A petroglyph of a religious ceremony at Humayma
M. Barbara Reeves

Over the past three decades Humayma (S Jordan) has been the subject of much research, focusing on the structures and artefacts left behind by its Neolithic, Nabataean, Roman, Byzantine, and early Islamic occupants, but the petroglyphs carved into the sandstone hills and ridges on the W side of the site have been mentioned only in passing. In 2012 and 2014 it was decided to carry out a survey of them. Of the more than 150 petroglyphs documented, most are simple depictions typical of those throughout the region: individual or grouped representations of bovids (ibex, gazelle, oryx), footprints or shoeprints, abstract symbols, and humans in the orant (half-arm raised) pose or holding weapons. Simple narrative scenes, again typical of the region, show carnivores or mounted humans chasing prey, or groups of archers hunting.

One petroglyph stands out for its finely incised detail and complex narrative documenting the performance, location, and outcome of a person’s religious offering (figs. 1-2).
