



### **Tall Zar'a/Gadara Region**

Project Name: The Gadara Region Project - Excavation at Tall Zar'a

Duration: August 30 - September 26, 2003

Number of Workmen: 10

Cost of Project: JD 833

Sponsor: Biblical Archaeological Institute, University of Wuppertal

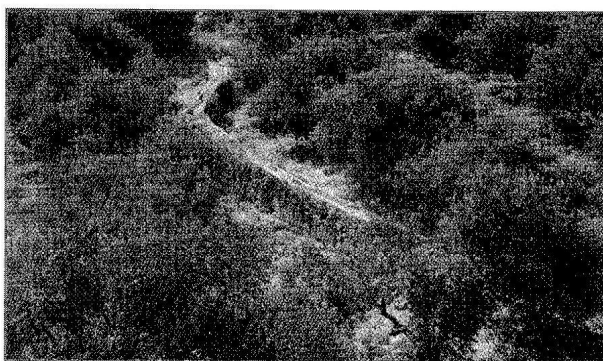
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Tall Zar'a, is located in Wadi al-'Arab, SW of Umm Qays. As the only notable elevation in the lower Wadi al-'Arab, Tall Zar'a dominates the latter. From the *tall*, Gadara/Umm Qays and its *extra muros* sanctuary could be seen. To the west, the narrow entrance to the *Wadi* could also be viewed, as well as the potential crop fields in its western and central parts. Likewise, the terraced slopes and the floor space on the mountain spur (tillable during the rainy season) are within view toward the east, as well as the hillside of the *wadi*, forming a wide semicircle from the east to the south and west (suitable for breeding small livestock).

Therefore it is not surprising that in the Early Bronze Age, the *tall* was already used for a hilltop settlement and served this purpose repeatedly well into the Middle Ages. Its geological, agricultural and geostrategic advantages are not to be overlooked (to the north and east the hill is protected by sheer rock faces, to the east and south it obviously overtops the surrounding area by about 22-25m).

An area of 200 m<sup>2</sup> was excavated up to a depth of 3.30m. Due to geophysical research of the *tall* about 6m of cultural layers are expected. Four strata were identified, which belong to the Roman - Byzantine Era, the Iron Age and the Late Bronze Age.



Modern water chanel within olive grove and Vineyards



Tall Zar'a from east side of Sad Wadi al-'Arab