

Lejjun standing stones

Although Lejjun is better known for its huge Roman legionary fort (from which it derives its name), a Bronze Age settlement, on the western hill towering above this fort was already noticed at the end of the nineteenth century. On the other side of that site, a very conspicuous row of standing stones can be seen on the rather steep slope down towards the wadi. Nineteenth century travelers reported 18 stones, although now only 17 are recognizable, with 11 still standing. Originally, there may actually have been two groups separated by



Line of standing stones at Lejjun, on a steep slope

an opening (but this cannot be ascertained without excavation), the upper group being somewhat taller (up to 1.80 m). When Glueck visited the place in 1933 he did not find any sherds near them and though their relationship to the Bronze Age town above seems obvious, it is not proven. The alignment is north-south, but the row curves slightly at the lower end. The stones were taken from the bedrock outcrops only a few meters above the alignment and seem to have been set up facing east (which shows the smoother side of the stones).

Glueck dated the settlement itself to the end of the Early Bronze Age-early Middle Bronze Age, on the basis of the sherds he found. In 2001 Meredith Chesson put in a few test trenches on this hilltop site, and these produced some C¹⁴ samples and sherds dating to EB II.

How to get there

N 31°14'20.5"

E 035°51'26.4"

About halfway along the road from Qatrana (Desert Highway) to Kerak a road branches off to the right (north). Lejjun is not indicated but is about 5 km down that road. On the right side of this road you will find the very impressive Roman camp down near the wadi which has a permanent spring, whereas up the slope to the left, above the row of ruined houses which were Turkish barracks, the Bronze Age site towers on the top of the hill. To find the row of standing stones, climb up that hill and down again on the other side towards the wadi. The row is also visible from the road when you continue along it, across the wadi going westwards up the hill and around a bend.

References:

Glueck, N. 1934. Explorations in Eastern Palestine, I. *AASOR* 14 (1933–1934): 15.

Chesson, M. S., C. Makarewicz, I. Kuijt, and C. Whiting. 2005. Results of the 2001 Kerak Plateau Survey. *AASOR* 59: 1–62.

Brünnow R. E., and A. von Domaszewski, 1905. *Die Provincia Arabia*, I–III. Strasburg.