

RJ Hall

Subject: FW: TeHEP UPDATE 24 DECEMBER 2009

# Tall el-Hammam Excavation Project

Trinity Southwest University,  
Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA

in a Joint Scientific Project with the

Department of Antiquities,  
The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

## TeHEP UPDATE

24 December 2009

**MERRY CHRISTMAS !!!**

*An Exclusive Report for TeHEP Alumni, Financial Supporters, and Friends*

### IGLOSSARY OF CHRONOLOGICAL TERMS FREQUENTLY USED IN TeHEP UPDATES:

Chalcolithic Period = Copper/Stone Age, 4400-3300 BCE; EBA = Early Bronze Age, 3300-2350 BCE; IBA = Intermediate Bronze Age, 2350-2000 BCE; MBA = Middle Bronze Age, 2000-1550 BCE; LBA = Late Bronze Age, 1550-1200 BCE; IA1 = Iron Age 1, 1200-1000 BCE; IA2 = Iron Age 2, 1000-586 BCE; IA3 = Iron Age 3/Persian Period, 586-332 BCE; HP = Hellenistic/Greek Period, 332-63 BCE; ERP = Early Roman Period, 63 BCE-168 CE]

Hello All:

Today is Christmas Eve. Gary Byers has something special planned for this evening after dinner (a "mystery tour"), but he won't tell anybody what it is. So we'll all be assembling at 7pm down near the central patio, for what I have no clue.



CLEANING THE T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL FOR A  
PHOTO SHOOT



EXCAVATION DIRECTOR STEVEN COLLINS AND FIELD  
ARCHAEOLOGIST GARY BYERS STANDING ON THE EBA  
CITY WALL AT T. EL-HAMMAM. MBA CITY WALL AT LEFT

Today is also Hal Bonnette's birthday. We sang to him on the bus on the

way out to the dig site this morning, and this evening at 8:15 (after Gary's "mystery") we've got a little birthday celebration going on in a special room in the main restaurant, complete with cake and candles. That'll be fun.



FOUNDATION OF 5M THICK EBA CITY WALL WITH MUDBRICK COURSES IN SITU T. EL-HAMMAM



T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL SHOWING TWO PHASES, EACH CAPPED WITH MUDBRICK

The weather was fantastic again today, and the digging was spectacular. We spent a good bit of time "primping" our massive EBA city wall for photos, which was quite a project. But she shined up very well like the "cover girl" she might become at some point in the future. The level of preservation of the construction phases, even of the visible methods of construction, is pretty amazing. If you've never gotten a sense of the size of Tall el-Hammam/Sodom, get a load of the attached photos. This is just a 6-meter sliver of a fortification system that also includes walls from 5-8m thick, towers, glacis, gates, curtain walls, entrance plazas, ramparts, and rings the entire site for a distance of between 2.5 and 3 kilometers. While today we're just looking at the stone foundations and a few courses of the mudbrick superstructures, the walls once rose to a height of 15 to 20 meters (45-60 ft.), were likely crenellated, and had towers rising even higher every 20 meters or so along the entire perimeter. This was the most important and powerful city in the southern Levant during the Bronze Age.



T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL WITH MUDBRICK COURSES



T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL WITH MUDBRICK COURSES AND MBA TOWER ADDITION LEFT

We wrapped up at the site a bit early, then went to eat some lunch before returning to the hotel to wash and "read" pottery. It was a great day.





**T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL WITH MUDBRICK COURSES ON STONE FOUNDATION**



**T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL WITH OUTER WALKING SURFACE**

Special thanks to you who are already sending in generous donations in response to the previous Update. We don't like having to bring up the "money thing," but we do need to let you know what we need here in the field---and you always respond in a wonderful way through both your prayers and giving. Most of those volunteering with us this season have made tremendous personal sacrifices in order to be here, paying their own way, and even giving to TeHEP over and above the cost of their own participation. It's encouraging to all of us when those on our Home Team step up and help us get the job done with continuing financial support. We need you in a big way. It's as simple as that. Literally, we can do as much as the money allows.



**T. EL-HAMMAM MBA CITY WALL (RIGHT) AND EBA CITY WALL (LEFT)**



**T. EL-HAMMAM'S MASSIVE EBA CITY WALL**

May God bless you and your family in an extra-special way. Merry Christmas from all us here at the Dead Sea in Jordan.



WALKING SURFACE OUTSIDE THE T. EL-HAMMAM EBA CITY WALL WITH MUDBRICK DEBRIS

Digging the Bible,

Steven Collins, TeHEP Director  
Dean, College of Archaeology, Trinity Southwest University

P.S. Please forward this to whomever you like!

**You can make donations to TeHEP at the TSU shopping website: [www.shop.tsu.edu.us](http://www.shop.tsu.edu.us).**

**Donations can be mailed to: TSU; 5600 Eubank NE, Suite 130; Albuquerque, NM USA 87111.**

**For detailed information about the Tall el-Hammam Excavation Project, visit the official TeHEP website: [www.tallelhammam.com](http://www.tallelhammam.com).**