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Tel Dor – 1988

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The ninth season of excavations at Tel Dor (*ESI* 7–8:43–49) was conducted in July–August 1988 on behalf of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University and the Israel Exploration Society. The expedition was directed by E. Stern, with the participation of teams from California State University in Sacramento (directed by H.P. Goldfried), the University of California in Berkeley (directed by A. Stewart), the Southern California College (directed by N. Heidebrecht), and the University of Minnesota. The expedition staff included R. Rosenthal-Higginbottom, I. Sharon (assistant to the director), J. Berg (architect), S. Wolff (assistant to the architect), L. Lanigan (photographer), A. De Groot, A. Gilboa, J. Zorn, R. Vander, I. Saragusti, K. Karhi (area supervisors); B. Zilberstein (registrar), S. Dahan and D. Stanfill (administrators). The expedition was lodged at the Pardess Hanna Agricultural school and had the support of the Center of Nautical and Regional Archaeology at Kibbutz Naḥsholim, directed by K. Raveh.

Five areas were excavated this season (fig. 23). In Area B1 the work had two aims: to continue exposing the early Iron Age levels in the north part of the area and to carry on the dismantling of part of the fortification walls to clarify their relationship to the two- and four-chambered gates. Area B2 was expanded in order to expose additional parts of the structures of the later period uncovered in previous seasons. Work also continued in the area of the gates. In Area D2 work went on in the same squares as last season, with the aim of reaching earlier levels and tracing their connection with the remains excavated in previous seasons in the south part of the area. Work in Area F was limited to a small part of the excavation area in the southwest, with the aim of removing Garstang's 1924 dump and of looking for a gap in the retaining wall which could have provided access to the temples on the west edge of the tell. Area G was expanded eastward and westward in order to expose additional parts of the concrete foundations of the Roman period which represent the edge of the forum or the piazza uncovered here in past seasons. In addition, work continued in the Iron Age strata.

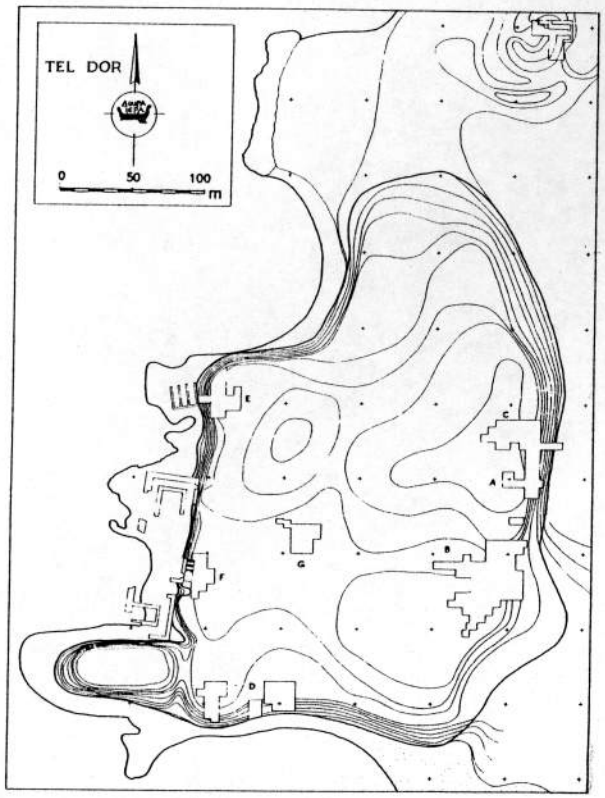

Fig. 23. Tel Dor. Map of excavation areas

Iron Age I

Work continued in Area B1 on the large mudbrick wall uncovered last season in the west part of the area (fig. 24). This wall consists of a brick superstructure (height *c.* 1.5 m) and a lower element built of fieldstones and large boulders, whose base has not yet been exposed. The width of the wall varies from *c.* 2 m in the mudbrick section to *c.* 3 m in the lower stone-built part.

The west side of this wall attests to an intense conflagration, resulting in a massive destruction of the adjacent area. The brick wall was burnt through to approximately half its width. A probe through the destruction debris to a depth of 3 m has so far not revealed any floors or surfaces reaching the wall. Finds in the destruction debris included a large flask decorated with red concentric circles and fragments of a large pithos of 'Sidonian' type, decorated with wavy bands in relief, dated to the 12th century BCE.

East of the wall is the thick plaster-capped ram-

part previously attributed to the Middle Bronze Age. A section dug through the rampart showed that it was constructed of sand laid against the wall. It follows that the retaining wall and the rampart are contemporaneous or that the wall is earlier than the sand fill. Most of the ceramic material found in the sand fill of the rampart dated from the Middle Bronze Age, but a significant quantity of Iron I sherds was also present. Since the base of the wall has not yet been reached, the possibility exists that the origins of the rampart go back to the Middle Bronze Age, while the upper part represents an Iron I remodeling or reconstruction of the rampart and the retaining wall.

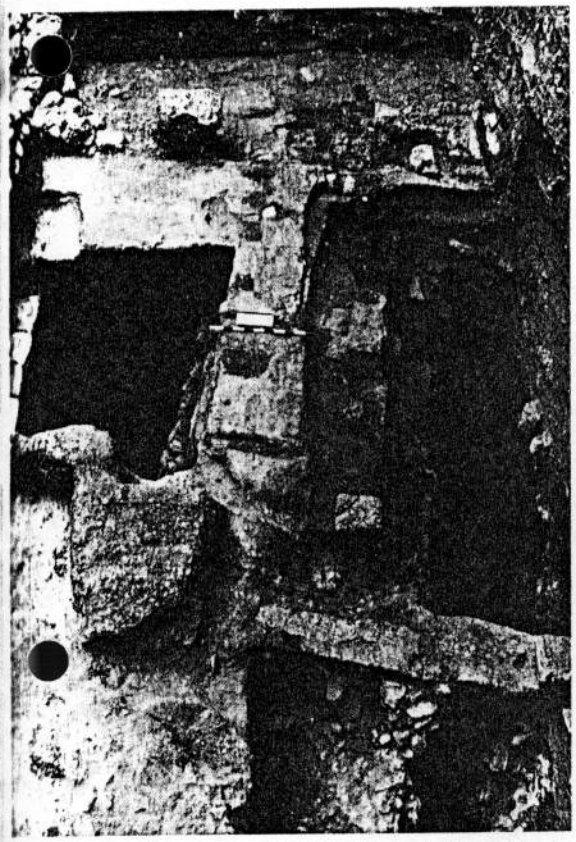

Fig. 24. Tel Dor. Area B1, Iron I large brick wall

Iron Age II

Work proceeded on the investigation of the stratigraphic relationship between the city walls and the two- and four-chambered gates in Areas B1 and B2 (fig. 25). Previously, it had been assumed that the complex of massive boulder walls was associated with the two-chambered gate and that the mudbrick wall located below them was associated with the four-chambered gate. The balk which covered the point where the walls connected with the gates on the outer side of the walls was removed and part of the stone core of the wall was dismantled in order to check the join on the inside of the walls.

It then became clear that the boulder wall did indeed reach the two-chambered gate, but that the brick wall formerly assumed to have been associated with the four-chambered gate continues under the foundations of that gate, and must therefore be earlier. Under the balk was a fragment of stone wall attached to the four-chambered gate, whose base lies higher than the top of the brick wall. This wall does not continue beyond the balk line. However, a rough stone fill uncovered in previous seasons north of this point and at the same elevation, which was then taken to be a foundation of the boulder wall, may in fact be what remained of a wall after its facing had been robbed. If so, it may be a continuation of the wall discovered this year. Moreover, one of the walls of a structure now exposed was directly attached to the four-chambered gate. The walls of this structure were incorporated into the foundations of a stone revetment built against the boulder wall. The relationship between this structure and the boulder wall has not yet been determined, and it is possible that an early phase of the boulder wall was contemporaneous with this structure and therefore with the four-chambered gate.

These new data can be interpreted as follows: (a) The mudbrick wall belongs to an early phase of the city fortifications and was associated with an as yet unidentified gate. (b) The foundation phase of the massive boulder wall is contemporaneous with the four-chambered gate (10th/9th–8th century BCE). (c) The boulder wall remained in use and was modified as necessary when the two-chambered gate was constructed (8th–5th centuries BCE). Since the two-chambered gate was wider, the facing of a portion of the wall under it was dismantled and a stone revetment was built at the point of connection of the wall and the gatehouse.

Such a reconstruction simplifies the correlation between the Iron Age fortification systems in Areas A and C and those in Area B. Two Iron Age city walls were uncovered in Area C1: a composite stone and mudbrick wall built in the 10th–9th centuries BCE, which continued to be used, with various modifications, until the Persian period; and below it, a

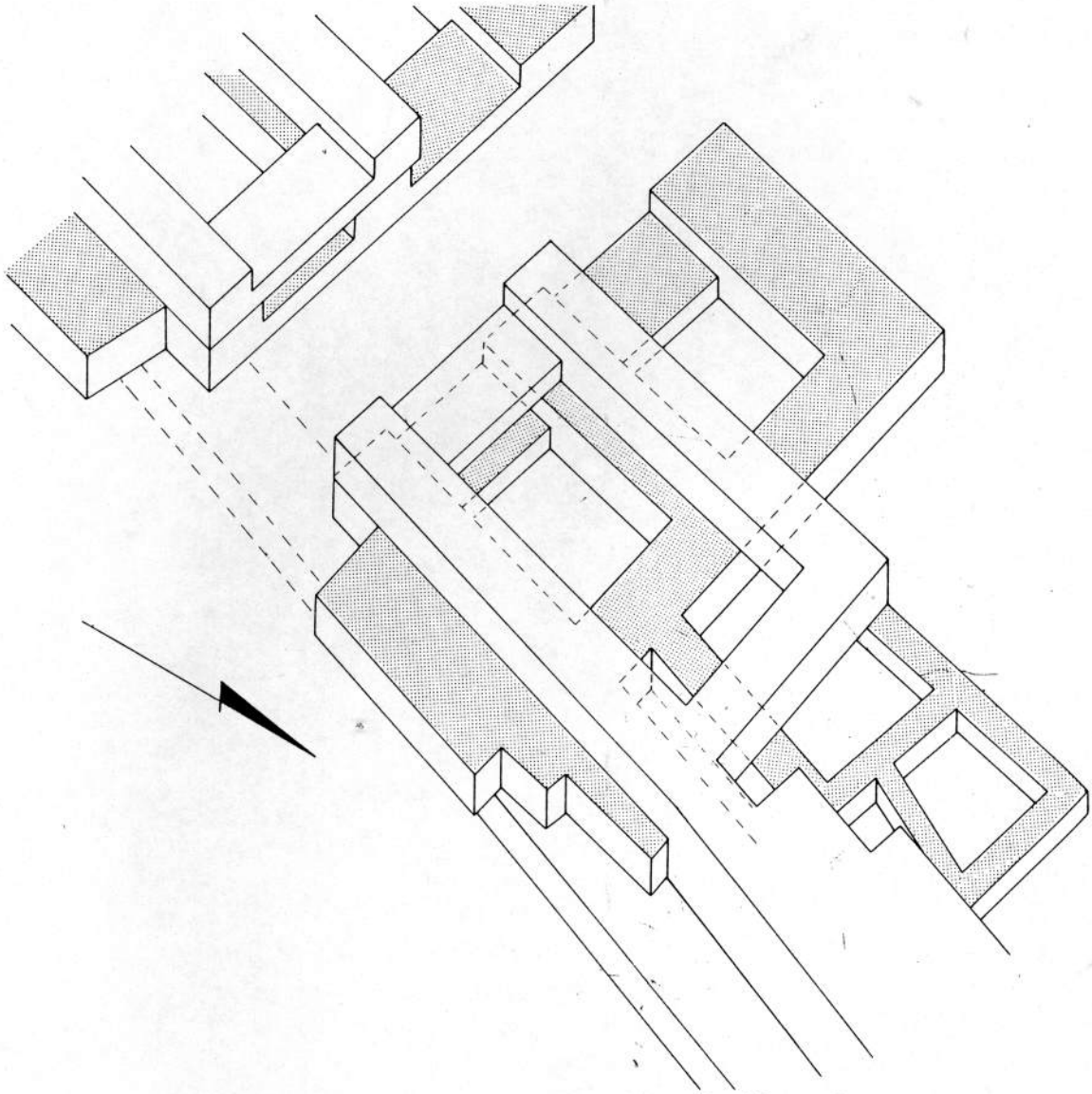

Fig. 25. Tel Dor. Isometric reconstruction of Iron II gates

mudbrick wall dated to the 11th–10th century BCE. Reassigning the mudbrick wall in Area B1 to a phase earlier than the four-chambered gate makes it possible to correlate it with the lower mudbrick wall in Area C. The assumption that the massive stone wall in Area B was in use with both gates gives it the same chronological range as that of the composite offset-inset wall in Areas A and C (see the parallel development of the offset-inset wall at Megiddo).

In Area B2 (south part of the Iron Age gates) massive ashlar walls were exposed, indicating the existence of outer gate complexes in both phases of the inner gates, but it is too early to give a reliable plan of these outer gates. Fragments were uncovered of the pebble-paved path leading to the two-chambered gate (part of this path was exposed in 1981). The new fragments are located north of the gate (Area B1), thus establishing that the approach to the city gate was from the north; inside the gate, entry into the inner, two-chambered gatehouse required a right turn.

The removal of later walls and fill exposed the southwest corner of the south chamber in the two-chambered gate. At this point a floor dating from the

end of the Iron Age, which reached the outer wall of the chamber, was unearthed. This is the first time that an undisturbed floor has been found which relates to the initial construction of the gate.

In Area G, work continued in the area around the room excavated last year. A number of plaster floors dating from Iron IIA was found, but the area is heavily disturbed by later pits. Of special interest is a mudbrick wall which contains the remains of layers of reeds laid parallel to each other between the brick courses. The use of reeds in the construction of brick walls is known in Mesopotamia, but previously had not been recorded in this country.

Persian Period

In Area D2, a series of fieldstone walls was discovered under the Hellenistic houses (fig. 26). These can be matched, very tentatively, with a similar set of walls excavated in the south, so that the reconstruction of the plan of two buildings can be attempted. These are long, narrow structures, each divided into several longrooms facing a street or a narrow (width 5 m) courtyard.

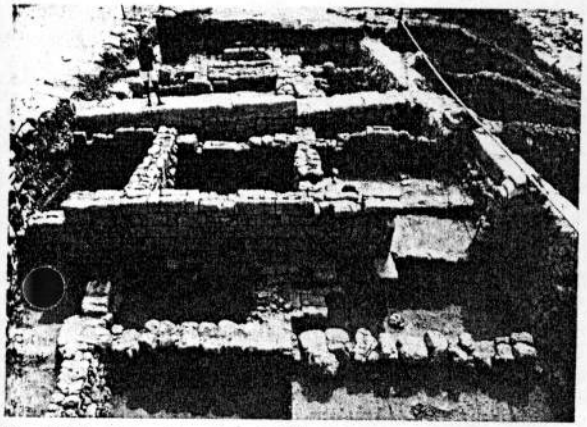

Fig. 26. Tel Dor. Area D2, Hellenistic *insula* and below it (in front), long rooms of Persian structure

This area seems to have been reserved for commercial or industrial use. Several pits filled with broken amphoras, waste of the dye industry and slags dot the area. A concentration of amphoras (a storeroom?) was found previously, also in the south part of the area.

In Area G more pits were uncovered in an area where pits and disturbances were exposed in previous seasons. The pits are not associated with any architecture.

Hellenistic Period

This season Area B2 was expanded eastward and a wall running east–west was uncovered. The wall was constructed in the same distinctive 'compartment' technique as the Hellenistic city wall. Severe later disturbances in this part of the area prevented an independent dating of this wall. However, based on its construction technique and alignment, it is probable that it represents the continuation of the Hellenistic fortification system. This would also solve a problem which perplexed the excavators for several seasons — the lack of the southward continuation of the fortification wall, which ended abruptly a short distance south of the gate. Now it has become clear that the city wall turns east at this point and borders several structures built south of the gate (fig. 27).

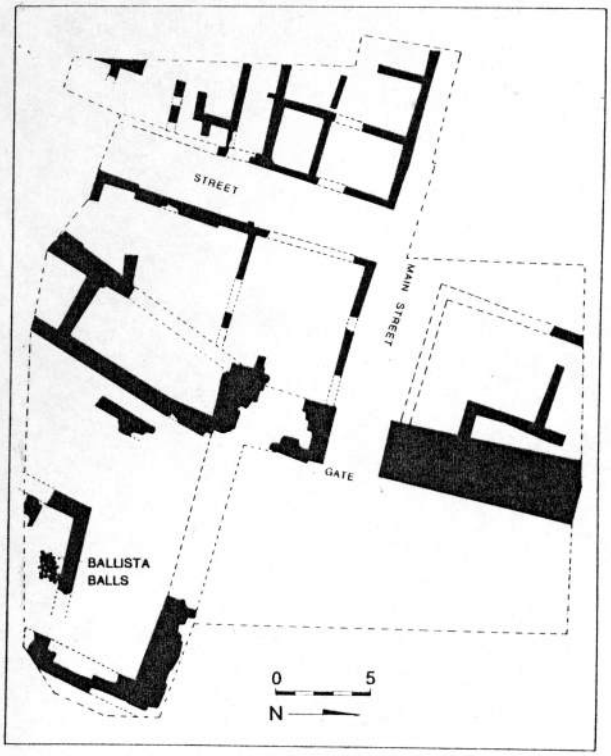

Fig. 27. Tel Dor. Area B2, plan of Hellenistic phase

In Areas D2, F and G, more walls of ashlar piers and rubble fill were found — a building method

common in the residential areas at Dor. At the west end of Area G, the southeast corner of a large ashlar structure, which may be part of a public building, was exposed.

Roman Period

The extension of Area B2 to the east, west and south led to the further exposure of the three main architectural complexes associated with the area of the 'piazza' at the city entrance: the aqueduct, the courtyard building east of the main street and the large colonnaded building west of the same street.

In 1984, two structures were identified as piers of the aqueduct entering the city just south of the 'piazza' at the entrance. The eastward expansion of the area exposed the foundations of another of the aqueduct's piers, thus confirming the identification. (Remains of an aqueduct bringing water to Dor were uncovered when the Tel Aviv–Haifa highway was built).

Work in the large courtyard house (caravanserai or barracks) revealed the southwest corner and a few more rooms next to the courtyard. An iron sword and the jawbone of a horse were found on the floor of one of the rooms.

Excavations continued in the large colonnaded building southwest of the entrance 'piazza'. Expansion to the west revealed a robber's trench corresponding to the south wall of the colonnaded building. The pavement discovered last season south of this building has now been firmly identified as the corner of an east–west street. The building is an elongated structure (width 25 m; length more than 35 m), divided lengthwise into four spaces.

In Area F (temple complex) work focused mainly on removing Garstang's dumps. This resulted in the discovery of an opening in the large concrete retaining wall east of the temple complex.

The expansion of Area G (Roman forum) to the east and west exposed more of the massive concrete foundations around the forum. In the east, foundations which are aligned with the north wall of the large building in Area B2 were uncovered. Another part of the concrete foundation continues to the west and incorporates part of the large Hellenistic ashlar building mentioned above. These remains may indicate the alignment of the main (east–west) street in the Roman city.

Ḥorvat Shefi

Yehudah Neeman, Aviva Boshnino and Yosef Porath

Following quarrying operations which damaged the east edge of Ḥ. Shefi (map ref. 1487/2215), a limited trial excavation was conducted in July 1988 at the site on behalf of the Antiquities Authority. The work was directed by Y. Neeman, assisted by A. Boshnino, I. Lotan and Y. Porath, and was financed by the Even Vesid Industries.

The ruin is situated at the tip of a rocky spur overlooking Naḥal Daliya, south of the Meir Shefeya School. Stone walls and sherds ranging from the Early Bronze Age to the Ottoman period were found in the area which has been quarried. Two pockets containing material were identified at the foot of the section, near bedrock, and were chosen for excavation.

Area A. A trial pit (*c.* 2 × 2 m; depth *c.* 1.2 m) was excavated down to bedrock at the foot of the section produced by quarrying. A thin layer of reddish earth mixed with sherds was uncovered on the bedrock. This was covered by a layer *c.* 0.2 m thick of debris (grey soil mixed with crumbled and charred organic material) which contained numerous EB II–III sherds. Above this lay brick material (a wall?) up to 0.2 m from the surface. Most of the associated sherds were of MB IIB, and a smaller number of EB II–III. The upper layer, which had been damaged, contained sherds ranging from the Late Roman to the Ottoman periods.

Area B. Two trial pits were dug north of Area A on a ledge produced by the quarrying operations. The following stratigraphy was recorded (from the top down): (1) Below the surface was a layer of small stones and crushed chalk, covered by sherds of the Byzantine period. (2) A mixed fill contained sherds