

HERODIAN PAVEMENT (ESPLANADE?) AND LATER REMAINS NEAR WARREN'S GATE, WEST OF THE TEMPLE MOUNT, JERUSALEM

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INTRODUCTION

A salvage excavation was undertaken in 2007–2008 in a small deep area within the Western Wall Tunnels, c. 10 m west of Warren's Gate, the northern gate of the Herodian Temple Mount, which is currently blocked (Fig. 1).¹ The excavation was conducted eight meters underground, without reaching bedrock, below the Bab el-Mathara area of the Muslim Quarter, under buildings of the medieval and Ottoman periods. This was the first stratigraphic excavation carried out in the immediate vicinity.²

The excavation area was located about 45 m north of Wilson's Arch and the overlying Silsileh Gate. Between 1967 and the 1990s, a narrow underground tunnel was dug along the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, exposing the lower courses of the Herodian Western Wall and the original *in situ* Herodian paving stones in front of Warren's Gate (Bahat 2013:242–256). Recent excavations below Wilson's Arch exposed a small, Roman-period theater-like structure, overlaid by intentional fills dating from the second to the fourth centuries CE (Uziel, Lieberman and Solomon 2019).

The excavation was located just north of the Cross Hall, an underground medieval cross-shaped hall that was partly cleared by the Ministry of Religious Affairs in the 1970s and 1980s (for a summary of this investigation, see Bahat 2013:222–241, Plan 7.01). According

¹ The excavations (Permit Nos. A-5124/2007, A-5431/2008) were initiated by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, and directed by Alexander Onn on behalf of the IAA, with the assistance of Avraham Solomon, Yehuda Rapuano (area supervisor) and Ron Be'eri (area supervisor and field photography), Vadim Essman (field plans), Dov Porotsky (drafting), Peretz Reuven (pottery) and Donald T. Ariel (numismatics). Following Alexander Onn's passing away, the responsibility for the publication of the final report was assigned to Shlomit Weksler-Bdolah, who worked with the excavator on the final reports of his excavations in the Western Wall Tunnels (for the preliminary report, see Onn et al. 2017). The report is dedicated to the memory of Alexander, my colleague and teacher in field archaeology.

² The archaeological excavation was undertaken due to plans to build a new underground structure in this area. Following the excavation, the site was backfilled, as it was decided that the area was not suitable for extensive excavation and construction.

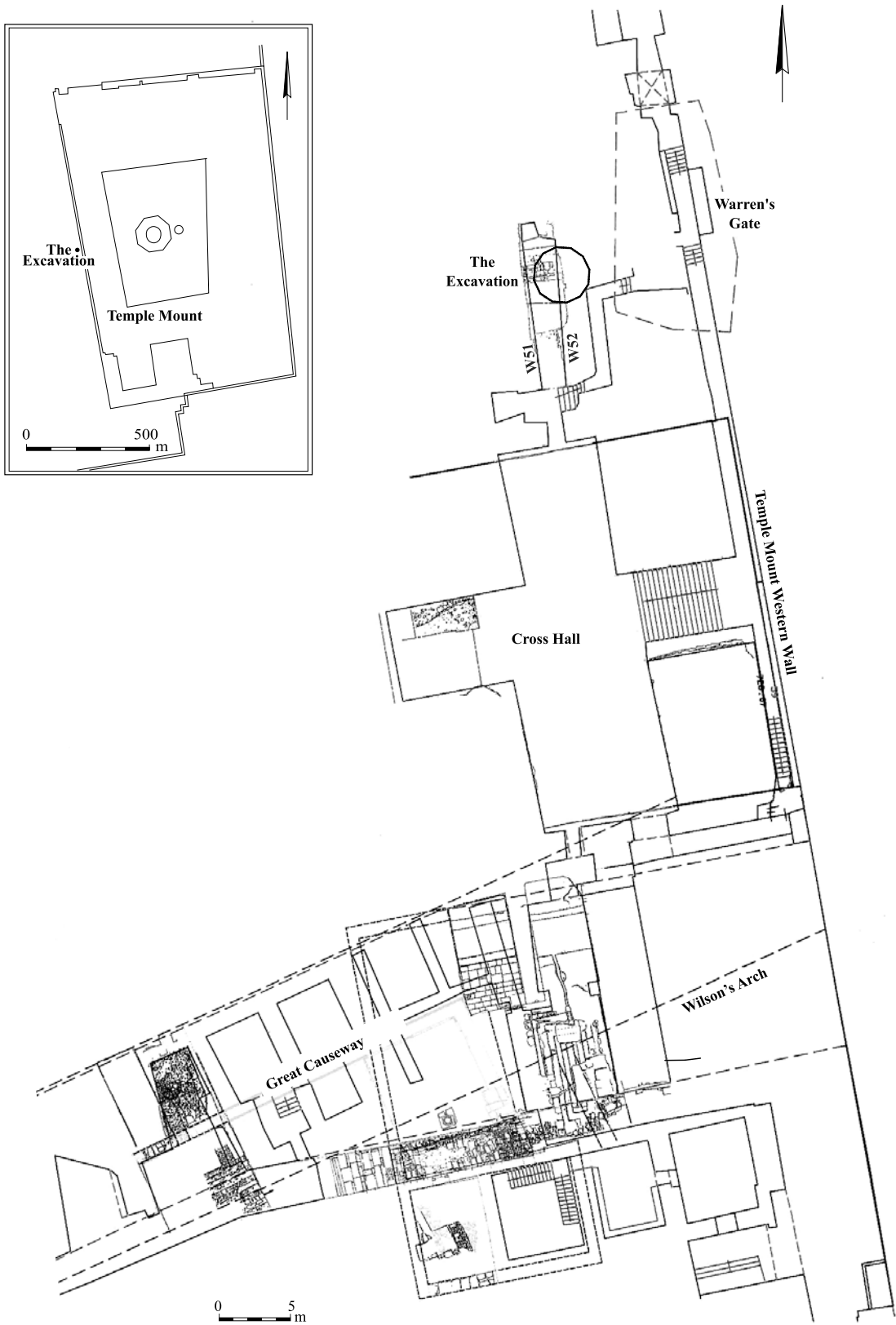


Fig. 1. Location map of the excavation near Warren's Gate, west of the Temple Mount.

to Bahat, the hall was constructed in the Ayyubid or Mamluk period as an underground supporting structure (Bahat 2013:222). It was partially built inside an extant large pool (length 26.5 m, width unknown), whose eastern wall was attached to the Herodian Temple Mount's western wall by means of stone pegs that are still visible today (Bahat 2013:225, Plan 7.02). The pool evidently postdated the western wall, and Bahat proposed dating it to the Roman period (Bahat 2013:236–240).³

THE EXCAVATION

The excavation (4 × 5 m, 8 m deep) was conducted in a shaft between two walls (W51, W52) of a narrow underground room or passage with a vaulted ceiling; it was expanded slightly to the east below the eastern wall (Plan 1). In the course of the excavation, the sides of the deep shaft were reinforced with a polygon-shaped concrete wall. Five strata, some with several phases, were distinguished, dating from the late Second Temple period (first century CE) to the medieval era (tenth–thirteenth centuries CE). The uppermost stratum was the vaulted room (Stratum I), and beneath it lay an Early Islamic-period staircase (Stratum II), that in turn overlay a Byzantine-period flagstone floor (Stratum III). Underneath the Byzantine floor was a drainage channel complex dating to the Roman period (Stratum IV), and below it lay two superimposed pavements and another drainage channel dated to the first century CE, probably before 70 CE (Stratum V). This drainage channel was the lowest element exposed (channel floor: 722.34 m asl). The archaeological remains exposed are described here from early to late (Table 1). Selected pottery and coin finds are presented separately (see Reuven, this volume; Ariel, this volume).

Stratum V: Early Roman Period (First Century CE)

Phase Vc. The upper part of a pile of collapsed stones (L29063, L29064) within an earth fill (L29060) was revealed at 722.70–722.90 m asl (Plan 1: Section 1–1).⁴ Two coins minted in the reign of Tiberius (see Ariel, this volume: Cat. Nos. 2, 4) were found in this layer, providing a *terminus post quem* of 31/2 CE for this phase. This dating was also corroborated by the associated pottery (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 1).

³ In the authors' opinion, the pool may already have been built in the late Second Temple period, similarly to other large water pools that were built against dams on riverbeds around Jerusalem during the Second Temple period, for example, the Pool of Isra'il, across the Bezeta River, at the foot of the northern wall of the Temple Mount; and others (Wilkinson 1974). The possible dating to the Early Roman period is based on the fact that the pool was built against the massive walls of the Second Temple period: the western wall of the Herodian Temple Mount in the east, and a massive (over 11 m wide) dam wall across the Tyropoeon Valley in the south (Onn, Weksler-Bdolah and Bar-Nathan 2011: W5006; Uziel, Solomon and Lieberman 2019: W4493).

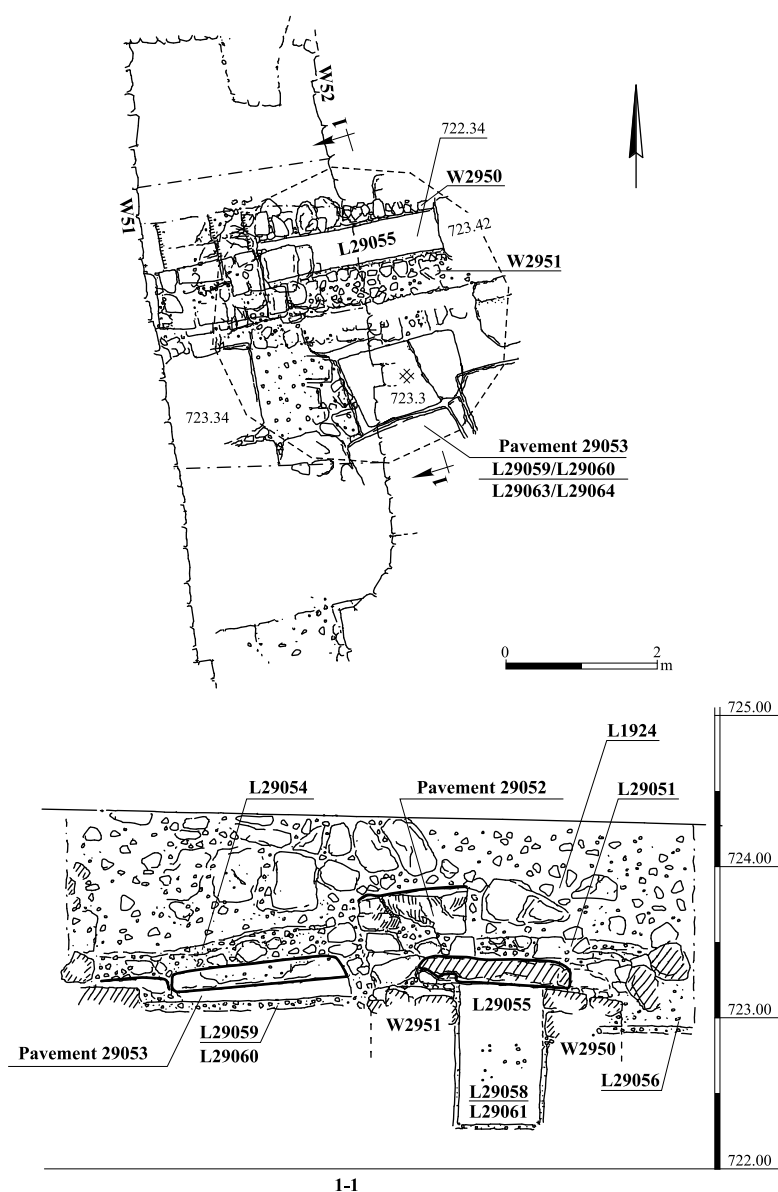
⁴ The stone collapse was exposed in a small area and was recorded in the daily logbook, without graphic documentation.

Table 1. Archaeological Strata at the Site with References to the Pottery and Coin Finds

Stratum/ Phase	Date (CE)	Main Remains	Locus No. ⁱ	Pottery Fig. No. (see Reuven, this volume)	Coin Cat. No. (see Ariel, this volume)
Ia	Post-10th – 13th/15th c.	Fill inside vaulted room	1901	17	
Ib		Vaulted room			
IIa	Late 8th–10th c.	Fill atop staircase, under bottom of W51, W52	1902	16	
IIb	Late 8th–9th c.	Staircase and W55	1903		
IIIa	6th–8th c.	Fill atop pavement	1904	15	
IIIb	6th–7th c.	Stone Pavement 1907/1908	1907, 1908, 1911	14	
IVa	3rd/4th– 6th/7th c.	Fill above drainage channels and below pavement	1917	10–13	10
IVb	3rd–5th c.	Fill inside drainage channels	1919	7–9	9
IVc	3rd–4th c.	Drainage Channels 1919a and 1919b and adjacent surfaces	1921, 1918, 1920	6	
IVd	2nd–4th c.	Fill below drainage channels, and stony surfaces	1922, 1923	5	5
IVe	1st–2nd c.	Fill above Pavement 29052	1924, 29054	4	1, 6, 7
		Unsealed fill above foundation layer (L29051), where a flagstone was robbed	29056		8
Va	1st c.	Upper Pavement 29052	29050, 29052, 29054	3	
		Yellowish hard foundation layer	29051		
Vb	1st c.	Drainage Channel 29055	29055, 29058, 29061	2	
		Lower Pavement 29053	29053		
		Foundation layer	29059		3
Vc	1st c.	Earth fill and stone collapse	29060, 29063, 29064	1	2, 4

ⁱ Loci 1901–1925 were allocated in the first excavation season; Loci 29050–29064 were allocated in the second excavation season; and Loci 28001, 29002 were allocated between the excavation seasons and used for special finds retrieved during construction works.

Phase Vb. The remains of a pavement and a drainage channel were exposed next to the stone pile (Plan 1: Section 1–1; Fig. 2). The channel (L29055; exposed length 3.8 m, internal width 0.4–0.5 m, depth 0.9 m) ran from west to east. Its walls (W2950, W2951; width 0.4–0.5 m) were well-built of medium-sized fieldstone courses, cemented with yellowish mortar and coated with a gray cement layer (Fig. 3), and was roofed with flagstones. The fill within the channel (L29058, L29061) yielded first-century CE potsherds (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 2). Part of a limestone flagstone pavement with small and medium-sized fieldstones in between (L29053; 4 × 2 m; Fig. 4) was unearthed south of the channel, approximately level with the



Plan 1. Stratum Vc-b, Early Roman/Herodian period, plan and section.

channel's stone-slab roofing; it probably continued north of the channel. The pavement—of which one complete although broken stone slab (1.6×1.0 m, thickness 0.3 m) survived—was set on a hard foundation layer made of small fieldstones set in gray mortar (L29059). Within this layer another coin from the reign of Tiberius (30/1 CE; see Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. 3), and some first-century CE potsherds (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 2), were found. It was not possible to ascertain whether Channel 29055 was contemporary with, or later than Pavement 29053, nor whether Pavement 29053 and its foundation layer formed a floor, or a solid foundation layer for the directly overlying monumental pavement (L29052; see below).



Fig. 2. Drainage Channel 29055, looking east.

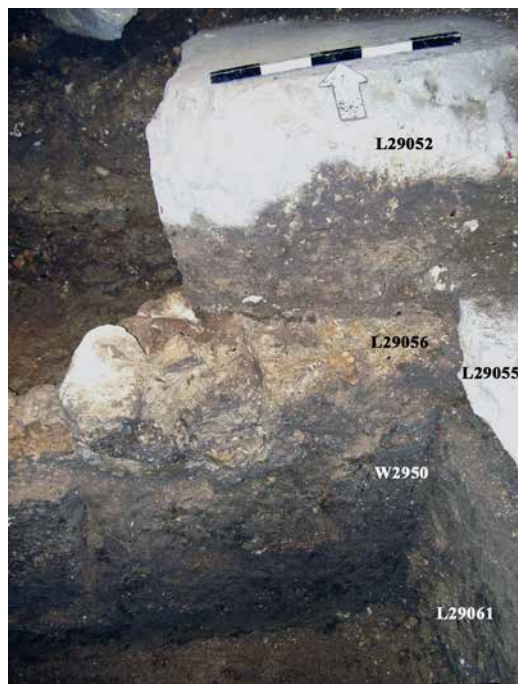
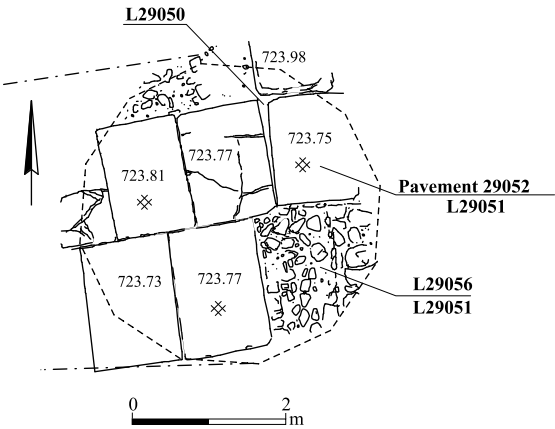


Fig. 3. Drainage Channel 29055, with gray cement layer on channel wall (W2950), looking north.



Fig. 4. Lower Pavement 29053 with Channel 29055, looking east.

Phase Va. A monumental pavement with a smooth surface (L29052) overlaid Pavement 29053 and Channel 29055 (Plans 1: Section 1–1; 2; Figs. 5, 6).⁵ Pavement 29052 consisted of three rows of large rectangular flagstones, carefully cut from the local *mizzi hilu* hard limestone, and aligned approximately north–south (16 sq m). Part of one flagstone was visible in the northern row, three flagstones in the middle, and two flagstones in the southern row. The flagstones ($1.5\text{--}1.6 \times 1.0\text{--}1.1$ m, thickness 0.3 m) were carefully laid side by side,



Plan 2. Stratum Va, Early Roman/Herodian period.

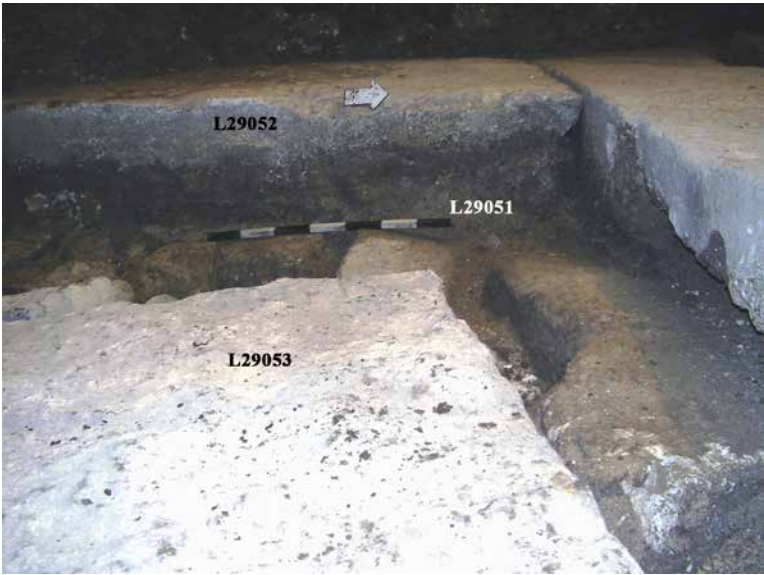


Fig. 5. Upper Pavement 29052, overlying foundation layer (L29051) and lower Pavement 29053, looking west.

⁵ During the excavation, the huge flagstones were lifted with a manual crane to enable the continuation of the excavation below.

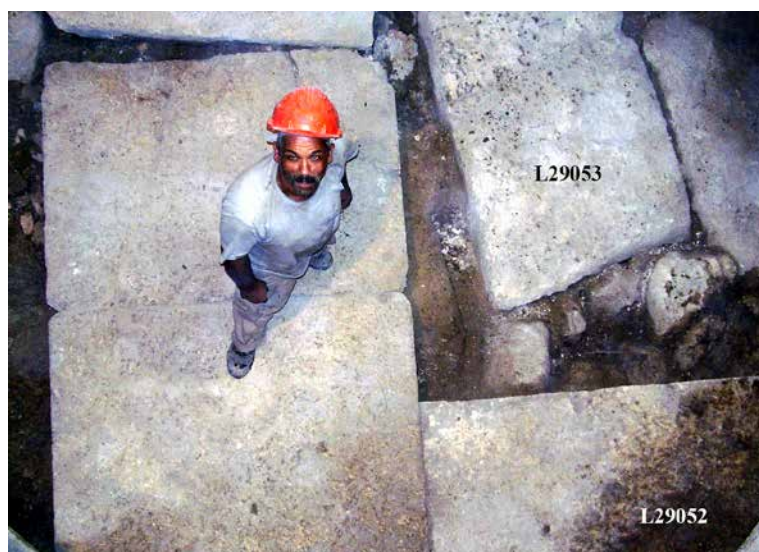


Fig. 6. Huge stone slabs of upper Pavement 29052 and lower Pavement 29053, looking east.

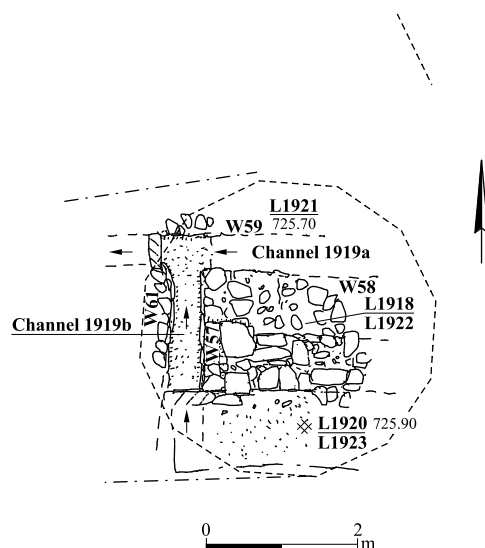
their straight sides fitting perfectly without mortar. The southeastern flagstone was robbed in antiquity, revealing an underlying foundation layer composed of a hard, yellowish cement layer containing small fieldstones in mortar (L29051; thickness 0.15–0.20 m). A coin dated to the second year of the First Jewish Revolt (67/8 CE) was found atop the foundation layer (L29056); it was probably discarded after the dismantling of the pavement (see Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. 8).⁶

Stratum IV: Roman–Byzantine Periods (c. Second–Sixth Centuries CE)

Phase IVe. Pavement 29052 was overlaid by a dark, blackish earth accumulation layer containing small and medium-sized stones (L1924; thickness c. 0.5 m; Plan 1: Section 1–1). The accumulation contained pottery sherds, including lamp fragments, from the first to the second centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 4), and three coins: one of the Hasmonean period and two from the second year of the First Jewish Revolt (see Ariel, this volume: Cat. Nos. 1, 6, 7).

Phase IVd. A two-meter thick earth fill layer (L1923, L1922; Plan 3) overlying the Phase IVe layer, was sealed below the Phase IVc drainage channel complex, stone fills and floors. A coin of Agrippa I was retrieved from L1922 (see Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. 5). The pottery sherds date predominantly to the Late Roman period, the second–fourth centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 5).

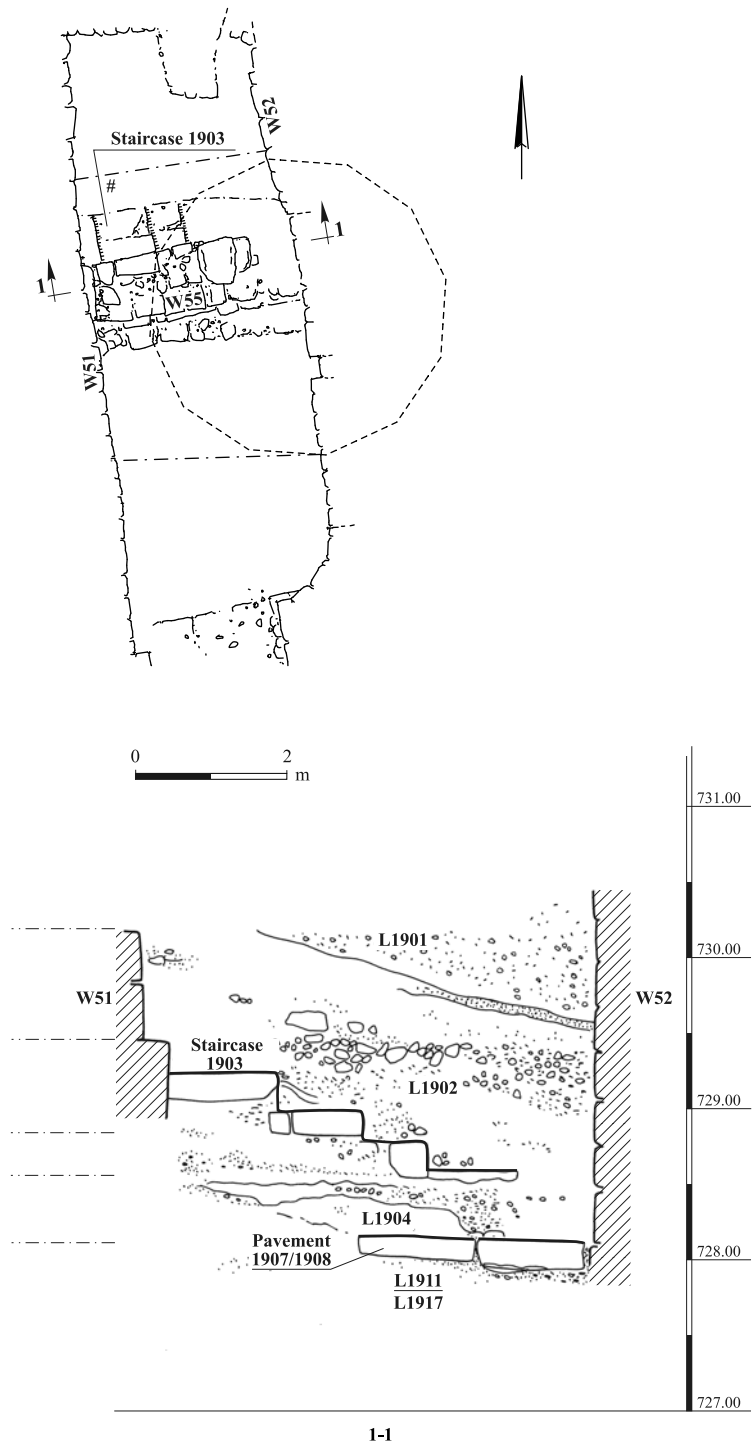
⁶ Coin No. 8 is therefore assigned to Stratum IVe, the layer that accumulated on top of Pavement 29052 after it was partly dismantled (see Table 1).



Plan 3. Stratum IV, Roman to Byzantine periods.

Phases IVc–a. A complex of drainage channels lying about 2.5 m above Phase Va Pavement 29052 was attributed to Phase IVc (Plan 3). The complex consisted of a main channel running east–west (L1919a; exposed length 4.3 m, internal width 0.45–0.50, depth 1.1–1.2 m), and a slightly narrower adjoining channel running from south to north (L1919b; exposed length 1 m, width 0.35 m). The channel walls (W57, W58, W59, W61; width c. 0.5 m) were built of hewn stones, some broken, seemingly in secondary use, and the channel interiors were coated with gray cement. The channels probably drained the water into the Tyropoeon Valley municipal drainage channel that was exposed at several spots below the Eastern Cardo. The fill (L1919) inside the channels, attributed to Phase IVb, yielded potsherds from the third–fifth centuries CE, as well as a Roman Provincial coin from the second–third centuries CE (see Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. 9). On both sides of Channel 1919a, there were fills containing small and medium-sized stones, the upper surface consisting of flat stones, some of which were broken, laid in different directions with a bonding material (L1918, L1921). The stone fills yielded potsherds from the third–fourth centuries CE. A small patch of a plastered floor (L1920) was exposed south of L1918.

Based on the pottery, the Phase IVc drainage channels and adjacent stone fills were probably constructed in the Roman period (third–fourth centuries CE; see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 6), and probably fell out of use in Phase IVb, in the early Byzantine period (fourth or fifth century CE; see Reuven, this volume: Figs. 7–9). The Phase IVa accumulation layer (L1917; Plan 4: Section 1–1), overlying the abandoned channels, contained a coin of Theodosius I (383–392 CE; see Ariel, this volume: Cat. No. 10), and many pottery sherds, the latest dating to the sixth–seventh centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Figs. 10–13).



Plan 4. Strata III–II, Byzantine to Early Islamic periods, plan and section.

Stratum III: Byzantine–Umayyad Periods (Sixth–Seventh Centuries CE)

Phases IIIb–a. Above the drainage channels, the stone surfaces and the overlying accumulation layer (L1917), there was an earth fill (L1911), partly sealed by a pavement (L1907/1908; Phase IIIb; Plan 4: Section 1–1). Pavement 1907/1908, exposed for 3.5 m, slightly descending eastward, was made of worked, rectangular flagstones (length 0.7–1.0 m, width not documented, thickness 0.15–0.20 m). The fill and the pavement (L1911, L1908) exhibited Byzantine–Umayyad potsherds dating to the sixth–seventh centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 14). Above the pavement, an earth fill layer (L1904) was dated by the pottery to the sixth–eighth centuries CE (Phase IIIa; see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 15). Thus, Pavement 1907/1908 probably dates to the late Byzantine or Umayyad period (sixth–seventh centuries CE).

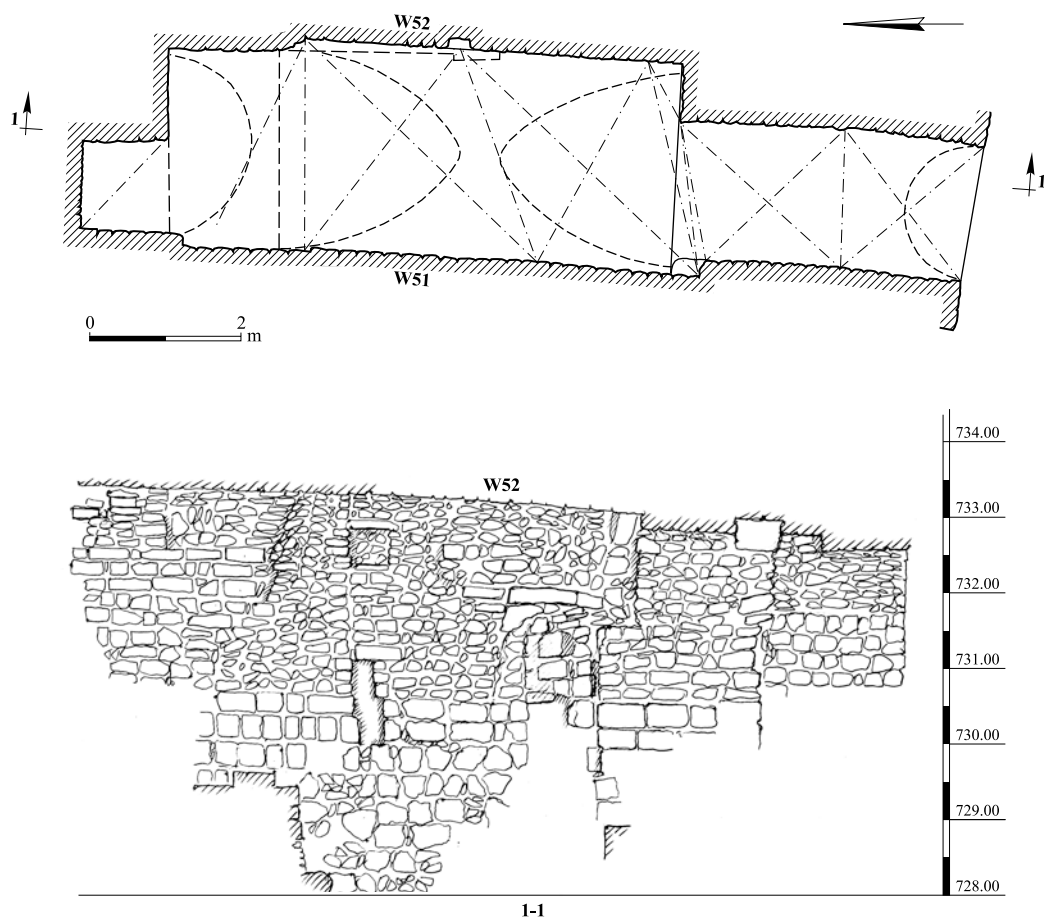
Stratum II: Early Islamic Period (Mid-Eighth–Late Ninth/Early Tenth Centuries CE)

Phase IIb. Above Pavement 1907/1908, the remains of a wall (W55) and a partly preserved staircase (L1903) were exposed (Plan 4). Wall 55 (exposed length 2.5 m, width 0.8 m, extant height 1.3 m) ran east–west, and along its northern face, Staircase 1903, consisting of three steps, descended eastward (length 1.75 m, height 0.55 m). The treads were built of worked flat stones (length 0.4–0.7 m, average width 0.6 m, height 0.18–0.20 m). The dismantling of Staircase 1903 yielded potsherds from the late eighth–ninth centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 16:5, 7); the dismantling of W55 did not yield any diagnostic finds. Wall 55 may have been contemporary with Staircase 1903, or slightly earlier, both postdating Pavement 1907/1908.

Phase IIa. An earth fill (L1902), containing Early Islamic potsherds (late eighth–tenth centuries CE) overlay Staircase 1903 (Plan 4: Section 1–1; see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 16:1–4, 6).

Stratum I: Medieval Period (Post-Tenth to Thirteenth/Fifteenth Centuries CE)

Phases Ib–a. The narrow, vaulted room or passage (length 7–8 m, width 2.7 m) was bordered by two long walls (W51: length 8 m; W52: length 7 m; Plans 4, 5), both exhibiting several repair phases (Plan 5: Section 1–1). It is possible that W51 was built over older building remains, as its lowest protruding stone was abutted by Staircase 1903 (see Plan 4: Section 1–1). Since the walls were built above the staircase, their construction postdated the ninth–tenth centuries CE; the pointed-vault ceiling supporting a dating in the medieval period. The latest pottery found in the earth fill in the vault (L1901) was a sherd of a Crusader or Ayyubid bowl dating to the twelfth–thirteenth centuries CE (see Reuven, this volume: Fig. 17:1). The vaulted room can tentatively be dated to the tenth–thirteenth centuries CE, or possibly later.



Plan 5. Stratum I, Medieval vaulted room, plan and section.

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The excavated area lies c. 10 m west of the Herodian Temple Mount, in front and just south of Warren's Gate. The architectural remains exposed, and the associated pottery and coins retrieved (see Reuven, this volume; Ariel, this volume), contribute to the understanding of this previously unknown area, albeit the small size of the excavation.

The first century CE pavement and drainage channel were most probably associated with the northwestern Herodian entrance gate of the Temple Mount, the predecessor of Warren's Gate. Warren's Gate is an arched opening in the Western Wall of the Temple Mount, located 233 m north of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount, and 45 m north of Wilson's Arch (see Fig. 1). The gate's entrance (width 4.6 m, height 7.1 m) is roofed with an irregular semicircular arch (Burgoyne 1999:215–217, Fig. 2; Mazar 2011b:92, Fig. 3.7.1; Bahat 2013:252, Fig. 8.05). Warren's Gate is considered by some scholars to be an Umayyad reconstruction of the original Herodian Gate (Burgoyne 1992:116–118;

1999:215); others date the gate between the Umayyad and the Fatimid periods (Mazar 2011b:93; Mazar, Shalev and Reuven 2011:264–265), and still others date it to the Fatimid period, the eleventh century CE (Bahat 2013:254). Some scholars viewed Warren's gate as a Roman reconstruction of the original Herodian Gate, dating to the period of Aelia Capitolina (second–third centuries CE; Wilson and Warren 1871:17; Ritmeyer 2006:35; Weksler-Bdolah 2011:xviii, 260–261; 2015:132–133). The irregularity of the arch noted in the past may be the result of this reconstruction (Mazar 2011b:92).

The original Herodian Gate was the northernmost of the four gates in the western wall of the Herodian Temple Mount (Wilson 1880:30, n. ++). Today, the remains of the original construction comprise the lower part of the southern gatepost, the monolithic threshold and the pavement in front of the gate (c. 726.70 m asl;⁷ Bahat 2013:245). According to Bahat, this pavement is part of a paved area or esplanade that was laid in front of Warren's Gate, level with its threshold, in the Second Temple period. The visitors had to ascend to the esplanade via staircases that led to the gate from the north, west and south (Bahat 2013:246). At a later date, the Herodian gate's passage was converted into a reservoir, designated Tank No. 30 on the British Survey map (Warren and Conder 1884:116 [plan], 119). In 1866, Wilson was the first to identify the reservoir as a gate of the Herodian temenos, and proposed naming it after Warren (Wilson 1880:30). Warren proposed identifying the gate with the gate mentioned by Josephus, from which the road descended into the valley by a great number of steps (Warren 1876:68), but Wilson suggested that the gate may have been approached by a roadway supported on arches (Wilson 1880:31). Ritmeyer considered that the gate provided access to the Temple Mount from both streets: a street that ran along the Western Wall, as well as a street that may have run from west to east, along the Transversal Valley (Ritmeyer 2006:34–35, 55 [illustration]).

Our findings attest to the existence of a paved street or plaza (more than 4 m wide), 8 m west of the gate's entrance, and a drainage channel running west–east below the pavement, descending eastward. As described above, two pavements layers were exposed in the excavation: upper Pavement 29052 (c. 724.00 m asl) and lower Pavement 29053 (c. 723.30 m asl). As expected, both were lower than the pavement in front of the gate's threshold (726.70 m asl), supporting the reconstruction of a staircase, arches or a ramp that ascended to the gate in the east. However, the short distance exposed between the eastern edge of the pavement (8 m west of the Temple Mount western wall), and the flagstones in front of the gate's entrance (1 m west of the Temple Mount western wall), allow only 7 m for the proposed staircase to ascend 3.0–3.5 m. If the pavement or esplanade in front of the gate was wider than 1 m, the suggested staircase would have been even steeper, as it had to ascend 3.0–3.5 m over a shorter distance. The other staircases known around the Herodian sacred temenos' gates are usually constructed of alternating wider and narrower stairs, with a much more moderate slope. In front of the Chain Gate (Bab es-Silsileh), the ascent of

⁷ According to Yael Rosenthal of the WWP Tunnels Engineering Company, the elevation is 726.5 m asl.

the Herodian staircase on top of Wilson's Arch stretches 0.75 m along a distance of c. 3 m (Kogan-Zehavi 1997:104–106; Onn, Weksler-Bdolah and Bar-Nathan 2011: Figs. 3, 18). In front of the western Hulda Gates along the southern wall, a monumental staircase (width 64 m, length 18 m), incorporating 30 stairs alternating in width (0.9 m, 0.3 m), ascended 6.5 m, reaching an upper esplanade (6.4 m wide) in front of the gate (Mazar 1972:79–80; Ritmeyer 2006:66). It is therefore less likely that there was a direct connection by means of a staircase between the pavement exposed in our excavation and the gate's threshold, although both seem to have existed contemporaneously.

Another possibility is that the pavement was part of an west–east street, reaching the vicinity of the Temple Mount at a lower elevation than the Warren's Gate threshold. The exposure of the west–east drainage channel underneath the Herodian pavement supports the existence of a street along this route, as suggested by Ritmeyer (2006:34–35). Alternatively, our pavement could have been part of a north–south street that ran along the Herodian Western Wall, a street that is partly known near Robinson's Arch (Reich and Billig 2008:1809), and further south, in the City of David (Szanton and Uziel 2016). This street is 8.5 m wide (between the curbstones on both sides), and it lies 3 m away from the Western Wall, where a row of shops was built along the Temple Mount. The finds support a reconstruction of Warren's Gate entrance, more or less as suggested by Ritmeyer (2006:35), namely, that there was a square or esplanade, where the two streets, one running north–south and the other east–west, possibly met (estimated elevation, 724.00–724.30 m asl), and a staircase that ascended from the square to the gate's threshold at 726.70 m asl. The staircase has not yet been located.

The Roman remains comprise an orthogonal set of drainage channels and construction stone fills along their sides. Interestingly, the east–west Roman drainage channel descends to the west, whereas the Herodian channel descends eastward. A possible explanation for the change in direction is that the Herodian channel drained toward the channel that ran along the western wall of the Temple Mount, whereas the Roman channel drained toward the Tyropoeon Valley, or more specifically, toward the drainage channel below the Eastern Cardo, 100 m west of the Temple Mount (for this channel, see Wilson and Warren 1871:281–284; Warren and Conder 1884:184, Pl. 26; Hamilton 1932; Johns 1932; 1948; Weksler-Bdolah 2014:40–44). The Roman channel underlying the Eastern Cardo replaced the Herodian one.

In the urban context, the construction of the new drainage system about 2.5 m above the earlier Herodian surface can be attributed to the redesigning of the urban topography after the destruction of the Herodian city. The new Roman city, Aelia Capitolina, had an orthogonal layout that adapted to the western wall of the Temple Mount, specifically to Warren's Gate. The new orthogonal layout is reflected in the north–south and east–west orientation of the channels. The raising of the surface from 724.00 to c. 726.50–726.70 m asl, evident in the Roman channel covering slabs, was probably intended to align the elevation of the surface in front of Warren's Gate with the gate's threshold (726.71–726.73 m asl). A similar phenomenon of raising a street's surface and the construction of a new

drainage system to match the new street level—was documented near Robinson's Arch, north of the southwestern corner of the Temple Mount: beneath the Herodian street exposed along the Tyropoeon Valley was a drainage system comprising a shallow channel below the street flagstones and a deeper and wider channel at a lower level (Mazar 1972: Figs. 2, 10: Nos. 29, 19, respectively). In the Late Roman period, both Herodian channels fell out of use, and a new north–south drainage channel was constructed 5–6 m above the Herodian street and the massive stone collapse of 70 CE that covered it (Wilson 1880:10; Mazar 2011a:13–15, L7133, Fig. 2.1; for a summary, see Weksler-Bdolah 2011:219).

The small segment of sixth-century CE Pavement 1907/1908, c. 1.5–2.0 m above the Roman drainage channel, seems to have also been part of a street or a public square, retaining the public nature of the area from the Herodian and Late Roman periods.

The Early Islamic staircase descended eastward, possibly toward an esplanade in front of Warren's Gate that still served as an entrance gate into the Temple Mount. The height difference between the top of the staircase (729.2 m asl) and Warren's Gate threshold (c. 727.00 m asl), 12 m to its east, allows for a reconstruction of a staircase that descended toward the gate along c. 6 m, leaving a six-meter-wide open esplanade or street in front of the gate.

Most researchers consider that Warren's Gate was in use until sometime in the twelfth century CE, and that it was subsequently blocked and converted into a reservoir, either in the Ayyubid (late twelfth–early thirteenth centuries CE; Mazar 2011b:97–99), or the Mamluk (mid-thirteenth century CE; Burgoyne 1992:117–118) period. Bab al-Mathara was constructed 5.5 m north of Warren's Gate, and 2.5 m above the top of its arch, i.e., 10.0–10.5 m above its threshold. The Stratum I narrow vaulted room, where our excavation began, seems to have been part of the raising of the surface elevation near the Temple Mount.

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