During the summer of 1999 Andrews University conducted its fourth season of archaeological excavation at Tall Jalul, located 5 km east of Madaba, Jordan. This year our international team consisted of approximately forty-five archaeologists, students, volunteers, and more than sixteen Jordanian specialists and workers. The Tall Jalul Excavations continue to be conducted as part of the Madaba Plains Project (MPP), under the direction of Larry Herr and Doug Clark. Because of the continuing growth of MPP, Tall al-‘Umayri’s excavation seasons now alternate seasons with those of Jalul. Work at Hesban, 

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Codirectors for the project this season were Randall W. Younker and David Merling. The Department of Antiquities of Jordan representative was Mr. Issa Syriani (from the Madaba office). Susie Oliver, Dave Merling and Randall Younker served as dig administrators. Pottery reading was done by Randall Younker and Zeljko Gregor. Pottery registrar was Stephanie Merling, assisted by Donna Eisenman and Melissa Farro. The Objects Registrar, David Merling, assisted by Paul Ray, supervised processing of small finds. Preliminary faunal analysis was done by Randy Younker and Jiri Moskala (Andrews University). Michael Younker and Melody Gonzales oversaw digital photography. Michael Younker was in charge of data entry and processing. Dig artists were Stephanie Elkins and Rhonda Root. Paul Ray served as draftsperson/architect. The surveyor was Abbas Khammash.

The excavation staff’s Field Supervisors included Richard Dorsett, Jim Fisher (Andrews University), Connie Gane (University of California at Berkeley), Ruzica Gregor, Zeljko Gregor (Andrews University), and Jennifer Groves (University of Arizona). Square Supervisors included Lael Caesar, Margaret Cohen, David Curtis, Lindsay DeCarlo, Roy Gane, Michael Haak, Moise Isaac, Yana Kondra, Pete Love, Patrick Mazani, Elizabeth Monroe, Jiri Moskala, Gregory Snyder, Efrain Velazquez, and Elizabeth Willet. Volunteers included Duksoo Ahn, Alais Alaby, Eduardo Brugman, John Dekle, Donna Eisenman, Melissa Farro, Sarah Gane, Barry Howe, Lynn Howe, Han-Seul Jung, Emily Love, Maxwell Murray, Benjamin Oliver, Matthew Wayner, Natalya Yakovenko, and Michael Younker.
which is primarily focusing on reconstruction and education, will continue under the leadership of Ø. S. LaBianca during the same seasons as Jalul. For a description of the project’s research objectives and previous results, we refer the reader to the preliminary reports published in earlier issues of AUSS.³

Excavations at Tall Jalul were conducted in four fields this season (A, B, C, and D) and uncovered remains from the Late Iron I (tenth to ninth centuries B.C.E.) to the Late Iron II and Persian periods (ca. tenth to fifth centuries B.C.E.).

Late Iron I (Tenth to Ninth Centuries B.C.E.)

Excavations penetrated late Iron I fills below the earliest Iron II architectural remains. In Field A ashy lenses with Iron I sherds (collar-rimmed jars, carinated bowls, and flanged cooking pots), as well as some Early Bronze, Middle Bronze (Chocolate-on-White ware), and Late Bronze sherds (Mycenaean) were found in small quantities in Squares A3 (Locus [hereafter “L”] 60), A4 (L. 71, 91, 100), A8 (L. 54) next to and under the tripartite building. In Square A4, these deposits were as much as 2-3 m thick (Figure 1). The tenth century (and earlier) fills consisted of the same fine ashy lenses seen in previous seasons. The lenses appear to represent a post-Iron I occupational phase. In Field B (Squares 14 and 15) these same ashy lenses were found under the lowest pavement, which we have tentatively dated to approximately the ninth century B.C.E. (Figure 2).

In Square C5 north balk, the south phase of the large south wall (L. 29, 34) was exposed (34 = C33). L. 33 (= 32) abuts against Wall 34. This locus contained Late Iron I sherds, as well as some Middle Bronze Age sherds.

sherds. There also appears to be a postoccupational phase of the Iron I period represented by L. 32, L. 33, and L. 31.

*Early Iron II (Ninth to Eighth Centuries B.C.E.)*

Field A, Square 4, Phase 12 was divided into two subphases that included postninth-century fill and a pit (L. 40) that had been dug into the postninth-century debris (L. 38 [= L. 50]) fill (Square A4; Figure 3). The sherds from the fill and the pit were field-dated to early Iron II. Based on their stratigraphic position it was surmised that they date to between the ninth and eighth centuries B.C.E. Identical sherds came from a fill in Square A7 (L. 42 and L. 64) located below an eighth-century-B.C.E. pavement and wall, and from an earth fill in Square A8 (L. 43). The fill (L. 43) in Square A8 is also penetrated by two pits: the earlier is L. 60 and the later is L. 47. The same basic situation was observed in Square A4.

In Field B, which contained the earliest Field Phase (FP) excavated this season, FP 9 dates to about the ninth century B.C.E. (Early Iron II). It includes two pylons of the inner gate chamber, the curb of the pavement that goes through the gate, and a few flagstones of the pavement (Figure 4). This entrance road appears to be related to the lower approach road found to the north in 1992.

*Iron II (Eighth Century B.C.E.)*

A number of architectural elements were uncovered in Squares 3 and 7 of Field A. These elements are located under the seventh-century tripartite building found during the previous season and include the pavement of a building (Square A3, L. 63), which was traced under the north wall of the seventh-century tripartite building to an eighth-century B.C.E. wall located to the north and outside of the seventh-century B.C.E. wall (Figure 5 and 10). This pavement also appears to continue to the south in Square A7 (L. 58). The pavement in A7 ended at a wall (Loc. 57 = 52, and 56) (Figure 6). The wall is apparently the eastern part of a large building that preceded the seventh-century B.C.E. tripartite building. The western section of this earlier building is missing, apparently robbed in antiquity, possibly for the construction of the later seventh-century B.C.E. tripartite building.

In Field B, Square 15, a fill (L. 23) under pavement 18, which appears to date to the eighth century B.C.E, dates this period. In Square B14, Wall 5 (= Wall 6 in B19) is founded on L. 22, which is immediately above ashy lenses containing Late Iron I sherds. The pottery in L. 22 was early Iron II. Based on its stratigraphic position it is possible that it dates to the ninth/eighth century B.C.E. Thus Wall 5/6 appears to date to around the eighth century B.C.E.
Iron II (Eighth to Seventh Centuries B.C.E.)

In Field A, the Iron II period was represented by an abandonment “fill” deposited sometime between the last use phase of the seventh-century tripartite building and the eighth-century pavement and building, noted above. In the fill were two pits; an older one (L. 77) and a more recent one (L. 66). Pit 66 was lined on the bottom with white chaff—a phenomenon noted in other pits in Field A from this general time period (Figure 3).

In Field B the main element of this phase was Pavement 18 located in Square B15 and dated to the ninth to eighth centuries B.C.E. (Figure 7). This same pavement runs into Square B14. The middle course of Wall 8, which may have served as a curb on the north edge of the pavement, appears to be contemporary and should probably be associated with the later phase of the outer gatehouse, of which three or four surviving stones were found in previous seasons. A section of Pavement 18 was found abutting the west face of Wall 10 (a gate pylon) in Square B18.

In Field C a stretch of rebuilt wall, originally built during the Iron I, was exposed. It appears to date to Iron II, although further work will be necessary to verify this preliminary impression (Figure 8). Specifically, the corner of Wall C4, L.20 was fully exposed. It appears to be a rebuilding of the Iron I wall (L. 29 [=34]). Courses 3, 4, and 5 probably were rebuilt during Iron II. Based on the sherds in the fill associated with these courses, a circular structure (L. 37) may be part of Phase 10 as well, but this will need to be checked by future excavation. The mudbrick (L. 10) in the east balk of Square C5 may date to this phase as well. It is above L. 15 (which contained Iron II pottery). In Square C5, a pavement (L. 29) appears to date to Iron II. (L. 30 had Iron I, early Iron II, and Iron II sherds.)

Late Iron Age II (Seventh to Sixth Centuries B.C.E.)

In Field A FP 9 represented this period. In Square A3 (east side of the square), the east side of the west wall of the tripartite building was exposed (Figure 9). Also, the subfloor was sectioned (L. 56). In Square A8, the east side of the tripartite building was exposed. In Square A3, a stylobate (L. 43) for the east row of pillars was found below pavement level (Figure 10). This stylobate continues into Square A7, to the south.

In Field B this period is represented by FP 5 and includes the late Iron II pavement, L. 10 in Square B15 (= Pavement 4 in Square B17) (Figure 7). A curb (Wall 8) bounds the pavement on the north side (in Square B16). Earth L. 19 layers below pavement 10 and contains Late Iron II potsherds. This stretch of flagstones may tie into upper pavement in the north area of ramp.
In Field C this period was represented by FP 5 and includes the wall of a building (L. 8/13) and an accompanying pavement in the northwest corner (L. 25) *(Figure 8).* The most interesting find of the season was Cave (L. 27) under the floor of the late Iron II building *(Figure 11).* The finds in this cave (L. 28) included 14 skeletons including several children and one infant *(Figure 12).* The orientation of the bodies was definitely random. Some of the bodies were almost standing on their heads; others had large rocks resting on their torsos and heads. The positions of the skeletons clearly do not reflect careful burial. Rather, the bodies appear to have been dumped into the cave along with other debris, including large building stones that probably came from the building above. This raises the interesting question as to what circumstances led to these bodies being dumped in this manner. Had they died in a plague and been quickly dumped to avoid contamination? Or, were they the victims of an attack on the city, unceremoniously disposed of by their victorious enemies? That these individuals represent Iron II Ammonites can be inferred from a number of considerations. The most compelling is that the Iron Age seal found in the previous season appears to have come from this building and was definitely seventh-century Ammonite, based on paleographic analysis. Other artifacts found in the cave in association with the skeletons also point to a late Iron II Ammonite occupation. These included a typical Ammonite-style “horse-and-rider” figurine *(Figure 13).* Other objects in the cave included stone loom weights and an axe. The presence of a small number of late Iron II/Persian sherds, including one blackware sherd found in the skull of one of the victims, causes some problems in dating the find. However, the majority of the sherds found in the cave were Late Iron II. It appears that the few later sherds must have worked their way into the mouth of the cave from earth settling and slumping, combined with water activity. The cave itself was sealed by the roof collapse of the Late Iron II building. Above this collapsed-roof debris was evidence of an ephemeral rebuilding during the Late Iron II Persian period, already noted in previous seasons.

*Late Iron II/Persian Period (Sixth to Fifth Centuries B.C.E.)*

Since our focus in field A this season was *beneath* the Iron II (seventh century B.C.E.) tripartite building excavated last season, no remains from the Late Iron II/Persian period were recovered. However, in Field B architectural elements of the Late Iron II/Persian were uncovered for the first time. Field B, Phase 4 includes a Late Iron II/Persian repaving (L. 29) of the road through the inner gatehouse; the top course of Wall 10 (a gate pylon?) in B18; and the curb (Wall 8 in Square B16) along the side of the roof debris was evidence of an ephemeral rebuilding during the Late Iron II Persian period, already noted in previous seasons.

entryway road. FP 4 was followed by FP 3, which consisted of the post-Persian debris accumulation. It included two bins (L. 9) and Pit 14 (= 17, 20, 21). The pit contained Hellenistic sherds.

In Field C this period is represented by FP 4. It included several layers of debris (L. 22, L. 28) that covered the Iron II/Persian building (L. 8/13). As noted above, a few Late Iron II/Persian sherds worked their way down into the Iron II cave below the floor of the Iron II building, but it appears that these were intrusive through natural, postdepositional processes.

In Field D work continued in all four squares. Excavations reached roof collapse and other fallen debris on top of a large Late Iron II/Persian period building (sixth/fifth century B.C.E.). The building seems to consist of a number of rooms surrounding a central courtyard (Figures 14, 15). Pillars seem to have supported the ceiling of this building. A number of objects were found in this field, including a small female plaque figurine (Figure 16) and a Late Iron II seal depicting a winged griffin. A large storage jar was found on the floor of this building, on the east side of the Field. It is anticipated that the next season will be most interesting for Field D when the roof debris will be removed and we will be able to see what lies upon the floor of this Late Iron II/Persian period building, in situ.
Figure 1. Ashy lenses in Field A containing Iron I pottery sherds.

Figure 2. Ashy lense under pavement in Field B (right in photo) contains Iron I sherds.
Figure 3. Pits in Field A Square 4 (top) date to ninth to eighth centuries B.C.E.

Figure 4. Note ninth-century B.C.E. Gate Pylons to left of photo in Field B; pavements from several Iron Age phases are visible in center of picture. Persian period curb is above stone with hole (left center); seventh-sixth century pavement is below black sign; ninth-eighth-century pavement above black sign (see also Figure 7).
Figure 5. Possibly eighth-century B.C.E. paving stones (bottom center) below seventh-century B.C.E. wall. Eighth-century wall consists of two rows of stones to right (where the arrow is pointing).

Figure 6. Eighth-century B.C.E. wall (top left) with pavers coming up against its base (top center).
Figure 7. Possible ninth-century pavers are in Field B just to the right of the probe in the center of this photo (only a couple of pavement stones are visible in this photo). Eighth-century pavers are under the sign; sixth-century pavers are at higher level above sign.

Figure 8. Rebuilt Iron I wall at top of photo (courses 3-5 rebuilt in Iron II) (Field C). Note circular structure between walls to right in photo and the corner of an Iron II building in bottom left of photo). There is a section of mudbrick between the two stone walls (right of photo below the circular structure).
Figure 9. Seventh-century B.C.E. tripartite building, looking south (Field A). West wall of building is to right and the stylobate that supported the pillars is visible to left of photo (running under the balk). The building’s north wall is visible at bottom of photo.

Figure 10. Long wall on left side of picture in the stylobate of the seventh-century B.C.E. tripartite building (Field A). The pavers and small section of wall in lower right are from the eighth-century building.
Figure 11. Cave in floor of Late Iron II pillared building in Field C.

Figure 12. Skull no. 8 under debris in Field C cave. The individuals probably are Ammonites from the Late Iron II (seventh-sixth centuries B.C.E.).
Figure 13. Head of a clay horse and rider figurine found near bodies in Field C cave. These figures are typical of the Late Iron II Ammonite figurine corpus.

Figure 14. Room from Late Iron II/Persian period building in Field D.
Figure 15. Pillars at entrance to courtyard in Late Iron II/ Persian period building in Field D.

Figure 16. Female figurine from Field D (legs to right, head broken).