealed a very massive large wall that occupied the entire width of the room (2.86 m). Most probably this is the top of a very massive wall (W 1158). The bottom of this wall was not excavated as yet. This massive wall, which surpasses the size of the central room of the Storage House, continues under the partition wall of the Storage house (W 306) and under the floor of the southern room of the Storage House. Thus far it has an exposed width of 5.17 m. If this lower wall continues under the northern room of the storage house where large boulders were previously uncovered beneath that room's floor, then the width of this massive wall would be 8.88 m. A segment of this wall had previously been discovered in 1994 and was excavated to a depth of 2 m but that excavation did not reach a floor. At that time it was thought to be a massive tower (fig. 7).

At the east end of this wall (W 1158), a narrow, 0.72 m wide, trench separates it from a parallel wall W301. The western face of W1158 bears the remains of plaster and whitewash which indicates that W301 must have been added sometime later. The later wall, W301, was one meter thick and was built of two

rows of stones. This wall is connected to the inner city wall by another wall that goes under the eastern wall of the Storage House (W315). Wall W301 then continues under the partition wall of the Storage House (W306) and lines up with the southern face of W1158. Since this end does not connect to any other wall, it is quite probable that it is the entrance to an elongated casemate adjacent to the city wall. The size of this room as can be measured thus far, is 3 X 7 m. If this will turn out to be true, then it seems that Bethsaida likely had casemate walls in Stratum VI (950 – 850 BCE).

Finds

Finds include Iron Age IIA pottery such as casual red slip ware, typical to Judah in the mid 10th century BCE, storage jars and rims of storage jar with wide neck (app. 20 cm in diameter). Jars like this were found in the Stratum V Storage House and so these shards probably are intrusive and properly belong to Stratum V and penetrated into the earlier Stratum VI material.

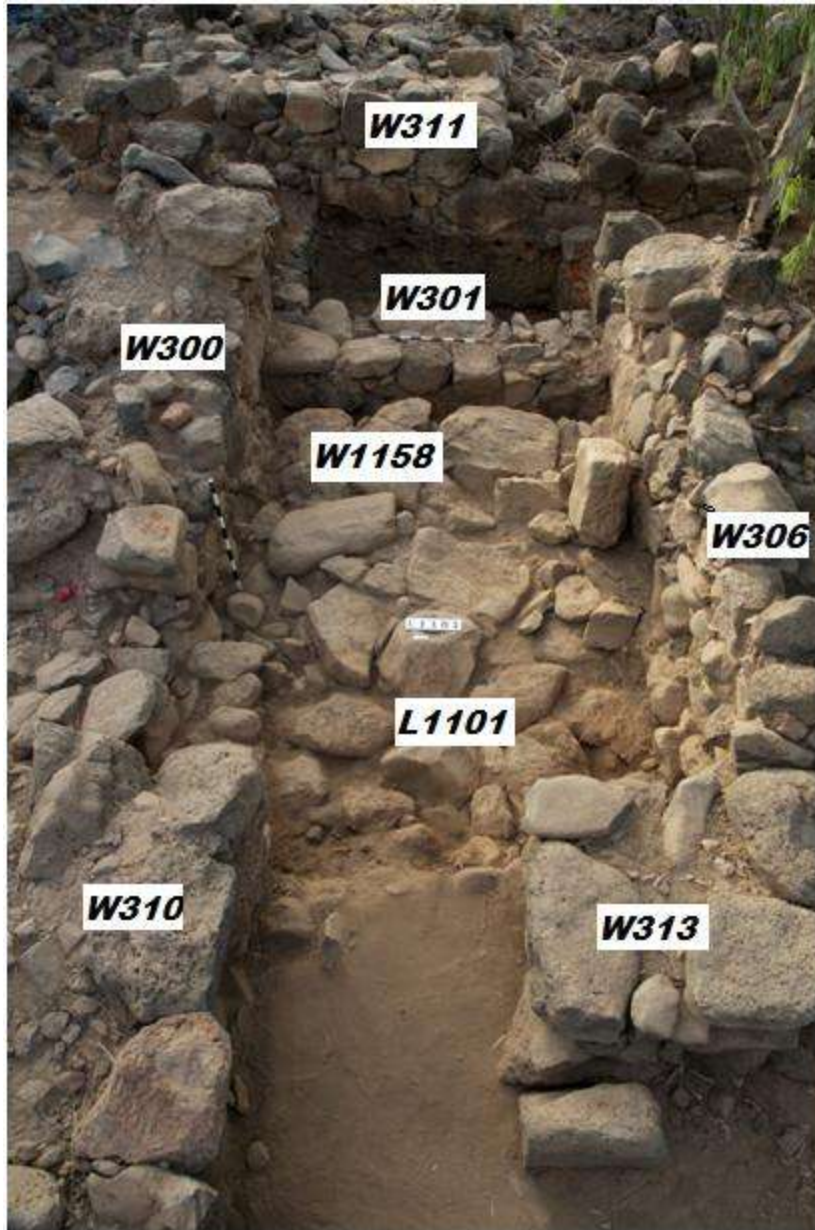


Figure 7, Stratum VI monumental structure under Stratum V storage house.

Stratum V (850 – 732 BCE)

This stratum includes the monumental city gate (published in Bethsaida volume IV) and the Storage House. One of the questions that remains unsolved from past excavations was whether the approach to the Storage House was made directly from the plaza inside the gate or not. The excavations this season revealed that wall W310 that is attached to W319, which is southwest wall of the city gate, and then continues to the west for a distance of 6.22 m where it meets a northeast-southwest wall, W1155. The latter wall is 4.7 m long and turns toward the Storage House, lining up with the southern wall of the Storage House, W304. This arrangement of walls creates a large opening, of 3.6 m into the large room (5

X 7 m) in front of the Storage House. Perhaps this outer room served as an administration room for the storage house.

In area A East, the approach to the city, a few more segments of the cobblestone plaza were excavated. Among the interesting finds from there was a shard from a clay cult stand with a clay knob situated on a ridge.

Some of the loci related to this Stratum V:

Locus 1113

Grid: J 59

Opening elevation: 169.76

After superimposed loci dating from the Roman and Hellenistic periods were removed, this is the first locus that revealed mainly Iron Age material. At a level of 169.76 m there was a hard packed floor associated with a southern wall. Below this floor, the finds were almost exclusively Iron Age. No lower floor associated with to these Iron Age has yet been reached.

Finds

Among the notable finds there is a bichrome Cypro-Phoenician ware shard (fig. 8). Four thin red lines painted above a black line are visible on this thin orange body shard of a juglet. This type of ware is normally ascribed to the tenth-ninth century BCE. Therefore, it may belong at Bethsaida to either Stratum V or VI.

Additionally, there were other Iron Age II A and II B pottery shards, such as cooking pots with protruding ridge under the rim, a crater with flat rim and a deep bowl.



Figure 8, Cypro-Phoenician Bichrome Ware

Locus 1116

Grid: G58

Elevation: 168.95

This locus is located west of wall W1155 which means that it is west of the large room situated west of the Storage House. The finds in this locus included large amounts of ash and bones and Iron Age IIb pottery shards. A Bedouin tomb cut into the Iron Age wall W1155. As noted above, W1155 connects to W310 which is the northern wall of an administrative building.

Finds

Finds include primarily Iron Age II B shards of pottery. Among these are jars, a whole mouth jar, craters and a single shard of a perforated tripod cup.

Locus 1117

Grid H59

Elevation 169.2

This locus is to be found in the large room west of the Storage House. This room is bordered by W310 at the north, W1155 at the west, W313 at the east and remnants of a wall at the south. It includes a southern entrance, 3.9 m wide, and perhaps served as an administration room for the storage house.

Finds

Finds from this locus consist of Iron Age IIB shards of pottery, a rim and a shoulder to a juglet, plates, a decorated crater, jars and some small amount of intrusive of Hellenistic and Medieval shards presumably attributable to the Bedouin tombs that were cut into the layers excavated in this area.

Locus 1119

Grid H 59

Elevation: 169.37

Half of the large room considered to be an administrative room was designated as locus 1119. The purpose of this locus was to probe carefully and to establish the elevation of the floor. Then using this data the entire room would be excavated. No floor was discovered as yet and the material observed from the probe is mainly debris.

Finds

Finds include shards of Iron Age II b pottery, such as cooking pots, pithoi and basalt grinding stone or weight.

List of loci at Area A South including Strata II and V.

Locus	Grid	Elevations	Architecture	Major finds
1102	H 58	168.15	The area before W 310 was discovered	Mixed pottery, Roman to Iron Age II, anchor, basalt round stone, tripod basalt pedestal, a silver coin?
1104	H 59	168.51	The area before a east-west wall was discovered	Bronze bowl, mixed pottery, Roman to Iron Age II, quartz bead,
1105	G58	168.41	Bedouin	Ottoman coin
1107	H 58	168.73	Within the administrative room, but in Hellenistic layers.	Hellenistic oil lamp, Hellenistic and Roman pottery

1108	H 58	168.66	Within the administrative building of Stratum V, but in Hellenistic Roman periods	Oil lamp, Hellenistic Roman pottery
1109	H 58	168.53	Removing Roman pavement	Roman oil lamp and pottery
1111	H 57	168.85	North of W 310	Hellenistic and Iron Age II pottery
1112	H 59	168.77	South of the administrative room but in the Hellenistic Roman levels.	Oil lamp, mixed pottery of Hellenistic, Roman and Iron Age
1113	H 59	169.14	Within the administrative room, next to the entrance to the room	Mixed pottery of Hellenistic and Iron Age IIb, A Cypro-Phoenician bichrome ware, oil lamp
1114	H 58	169.07	Below Roman packed floor	Hellenistic Roman pottery and glass
1115	H 58	169.03	Within the administrative room, next to the northwestern corner	Mixed pottery of Hellenistic and Iron Age II
1116	G,H 58	168.95	Above the western wall of the administrative room W1155	Iron Age IIb pottery, jars, perforated three-legged cups,
1117	H 58	169.2	Below T 282, approaching the Iron Age IIb floor of the administrative room	Iron Age IIb pottery, jugs, cooking pots,
1118	H 58, 59	169.36	The southern end of the administrative room, next to the southern wall. W1159	Iron Age pottery shards
1119	H 59	169.37	Collapse material over the storage floor	Iron Age II b pottery shards
1806	P 48	172.43	Cobblestone plaza	Stamped Rhodian wine amphora, Roman and Hellenistic pottery, oil lamps
1807	P48	172.25	Cobblestone plaza	Hellenistic Roman pottery, oil lamps,
1808	P48	172.71	Cobblestone plaza	Cultic stand with a ridge and a knob. Roman pottery, Iron Age II pottery



Figure 9, Locus 1806, Rhodian Wine Amphora, Stamped handle

Stratum II (Hellenistic, Roman)

Most loci excavated in the 2010 season were from Stratum II. The excavations concentrated on the summit of Area A where excavations from previous years indicated that the main first century occupation of the site is located. This area was given the designation Area A West.

Area A East

This area marks the approach to the city. This area was paved in the 9th century BCE and the pavement continued to be in use until the 4th century CE when the city wall collapsed and covered the pavement. In the 2010 excavations season more sections of the pavement had been found. The loci belong to this area are: 1806, 1807, 1808.

Finds

Most of the finds from Area A East contained Hellenistic to Roman period shards of pottery and other finds. Among the outstanding finds there is a broken stamped handle of a Rhodian wine amphora (fig. 9). This is the 17th find of this kind at Bethsaida. Additionally, there were fragments of oil lamps, and pottery shards of cooking pots, juglets, casseroles, and jars.

Area A West

Six 5X5 m squares were excavated in 2010 (sq. 55, 56, E,F,G). They are located south of the area excavated in 2009. The massive structure dating from this stratum that had been excavated in 2009 was found to be confined with a massive wall to its south. South of those remnants, other structures were found in 2010. The northern segment included a nicely cobble stone pavement abutting a wall (W1153) to the west and another wall (W1154) to the south (L. 2200 and the superimposed L. 2209, see fig. 10). The eastern section was destroyed by a modern Syrian bunker. The finds from this loci included Roman period coins, an intact iron sickle with remains of its wooden handle, glass and pottery shards (figs. 12, 13, 14, 15, 17).

West of wall W1153 there were remnants of another pavement. This area includes loci 2201, and after the wall W1153 was discovered in it the locus number was changed to 2013. The finds include an aureus of Antoninus Pius dating from 138 CE. This is the third aureus of its type known in numismatic literature. Other finds from this locus include another bronze coin and a complete Roman glass typical to the first century CE (fig. 18).

An east-west wall running in square E 55 (W1157) in locus 2221 seems to make right angle corner with W1153. The finds from this locus include Roman period pottery shards.

Square F 56 is divided by a wall running north-south (W1151). This is a typical Stratum II wall, built of mid size field stones, the average width of the wall is 0.7 m. The loci east of the wall contains loci L. 2206 and L. 2208. Complete pottery vessels were found on the floor of locus 2208 (fig. 11). An oven in this locus (L. 2210) may indicate that these loci are perhaps a courtyard. Among the finds are Roman period coins, shards of oil lamps and a pyramidal shape clay loom weight.

In the last days of the season a wall running under locus L.2208 was discovered. This thick north-south wall is built of field stones and is 1.3 m wide. It seems to run in the same course and about the same elevation as wall W 906. However, W 906 is slightly wider (1.45 m).

West of wall W1151 there is a cobblestone pavement. This area was designated locus 2206 before the wall was discovered. At the elevation of 167.59 the top of the wall was found. The floor was found in about one meter deeper (168.52). The finds from L. 2209 include Roman pottery shards, oil lamps, glass beads and a Megarian shard of pottery showing a leaf in a high relief.



Figure 10, Area A West, L. 2200



Figure 11, Area A West, L2208, L 2209



Figure 12, Roman Glass fragments



Figure 13, An Iron Sickle, Stratum II, Roman period

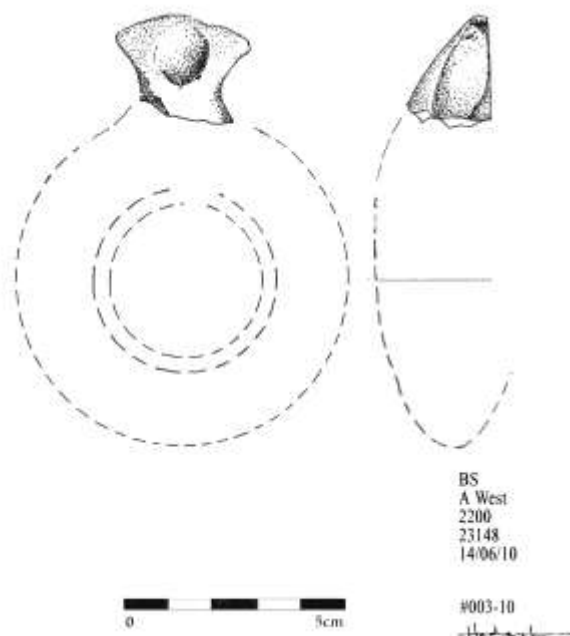


Figure 14, Chopped Nozzle of an “Herodian” Oil Lamp



Figure 15, Stratum II, Eroses Oil Lamp



Figure 16, Stratum II, locus 2212, A Roman Period Juglet without neck and handle, a hole was pierced in body.



Figure 17, Bedouin Glass Bracelet

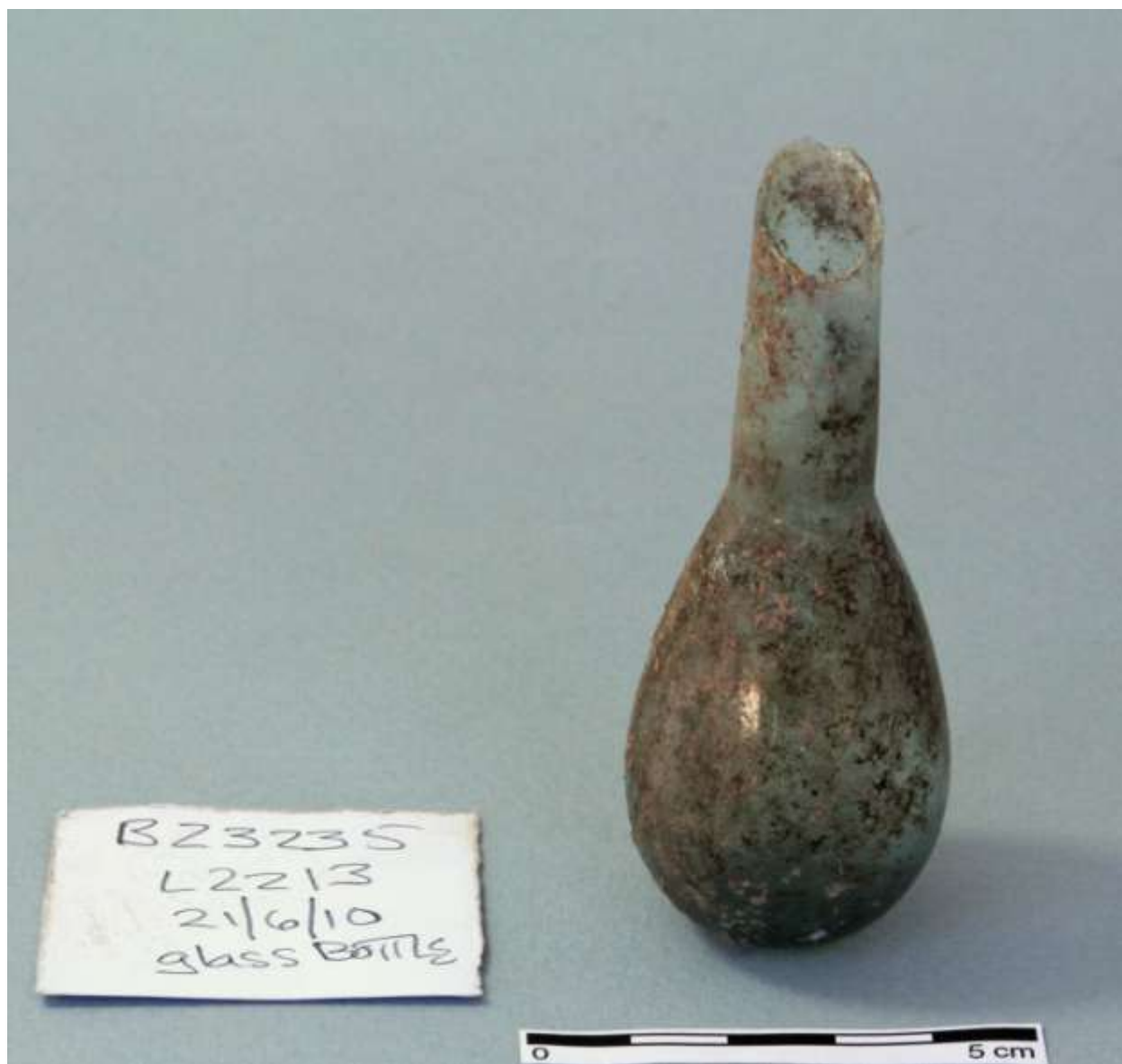


Figure 18, Stratum II, Roman Period Glass Bottle

List of Stratum II loci excavated in 2010 in A West:

Locus	Grid	Elevation	Architecture	Major finds
2200	G55	167.39	A paved room 4X2.2 m	Roman pottery, glass and coin, Intact iron sickle
2201	F55	168.15	Scattered stones	Aureus of Antoninus Pius, mixed pottery, lead net weight
2202	E55	167.78	East-west wall W1157	Roman pottery, glass, oil lamps, iron objects
2203	G56	167.57	Disturbed by a Syrian bunker, few remnants of walls	Roman pottery, Erotes oil lamp, lead net weight

2204	G56	167.67	Surface layer	Roman pottery
2206	F56	167.67	Scattered stones, debris,	Roman pottery, oil lamp, glass, iron
2207	G56	168.22	pit	Oil lamp
2208	F56	168.13	Room 1.55X3.16	Oil lamp Hellenistic-Roman pottery, pyramidal loom weight
2209	F56	168.25	Coble floor	Roman pottery, oil lamps, glass, beads, Megarian bowl,
2210	F56	168.03	oven	Roman pottery, bronze coin
2211	F56	168.12	Segment of a room 1.5X1 m	Herodian oil lamp, glass, Roman pottery
2212	F55	167.96	A small paved room, 0.75 X 95 m	Roman pottery, iron lance head, dagger, a complete juglet with removed neck and handle and pierced on the body
2213	F55	168.11	Cobble stone floor	Roman pottery, complete Roman bottle, coin, lead net weight
2214	G56	168.16	Entrance to the Syrian bunker	Mixed pottery, basalt sinker, beads
2215	G 56	168.5	Cobble stone floor	Roman pottery, oil lamps, coin
2216	F 55	168.5	T 281	Glass bead and pieces of glass
2218	E 55	168.6	T 284, Bedouin,	Glass bracelets, bronze bracelets, coins, amber beads, Bedouin clay pipe
2219	G55	168.03	Wall W1156	Roman period pottery shards
2220	E55	168.68	T 285, Bedouin	Mixed pottery, Iron Age II, Roman,
2221	E55	168.64	Under 2202, loose soil	primarily Roman pottery shards

Area C

This area contains a mixture of Iron Age II material and Hellenistic pottery shards and finds. The north-south wall W668 was found to continue in the next two squares E 25, 24. So far 13 m of this wall has been excavated. It is parallel to wall W 663. The area between the two walls is perhaps a large courtyard with a width of 9 m.

An extraordinary find was a decorated bull's head which was part of a zoomorphic vessel. The decoration includes a band in the bull's forehead; a second band seems to depict a necklace with round object hanging on the bull's neck containing cross lines. This round object with the cross lines appears similar to the decoration on the moon-god stele at the gate and might mean a symbol of the sun. Similar zoomorphic vessels are known from a few places such as Hazor and Moab.

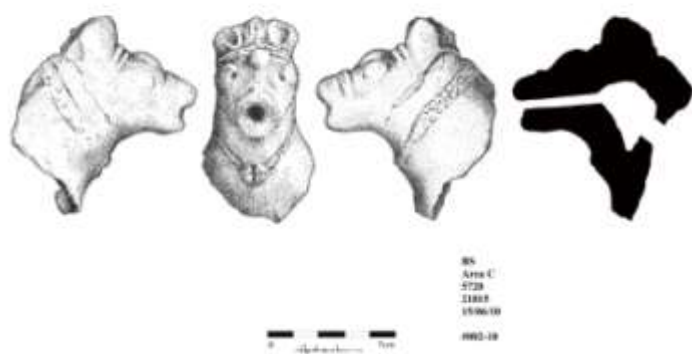


Figure 19, Decorated Head of a Bull on a Zoomorphic Vessel



Figure 20, Decorated Head of a Bull on a Zoomorphic Vessel

The loci excavated in this area are:

Locus	Grid	Elevation	Architecture	Major finds
5718	E25	167.44	Removing debris	Basalt bowl, Iron Age II pottery, coin, perhaps Hellenistic
5719	E 24	166.76	West of W 668	Hellenistic pottery, Iron Age II pottery, EB platter, impressions of rope at the bottom of a handle of a jar Black Athenian oil lamp
5720	F 24	167.2	East of W 668	A zoomorphic vessel showing a decorated head of a bull, Iron Age II pottery, a jar handle with an X and > marks, a jag handle with a cross mark
5721	F 25	167.45	East of W668	Basalt round stone, 10 cm in diameter, a weight? Military?



Figure 21, Bethsaida 2010 season



Figure 22, Bethsaida city gate, 2010



Figure 23, Area A West



Figure 24, Area C

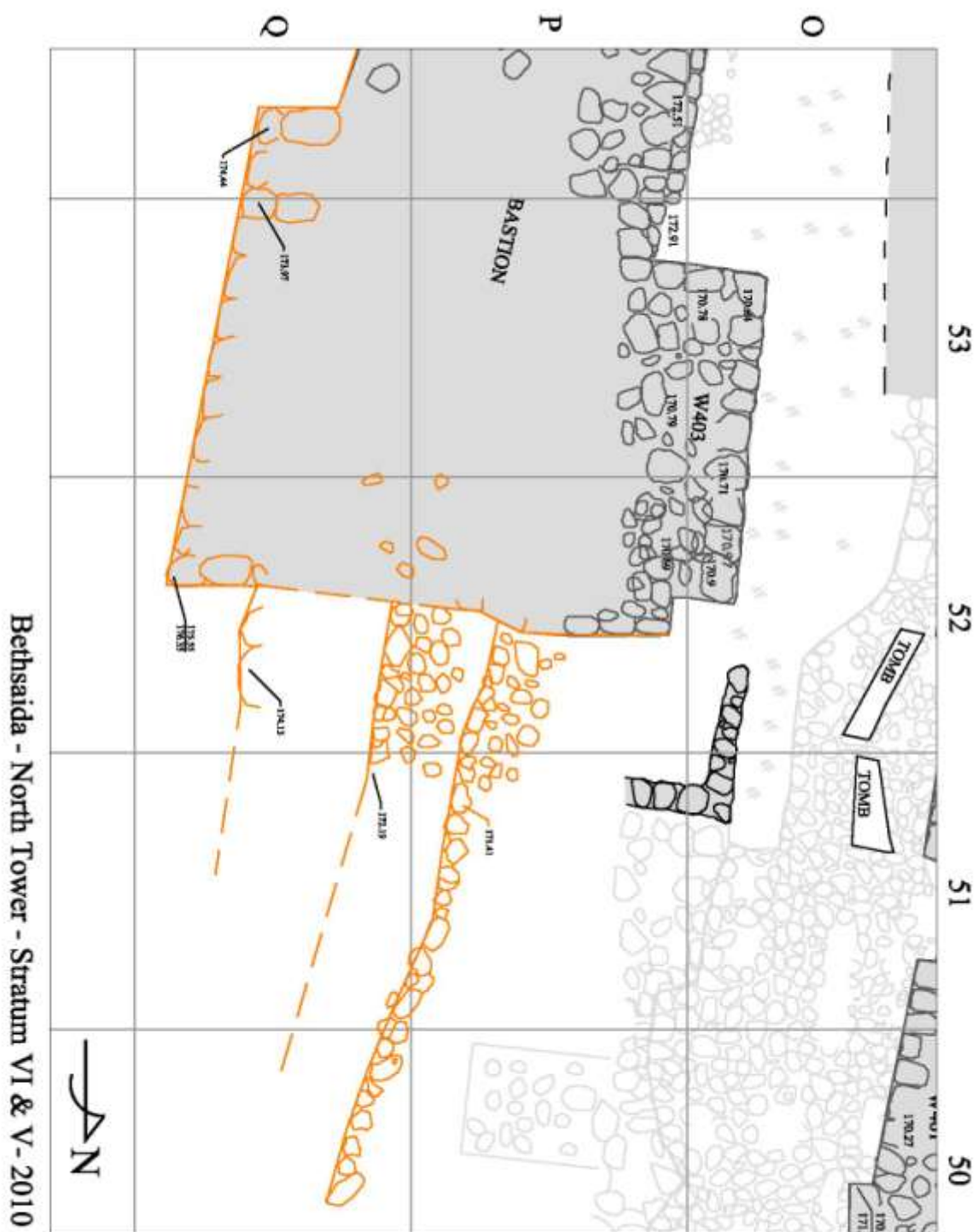


Figure 26, Bastion, Northeast Tower

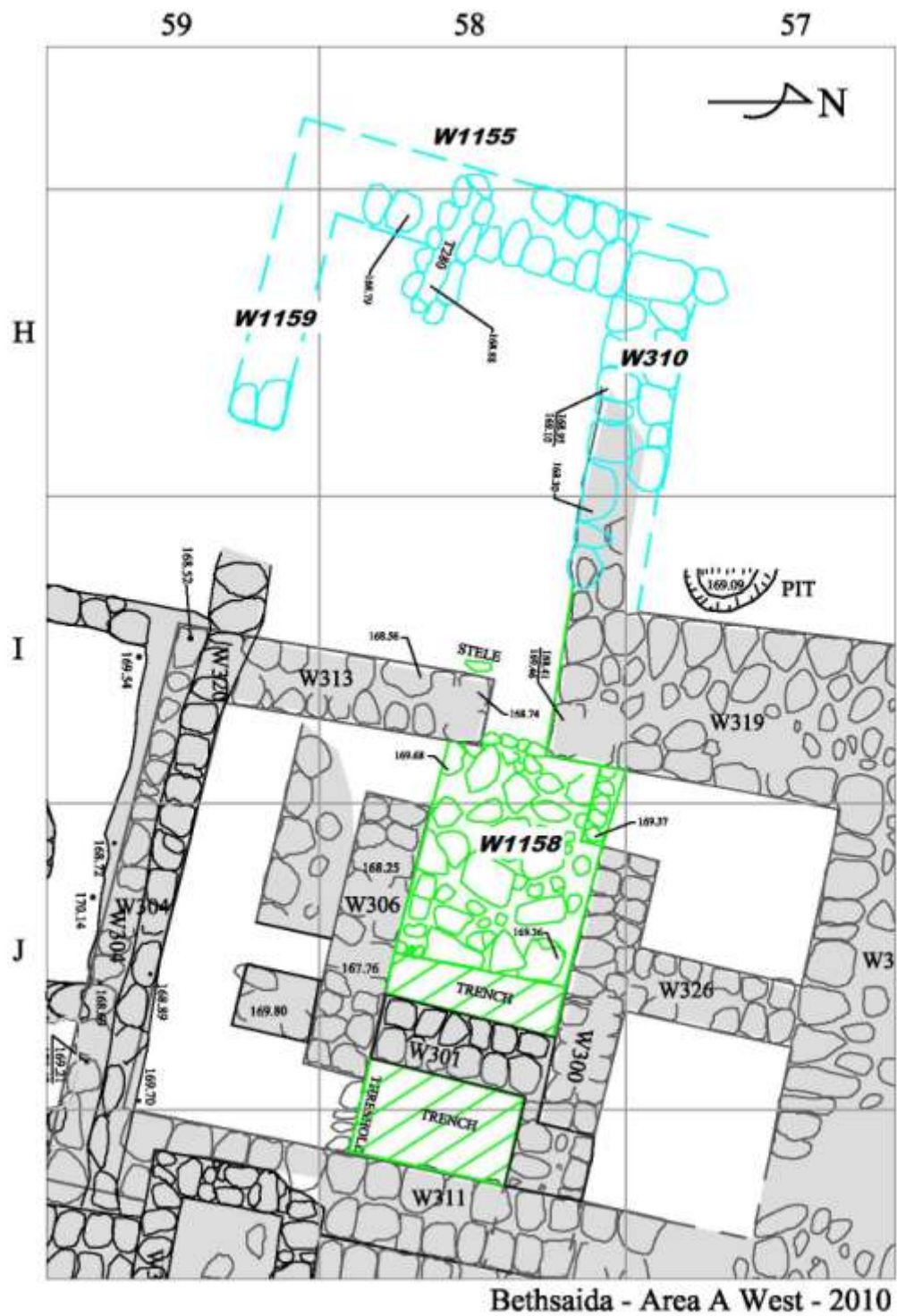


Figure 27, Area A South

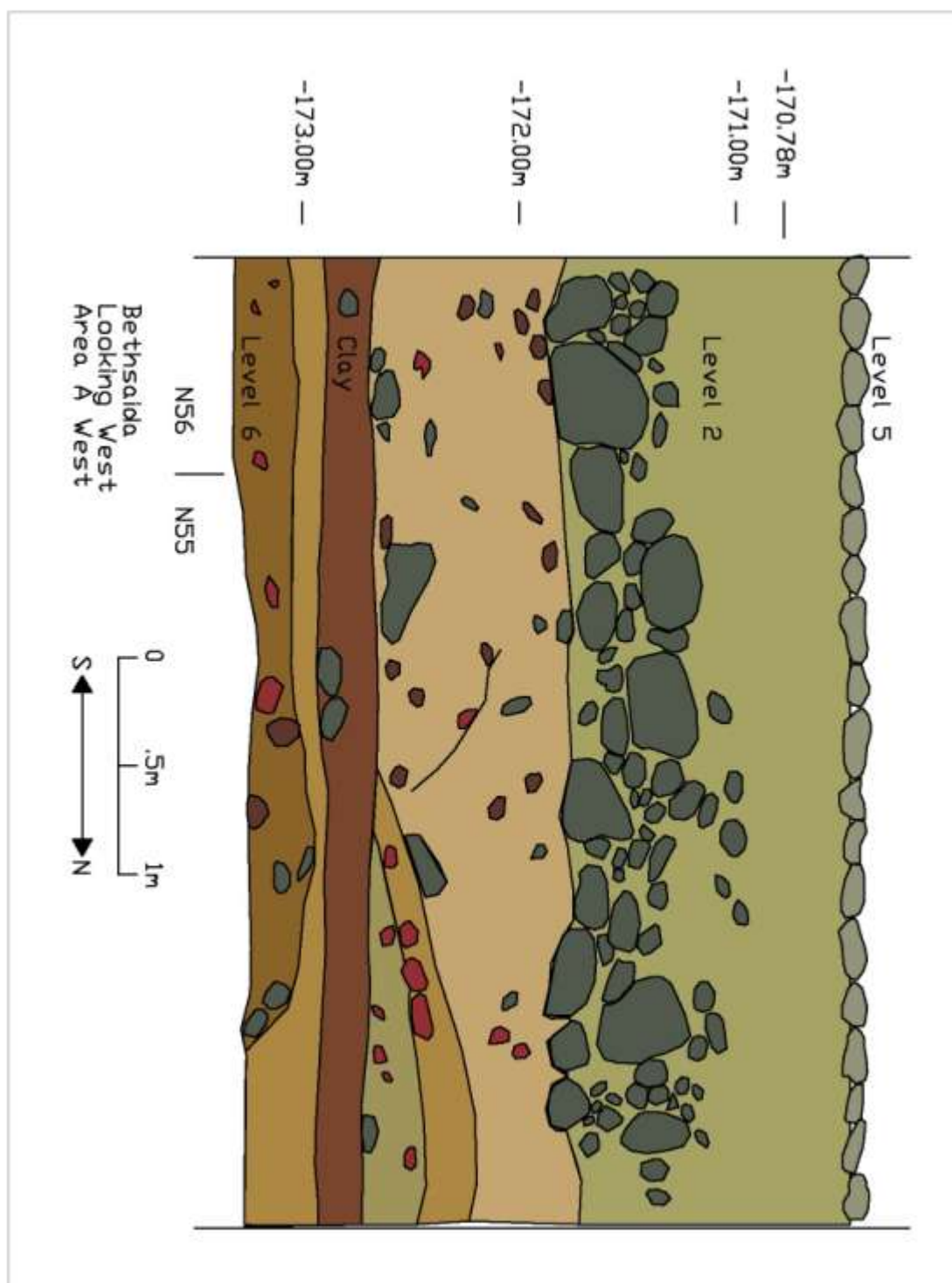


Figure 28, Section at N56/N55

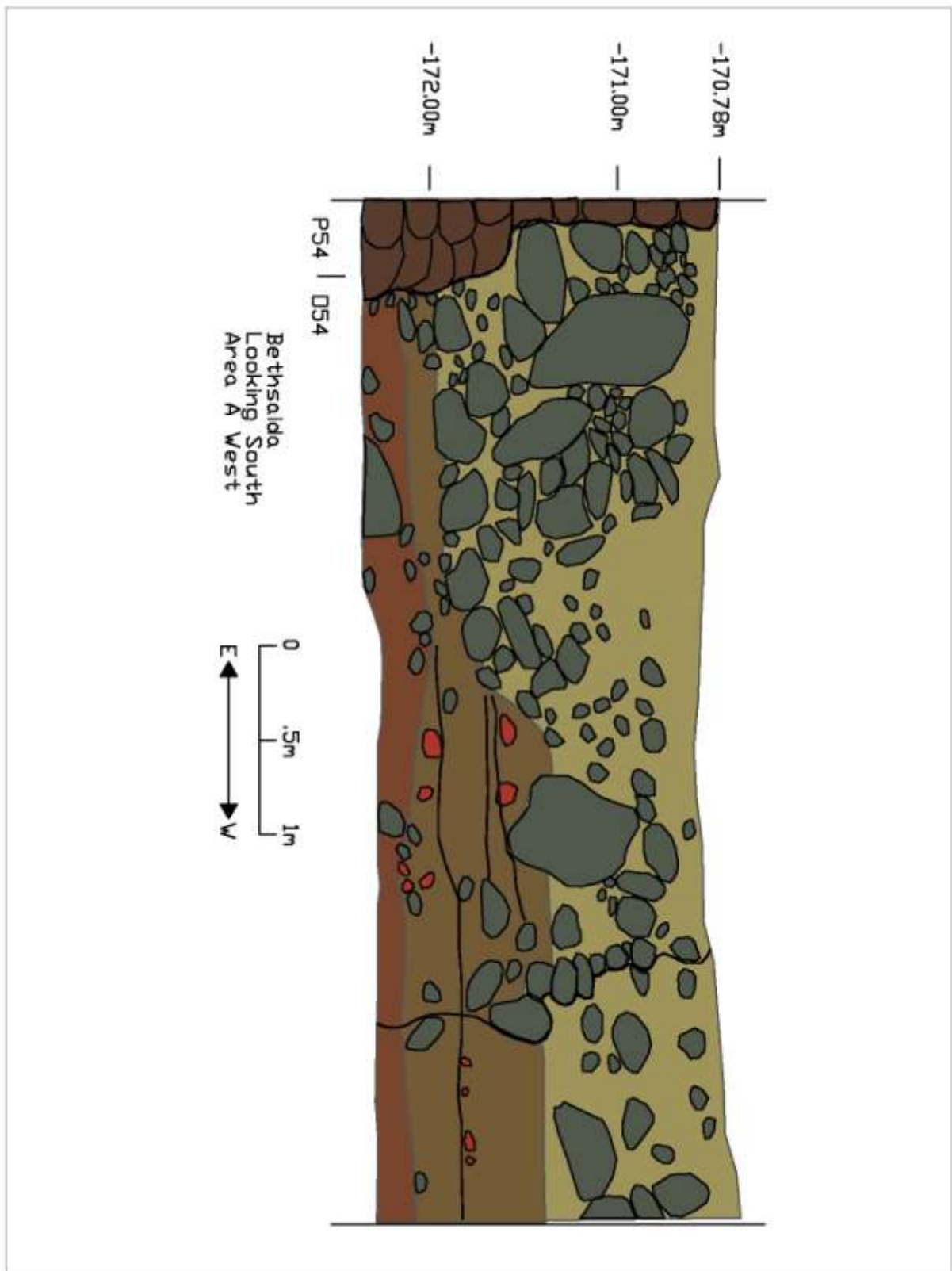


Figure 29, Section P54/O 54 Area A West

Coin Report 2010

Donald Ariel

IAA no.	Loc us	Bas ket	Description	Yea r1	Yea r2	Yea r3	Yea r4	Ar ea	Dimensions
	1101	11011	Coin ,Ottoman	1700		1917			
137117	1102	11029	Coin , Ottoman (not fully identified),Bronze	1500		1699			Weight : .54 gm Diameter : 14 mm Second Diam : 16 mm
	1105	11026	Coin ,Ottoman	1700		1917			
	2200	23124	UNIDENTIFIABLE Coin ,Bronze						
137118	2201	23022	Coin ,Antoninus Pius,Rome,Gold Aureus	138					Weight : 7.17 gm Diameter : 20 mm Axis : 6
137119	2206	23077	Coin ,Herod,Jerusalem,Bronze	-37		-4			Weight : 1.6 gm Diameter : 15 mm Axis : 6
137120	2210	23271	Coin ,Seleucid,Tyre,Bronze	-199		0			Weight : 5.36 gm Diameter : 20 mm Axis : 12
137121	2213	23188	Coin ,Hasmonean,Jerusalem,Bronze	-134		-37			Weight : 2 gm Diameter : 13 mm Axis : 12
137122	2215	23272	Coin ,Hasmonean,Jerusalem,Bronze	-134		-37			Weight : 1.22 gm Diameter : 14 mm Second Diam : 16 mm Axis : 6
	2217	23251	UNIDENTIFIABLE Coin ,Bronze						
	221	232	UNIDENTIFIABLE Coin ,Bronze						

	7	51							
1371 23	571 6	217 25	Coin ,Seleucid,Tyros,Bronze	- 154	- 153	- 144	- 143	C	Weight : 2.21 gm Diameter : 17 mm Axis : 12
1371 24	571 8	218 11	Coin ,Demetrius II,Tyros,Bronze	- 146	- 145				Weight : 1.96 gm Diameter : 13 mm
	"פ ש		Coin ,Mahmud II (Ottoman),Qustantiniyeh,Silver On Paralik noktasiz	183 3					
	"פ ש		UNIDENTIFIABLE Coin ,Bronze						
	"פ ש		UNIDENTIFIABLE Coin ,Bronze						