

52–53. Shikhin, west of Jebel Qat (Shikhin, 1: Map ref. 176111/241636; Shikhin, 2: Map ref. 175670/240906)

Shikhin is mentioned in rabbinical literature and described several times by Josephus as a large settlement near Sepphoris; it is now identified as Asochis (Ἄσωχις) (*War* 1:86).<sup>107</sup> Various scholars attempted to locate the settlement until it was identified by David Adan-Bayewitz, who found a large storage-jar workshop there that supplied jars to the entire north of the country.<sup>108</sup> Shikhin is now identified with the dome-shaped hill on the Sepphoris ridge, c. 2.5 km to the north of the ancient city. From the top of Shikhin hill (188 m asl), St. Anne's Church and the southern part of the Bet Natofa Valley are visible.

<sup>107</sup> See Klein 1945:32, 54, 69 and especially 212–213; Strange 2015a; Strange, Groh and Longstaff 1994 and 1995.

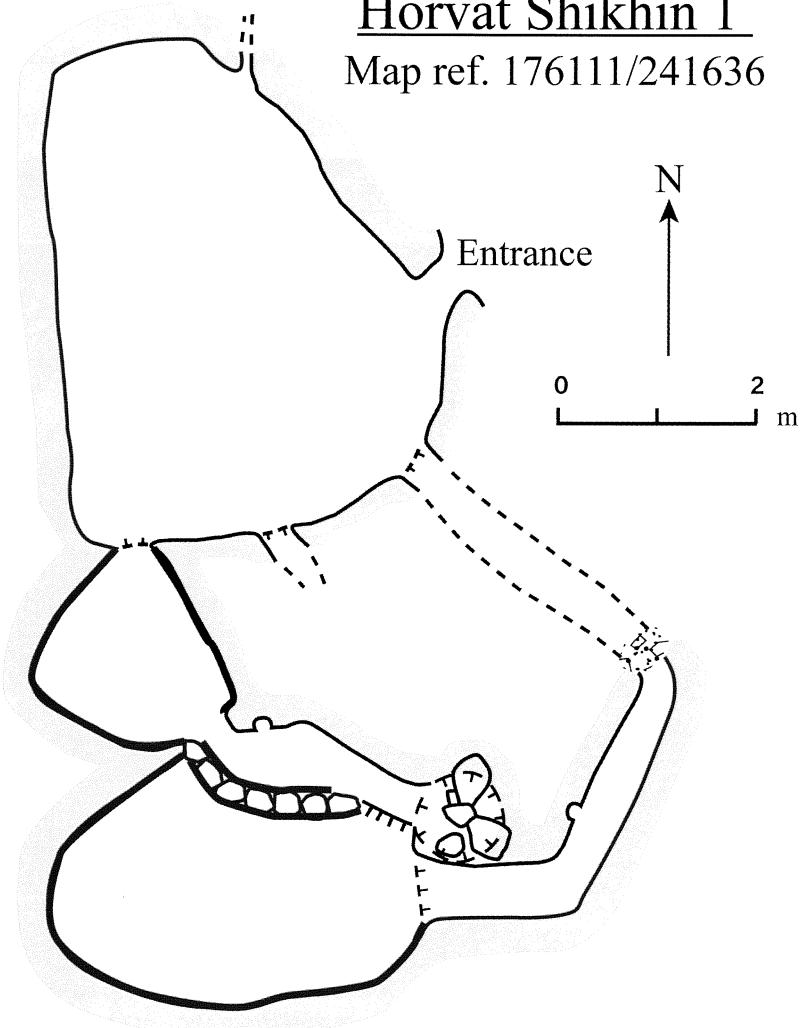
<sup>108</sup> See Adan-Bayewitz 1993:32.

Our survey discovered two hiding complexes.<sup>109</sup> **Shikhin 1** is located north of Shikhin hill, in the folds of a moderate west slope of a hill south of Jebel Qat. Next to a rock ledge is a very narrow entrance ( $0.3 \times 0.4$  m in section) which is a tight crawl and leads to a large plastered hewn chamber ( $8 \times 12$  m, height 2.5 m) that was probably a water cistern that became defunct when a round opening (diameter 0.5 m) was cut in its east wall. The opening leads to a 3 m long plastered passage ( $0.3 \times 0.4$  m in section) and this leads in turn to another chamber ( $1.5 \times 2.0$  m, height 1.2 m) that was also used as a water cistern in an earlier period. In the east wall of the cistern, a wall built of dressed stones and coated with plaster divides it in two. Another pas-

<sup>109</sup> Vladimir Boslov, Shmuel Avidan and Boaz Langford participated in the site's exploration. A third hiding complex was discovered at map ref. 175949/241439 during a subsequent survey, but almost all of it is blocked with earth and it is therefore not included in the complexes described here.

## Horvat Shikhin 1

Map ref. 176111/241636



Map 75: Horvat Shikhin, Hiding Complex 1

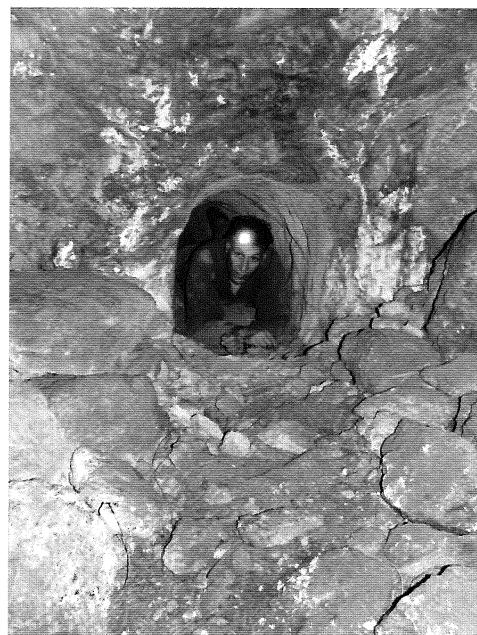


Fig. 108: Horvat Shikhin,  
Hiding Complex 1

sage ( $1.0 \times 1.6$  m in section) is cut in the south wall of the cistern. On entering the 5 m long passage, it bends eastward and an entrance blocked with dressed stones is visible in its southern wall, through which a little daylight can be glimpsed. About fifteen Roman-period potsherds whose production and distribution are attributed to Shikhin were recovered from the passage, together with a fragment of a Shikhin-ware jar.<sup>110</sup> Halfway along the passage, an opening hewn in the roof probably provided ventilation and a stone wall was built along the west side of the passage, dividing it from a third water cistern that was also rendered obsolete and can be reached via a passage. The cistern measures  $2.0 \times 4.2$  m and has a vaulted plastered roof. A passage cut into its south wall has the same dimensions as those described above and slopes down for 5 m until it is blocked by earth.

**Shikhin 2:** Situated to the south of Shikhin hill, c. 800 m south of the first hiding complex, this complex is hewn into a terraced hill; a small valley runs between it and the hill where Complex 51 (Shikhin 1) was discovered. Its entrance ( $1 \times 2$  m) is hewn into the hill's northern slope, and leads to a rock-hewn chamber ( $6 \times 10$  m, height 2 m). A passage cut in the east wall of the chamber is 10 m long and  $0.5 \times 0.6$  m in section. The passage was built in a straight line and preserves the same width along its entire length, but not the same height. Eighteen niches for oil lamps are hewn along it. On reaching the last 3 m, the passage widens to form a  $1 \times 1$  m cavity. The remainder of the passage to the south is blocked with silt.



Fig. 109: Horvat Shikhin, Hiding Complex 2

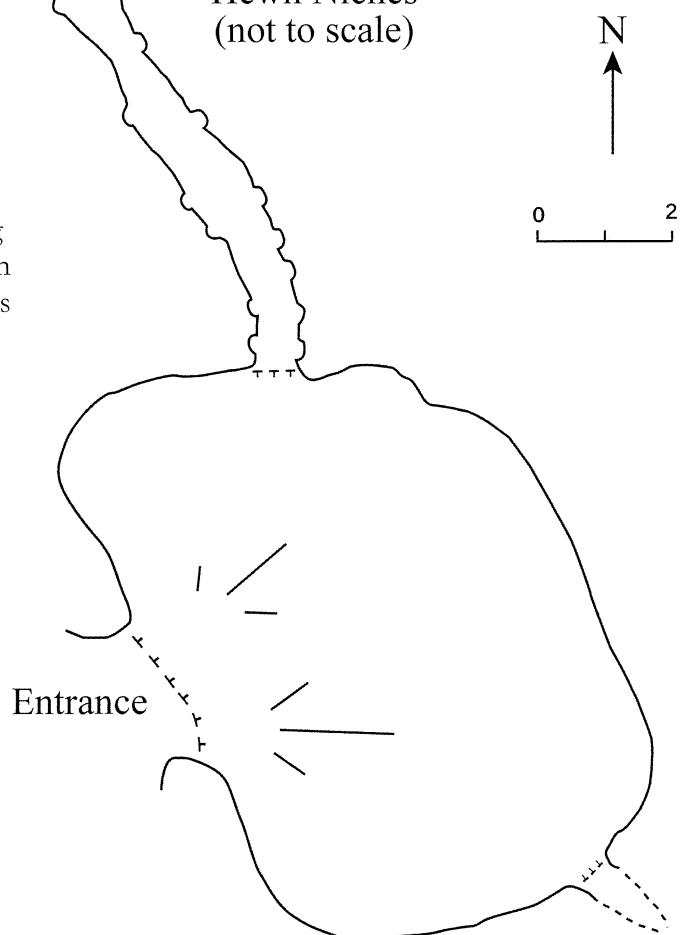
## Horvat Shikhin 2

Map ref. 175670/240906

Hewn Niches  
(not to scale)

N  
↑

0 2 m



<sup>110</sup> Adan-Bayewitz and Perlman 1990:162–170 fig. 3:1 and 167–169 fig. 3:3.

Map 76: Horvat Shikhin, Hiding Complex 2

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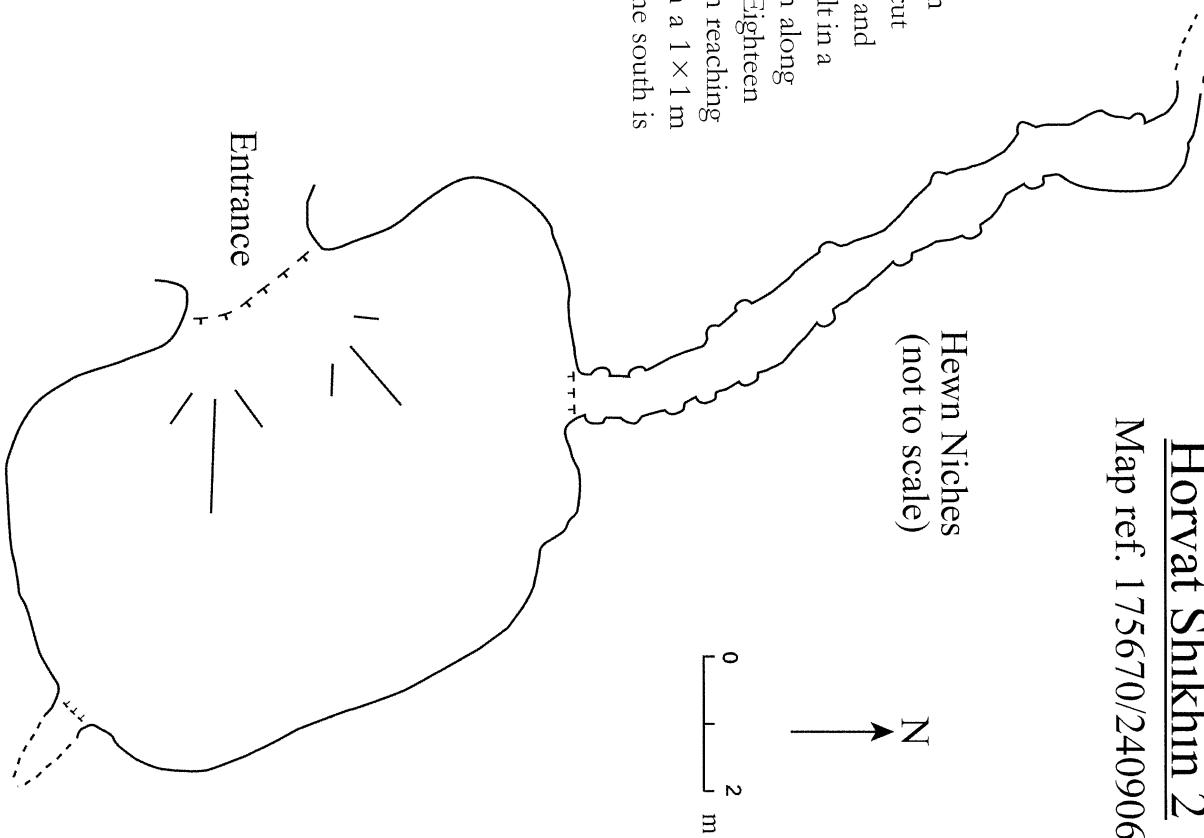
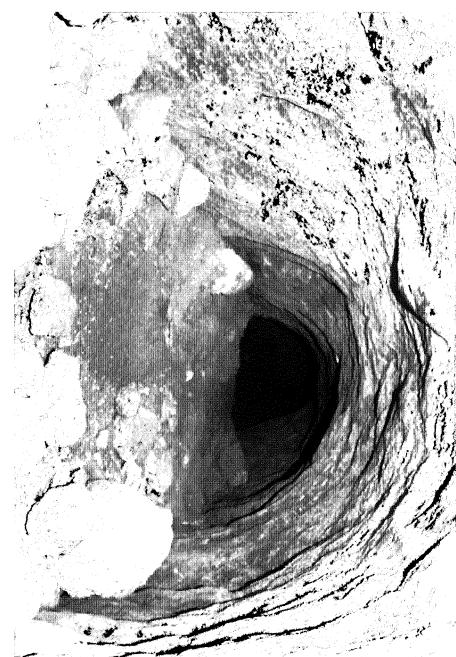


Fig. 109: Horvat Shikhin,  
Hiding Complex 2



## Horvat Shikhin 2

Map ref. 175670/240906

110 Adan-Bayewitz and Perlman 1990:162–170 fig. 3:1 and 167–169 fig. 3:3.