



Endnotes for “The Roman Assault on Khirbet el-Maqatir: A Military Analysis”

Fall 2025 *Bible and Spade*

Notes

¹ Brian N. Peterson and Scott Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir: A Fortified Settlement of the Late Second Temple Period on the Benjamin Plateau,” *In the Highland’s Depth* 7 (2017): 67*.

² Mark A. Hassler, “Monumental Tower and Fortification System,” in *The Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir: 1995–2001 and 2009–2016*, vol. 2, *The Late Hellenistic, Early Roman, and Byzantine Periods*, by Scott Stripling, ed. Scott Stripling and Mark A. Hassler, with contributions by Yoav Farhi et al. (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2023), 40.

³ Peterson and Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir,” 65*; Scott Stripling, “Geography and Topography,” in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 5; Hassler, “Monumental Tower and Fortification System,” 33.

⁴ Brian N. Peterson, “Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Architecture,” in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 15; Scott Stripling, “Conclusion,” in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 351.

⁵ Jonathan P. Roth, “The Logistics of the Roman Army in the Jewish War” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1991), 89–90.

⁶ Stratum 3 at KeM, which included the time of the revolt, saw Jewish occupation (Scott Stripling, “Stratigraphy and Occupational History,” in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 8).

⁷ Boyd V. Seevers and Kenneth E. Downer, “The Roman Assault on Khirbet el-Maqatir/Ephraim in AD 69: The Archaeological Evidence,” *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* (forthcoming).

⁸ Scott Stripling, personal communication, January 8, 2024.

⁹ Nic Fields, *The Roman Army of the Principate 27 BC–AD 117*, Battle Orders 37 (Oxford: Osprey, 2009), 27–28; Josephus, *B.J.* 4.424. (*B.J.* = *Bellum Judaicum* [Jewish War].)

¹⁰ Fields, *Roman Army of the Principate*, 23–32.

¹¹ Vegetius, *De re militari* 2.25; Josephus, *B.J.* 3.95, 3.254.

¹² Caesar, *Gallie War* 3.14; Guy D. Stiebel, “Military Equipment,” in *Gamla III: The Shmarya Gutmann Excavations 1976–1989, Finds and Studies*, by Danny Syon, with contributions by Shua Amorai-Stark et al., part 1, IAA Reports 56 (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2014), 97–98.

¹³ Tacitus, *Annals* 4.5; D. B. Saddington, *The Development of the Roman Auxiliary Forces from Caesar to Vespasian (49 B.C.–A.D. 79)* (Harare: University of Zimbabwe, 1982), 131, 133; Yann Le Bohec, *The Imperial Roman Army*, trans. Raphael Bate (London: Batsford, 1994), 25; G. L. Cheesman, *The Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1914), 53, 91–93; Roth, “Logistics,” 129–30.

¹⁴ The discovery of Roman medical instruments at KeM—specifically, three scalpel blades and a probe-spatula (see Boyd V. Seevers and Kenneth E. Downer, “The Conquest of Khirbet el-Maqatir / Ephraim: More Roman Action in AD 69,” *Bible and Spade* 38, no. 2 [Spring 2025]: 18)—appears to corroborate the presence of a cohort; surgeons, both Roman and auxiliary, were typically assigned down to the cohort level, but not lower (Cheesman, *Auxilia of the Roman Imperial Army*, 43–44; John Peddie, *The Roman War Machine* [Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK: Alan Sutton, 1994], 9; Roy W. Davies, “The Roman Military Medical Service,” in *Service in the Roman Army*, by Roy W. Davies, ed. David Breeze and Valerie A. Maxfield [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989], 214).

¹⁵ Fields, *Roman Army of the Principate*, 19–21.

¹⁶ Josephus, *B.J.* 3.67.

¹⁷ When on the march, Roman legions customarily used auxiliary infantry and cavalry for protection on the flanks, front, and rear; the size of this necessary security force nearly equaled that of the legionary infantry force. For a fuller discussion, see Kenneth E. Downer and Boyd V. Seevers, “The Roman Assault at Khirbet el-Maqatir: A Military Assessment,” *Near East Archaeological Society Bulletin* (forthcoming).

¹⁸ Hassler, “Monumental Tower and Fortification System,” 44.

¹⁹ Hassler, 44–45.

²⁰ Josephus, *B.J.* 4.550; Downer and Seevers, “Roman Assault at Khirbet el-Maqatir.”

²¹ The Romans repeatedly used this tactic against fortified targets during the First Jewish Revolt. For example, they did this at Jotapata (Josephus, *B.J.* 3.144, 3.148, 3.255), Mt. Gerizim (*B.J.* 3.311, 3.314), Gischala (*B.J.* 4.101), Bethennabris (*B.J.* 4.422–423), and Jerusalem (*B.J.* 5.106). See also Le Bohec, *The Imperial Roman Army*, 135.

²² Katherine A. Streckert and Boyd V. Seevers, “Militaria,” in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 307.

²³ Erwin Schramm, *The Ancient Artillery of Saalburg and Commentary on Its Reconstruction*, in *The Ancient Artillery of Saalburg: Two Treatises on Greek and Roman Artillery*, trans. and ed. William Paul Dean (published independently, 2018), 30, 33; Duncan B. Campbell, *Greek and Roman Artillery 399 BC–AD 363*, New Vanguard 89 (Oxford: Osprey, 2003), 37; Guy D. Stiebel, “The Militaria from Herodium,” in *One Land, Many Cultures: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Stanislaw Loffreda OFM*, ed. G. Claudio Bottini, Leah Di Segni, and L. Daniel Chrupcala, Studium Biblicum Franciscanum, Collectio major 41 (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 2003), 217.

²⁴ E. W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery: Historical Development* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), 94. Marsden speaks specifically of the scorpion, but the ballista, only slightly larger but of similar design, would likely have had a similar firing rate.

²⁵ Caesar, *Gallie War* 7.25; Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery*, 92–96; Le Bohec, *The Imperial Roman Army*, 139; Adrian Keith Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War: 100 BC–AD 200*, Oxford Classical Monographs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 190.

²⁶ For a modern military reference to the tactic of “suppression,” see *Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for the Field Artillery Manual Cannon Gunnery*, with Change 1, FM 6-40 (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, October 1, 1999), Appendix C, p. C-3, https://www.marines.mil/Portals/1/Publications/mcwp3_16_4.pdf. Roman forces used suppressive techniques at least twice in the battle at Jotapata (Josephus, *B.J.* 3.167, 3.219–220) and also used them at Gamla (Jodi Magness, “Arrowheads and Projectile Points,” in Syon, *Gamla III*, 27; Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery*, 185–86), Jerusalem (Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 65.4.2), and Cremona (Gwyn Morgan, *69 A.D.: The Year of Four Emperors* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006], 210).

²⁷ A ladder made of sycamore and measuring 32.8 feet (10 m) tall might be constructed of two rails measuring 3 × 3 × 393.6 inches (7.6 × 7.6 × 1,000 cm) and 28 rungs measuring 2 × 2 × 18 inches (5.1 × 5.1 × 45.7 cm); using the “Lumber and Hardwood Weight Calculator” on Joe Sexton’s Inch Calculator website (<https://www.inchcalculator.com/lumber-weight-calculator/>, accessed October 28, 2025), its weight may have come between 126 and 195 pounds (57–88 kg).

²⁸ Josephus, *B.J.* 3.264, 3.301; Livy, *History of Rome* 10.43.5.

²⁹ Josephus, *B.J.* 6.36, 6.53.

³⁰ Livy, *History of Rome* 10.43.5.

³¹ After the siege of Jaffa, Josephus records that “when the fighting men were spent, the rest of the multitude had their throats cut, partly in the open air, and partly in their own houses, both young and old together. So there were no males now remaining, besides infants, who, with the women, were carried as slaves into captivity” (*B.J.* 3.304; William Whiston, trans., *Josephus: The Complete Works* [Nashville: Nelson, 1998], 782). Roman actions at Gadara (*B.J.* 3.133) and Jotapata (*B.J.* 3.336–337) were similar. See also Frank Russell, “Roman Counterinsurgency Policy and Practice in Judaea,” in *Brill’s Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Timothy Howe and Lee L. Brice, Brill’s Companions in Classical Studies: Warfare in the Ancient Mediterranean World 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 269.

³² Stiebel, “Militaria from Herodium,” 218; Andrew E. Holley, “Stone Projectiles and the Use of Artillery in the Siege of Gamla,” in Syon, *Gamla III*, 37–38.

³³ Danny Syon, “Introduction—A History of Gamla,” in Syon, *Gamla III*, 15; M. C. Bishop, *The Pilum: The Roman Heavy Javelin*, Weapon 55 (Oxford: Osprey, 2017), 28, 62.

³⁴ Among those discovered was Jewish rebel leader Josephus himself, who went on to chronicle a history of the revolt after his capture by the Romans. In his words, as Jotapata fell, he “leaped into a certain deep pit, whereto there adjoined a large den at one side of it, which den could not be seen by those that were above ground; and here he met with forty persons of eminence that had concealed themselves, and with provisions enough to satisfy them for not a few days” (*B.J.* 3.341–342; Whiston, *Josephus: The Complete Works*, 784).

³⁵ Peterson and Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir,” 80*–81*; Scott Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” with a contribution by Dvir Raviv, in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 58, fig. 4.12. Of 252 hiding complexes catalogued throughout Judea, at least 37 at 17 different sites date to the first century AD or before (Dvir Raviv and Boaz Zissu, “Judean Hiding Complexes: A Geographical, Typological and Functional Update (Israel),” *Opera Ipogea* 24, no. 2 [2022]: 48–49).

³⁶ Excavators found 43 different underground installations at KeM, many of which existed at the time of the attack (Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 47).

³⁷ Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 47.

- ³⁸ Peterson and Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir,” 74*; Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 51, 59–60.
- ³⁹ Peterson, “Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Architecture,” 28; Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 47, 51.
- ⁴⁰ Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 56.
- ⁴¹ Stripling, “Stratigraphy and Occupational History,” 10; Streckert and Seevers, “Militaria,” 301; Peterson and Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir,” 90*–91*. Carbon 14 dating of the remains is consistent with the time of the First Revolt.
- ⁴² Peterson and Stripling, “Kh. el-Maqatir,” 74*; Streckert and Seevers, “Militaria,” 303–5.
- ⁴³ *B.J.* 4.551. For the KeM/Ephraim connection, see Seevers and Downer, “Roman Assault on Khirbet el-Maqatir/Ephraim in AD 69”; Scott Stripling, “Have We Walked in the Footsteps of Jesus? Exciting New Possibilities at Khirbet el-Maqatir,” *Bible and Spade* 27, no. 4 (Fall 2014): 91–94.
- ⁴⁴ Streckert and Seevers, “Militaria,” 300–303; Seevers and Downer, “Roman Assault on Khirbet el-Maqatir/Ephraim in AD 69.”
- ⁴⁵ Josephus, *B.J.* 4.486, 5.42.
- ⁴⁶ Peterson, “Late Hellenistic and Early Roman Architecture,” 24; Stripling, “Subterranean Features,” 56.
- ⁴⁷ Hassler, “Monumental Tower and Fortification System,” 44.
- ⁴⁸ Josephus, *B.J.* 4.491, 4.497; James J. Bloom, *The Jewish Revolts against Rome, A.D. 66–135: A Military Analysis* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010), 154–55.
- ⁴⁹ Josephus, *B.J.* 4.658–663; Tacitus, *Histories* 5.1.
- ⁵⁰ Josephus, *B.J.* 5.40–46.
- ⁵¹ Burning a city or village was common Roman practice. After seizing Gadara, the Romans “set fire, not only to the city itself, but to all the villas and small cities that were round about it” (Josephus, *B.J.* 3.134; Whiston, *Josephus: The Complete Works*, 774). After the fall of Jotapata, “Vespasian gave order that the city should be entirely demolished, and all the fortifications burnt down” (*B.J.* 3.338; Whiston, 784).
- ⁵² Yoav Farhi, “The Numismatic Finds from Khirbet el-Maqatir,” with an appendix by Kevin W. Larsen, in *Excavations at Khirbet el-Maqatir*, 99–100.

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