

The Biyrah of The Bayith-The Rocks Are Crying Out

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By Joseph F. Dumond

December 7, 2018



News Letter 5854-036

The 2nd Year of the 4th Sabbatical Cycle
The 23rd year of the 120th Jubilee Cycle
The 29th day of the 9th month 5854 years after the creation of Adam
The 9th Month in the Second year of the Fourth Sabbatical Cycle
The 4th Sabbatical Cycle after the 119th Jubilee Cycle
The Sabbatical Cycle of Sword, Famines, and Pestilence

December 8, 2018

Shabbat Shalom to the Royal Family of Yehovah,

The Rocks Are Crying Out

In [News Letter 5854-029](#) I explained to you where Golgatha was and how you could figure it out the next time you go to Jerusalem. I also walked you through the history of the Church of the Holy Selpuchre and the Garden Tomb so that you had the information at hand to make clear understandings of what you are looking at and at what it is not, even though the masses will say it is the actual place.

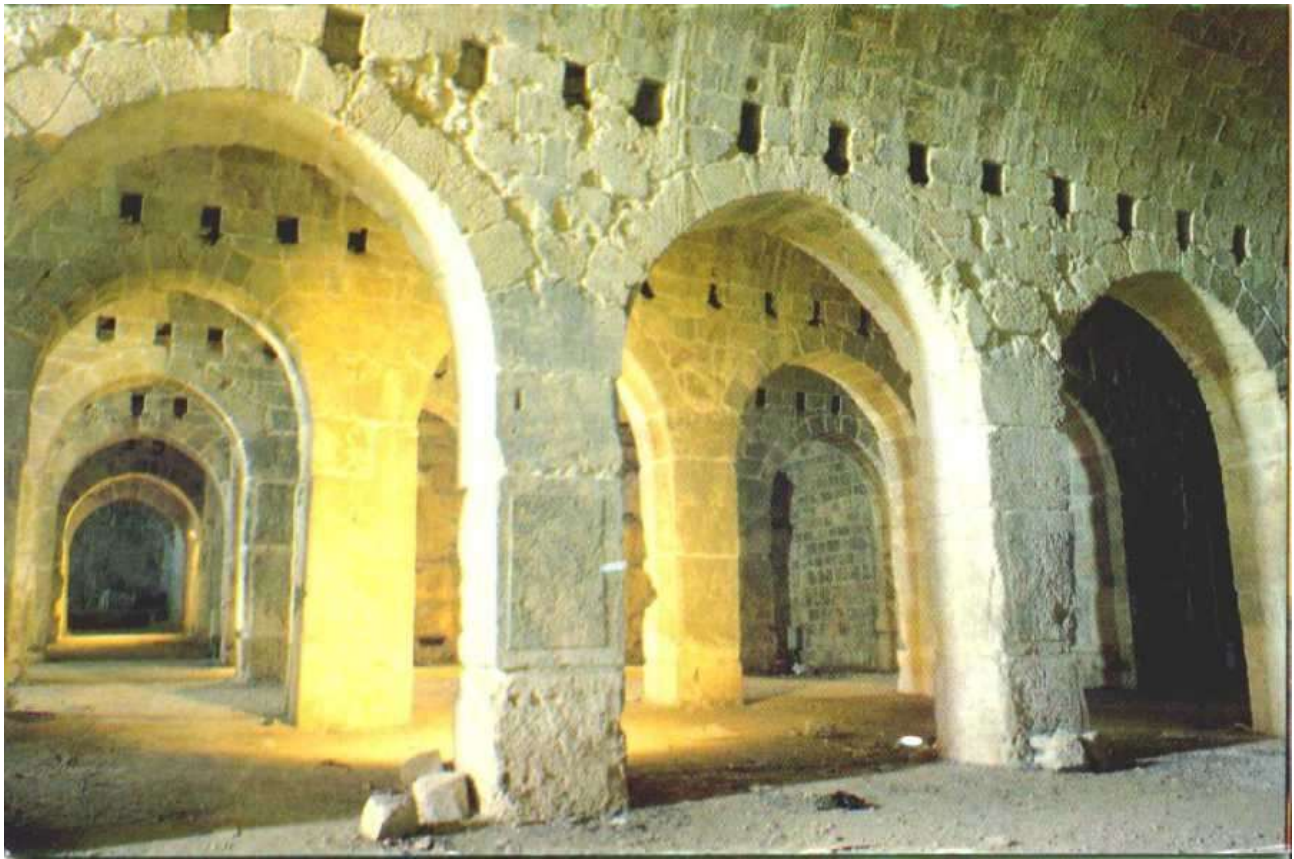
Then in [News Letter 5854-033](#), we walked you through the history of the Church of the Holy Wisdom and the Praetorium which would come down to our time known as the Dome of the Rock. We then followed this teaching with [News Letter 5854-035](#) showing you the history of the Church of Nea where today sits the Al Aqsa Mosque and there we also explained to you how it was the crusaders that named the pillars built by Justinian which became known as Solomon Stables.

This week we have even more to share with you about the Harem esh-Shariff. I have been guilty of leading all those who have been on tour with me, astray about this structure. The things in this News Letter are even new to me and have helped me to understand the Harem esh-Shariff even better. I hope it also helps your understanding. I thought this was going to be a straightforward simple News Letter about the Harem Esh-Sharif, but the more I searched the more I learned then the more questions I had which meant I had to go and find the answers to those questions which led me deeper into this subject. All I can say now is WOW. I had no idea.

Last week's News Letter left me with some obvious questions that have haunted me since I first began to write last week's News Letter about the Nea Church and how Justinian built these columns to make a level platform to build his church upon. But as I looked at the picture I could see over and over all of these Herodian Stones in the structures. Herodian stones are those with the 6-inch recess around the edges.



This caused me to look at all the other pictures I had of these columns. And I began to think.



There was another picture that caused me to have to rethink these Herodian Stones. It was this one with Herod, Hasmonean and Old testament written on it. WHAT? I thought Herod built the Temple Mount or what I have thought was Fort Antonio. But the Hasmoneans lived 120 years before Herod and then who built the wall before them? I have just assumed those walls on the outside were built by

Suleiman. In 1535, when Jerusalem was part of the Ottoman Empire, Sultan Suleiman I ordered the ruined city walls to be rebuilt. The work took some four years, between 1537 and 1541. Rebuilt not new walls. Rebuilt walls. Again my mind is swimming with all the history and facts and new information.



We were also talking last week, about the seam in the wall and this was where I began to rethink everything I understood. So I have now rewritten this News Letter about 6 times. Each time I came to more understanding. So please forgive me as I try to make it all make sense redoing my notes and trying to incorporate other notes in and out and then redoing them.



This then brings us to the next picture I have for you. Hasmonean stones. I have noticed these types of stone on top of what is supposed to be Herodian stones. Trouble is the Hasmoneans came about 120 years before Herod did. So were these stones placed here by Solomon or one of the other Kings of Israel and not the Hasmoneans and not Herod?



Last week we had this picture and suggested the southern wall was done by Justinian to build the Church of Nea above what is now called the stables of Solomon. But what these stone are telling us is that this Temple Mount area was being used by others before Herod build anything.



Again we are jumping into the history of The Temple of Yehovah about halfway through its history and then coming down to our time. Strike that. We are actually going to go back to the beginning. I just did not know it when I began this article.

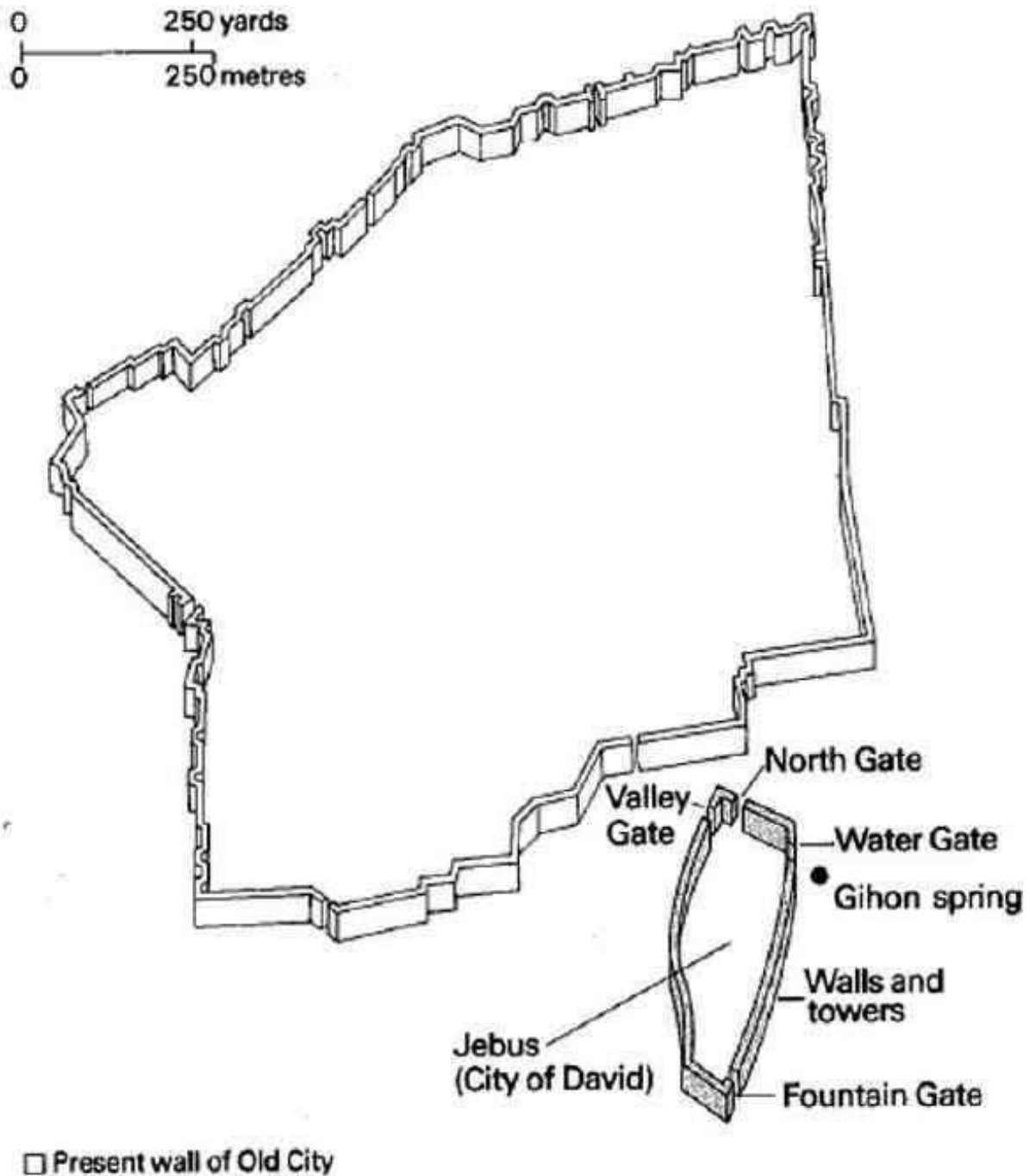
Our Title is the phonetic pronunciation of the phrase found in Nehemiah 2. **hybl rca hrybh The Fortress of The Temple.** The Fortress is not and never was the Temple. The Fortress would in time become known as the Temple Mount and the Temple would just disappear.

Neh 2:8 and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the fortress of the temple**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

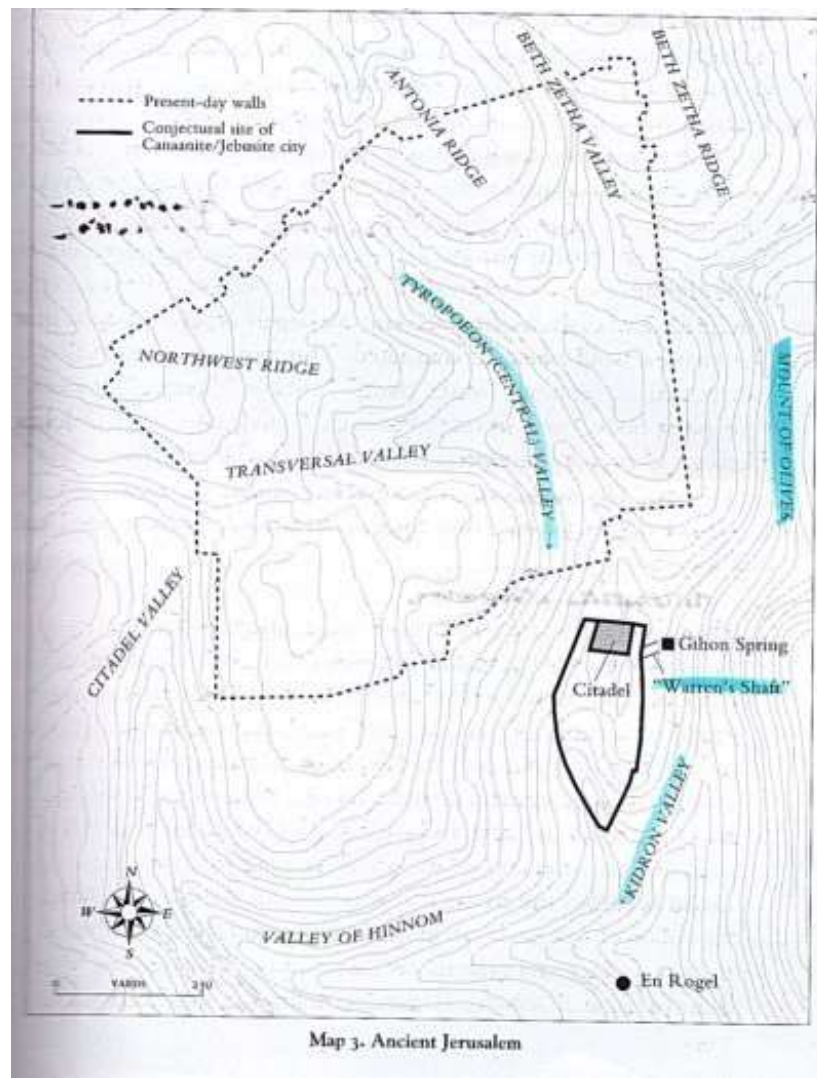
In the last two News Letters, we were explaining historical events after the destruction of The Temple of Yehovah. I am going to use the destruction of the Temple of Yehovah to distinguish it from the Temple Mount. They are two very different areas and served two very different purposes. The last two News Letters I have only been talking for the most part about historical events on the Temple Mount and I am not talking about The Temple of Yehovah. This week we are going to go and look at history before the time of Herod.

This study has led me on a number of turns I had not expected and given me a greater understanding of this subject. I hope it does so for you as well. Boy oh boy, I really was not expecting the results I have come to understand. You are free to agree or disagree. But do please do your own research and see what you find.

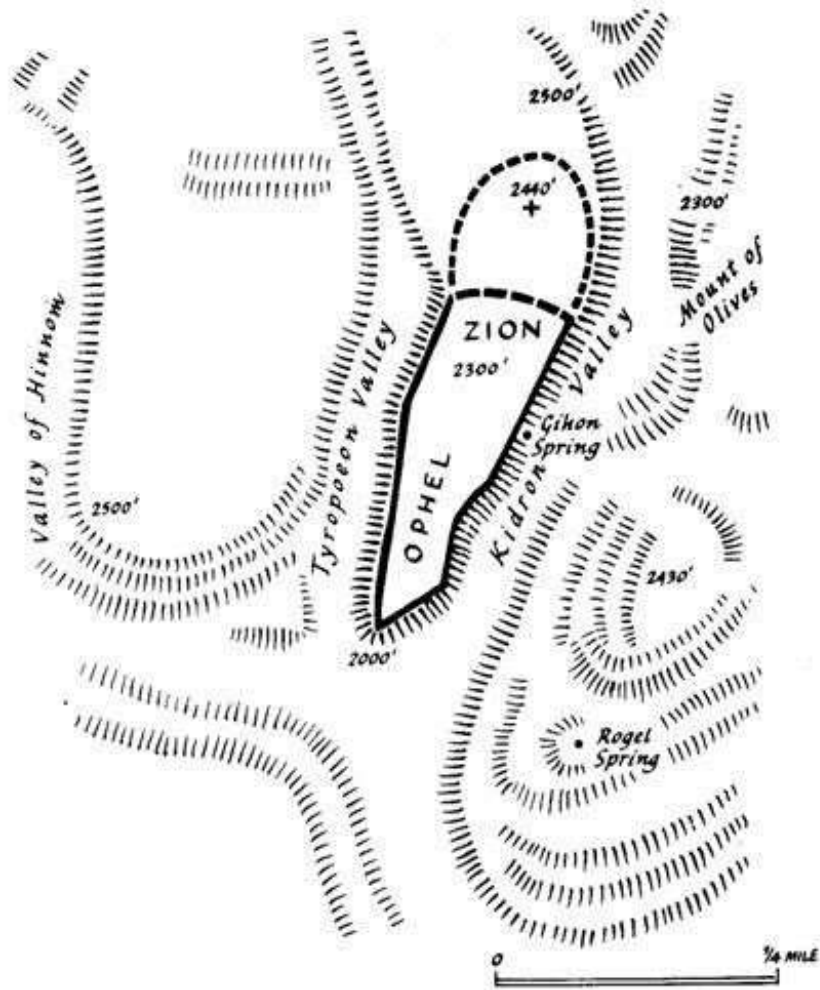
Maps are going to be very important to understand from now on. So I would like to show you the map of the City of David when Solomon came to power in 970 B.C.



The large area above The City of David is the current walls around the “Old City” that anyone would see when they go to Jerusalem in 2018. But the original city of David was the City of Jebus. The very little City at the bottom of this map. After David conquered the city of Jebus he then named it the City of David.

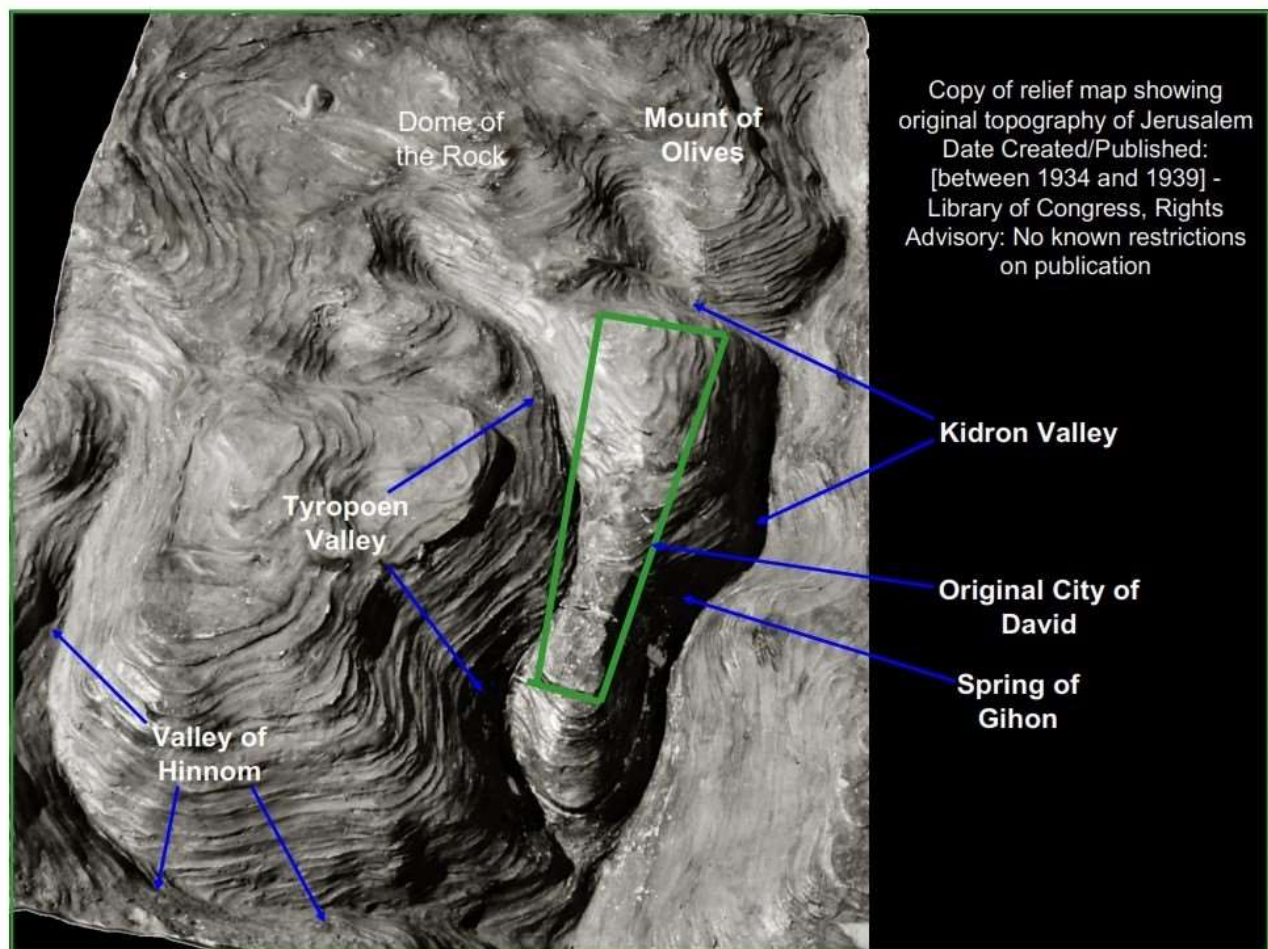


This next map has the Ophel and Zion reversed. But notice the topography. The City of David which was Jebus was protected on the east by the Kidron Valley and on the west by the Tyropoean Valley and on the South and further west by the Gehenna Valley. Its weakest area was to the north. Where the dotted line is above the word Zion is about where David restored the Milo.



Length of the Ophel about 500 yards
 Average width: 100 yards
 +: Area of Ornan (it was there that later the Temple was built).

This next map is even more revealing about the topography of the City of David and of what would become the Temple Mount.



We read of David restoring the Milo in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicle.

2 Sam 5:7 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. And David said on that day, “Whoever would strike the Jebusites, let him get up the water shaft to attack ‘the lame and the blind,’ who are hated by David’s soul.” Therefore it is said, “The blind and the lame shall not come into the house.” And David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built the city all around from the Millo inward. And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him.

1 Chronicles 11:5 Nevertheless, David took the stronghold of Zion, that is, the city of David. David said, “Whoever strikes the Jebusites first shall be chief and commander.” And Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, so he became chief. And David lived in the stronghold; therefore it was called the city of David. And he built the city all around from the Millo in complete circuit, and Joab repaired the rest of the city. And David became greater and greater, for the Lord of hosts was with him.

This is a key verse in understanding the Prophecy of Daniel 9:24-27. David repaired the City of Jerusalem. Yehshua never did. The City of Salem was first owned by Melchizedek and after his death, it was taken over by the Jebusites from whom David had just captured it.

Daniel 9:25 Know therefore and understand that from the going out of the word to restore and build Jerusalem to the coming of an anointed one, a prince, there shall be seven weeks.

From the command to Moses by Yehovah to go and get Israel from Egypt until the time of David who would build and restore Jerusalem was 7 Jubilee cycles.

Exodus 3:4 When the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Then the Lord said, “I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.”

The City of David was the original Mount Zion as we are told quite clearly in 1 Kings 8:1 and above in 2 Samuel.

Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and all the heads of the tribes, the leaders of the fathers' houses of the people of Israel, before King Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of the city of David, which is Zion.

Also, I want you to notice that the word for the stronghold in Chronicles 11:5 H4686

(Strong) mâtsûd metsûdâh maw-tsood', mets-oo-daw', mets-oo-daw'

From H4685; a net, or (abstractly) capture; also a fastness: – castle, defence, fort (-ress), (strong) hold, be hunted, net, snare, strong place.

The Stronghold of Zion was a Fortress or a Castle. It is also called the Akra or Acra and the Citadel.





This last picture is the one I like the best to represent the Stronghold of David. The City of David and to the north which was its weakest link David dug the Milo. Now, what is a Milo?

Here is a picture of the City of Shechem where the 12 sons of Israel killed all the Shechemites after the rape of Dina in Genesis.



The trench outside the Shechem wall is called the Milo. Here is a closer look at it below.

It is a dry moat. Whereas Castles in Scotland have moats with water around them, in Israel they had no water. They were part of the fortifications of the Rampart which is the wall that protects the city from enemies.



When you walk in the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem today you will see this structure that is called the Citadel of David. It too has Herodian stones in it and a Milo, a dry moat around it. I had the great pleasure of explaining this to my Daughter this year at Sukkot in 2018. I know I keep saying this, but for me this

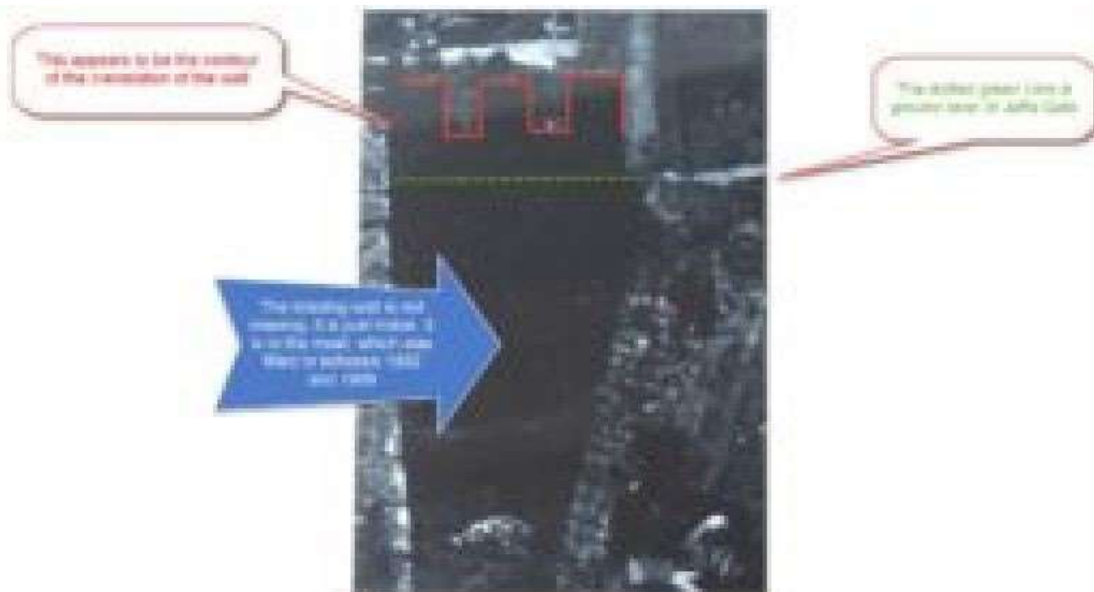
was one of the highlights of my life to share with my very own Daughter those things I love to show people when I am in Jerusalem.





A large portion of the Milo at the Jaffa Gate was filled in to make the road and the entrance by road more accessible because of the coming of German Emperor Wilhelm II on Oct 29, 1898. The name Jaffa Gate is currently used for both the historical Ottoman gate from 1538, and for the wide gap in the city wall adjacent to it to the south. The old gate has the shape of a medieval gate tower with an L-shaped entryway, which was secured at both ends (north and east) with heavy doors. The breach in the wall was created in 1898 by the Ottoman authorities in order to allow German emperor Wilhelm II to enter the city triumphally. The breach and the ramp leading up to it are now allowing cars to access the Old City from the west.

Here is a picture of the Jaffa Gate in 1880 showing the moat and the wall that was there before it was removed for Emperor Wilhelm II. Notice how narrow the street was then. It was for people and not for cars.



Emperor Wilhelm Triumphant entrance into Jerusalem on October 29, 1898, through David's Gate as the Crusaders called it which today is known as Jaffa Gate.



This is not the Milo David built spoken of in 2 Samuel above. This is just an example of what one looks like in the current City of Jerusalem.





The Stepped Stone Structure is the name given to the remains at a particular archaeological site (sometimes termed Area G) on the eastern side of the City of David. It is a curved, 60 ft high, narrow stone structure built as a series of terraces (hence the name). It was uncovered during a series of excavations by R.A.S. Macalister in the 1920s, Kathleen Kenyon in the 1960s, and Yigal Shiloh in the 1970s-1980s. Kathleen Kenyon dated the structure to the start of Iron Age II (1000-900 BC); Macalister believed it to be Jebusite. Macalister, the first to excavate the structure, called the remains he had found a ramp; other scholars, after the more recent discoveries by Kenyon and Shiloh, have suggested that it might be a retaining wall, or a fortress. Israel Finkelstein et al. suggest that the upper part of the structure was substantially rebuilt in the Hasmonean period.[9]

Mazar believes that the Stepped Stone Structure connects with and supports the Large Stone Structure.[10] Mazar presents evidence that the Large Stone Structure was an Israelite royal palace in continuous use from the 10th century until 586 BC. Her conclusion that the stepped stone structure and the large stone structure are parts of a single, massive royal palace makes sense of the biblical reference to the Millo as the House of Millo in II Kings 12:21 and II Chronicles 24:25, describing it as the place where King Joash was assassinated in 799 BC while he slept in his bed. Millo is derived from “fill”, (Hebrew milui). The stepped stone support structure is built of fills.[11]

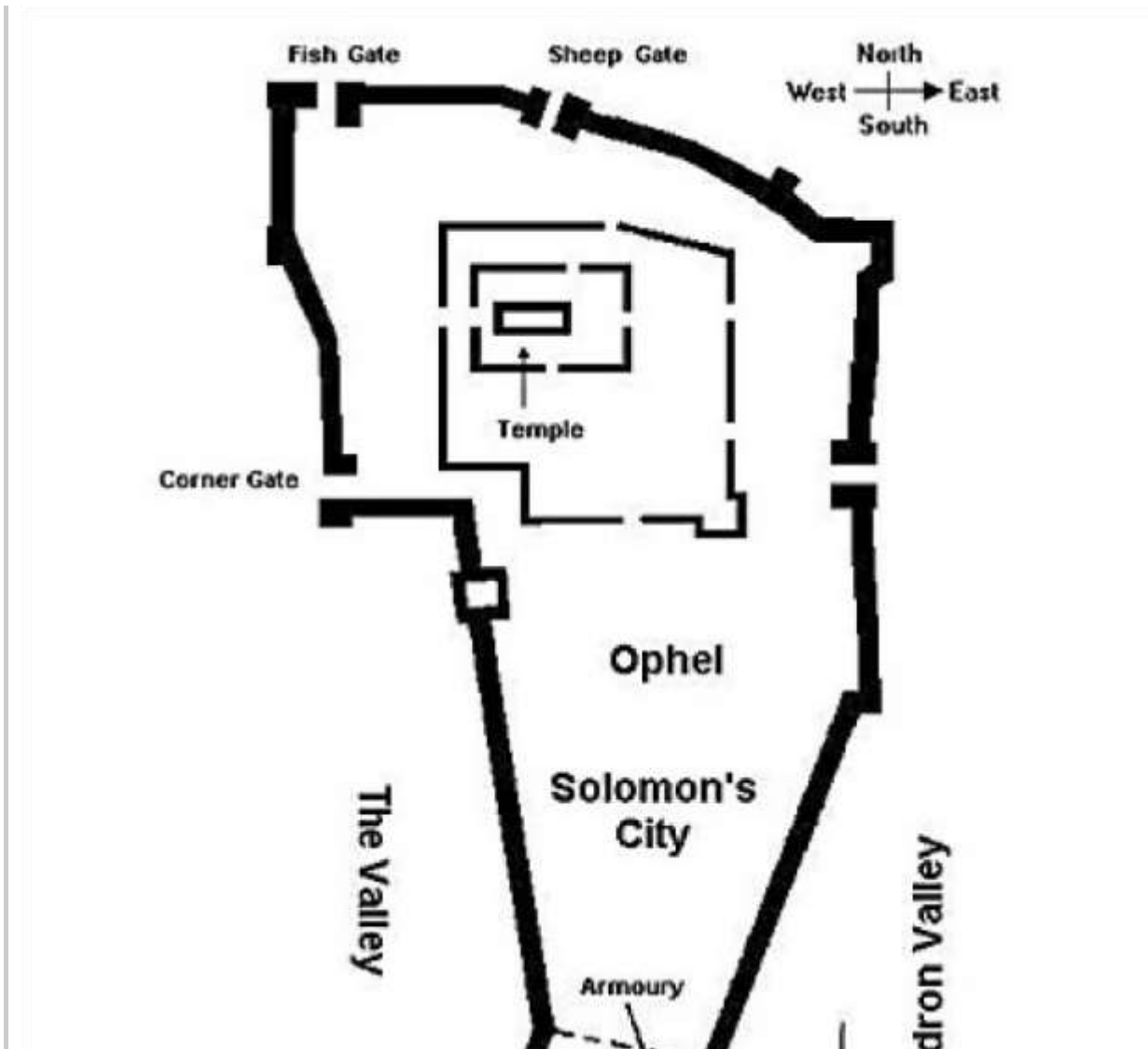
It is my position that this Wall is part of the Temple of Solomon and not King David's Rampart. The Millo is going to be found further south.

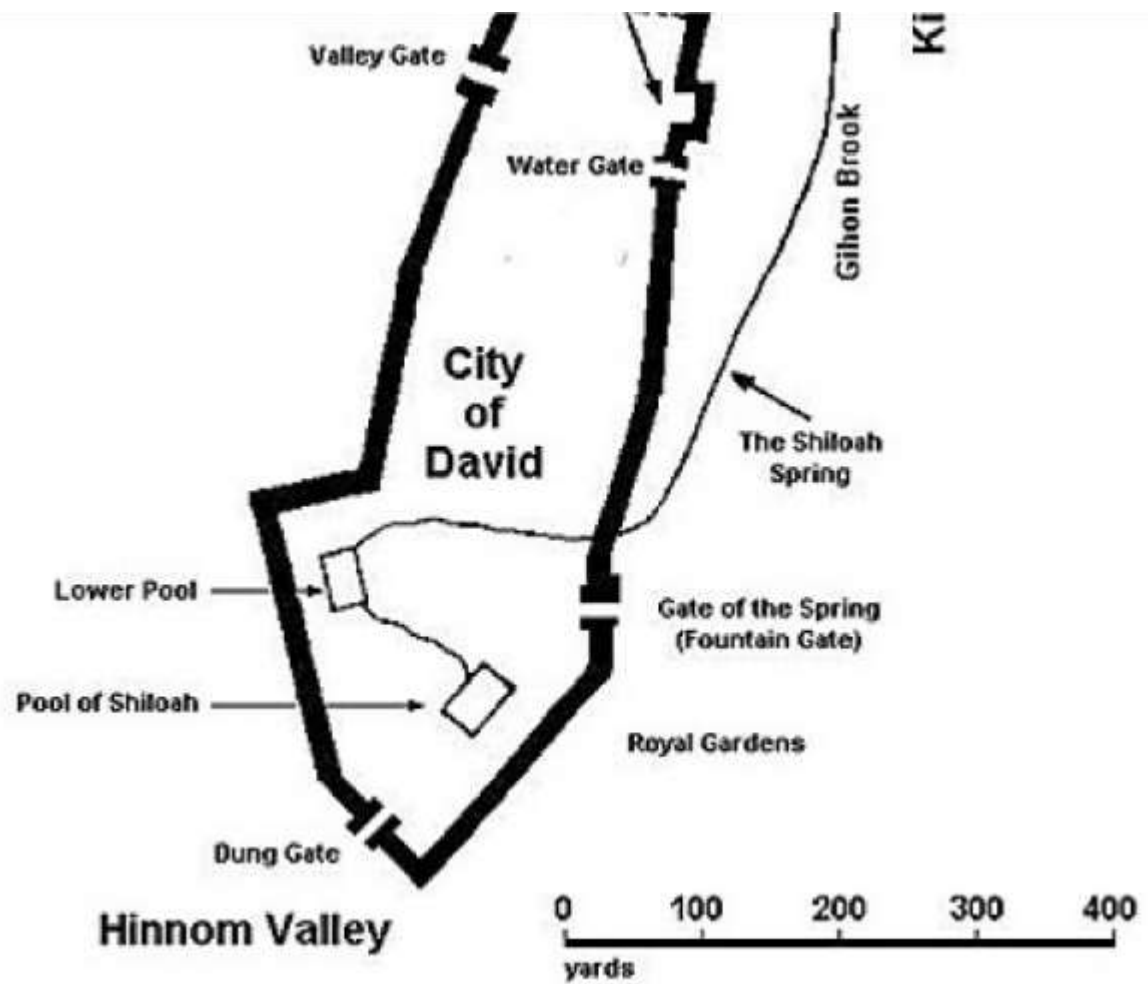
Let's get back to the Temple Mount Area. I just had to explain this Milo, this Moat to you as it will come up again and be very important to our understanding.

King David had built the Akra. We cover the Akra, the Ophel and the Milo on pages 401-420 of our book [The 2300 Days of Hell](#), which you can purchase at the link provided.

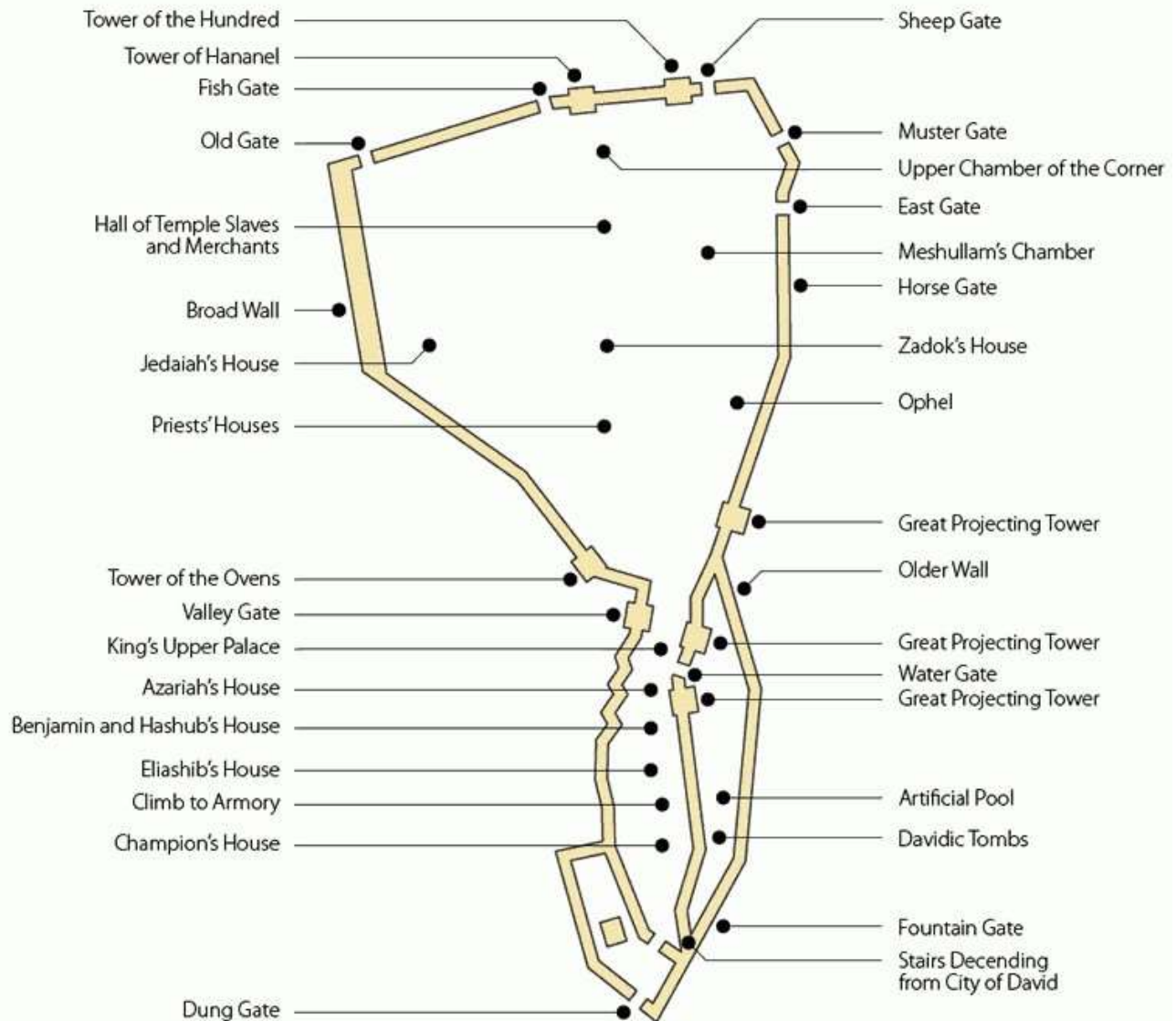
An Acra is a citadel or a strong tower or a fortress. When I first wrote this or began this study I had the following map I was going to use showing the work Herod did. But it along with the pictures I had shown you at the start of this article were eating away at my conscious. The Map is of Jerusalem and the walls that Nehemiah restored or rebuilt. Nehemiah restored the walls before 456 BC. That means they existed before his time. But I was of the view that King Herod built the Temple Mount starting in 19 BC.

This is a map of the City of Jerusalem in the time of Nehemiah. Again we are jumping into this story halfway through and I have been focused on what is called the Temple Mount and explaining the history of this area only. Well, I have been trying to focus on the Temple Mount area but keep going down these rabbit trails. But because it is all so intertwined with the City of David we do and will go back and forth. Ignore what they are claiming to be the Temple in this next map. I am using it to show the placement of the walls in Nehemiah's day.





Jerusalem's Wall in Nehemiah's Day

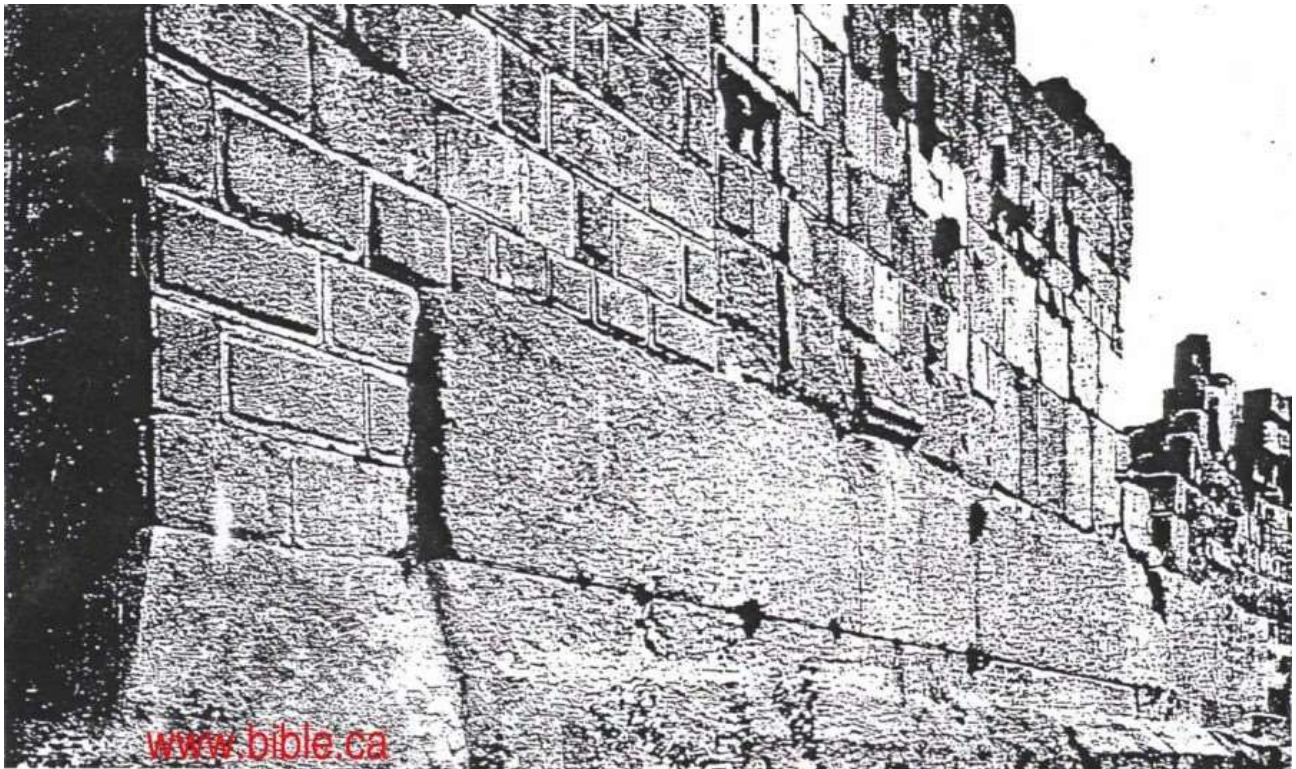


I am going to mention something here in passing. I cannot prove it. But it does strike me as something to consider. Each year I have explained at the Temple Mount about the Herodian stones and that King Herod was the one to have built the Temple Mount. I have used this understanding to prove that the Temple Mount is not the Temple of Yehovah because Yehshua said not one stone would be left upon another.

Mat 24:1 Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

I can use this scripture as proof about this site The Temple Mount area, being the wrong site but the stones may not, in fact, belong to King Herod as I have always thought.

We have very similar stones in the city of Baalbek. Below is a picture of the Temple to Jupiter in Baalbek.



And this picture is of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. Notice the very similar stonework with the 6 inches around the outside edge being recessed. They are known as Phoenician at Samaria masonry, also called Ashlars stones and are typical of the type associated with the projects Solomon had done by the skill trades he hired from Hiram. The Temple picture above dedicated to Jupiter would have been renamed and rededicated by the Romans almost 1000 years after Solomon the same as the Dome of the Rock was as we demonstrated in our earlier articles.



Biblical passages (I Kings, IX: 17-19) mention the name of King Solomon in connection with a place that may be ancient Baalbek (“And Solomon built Gezer and Beth-Horon, the lower, and Baalath and Tadmor in the wilderness”), but most scholars are hesitant to equate this Baalath with Baalbek and therefore deny any connection between Solomon and the ruins. Because the great stones of Baalbek are similar, though far larger, than the stones of the temple of Solomon in Jerusalem, archaic myths had arisen that Solomon erected both structures. If Solomon had really erected the site of Baalbek, however, it is astonishing that the Old Testament has mentioned nothing of the matter.

The reason I bring this up is to draw your attention to the possibility that it was Solomon who built this fortress to the north of the Temple of Yehovah using the skills of Hiram of Tyre. So I went looking for stones of those three cities and pictures. I found this one of the Megiddo Gate with what I have erroneously been calling the Herodian Stones. They are Samaria Phoenician masonry Ashlar stones. I can clearly see one stone with the 6-inch edging around the edge. I was not able to find other stones from Hazor or Gezer to back this up.



But read what it says here in 1 Kings 9:15.

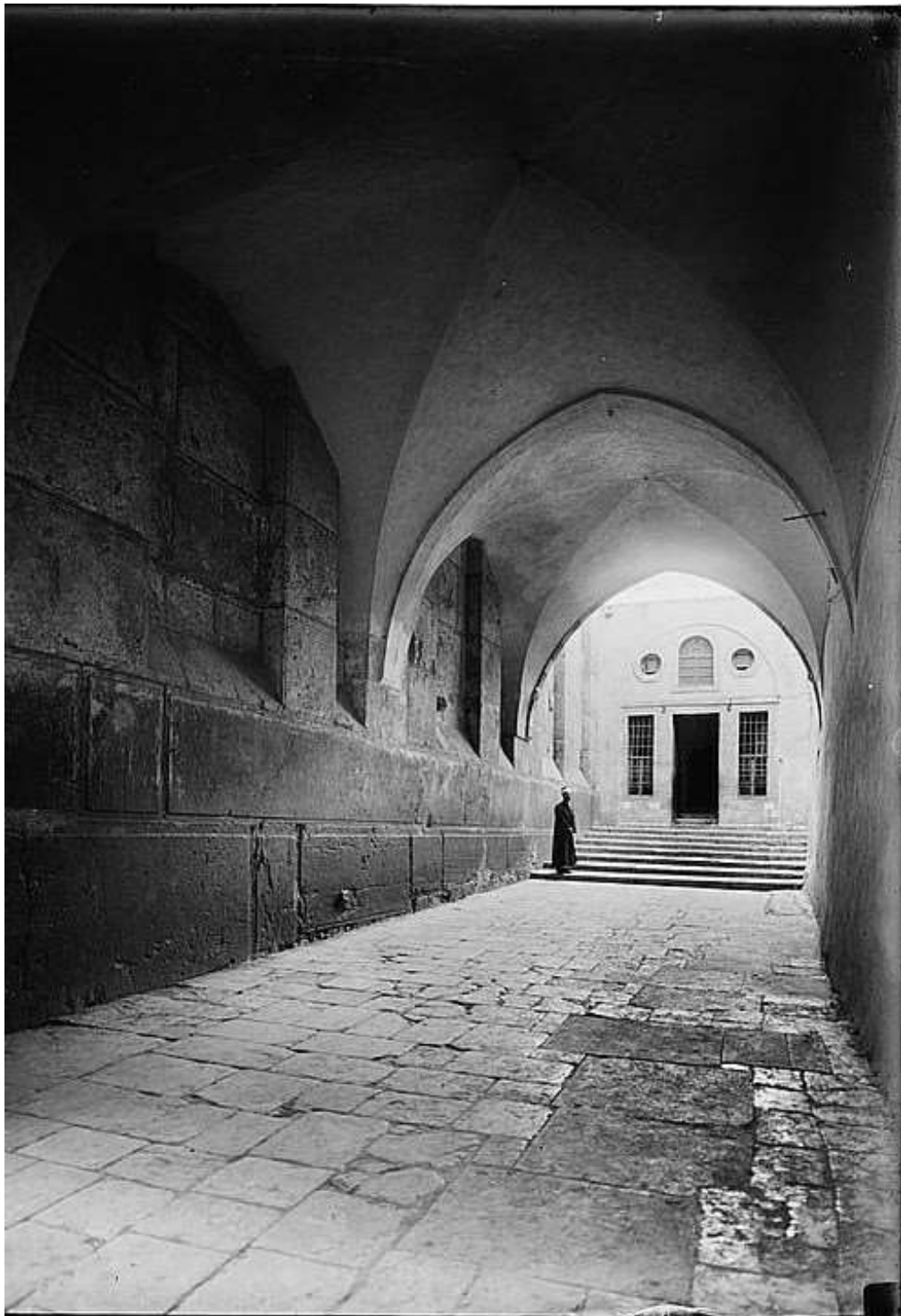
And this is the account of the forced labor that King Solomon drafted to build the house of the Lord and his own house and the Millo and the wall of Jerusalem and Hazor and Megiddo and Gezer (Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer and burned it with fire, and had killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife; so Solomon rebuilt Gezer) and Lower Beth-horon and Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land of Judah, and all the store cities that Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots, and the cities for his horsemen, and whatever Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

I was looking at this verse and then searching for those cities to see if I could find a picture of the stones they used to build them. Are they like those above which I have been calling Herodian stones. I was only able to find the one at Megiddo. I know this is not proof of itself. I am just sharing my thought process and research as I do this. But these Phoenician masonry Ashlar stones are typically found on the bottom of any other periods of time that build after them. Maybe some of you can help by finding other pictures to back this up.

Here is a picture from Hebron of the structure built over the cave of the Patriarchs. It too has these same stones, but we are not told that Herod built this. It is assumed that Herod built this based on the "Herodian stones" but I have not found a source, an ancient source that said built this structure and it took 4 years or something like that.



“Inner entrance to Machpelah showing mammoth stones in Herodian wall” This is the line for the picture below. But I am not able to find a single source that tells us that Herod built this building over the cave of Machpelah. Josephus does not tell us. But we do know Herod built the Herodium.



And I challenge you to search the pictures of the Herodium and find one “Herodian Stone”. I have looked at many pictures but fail to find one massive Herodian stone. I was at the Herodium on one tour but never considered what I am telling you now.



I then went and looked at the stonework for Caesarea and I looked at many pictures but could not see any of the large “Herodian stones” with the 6-inch edges anywhere.

So I am saying that those Herodian Stones on the Temple Mount were not built by Herod but that they were built by Solomon. And it was also Solomon who built the building over the Cave of Machpelah where the patriarchs are buried.

Let’s get back to the Milo that we were talking about earlier.

Read again what it says in 1 Kings about the Milo. I noticed that Solomon built a Milo. How many times have I read over this and not paid any notice to it? This is amazing as there is only need of one Milo in all of Jerusalem and it is on the north side of what is now the Temple Mount.

Again we are told that Solomon built the Milo in 1 Kings 9:24

But Pharaoh’s daughter went up from the city of David to her own house that Solomon had built for her. Then he built the Millo.

And again in 1 Kings 11,

1 Kings 11:26 Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow, also lifted up his hand against the king. And this was the reason why he lifted up his hand against the king. Solomon built the Millo, and closed up the breach of the city of David his father.



Jeroboam, son of Nebat, began the rebellion that resulted in the breach between Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel because Solomon was building the millo.

Why the construction work on the millo was so vexing to Jeroboam that he tore the united kingdom apart, and subsequently ended Israel's golden age may not be immediately clear. Jeroboam was chief of the forced labor coming from Ephraim and Manasseh (the house of Joseph; 1 Kings 11:28, but see 11:22), and although Jeroboam was vexed, it was YHWH Himself who gave him the northern kingdom (1 Kings 11:31). It therefore appears that not solely Solomon's many wives and their idols led to the undoing of the united kingdom but also Solomon's work on the mysterious millo.

Jeroboam was in charge of the forced labour forces from the Tribes of Joseph.

1 Kings 11:28 The man Jeroboam was very able, and when Solomon saw that the young man was industrious he gave him charge over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph. And at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him on the road. Now Ahijah had dressed himself in a new garment, and the two of them were alone in the open country. Then Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and tore it into twelve pieces. And he said to Jeroboam, "Take for yourself ten pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel,

'Behold, I am about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and will give you ten tribes (but he shall have one tribe, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city that I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel), because they have forsaken me and worshiped Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the Ammonites, and they have not walked in my ways, doing what is right in my sight and keeping my statutes and my rules, as David his father did.

Then I read this about Hezekiah and my mind is swimming.

2 Chronicles 32:1 After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?” He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it he built another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David.

The TS 2009 does not have the word in as “In” the city of David. But it reads that Hezekiah built up the Milo and The City of David and the Walls that had fallen down.

2 Chronicles 32:1 (TS2009) And he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and outside of it another wall, and strengthened Millo, the City of Dawid, and made large numbers of weapons and shields.

Again the Milo spoken of is the one Solomon built not the one David built because the one David built was filled in by Solomon to build the Temple on. We are speaking about two different Milos.

Another note to keep in mind. The word Milo is also associated with the word Brit milah which means “covenant of circumcision”. The same word with no vowels is Im This word Milo is also Mul for circumcise. The word used in Genesis 17 when Moses was told to be circumcised is; H4135

(Strong) mûl mool

A primitive root; to cut short, that is, curtail (specifically the prepuce, that is, to circumcise); by implication to blunt; figuratively to destroy: – circumcise (-ing, selves), cut down (in pieces), destroy, X must needs.

When you again look at the map of Jerusalem and know where the Milo Solomon built was, it becomes very plain that this Milo was in front of, and was the place where the enemy would be cut off and destroyed.

But where was the Milo?

1 Kings 5:1 Preparations for Building the Temple

Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David. And Solomon sent word to Hiram, “You know that David my father could not build a house for the name of the Lord his God because of the warfare with which his enemies surrounded him, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God has given me rest on every side. There is neither adversary nor misfortune. And so I intend to build a house for the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord said to David my father, ‘Your son, whom I will set on your throne in your place, shall build the house for my name.’ Now therefore command that cedars of Lebanon be cut for me. And my servants will join your servants, and I will pay you for your servants such wages as you set, for you know that there is no one among us who knows how to cut timber like the Sidonians.” As soon as Hiram heard the words of Solomon, he rejoiced greatly and said, “Blessed be the Lord this day, who has given to David a wise son to be over this great people.” And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, “I have heard the message that you have sent to me. I am ready to do all you desire in the matter of cedar and cypress timber. My servants shall bring it down to the sea from Lebanon, and I will make it into rafts to go by sea to the place you direct. And I will have them broken up there, and you shall receive it. And you shall meet my wishes by providing food for my household.” So Hiram supplied Solomon with all the timber of cedar and cypress that he desired, while Solomon gave Hiram 20,000 cors of wheat as food for his household, and 20,000 cors of beaten oil. Solomon gave this to Hiram year by year. And the Lord gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him. And there was peace between Hiram and Solomon, and the two of them made a treaty.

King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft numbered 30,000 men. And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in shifts. They would be a month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the draft. Solomon also had 70,000 burden-bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, besides Solomon’s 3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people who carried on the work. At the king’s command **they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones.** So Solomon’s builders and Hiram’s builders and the men of Gebal did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

Solomon’s Palace

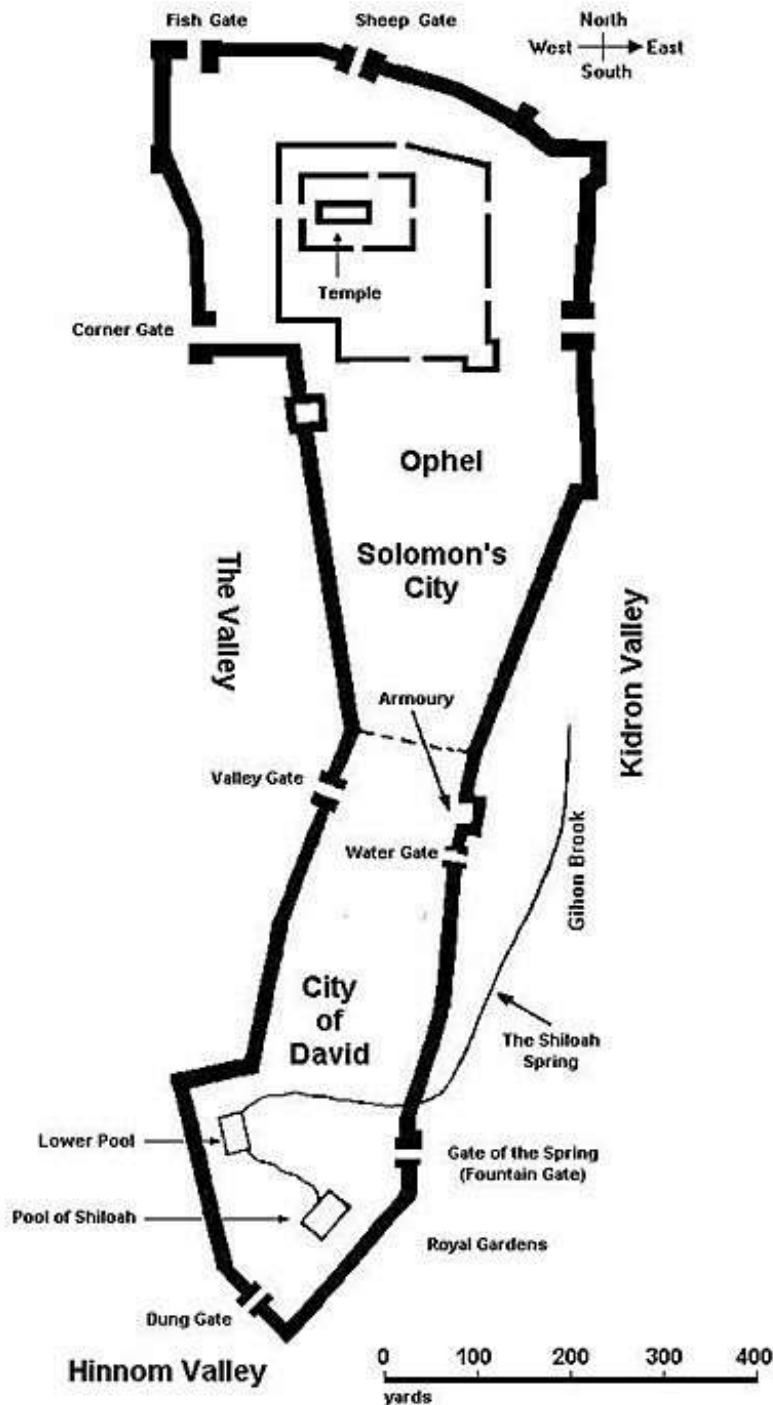
Just to the south of The Temple Mount are the most recent excavations in the Old City in the archeological gardens along the road between The City of David and the Dung Gate. They are stating that these excavations are the ruins of the Palace of Solomon. This first picture is one of the Gates to the Palace of Solomon.



This next picture is me sitting beside the tithes of the people sent to the King. And I was thrilled to be able to share these things with Natalie this year.



So this begs the question about the wisest man to ever live. Why would Solomon build the Palace of the King of Israel on the North side of the city of David and not have any protections should the City be attacked?



I am strongly suggesting that the area to the north of Solomon's Palace was in fact built by Solomon as a fortification for the northern flank of the City of David now called Jerusalem and for protection of Solomon's palace. This is the area today called the Temple Mount. The Temple Mount is where Solomon built His Palace within the Fortress of this area.

The Baris

When I began this study I was looking at Fort Antonio and how it was the Fortress that Herod built.

The Antonia Fortress (Aramaic:)[1] was a military barracks built over the Hasmonean Baris by Herod the Great. Named for his patron Mark Antony, a pre-31 BC date is certain for the

Fort as Mark Anthony was defeated by Octavius (later Augustus Caesar) at the sea battle of Actium in 31 BC. Built in Jerusalem on the site of earlier Ptolemaic and Hasmonean strongholds, the fortress was built at the eastern end of the great wall of the city (the second wall), on the northeastern side of the city, near the Temple Mount and the Pool of Bethesda.

Description

Although modern reconstructions often depict the fortress as having a tower at each of four corners, the historian Josephus repeatedly refers to it as the tower Antonia, and stated that it had been built by John Hyrcanus for storing the vestments used in the Temple.[2] However, Josephus states:

“The general appearance of the whole was that of a tower with other towers at each of the four corners; three of these turrets were fifty cubits high, while that at the south-east angle rose to seventy cubits and so commanded a view of the whole area of the temple.”[3]

Some archaeologists are of the opinion that the fortress was only a single tower, located at the south-east corner of the site;[4] for example, Pierre Benoit, former professor of New Testament studies at the École Biblique, having carried out extensive archaeological studies of the site, concurs and adds that there is absolutely no [archaeological] support for there having been four towers.[5]

Josephus attests to the importance of the Antonia: “For if the Temple lay as a fortress over the city, Antonia dominated the Temple & the occupants of that post were the guards of all three.” Josephus placed the Antonia at the northwest corner of the colonnades surrounding the Temple. Modern depictions often show the Antonia as being located along the north side of the temple enclosure. However, Josephus’ description of the siege of Jerusalem suggests that it was separated from the temple enclosure itself and probably connected by two colonnades with a narrow space between them. Josephus’ measurements suggest about a 600-foot separation between the two complexes.

Why did the two 600-foot aerial bridges disappear from the pages of history? They were mentioned in two 19th-century books written by scholars Lewin, Sanday & Waterhouse, who probably read Josephus in the original Greek, whilst others, later relied on William Whiston, an 18th-century translator. We cannot know if Whiston was influenced by traditional thinking but he probably decided that Josephus had erred when he gave the length of the aerial roadways as a furlong (Stadion), so Whiston used the words “no long space of ground”. War VI, 2, 144

Based upon Jerusalem’s topography and the impossibility of placing Fort Antonia six hundred feet further north of the alleged Temple Mount, Whiston’s translation obscured their existence, although there are ten references in Josephus to these bridges.

Prior to the First Jewish–Roman War, the Antonia housed some part of the Roman garrison of Jerusalem. The Romans also stored the high priest’s vestments within the Fortress.

During the defence of Herod’s Temple, supposedly the Jewish fighters demolished the Tower of Antonia. Josephus is adamant the Jews had no chance of destroying a huge Roman fort with 60foot walls, defended by thousands of Roman troops. It’s the destruction of the two 600-foot aerial

bridges that is meant. It fulfilled the prophecy: “When square the walls, the Temple falls.” Roman soldiers then hastened to construct siege banks against the Temple’s north wall. Battle lasted until they seized the sanctuary.



Herod is said to have built upon the built over top of the Hasmonean Barris.

The Baris was rebuilt or repurposed as a fortress-residence under the Hasmoneans during the late 2nd century BCE. Little is known of its form except that it was rectangular and possessed several high towers, one of which was known as “Straton’s Tower”. The High Priest resided in the Baris, and Josephus reports that Hyrcanus I spent more time in it than at the Hasmonean palace in Jerusalem’s upper city. The Baris was connected to the Temple Mount by an underground passageway and also housed the sacred vestments worn by the High Priest.[3] The Baris was besieged by Pompey the Great during his Siege of Jerusalem in 63 BCE, during which one of its towers was felled by Roman siege engines.[3][4] Under Herod the Great, the Hasmonean Baris underwent renovation or reconstruction, and it was renamed Antonia in honor of his patron Mark Antony.[5][6]

So now let us look at the maps for both sieges of Jerusalem by Pompey and by Titus.

The Siege 63 BC.

When Pompey arrived in Jerusalem, he surveyed the city: for he saw the walls were so firm, that it would be hard to overcome them; and that the valley before the walls was terrible; and that the temple, which was within that valley, was itself encompassed with a very strong wall, insomuch that if the city were taken, that temple would be a second place of refuge for the enemy to retire to.

—?Josephus, The Wars of the Jews 1:141[6]

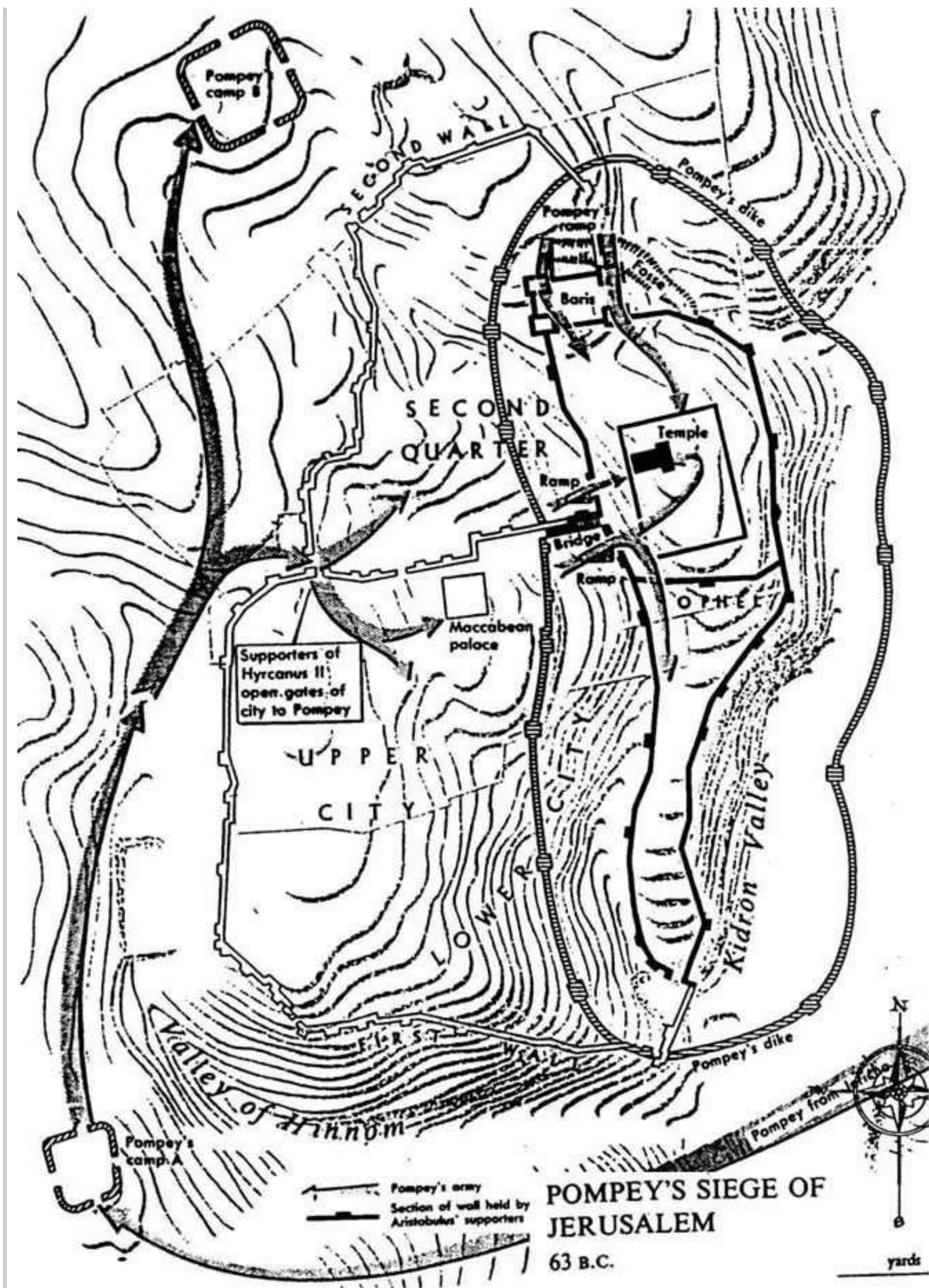
Hyrcanus II still had supporters in the city. They opened a gate, probably situated in the northwestern part of the city wall, and let the Romans in. This allowed Pompey to take hold of Jerusalem's upper city, including the Royal Palace, while Aristobulus' party held the eastern portions of the city—the Temple Mount and the City of David.[5]The Jews consolidated their hold by breaking down the bridge over the Tyropoeon Valley connecting the upper city with the Temple Mount.[7] Pompey offered them the chance to surrender, but when they refused, he began prosecuting the siege with vigour. Pompey had his forces construct a wall of circumvallation around the areas held by the Jews and then pitched his camp within the wall, to the north of the Temple. **Here stood a saddle allowing access to Temple, and it was therefore guarded by the citadel known as the Baris, augmented by a ditch.**[8][9] A second camp was erected south-east of the Temple.[5]

The troops then set about filling the ditch protecting the northern part of the Temple enclosure and building two ramparts, one next to the Baris and the other on the west, while the defenders, from their superior position, sought to hinder Roman efforts. When the banks were complete, Pompey erected siege towers and brought up siege engines and battering rams from Tyre. Under the protection of slingers driving the defenders from the walls, these began to batter the walls surrounding the Temple.[5][10][11] After three months, Pompey's troops finally managed to overthrow one of the Baris' towers and were able to enter the Temple precinct, both from the citadel and from the west. First over the wall was Faustus Cornelius Sulla, son of the former dictator and a senior officer in Pompey's army. He was followed by two centurions, Furius and Fabius, each leading a cohort, and the Romans soon overcame the defending Jews. 12,000 were slaughtered, while only a few Romans troops were killed.[5][12]

Josephus calls the day of the fall of Jerusalem “the day of the fast” (“Ant.” xiv. 4, § 3); but in this he merely followed the phraseology of his Gentile sources, which regarded the Sabbath as a fast day, according to the current Greco-Roman view. Dio Cassius says (xxxvii. 16) correctly that it was on a “Cronos day,” this term likewise denoting the Sabbath.

The capture of the Temple mount was accompanied by great slaughter. The priests who were officiating despite the battle were massacred by the Roman soldiers, and many committed suicide.

Pompey himself entered the Temple's Holy of Holies which only the High Priest was allowed to enter, thereby desecrating it. He did not remove anything, neither its treasures nor any funds, and the next day ordered the Temple cleansed and its rituals resumed.[13][14][15][16] Pompey then headed back to Rome, taking Aristobulus with him for his triumphal procession.[5]



I want you to notice that Pompey is describing the Milo on the north side of the Baris that is protecting the Temple Mount area. The Milo is what is being called the ditch that they filled in.

guarded by the citadel known as the Baris, augmented by a ditch.

We are then told how they filled in the Milo and began to build ramparts to attack the Baris and it took them three months to complete the work.

The troops then set about filling the ditch protecting the northern part of the Temple enclosure and building two ramparts, one next to the Baris and the other on the west

King Herod would then come to power and begin to rebuild the Temple Mount in the year 19 BC until his death in 1 BC and it would finally be completed in the year 63 C.E. just 7 years before it was destroyed again. From the beginning of the Temple project in 19 B.C., it took 46 years to complete the main building and another 36 years to finish the entire Temple complex. In 70 A.D., this splendid structure that had taken 82 years to build was destroyed by the Romans. John 2:20 is speaking of that time when Yehshua was at the temple of being a total of 46 years. But it was not yet completed.

The Siege of 70 CE

The Siege of Jerusalem in the year 70 CE was the decisive event of the First Jewish–Roman War. The Roman army, led by the future Emperor Titus, with Tiberius Julius Alexander as his second-in-command, besieged and conquered the city of Jerusalem, which had been controlled by Judean rebel factions since 66 CE, following the Jerusalem riots of 66, when the Judean Free Government was formed in Jerusalem.

The siege ended on 30 August 70 CE[3] with the burning and destruction of its Second Temple, and the Romans entered and sacked the Lower City. The destruction of both the first and second temples is still mourned annually as the Jewish fast Tisha B'Av. The Arch of Titus, celebrating the Roman sack of Jerusalem and the Temple, still stands in Rome. The conquest of the city was complete on 8 September 70 CE.

First Jewish–Roman War

Despite early successes in repelling the Roman sieges, the Zealots fought amongst themselves, and they lacked proper leadership, resulting in poor discipline, training, and preparation for the battles that were to follow. At one point they destroyed the food stocks in the city, a drastic measure thought to have been undertaken perhaps in order to enlist a merciful God's intervention on behalf of the besieged Jews,[4] or as a stratagem to make the defenders more desperate, supposing that was necessary in order to repel the Roman army.[5]

Titus began his siege a few days before Passover,[6] surrounding the city, with three legions (V Macedonica, XII Fulminata, XV Apollinaris) on the western side and a fourth (X Fretensis) on the Mount of Olives to the east.[7][8] If the reference in his Jewish War at 6:421 is to Titus' siege, though difficulties exist with its interpretation, then at the time, according to Josephus, Jerusalem was thronged with many people who had come to celebrate Passover.[9] The thrust of the siege began in the west at the Third Wall, north of the Jaffa Gate. By May, this was breached and the Second Wall also was taken shortly afterwards, leaving the defenders in possession of the Temple and the upper and lower city. The Jewish defenders were split into factions: John of Gischala's group murdered another faction leader, Eleazar ben Simon, whose men were entrenched in the forecourts of the Temple.[6] The enmities between John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora were

papered over only when the Roman siege engineers began to erect ramparts. Titus then had a wall built to girdle the city in order to starve out the population more effectively. After several failed attempts to breach or scale the walls of the Fortress of Antonia, the Romans finally launched a secret attack, overwhelming the sleeping Zealots and taking the fortress by late July.[6]

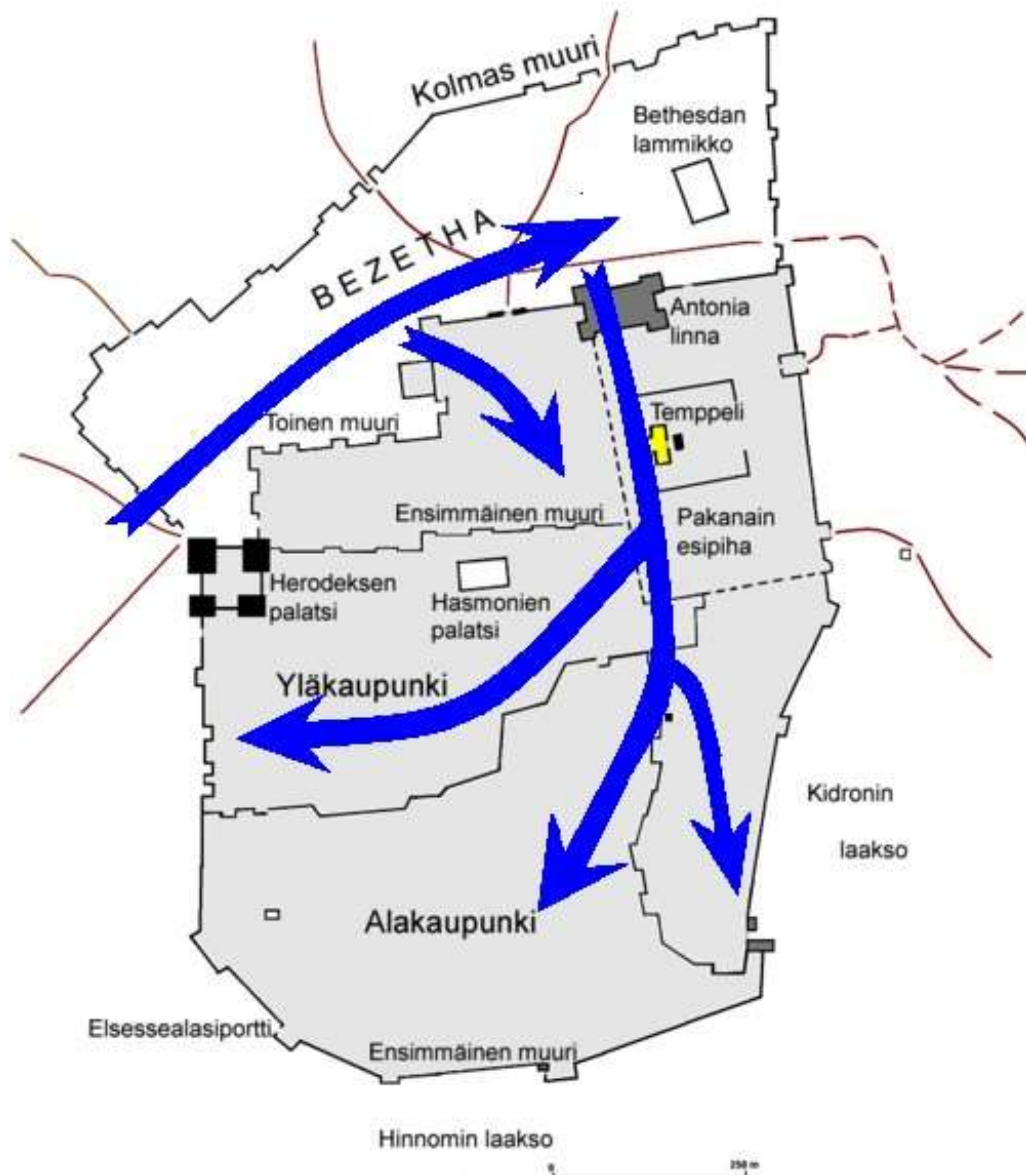
After Jewish allies killed a number of Roman soldiers, Titus sent Josephus, the Jewish historian, to negotiate with the defenders; this ended with Jews wounding the negotiator with an arrow, and another sally was launched shortly after. Titus was almost captured during this sudden attack, but escaped.

Overlooking the Temple compound, the fortress provided a perfect point from which to attack the Temple itself. Battering rams made little progress, but the fighting itself eventually set the walls on fire; a Roman soldier threw a burning stick onto one of the Temple's walls. Destroying the Temple was not among Titus' goals, possibly due in large part to the massive expansions done by Herod the Great mere decades earlier. Titus had wanted to seize it and transform it into a temple dedicated to the Roman Emperor and the Roman pantheon. However, the fire spread quickly and was soon out of control. The Temple was captured and destroyed on 9/10 Tisha B'Av, at the end of August, and the flames spread into the residential sections of the city.[6][8] Josephus described the scene:

As the legions charged in, neither persuasion nor threat could check their impetuosity: passion alone was in command. Crowded together around the entrances many were trampled by their friends, many fell among the still hot and smoking ruins of the colonnades and died as miserably as the defeated. As they neared the Sanctuary they pretended not even to hear Caesar's commands and urged the men in front to throw in more firebrands. The partisans were no longer in a position to help; everywhere was slaughter and flight. Most of the victims were peaceful citizens, weak and unarmed, butchered wherever they were caught. Round the Altar the heaps of corpses grew higher and higher, while down the Sanctuary steps poured a river of blood and the bodies of those killed at the top slithered to the bottom.[10]

Josephus's account absolves Titus of any culpability for the destruction of the Temple, but this may merely reflect his desire to procure favor with the Flavian dynasty.[10][11]

The Roman legions quickly crushed the remaining Jewish resistance. Some of the remaining Jews escaped through hidden underground tunnels and sewers, while others made a final stand in the Upper City.[12] This defense halted the Roman advance as they had to construct siege towers to assail the remaining Jews. Herod's Palace fell on 7 September, and the city was completely under Roman control by 8 September.[13][14] The Romans continued to pursue those who had fled the city.



The account of Josephus described Titus as moderate in his approach and, after conferring with others, ordering that the 500-year-old Temple be spared. According to Josephus, it was the Jews who first used fire in the Northwest approach to the Temple to try and stop Roman advances. Only then did Roman soldiers set fire to an apartment adjacent to the Temple, a conflagration which the Jews subsequently made worse.[15]

Josephus had acted as a mediator for the Romans and, when negotiations failed, witnessed the siege and aftermath. He wrote:

Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other work to be done), [Titus] Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and Temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as they were of the greatest eminence; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison [in the Upper City], as were the towers [the three forts] also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of city it was, and

how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall [surrounding Jerusalem], it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it [Jerusalem] had ever been inhabited. This was the end which Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind.[16] And truly, the very view itself was a melancholy thing; for those places which were adorned with trees and pleasant gardens, were now become desolate country every way, and its trees were all cut down. Nor could any foreigner that had formerly seen Judaea and the most beautiful suburbs of the city, and now saw it as a desert, but lament and mourn sadly at so great a change. For the war had laid all signs of beauty quite waste. Nor had anyone who had known the place before, had come on a sudden to it now, would he have known it again. But though he [a foreigner] were at the city itself, yet would he have inquired for it.[17]

Josephus claims that 1.1 million people were killed during the siege, of which a majority were Jewish. Josephus attributes this to the celebration of Passover which he uses as rationale for the vast number of people present among the death toll.[18] Armed rebels, as well as the frail citizens, were put to death. All of Jerusalem's remaining citizens became Roman prisoners. After the Romans killed the armed and elder people, 97,000 were still enslaved, including Simon bar Giora and John of Giscala.[19] Simon bar Giora was executed, and John of Giscala was sentenced to life imprisonment. Of the 97,000, thousands were forced to become gladiators and eventually expired in the arena. Many others were forced to assist in the building of the Forum of Peace and the Colosseum. Those under 17 years of age were sold into servitude.[20] Josephus' death toll assumptions are rejected as impossible by modern scholarship, since around the time about a million people lived in Palestine, about half of them were Jews, and sizable Jewish populations remained in the area after the war was over, even in the hard-hit region of Judea.[21] Titus and his soldiers celebrated victory upon their return to Rome by parading the Menorah and Table of the Bread of God's Presence through the streets. Up until this parading, these items had only ever been seen by the high priest of the Temple. This event was memorialized in the Arch of Titus.[20][18]

Many fled to areas around the Mediterranean. According to Philostratus writing in the early years of the 3rd century, Titus reportedly refused to accept a wreath of victory, saying that the victory did not come through his own efforts but that he had merely served as an instrument of divine wrath.[22]

The Fortress of The Temple

When I began to look at the Temple Mount before the Hasmoneans I was led to the time of Nehemiah because of the map that showed the walls that he restored. It was around the Temple Mount area.

The very first mention of the this Temple Mount area is found in Nehemiah.

Neh 2:7 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given me to the governors of the province Beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Judah, and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the fortress of the temple, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

The word translated as fortress here is Strong's 1004 **hryb**

bʔʔyrâh *bee-raw*ʹ

Of foreign origin; a *castle* or *palace*: – palace.

And here are how other bibles translated this word Biyrah.

Nehemiah 2:8

(ASV) and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the castle which appertaineth to the house**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(BBE) And a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's park, so that he may give me wood to make boards for the doors of **the tower of the house**, and for the wall of the town, and for the house which is to be mine. And the king gave me this, for the hand of my God was on me.

(Darby) and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the palace which appertains to the house**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(ESV+) and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of ^{R7}**the fortress of the temple**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, ^{R8}for the good hand of my God was upon me.

(ESV) and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the fortress of the temple**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy." And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

(ISV) along with a letter to Asaph, the royal Commissioner of Forests, so that he will supply me with timber to craft beams for **the gatehouses of the Temple**, for the city walls, and for the house in which I will be living." The king granted this for me, according to the good hand of my God.

(JPS) and a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's park, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the castle which appertaineth to the house**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into.' And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(KJV+) And a letter?H107? unto?H413? Asaph?H623? the keeper?H8104? of the king's?H4428? forest,?H6508? that?H834? he may give?H5414? me timber?H6086? to make beams?H7136? for(?H853?) the gates?H8179? of **the palace?H1002? which?H834? appertained to the house,? H1004?** and for the wall?H2346? of the city,?H5892? and for the house?H1004? that?H834? I shall enter?H935? into.?H413? And the king?H4428? granted?H5414? me, according to the good? H2896? hand?H3027? of my God?H430? upon?H5921? me.

(KJV) And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the palace which appertained to the house**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(MKJV) and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, so that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the palace which belong to the house**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house into which I shall enter. And the king granted me what I asked, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

(TS2009) and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the sovereign's forest, that he should give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the palace that belongs to the House**, and for the city wall, and for the house I would enter." And the sovereign gave them to me according to the good hand of my Elohim upon me.

(YLT) and a letter unto Asaph, keeper of the paradise that the king hath, that he give to me trees for beams *for* the gates of **the palace that the house hath**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house into which I enter;' and the king giveth to me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Do you understand what this is saying in Nehemiah? The Palace of the House is the Fortress for THE House of Yehovah, the Temple of Yehovah. The Fortress is also known as the Acra or Citadel or Castle or the strong Tower or gatehouse.

Nehemiah 7:2 Now when the wall had been built and I had set up the doors, and the gatekeepers, the singers, and the Levites had been appointed, I gave my brother Hanani and Hananiah the governor of the castle charge over Jerusalem, for he was a more faithful and God-fearing man than many.

The Castle Nehemiah is speaking about is what today is called Fort Antonio also known as the Temple Mount and the Harem esh-Shariff. It was called the Biyrah and this then changed to the Baris by the Greeks. It is another name for an Acra or citadel, a high tower that provided protection and strength.

The Acra

The Ptolemaic Baris (also Ptolemaic Acra) was a citadel maintained by Ptolemaic Egypt during its rule of Jerusalem in the 3rd century BC. Described by only a few ancient sources, no archaeological remains of the citadel have been found and much about it remains a matter of conjecture.

Persian origins?

After the conquest of Babylon by the Persian Empire, Cyrus the Great allowed the Jews to return to their native land and rebuild Jerusalem, sacked by Nebuchadnezzar II in 586 BC. While rebuilding the city's fortifications, the Persian administration also constructed a new citadel north of the Temple Mount enclosure, as part of a general Persian effort to bolster the empire's defences.[1] This citadel is the Biyrah (Hebrew: hryb) referred to in Nehemiah 2:8 and 7:2, appearing as the Baris in Greek translations of the Septuagint. The origin of the word is not entirely clear, but may have been borrowed into Hebrew from Assyrian birtu or bistu meaning a citadel or castle within a city, or a fort located at a strategic position outside a city. It may also derive from the Old Persian baru, meaning 'fort'.[2]

Jerusalem was taken by Alexander the Great in 332 BC, in between his siege of Tyre and the conquest of Egypt. Jerusalem, however, was taken without a fight, and no account mentions the Persian citadel at this time. It may have been dismantled in the two centuries since its construction, but may have also fallen into Macedonian hands intact.

Hellenistic rule

In the Wars of the Diadochi following Alexander's death, Coele-Syria initially came under the rule of Antigonus Monophthalmus. In 301 BC Ptolemy I Soter, who four years earlier had crowned himself King of Egypt, exploited events surrounding the Battle of Ipsus to take control of the region. Coele-Syria, however, had been allocated to Ptolemy's former ally Seleucus I Nicator, founder of the Seleucid Empire. Seleucus, who had been aided by Ptolemy during his ascent to power, did not take any military action to reclaim the region. Once both were dead, however, their successors became embroiled in the Syrian Wars. In 200 BC, during the Fifth Syrian War, Antiochus III defeated the Ptolemaic army at the Battle of Panium, bringing an end to Ptolemaic control of Judea. According to Josephus, the Egyptian garrison still held out at the city's citadel (This is the temple Mount Fortress) when the Seleucid army arrived at Jerusalem. Aided by the local Jewish population, Antiochus besieged the fort and brought about its capitulation. Grateful for their assistance, Antiochus published a decree granting the Jews religious freedoms. As this decree also mentions the city's citadel,[3][4] it was apparently still standing after the Seleucid conquest of Jerusalem.

Letter of Aristeas

The most detailed account of the Ptolemaic citadel is to be found in the Letter of Aristeas, an account of the translation into Greek of the Septuagint. In one section, the author, supposedly an

Alexandrian Jew in the service of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (309 BC – 246 BC), visits the Temple and is then invited to visit the Baris as well:

But in order that we might gain complete information, we ascended to the summit of the neighboring citadel and looked around us. It is situated in a very lofty spot, and is fortified with many towers, which have been built up to the very top of immense stones, with the object, as we were informed, of guarding the temple precincts, so that if there were an attack, or an insurrection or an onslaught of the enemy, no one would be able to force an entrance within the walls that surround the temple. On the towers of the citadel engines of war were placed and different kinds of machines, and the position was much higher than the circle of walls which I have mentioned. The towers were guarded too by most trusty men who had given the utmost proof of their loyalty to their country. These men were never allowed to leave the citadel, except on feast days and then only in detachments. nor did they permit any stranger to enter it. They were also very careful when any command came from the chief officer to admit any visitors to inspect the place, as our own experience taught us. They were very reluctant to admit us – though we were but two unarmed men – to view the offering of the sacrifices. And they asserted that they were bound by an oath when the trust was committed to them, for they had all sworn and were bound to carry out the oath sacredly to the letter, that though they were five hundred in number they would not permit more than five men to enter at one time. The citadel was the special protection of the temple and its founder had fortified it so strongly that it might efficiently protect it.[5]

The exact location of the citadel is not specified in this account, but the mention of an ascent to the Baris, as well as its location in a “very lofty spot”, suggests the citadel overlooked the temple enclosure. As the citadel is in close proximity to the Temple, not on one of the other hills surrounding Jerusalem, the topographical nature of the Temple Mount affords only one such location – a rocky outcrop north of the temple enclosure, a spot where Herod the Great later built the Antonia Fortress. This is the precise location where the Persian citadel is supposed to have stood, suggesting the two may indeed be identical.[6]

It is not entirely clear when the Letter of Aristeas was written, although it is certainly much younger than the time of its supposed creation, in the middle of the 3rd century BC. Opinions differ on the exact date, although current research suggests the middle of the 2nd century BC. [7] Such a date would rule out the Hasmonean Baris or Antonia Fortress as the inspiration for the account, though not the Seleucid Acra. Thus, although it is not certain, the Letter of Aristeas may indeed preserve a genuine account of the citadel which stood in Jerusalem during Ptolemaic rule. [8]

Ultimate fate

Direct Seleucid control of Jerusalem was short lived, and around 168 BC the Hasmonean Revolt broke out. Although 2 Maccabees contains a reference to a citadel a few years before the revolt, there is not a single mention of a Hellenistic citadel north of the Temple enclosure during or after the revolt. Its sudden disappearance have led some to postulate that the Ptolemaic Baris and

Seleucid Acra were in fact one and the same.[9]All accounts of the Seleucid citadel, however, place its construction on the eve of the revolt.

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The Temple Mount in Hezekiah's Day

We have read before in this article that the word “in” is not there. So that this is saying Hezekiah strengthened both the Milo and the City of David and the walls. Hezekiah is doing this in the years just before 701 BC. These same walls would be breached in 586 BC and then Nehemiah would come back in the years before 456 BC.

2 Chronicles 32:1 After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?” He set to work resolutely and built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it he built another wall, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also made weapons and shields in abundance.

Temple Mount-The Palace built by Solomon

Let me now make a case for who built this Fortress.

Nehemiah 2:8 (ESV) and a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the king’s forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of **the fortress of the temple**, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall occupy.” And the king granted me what I asked, for the good hand of my God was upon me.

The word used for this is H1002 A castle or a Palace

The ESV translates this as **the fortress of the temple**,

I found the same word used in 1Chron 29 but let's start in Chapter 28:1

David's Charge to Israel

David assembled at Jerusalem all the officials of Israel, the officials of the tribes, the officers of the divisions that served the king, the commanders of thousands, the commanders of hundreds, the stewards of all the property and livestock of the king and his sons, together with the palace officials, the mighty men and all the seasoned warriors. Then King David rose to his feet and said: "Hear me, my brothers and my people. I had it in my heart to build **a house of rest** for the ark of the covenant of the Lord and for the footstool of our God, and I made preparations for building.

The words house here is in reference to the Temple of Yehovah and is H1004 Bayith. Now notice this other word H1002 Biyrah for fortress or Palace in 1 Chron 29:1

Offerings for the Temple

1 Chron 29:1 And David the king said to all the assembly, "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, **for the palace** will not be for man but for the Lord God. So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze, the iron for the things of iron, and wood for the things of wood, besides great quantities of onyx and stones for setting, antimony, colored stones, all sorts of precious stones and marble. Moreover, in addition to all that I have provided for the holy house, I have a treasure of my own of gold and silver, and because of my devotion to the house of my God I give it to the house of my God: 3,000 talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir, and 7,000 talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the house, and for all the work to be done by craftsmen, gold for the things of gold and silver for the things of silver. Who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself today to the Lord?"

(ISV)Then King David addressed the entire assembly: "My son Solomon, the one whom God alone has chosen, is still young and inexperienced, and the task is great, since this structure will be a citadel to the LORD God and not for human beings.

The Fortress, the Citadel is for the Temple of Yehovah.

Then again in 1 Chronicles 29:19 David speaks of the Palace or fortress again. The word is Biyrah.

Grant to Solomon my son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies, and your statutes, performing all, and that he may build the palace for which I have made provision."

The Moat and the Kidron Valley



Fort Antonia had a moat on its north side; “Temple Mount” has moat on north side

According to Warren’s excavation in Jerusalem in the 19th century “there is a moat between the Dome of the Rock and the El-Omariah School.” (*The Hidden Secrets of the Temple Mount*, Tuvia Sagiv) This school is just north of the Temple Mount, therefore the moat is just north of the so-called Temple Mount:

“**The Moat:** The Ancient Moat exists today between the Dome of the Rock and The El Omariah school. Though filled in with dirt and planted as a garden, the location of this moat is just North of the edge of the paved Platform [Temple Mount]. According to the conventional theories, the El Omariah school is the site of the Antonia Fortress. Therefore the Moat would have been located **between** the Temple and the Antonia Fortress. However, according to the literary sources, the Moat was located **to the North** of the Antonia Fortress! If this moat is indeed the moat mentioned in the historical sources, the Antonia Fortress should be situated **South** of this moat. The logical location for a defensive moat protecting the Northern approach to Fortress Antonia and the City, would be immediately to the North of Antonia.” (*The Hidden Secrets of the Temple Mount*, Fig. 24, by Tuvia Sagiv, found on Internet at: www.templemount.org/tempmt.html)

Josephus also described a moat on the north side of Fort Antonia as being a “deep valley dug on purpose” and the “depth of the ditch made the elevation of the towers more remarkable” (*War*, book 5, chap 4, 2). This moat or “ditch” was built in order to keep Fort Antonia “from joining to this hill [“Bezetha,” north of the fort], and thereby affording an opportunity for getting to it with ease, and hindering the security that arose from its superior elevation.” In other words, ignoring the awkward wording of the translation of Josephus’s book, this “ditch” was a moat that helped to keep invaders out of the fort by having the moat separate the fort from the hill.

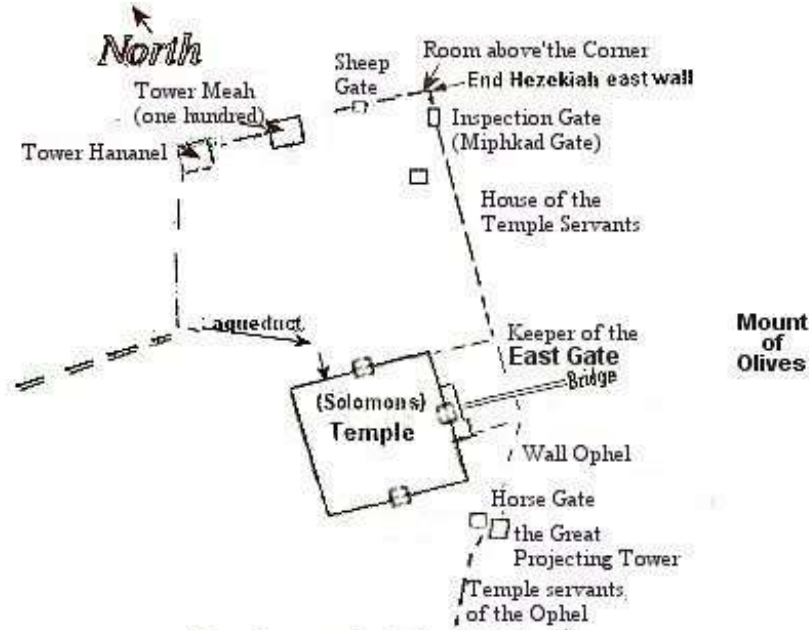
This is the area where Lions Gates is found and I must wonder if Lions gate itself is not part of this old moat.



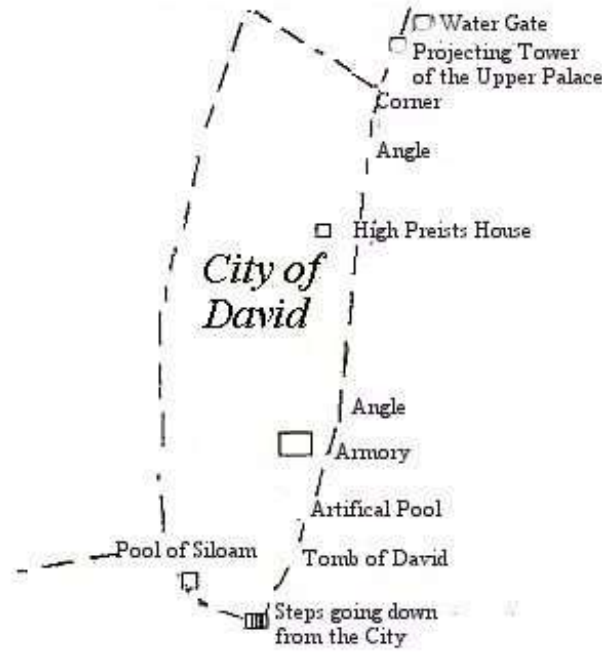


Nehemiah's wall gives us some important information that helps identify where the Temple was NOT located.

Nehemiah wrote that the Tower of the Hundred (Meah) was in the north wall as the drawing below indicates. It was the fortification against an attack from the North on the Temple and City of David. Nehemiah did not rebuild any of the Temple walls. He only rebuilt the City walls.



Nehemiah's Wall



Sheep Gate. They consecrated it and set its doors. They consecrated it as far as the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Tower of Hananel. And next to him the men of Jericho built. And next to them Zaccur the son of Imri built.

The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish Gate. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And next to them Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired. And next to them Meshullam the son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel repaired. And next to them Zadok the son of Baana repaired. And next to them the Tekoites repaired, but their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord.

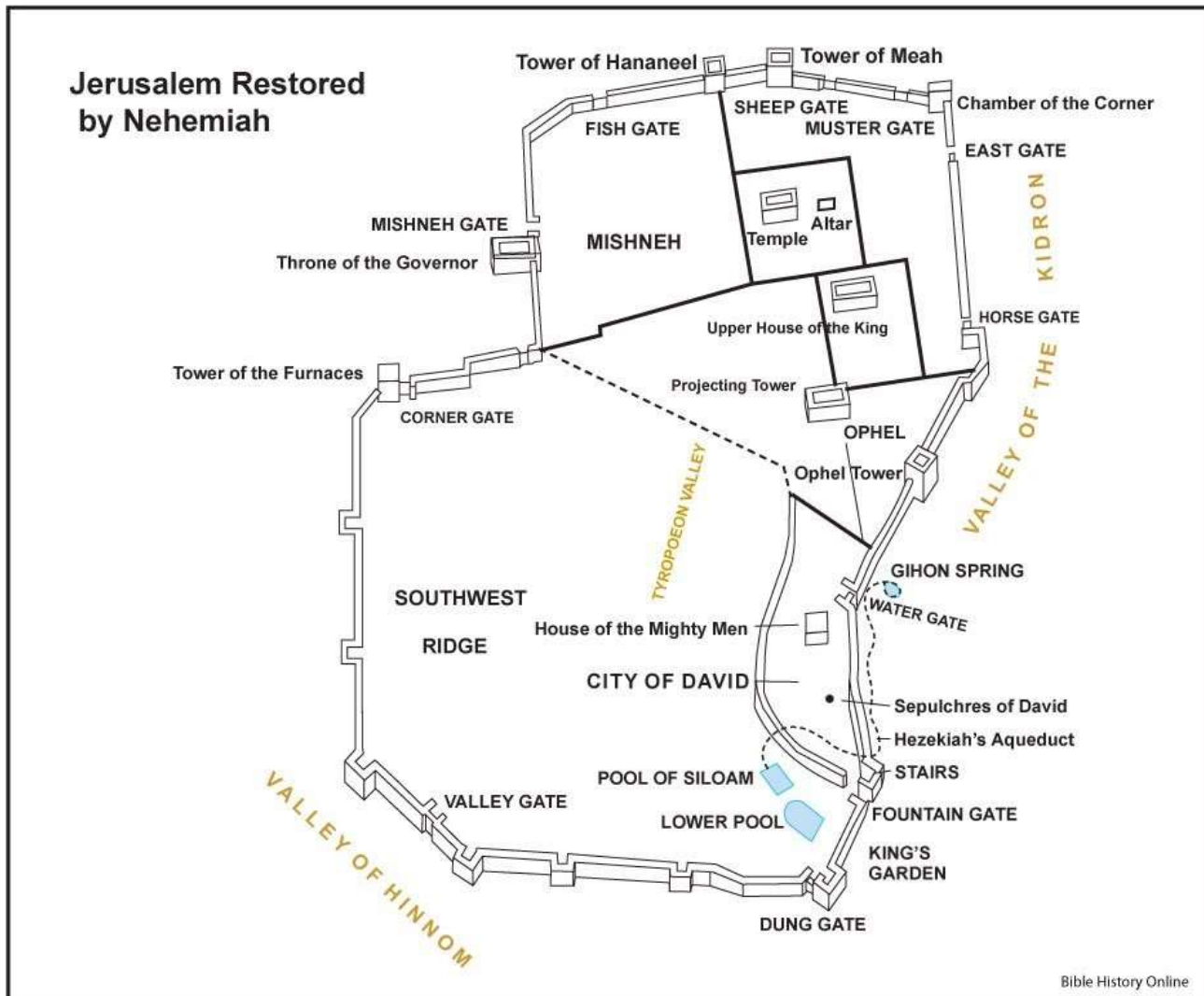
Joiada the son of Paseah and Meshullam the son of Besodeiah repaired the Gate of Yeshanah. They laid its beams and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And next to them repaired Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and of Mizpah, the seat of the governor of the province Beyond the River. Next to them Uzziel the son of Harhaiah, goldsmiths, repaired. Next to him Hananiah, one of the perfumers, repaired, and they restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. Next to them Rephaiah the son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired. Next to them Jedaiah the son of Harumaph repaired opposite his house. And next to him Hattush the son of Hashabneiah repaired. Malchijah the son of Harim and Hasshub the son of Pahath-moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens. Next to him Shallum the son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, repaired, he and his daughters.

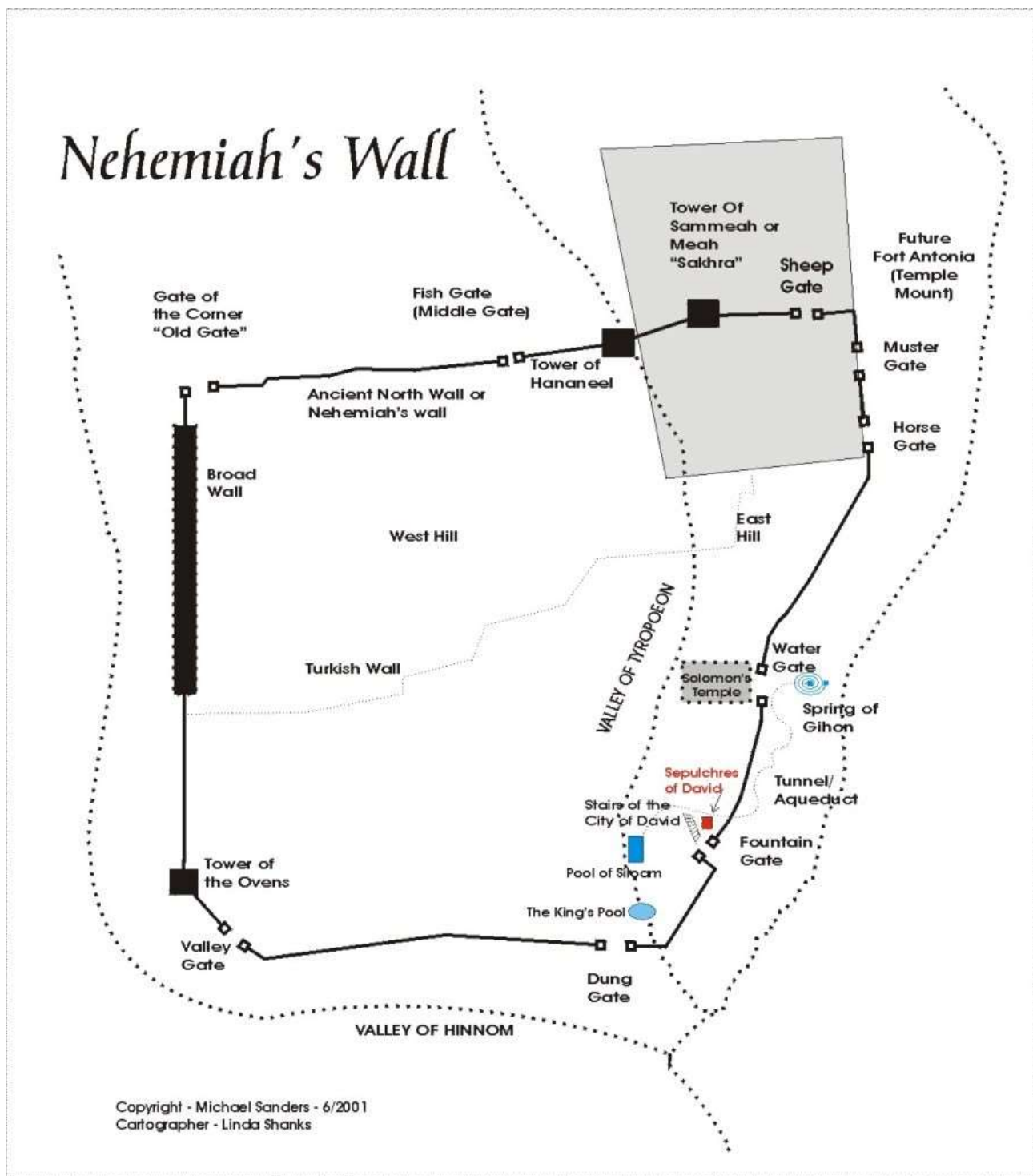
Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah repaired the Valley Gate. They rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars, and repaired a thousand cubits of the wall, as far as the Dung Gate.

Malchijah the son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-haccherem, repaired the Dung Gate. He rebuilt it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars.

And Shallum the son of Col-hozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate. He rebuilt it and covered it and set its doors, its bolts, and its bars. And he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah of the king's garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the city of David. After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, repaired to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool, and as far as the house of the mighty men. After him the Levites repaired: Rehum the son of Bani. Next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, repaired for his district. After him their brothers repaired: Bavvai the son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah. Next to him Ezer the son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section opposite the ascent to the armory at the buttress. After him Baruch the son of Zabbai repaired another section from the buttress to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest. After him Meremoth the son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz repaired another section from the door of the house of Eliashib to the end of the house of Eliashib. After him the priests, the men of the surrounding area, repaired. After them Benjamin and Hasshub repaired opposite their house. After them Azariah the son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah repaired beside his own house. After him Binnui the son of Henadad repaired another section, from the house of Azariah to the buttress and to the corner. Palal the son of Uzai repaired opposite the buttress and the tower projecting from the upper house of the king at the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah the son of Parosh and the temple servants living on Ophel repaired to a point opposite the Water Gate on the east and the projecting tower. After him the Tekoites repaired another section opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

Above the Horse Gate the priests repaired, each one opposite his own house. After them Zadok the son of Immer repaired opposite his own house. After him Shemaiah the son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, repaired. After him Hananiah the son of Shelemiah and Hanun the sixth son of Zalaph repaired another section. After him Meshullam the son of Berechiah repaired opposite his chamber. After him Malchijah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired as far as the house of the temple servants and of the merchants, opposite the Muster Gate, and to the upper chamber of the corner. And between the upper chamber of the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and the merchants repaired.

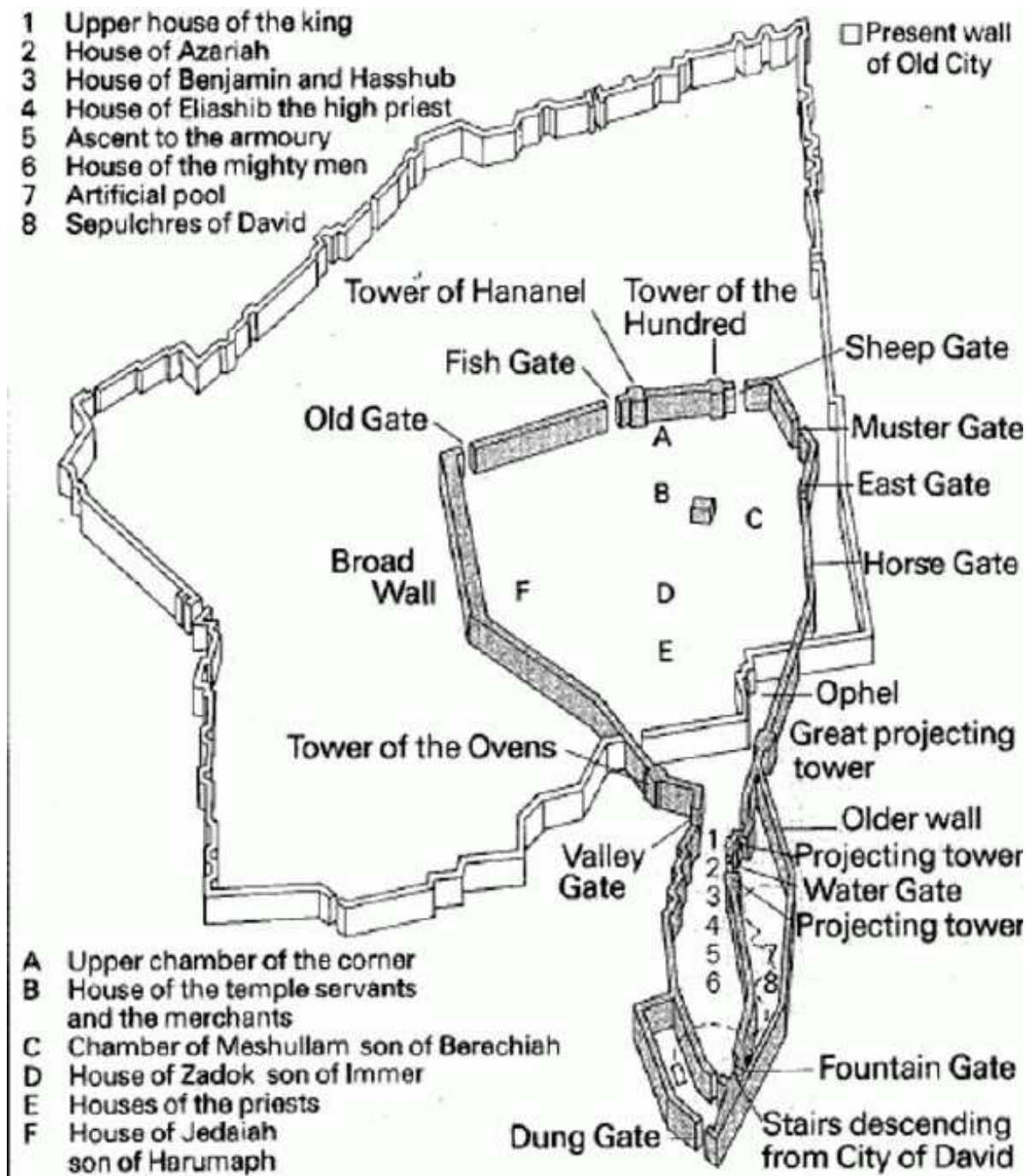




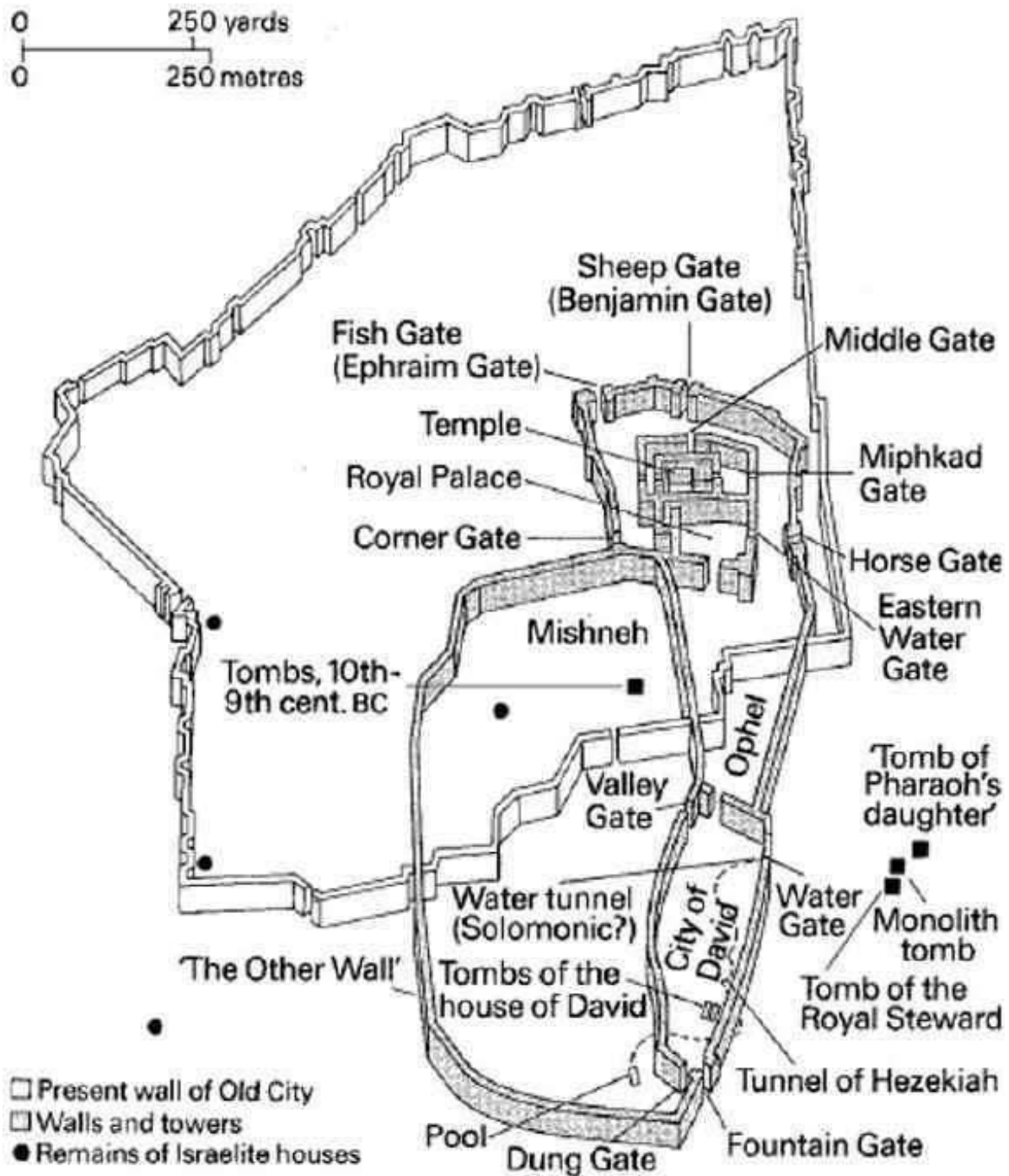
The Tower of Sammeah {Meah=hundred). Perhaps a 100 cubits high. Located on the old North wall, called by archaeologists the Ancient North Wall. Nehemiah tells us that Tower of meah was between the Sheep Gate and the Tower of Hananeel in the North Wall.

The Meah tower on the north wall was replaced with the Baris Tower/ fortress after the Hasmoneans defeated Antiochus IV in 163 AD. Later the Baris was increased in size dramatically by Herod and called Fort Antonia.

Here is a map with the modern wall and then the older walls from what I am saying is the time of Solomon.



You will notice that this next map along with all the other details has the Royal Palace in the place where last week we shared with we felt it was. That is the place where the current Al Aqsa Mosque now stands over what is presumed to be Solomons Stables.



You will see will notice on the maps above the "Broad Wall". It is claimed to have been built by Hezekiah when he expanded the city to the west to protect it from the Assyrian invasion that they expected was coming.



Just to the north of what is today the Cordo in the Jews quarter is this broad wall pictured above. The maps below show its relation to the modern walls.

The Broad Wall was built during Hezekiah's expansion of the city. Jews from the northern tribes of Israel, who had been overrun by the Assyrians in 721 BC, migrated down to Judah and the city of Jerusalem for protection at this time. They settled outside the city walls to the west on the Western Hill. To protect them and their residences Hezekiah fortified the western part of this newly expanded city around 721 BC with a wall. The uncovered remains of this wall are 23 feet wide and 213 feet long. This portion of the wall ran west from the Temple Mount toward the western corner of the southwestern hill (which would be the Citadel today).

I must interject here. Hezekiah became King in the year 709 BC and reigned until the year 697 BC. So it was during this time that he rebuilt the walls.

Evidence uncovered during excavation seems to indicate that Hezekiah had to destroy some homes in order to build it. Isaiah addresses this very issue in his book, in chapter 22:

And you looked in that day to the weapons in the Palace of the Forest (King Solomon's Palace of the Forest of Lebanon); you saw that the City of

David had many breaches in its defenses; you stored up water in the Lower Pool (from Hezekiah's

Tunnel). You counted the buildings in Jerusalem

(new expansion to the west) and tore down houses to strengthen the wall (this is what we see here, a broad wall built through houses that had to be

removed to build it). You built a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the Old Pool, but you did not look to the One who made it, or have regard for the One who planned it long ago.

– Isaiah 22:8-11

The book of Nehemiah places the Broad Wall near the Temple Mount wall when, during the dedication of the new wall, one group of priests walked in procession on the wall, past the remains of this Broad Wall:

The second choir proceeded in the opposite direction. I followed them on top of the wall, together with half the people – past the Tower

of the Ovens to the Broad Wall, over the Gate of Ephraim... -Nehemiah 12:38

I would like to point out one thing that Isaiah said and no one has picked up on.

Isaiah 22:1 The oracle concerning the valley of vision. What do you mean that you have gone up, all of you, to the housetops, you who are full of shoutings, tumultuous city, exultant town? Your slain are not slain with the sword or dead in battle.

All your leaders have fled together;
without the bow they were captured. All
of you who were found were captured,
though they had fled far away.

Therefore I said:

“Look away from me;
let me weep bitter tears;
do not labor to comfort
me

concerning the destruction of the daughter of my
people.” For the Lord God of hosts has a day of tumult
and trampling and confusion in the valley of vision, a
battering down of walls and a shouting to the mountains.

And Elam bore the quiver with chariots and horsemen,
and Kir uncovered the shield.

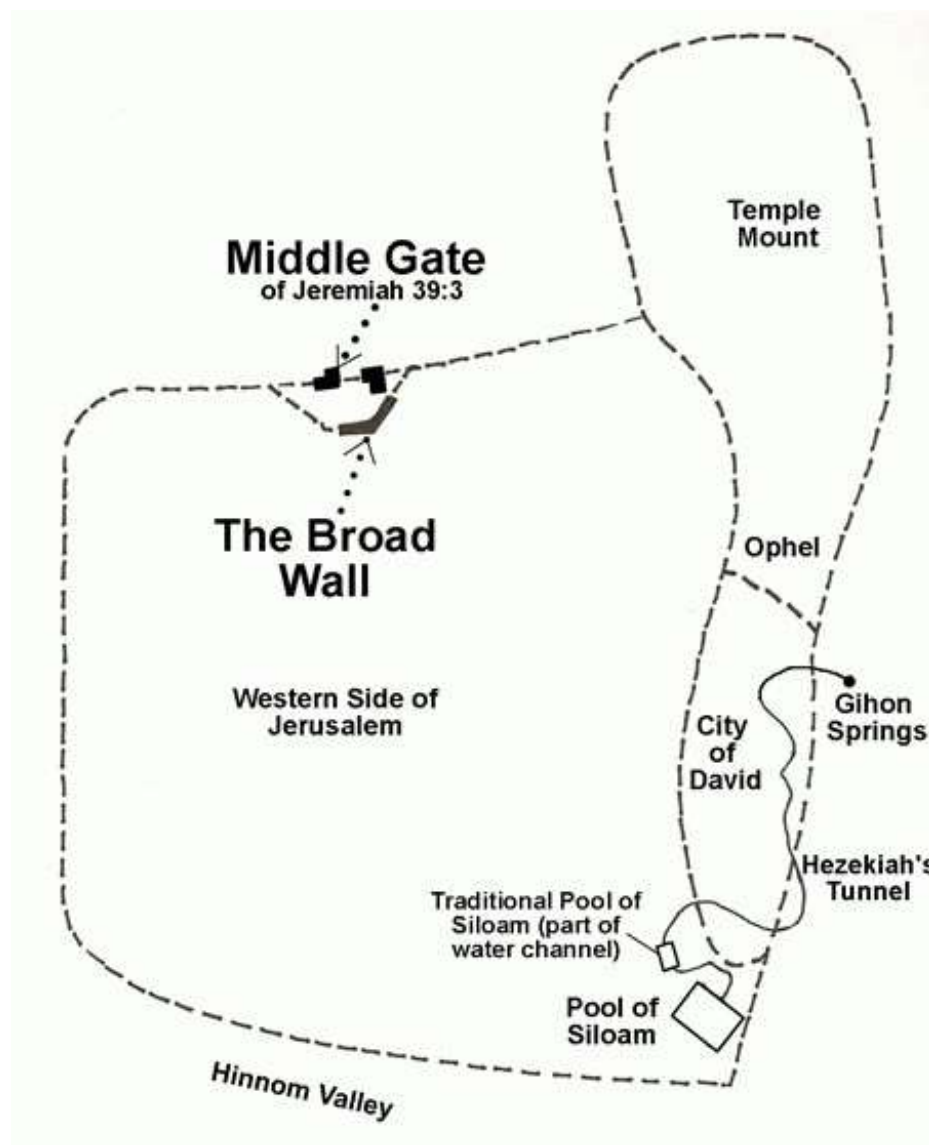
Your choicest valleys were full of chariots,
and the horsemen took their stand at the
gates.

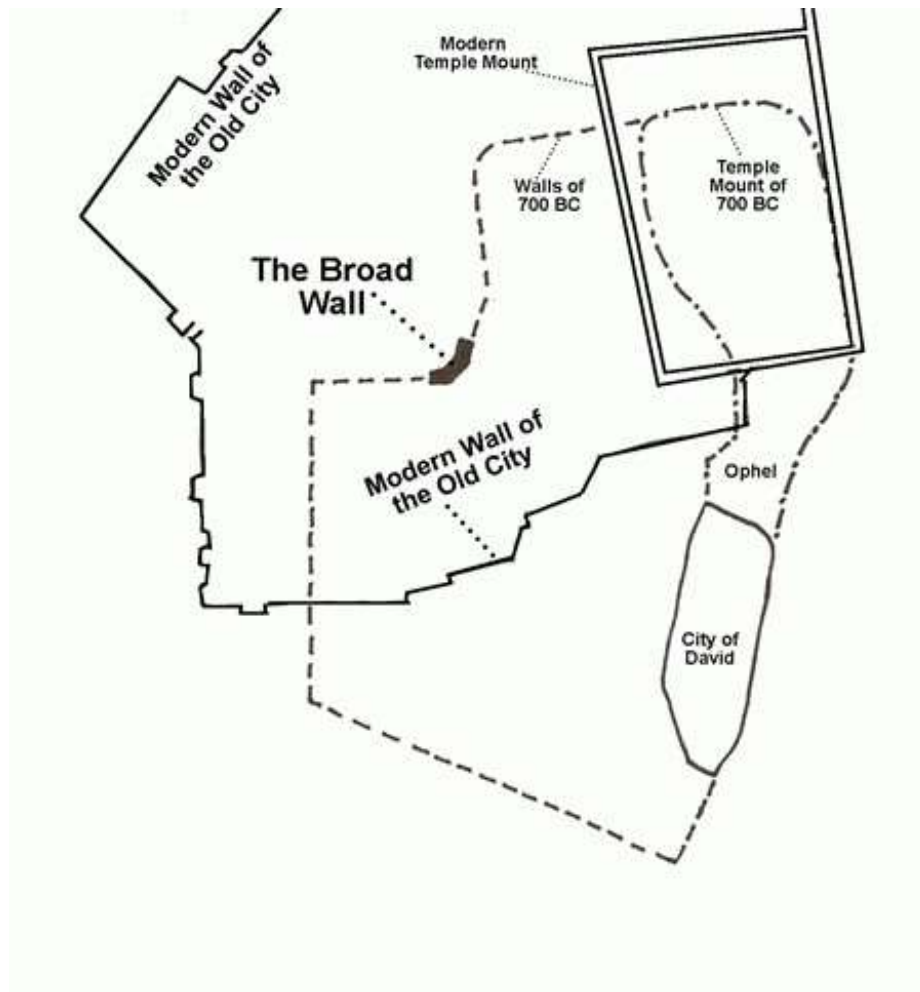
He has taken away the covering of Judah.

In that day you looked to the weapons of the House of the Forest, and you saw that the breaches of the city of David were many. You collected the waters of the lower pool, and you counted the houses of Jerusalem, and you broke down the houses to fortify the wall. You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool. But you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.

Again we read of Hezekiah in

2 Chron 32:1 After these things and these acts of faithfulness, Sennacherib king of Assyria came and invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified cities, thinking to win them for himself. And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib had come and intended to fight against Jerusalem, he planned with his officers and his mighty men to stop the water of the springs that were outside the city; and they helped him. A great many people were gathered, and they stopped all the springs and the brook that flowed through the land, saying, “Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?” He set to work resolutely and **built up all the wall that was broken down and raised towers upon it, and outside it he built another wall**, and he strengthened the Millo in the city of David. He also made weapons and shields in abundance.





The reason for sharing this information about this Broad wall is because it is tied into the King David Citadel fortifications.

The Tower of David, also known as the Jerusalem Citadel, is an ancient citadel located near the Jaffa Gate entrance to western edge of the Old City of Jerusalem.

The citadel that stands today dates to the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. It was built on the site of a series of earlier ancient fortifications of the Hasmonean, Herodian-era, Byzantine and Early Muslim periods, after being destroyed repeatedly during the last decades of Crusader presence in the Holy Land by Ayyubid and Mamluk rulers.[1] It contains important archaeological finds dating back over 2,000 years including a quarry dated to the First Temple period, and is a popular venue for benefit events, craft shows, concerts, and sound-and-light performances.

Dan Bahat writes that the original three Hasmonean towers were altered by Herod, and that “The northeastern tower was replaced by a much larger, more massive tower, dubbed the “Tower of David” beginning in the 5th century C.E.”[2] The name “Tower of David” is due to Byzantine Christians who believed the site to be the palace of King David.[3] They borrowed the name “Tower of David” from the Song of Songs, attributed to Solomon, King David’s son, who wrote: “Thy neck is like the Tower of David built with turrets, whereon there hang a thousand shields, all the armor of the mighty men.” (Song of Songs, 4:4)

As evidenced by the archaeological discovery of the Broad Wall, King Hezekiah was the first to fortify this area.[4] The city's fortifications demonstrate that by the late eighth century the city had expanded to include the hill to the west of the Temple Mount. The motivation for building the walled fortification was the expected invasion of Judea by Sennacherib. The wall might be the one referred to in Nehemiah 3:8 and Isaiah 22:9-10 [5][6]

I will include the rest of the history of these three towers here for you. But I want to point out that this area was first developed by Hezekiah according to these historians.

During the 2nd century BCE, the Old City of Jerusalem expanded further onto the so-called Western Hill. This 773-meter-high prominence, which comprises the modern Armenian and Jewish Quarters as well as Mount Zion, was bounded by steep valleys on all sides except for the northern one. The first settlement in this area was about 150 BCE around the time of the Hasmonean kings[2] when what Josephus Flavius named the First Wall was constructed.

Herod, who wrestled the power away from the Hasmonean dynasty, added three massive towers to the fortifications in 37–34 BCE. He built these at the vulnerable northwest corner of the Western Hill, where the Citadel is now located. His purpose was not only to defend the city, but to safeguard his own royal palace located nearby on Mount Zion. Herod named the tallest of the towers, 145 feet in height, the Phasael in memory of his brother who had committed suicide while in captivity. Another tower was called the Mariamne, named for his second wife whom he had executed and buried in a cave to the west of the tower. He named the third tower the Hippicus after one of his friends. Of the three towers, only the base of one of them survives until today – either the Phasael or, as argued by archaeologist Hillel Geva who excavated the Citadel, the Hippicus Tower.[7] Of the original tower itself (now called the Tower of David), some sixteen courses of the original stone ashlar can still be seen rising from ground level, upon which were added smaller stones in a later period, which added significantly to its height. During the Jewish war with Rome, Simon bar Giora made the tower his place of residence.[8]

Following the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 CE, the three towers were preserved as a testimony of the might of the fortifications overcome by the Roman legions, and the site served as barracks for the Roman troops.

When the empire adopted Christianity as its favoured religion in the 4th century, a community of monks established itself in the citadel. It was during the Byzantine period that the remaining Herodian tower, and by extension the Citadel as a whole, acquired its alternative name – the Tower of David – after the Byzantines, mistakenly identifying the hill as Mount Zion, presumed it to be David's palace mentioned in 2 Samuel 5:11, 11:1-27, 16:22.

After the Arab conquest of Jerusalem in 638, the new Muslim rulers refurbished the citadel. This powerful structure withstood the assault of the Crusaders in 1099, and surrendered only when its defenders were guaranteed safe passage out of the city.[citation needed]

During the Crusader period, thousands of pilgrims undertook the pilgrimage to Jerusalem by way of the port at Jaffa. To protect pilgrims from the menace of highway robbers, the Crusaders built a tower surrounded by a moat atop the citadel, and posted lookouts to guard the road to Jaffa. [dubious – discuss] The citadel also protected the newly erected palace of the Crusader kings of Jerusalem, located immediately south of the citadel.[9]

In 1187, Sultan Saladin captured the city including the citadel. In 1239 the Ayyubid emir of Karak, An-Nasir Dawud, attacked the Crusader garrison and destroyed the citadel. In 1244 the Khwarazmians defeated and banished the Crusaders from Jerusalem for a last time, destroying the entire city in the process. The Mamluks destroyed the citadel in 1260.[dubious – discuss]

In 1310 the citadel was rebuilt by Mamluk sultan Al-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qalawun, who gave it much of its present shape.[10]

The citadel was expanded between 1537 and 1541 by the Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, whose architects designed a large entrance, behind which stood a cannon emplacement.[dubious – discuss] For 400 years, the citadel served as a garrison for Turkish troops. The Ottomans also installed a mosque near the southwest corner of the citadel commonly known as the Mehrab e Qala'a e Daood (Prayer niche of Tower of David)[11], erecting a minaret during the years 1635-1655. In the 19th century the conspicuous minaret, which still stands today, took over the title of “Tower of David”, so that the name can now refer to either the whole Citadel or the minaret alone.

During World War I, British forces under General Edmund Allenby captured Jerusalem. General Allenby formally proclaimed the event standing on a platform outside the eastern gate to the citadel.

During the period of the British Mandate (1917–1948), the High Commissioner established the Pro-Jerusalem Society to protect the city's cultural heritage. This organization cleaned and renovated the citadel and reopened it to the public as a venue for concerts, benefit events and exhibitions by local artists. In the 1930s, a museum of Palestinian folklore was opened in the citadel, displaying traditional crafts and clothing.[12]

Following the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, the Arab Legion captured Jerusalem and converted the citadel back to its historical role as a military position, as it commanded a dominant view across the armistice line into Jewish Jerusalem. With the Israeli victory of 1967 after the Six-Day War, the citadel's cultural role was revived.

In 2 Chron 32 we just read how Hezekiah had rebuilt these walls and in Isaiah 22 the very last line was

But you did not look to him who did it, or see him who planned it long ago.

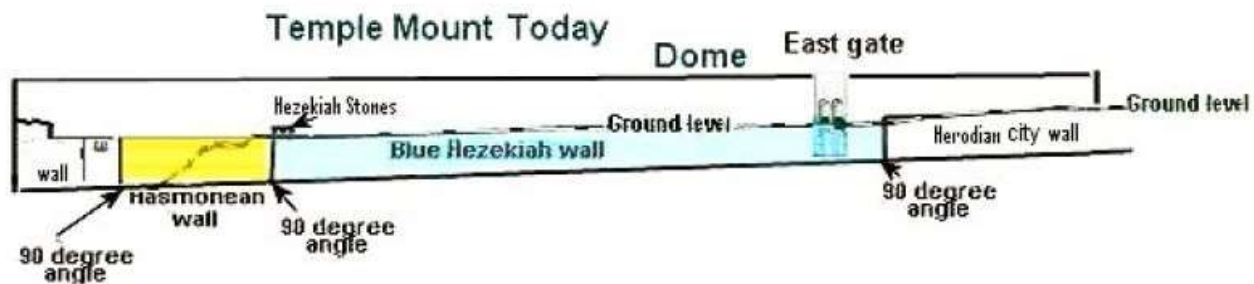
Who was it that did this and who was it that planned this? King David and King Solomon! Isaiah is telling Hezekiah that he did not regard the original planners of the city.

This same expression is used in the address to Senecharib when he attacked Jerusalem.

Isaiah 32:26 “Have you not heard long ago how I made it, from days of old, that I formed it? Now I have brought it about, that you should be for crushing walled cities into heaps of ruins. “And their inhabitants were powerless, they were overthrown and put to shame. They were as the grass of the field and as the green plant, as the grass on the house-tops and as grain blighted before it is grown. “But I know your sitting down, and your going out and your coming in, and your rage against Me. “Because your rage against Me and your pride have come up to My ears, I shall put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips, and I shall turn you back by the way which you came. “And this shall be the sign for you: This year you eat such as grows of itself, and the second year what springs from that, and in the third year sow and reap, plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. “And the remnant who have escaped of the house of Yehudah shall again take root downward, and be fruitful upward.

(yes this is also describing the Shemitah years of 701 and 700 BC)

If you look at the stones in the King David Citadel and along the bottom courses of the walls to the south on the outside of the Jaffa Gate you will again see these “Herodian Stone” Also known as “Phoenician at Samaria masonry”. I am unable to find a picture for you at this time. Again I am strongly of the persuasion that the original towers and walls were built by Solomon, rebuilt by Hezekiah. Rebuilt again by Nehemiah and then the Hasmoneans and then Herod who gets all the credit.



It is believed by Leen Ritmyer, and I agree, that Hezekiah (700B BC) built the lower portions of the east wall (in blue) all the way from the bend in the east wall to just beyond the east gate, at that point the wall went westward across the mount.

The ruins of the oldest east gate still remain under the east gate we see today. Nehemiah called this older gate in Hezekiah’s wall the Commanders Gate, which as we can see was located at the very north end of the old east wall in blue, but after the east wall was extended on both the north and the south ends then the gate in the east wall is a little more centralized.

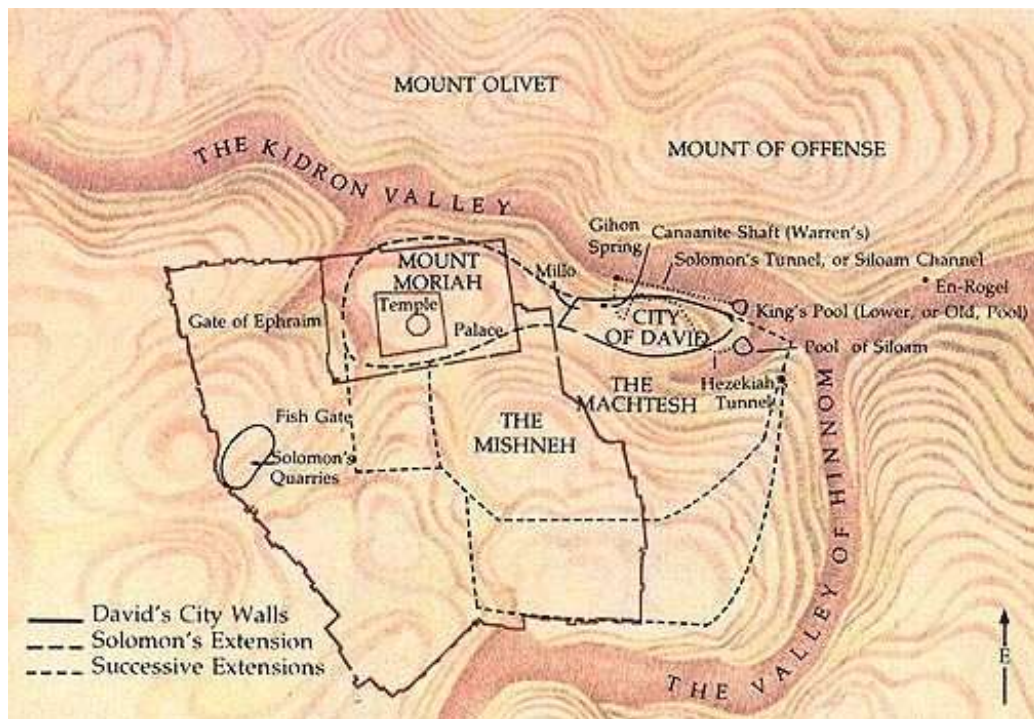
The true East Gate, and East wall, of Solomon’s Temple were never rebuilt by Herod. He said it was too beautiful, and his builders did not have permission to touch it.

There is no way this east gate entered directly into the woman’s court in the time of Nehemiah.

In this next map, I want you to look at where the Kidron Valley turns and goes across the north side of the Bayrah which would later be called the Baris during the Hasmoneans time. I also want you to pay attention to the Moat that was dug through part of this valley to extend the fortifications of the

Fortress. The dotted lines are what will later become the wall that Herod builds around the Baris Fortress and he renames it, Fortress Antonio. This map shows that the current Lions gate in Jerusalem is where the Kidron once was.

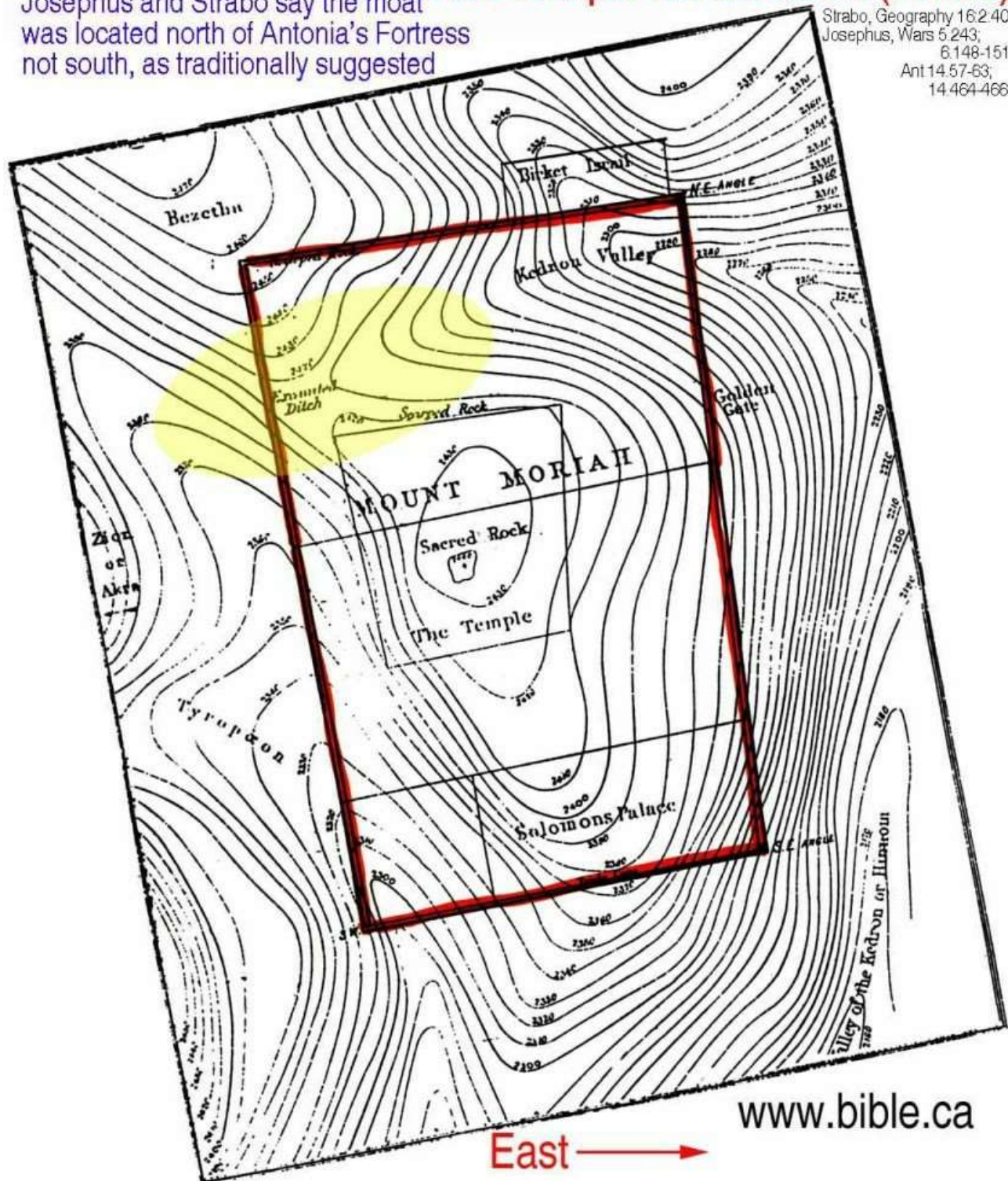
Again here is another map showing the natural defenses of the city and the weakest point was where they dug this moat.



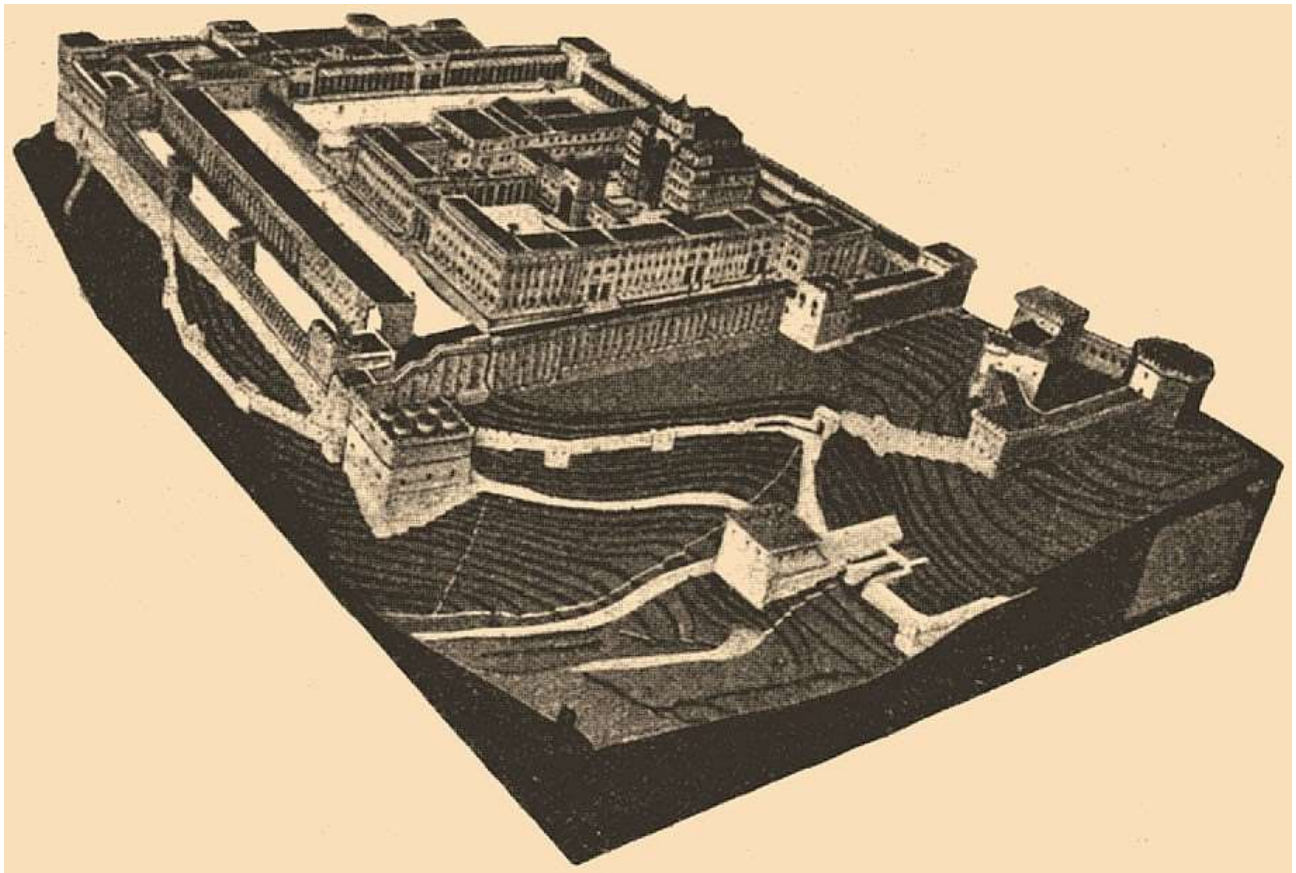
Fosse (moat) indicated by yellow.
Josephus and Strabo say the moat
was located north of Antonia's Fortress
not south, as traditionally suggested

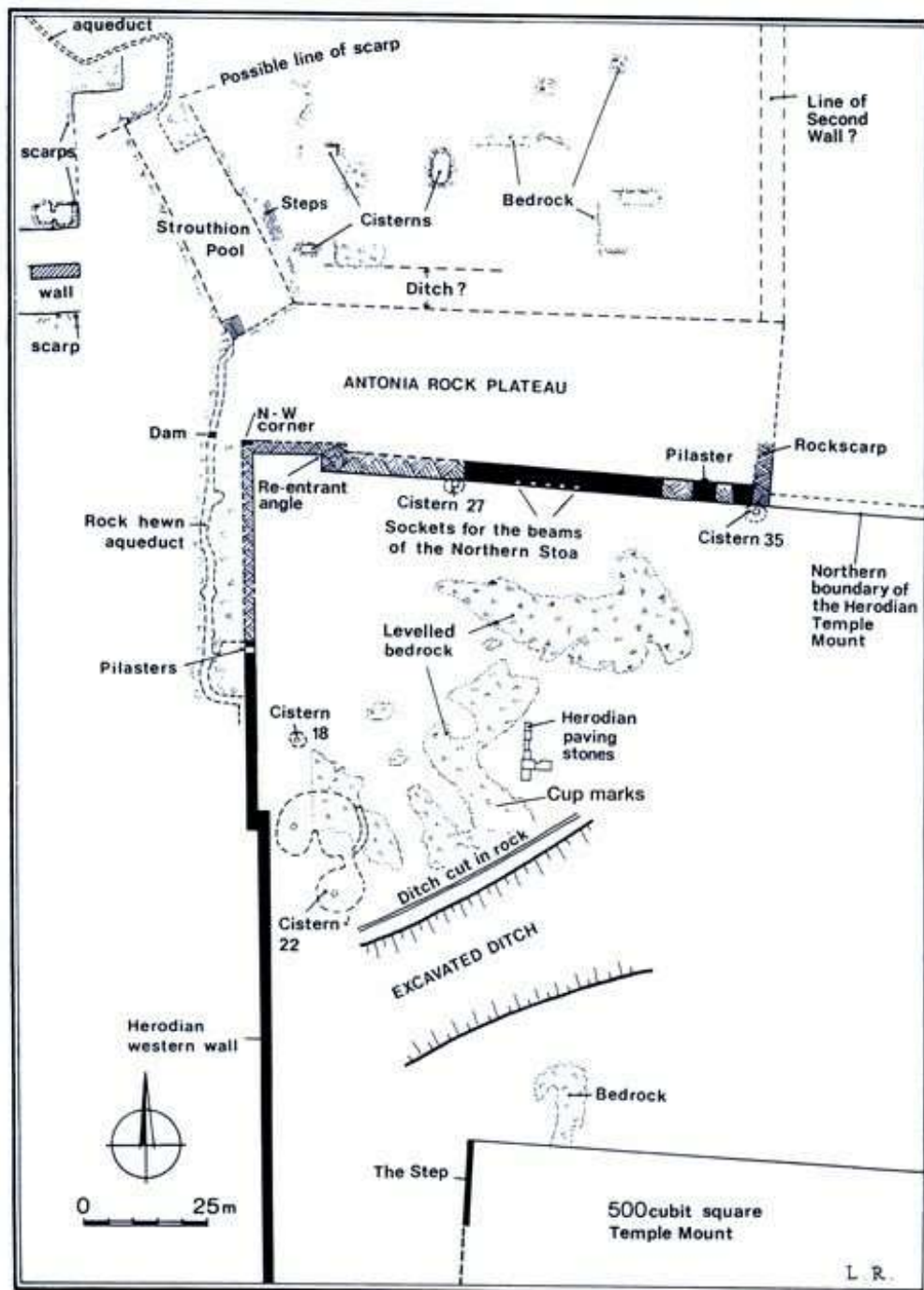
The Temple Mount Moat (Fosse)

Strabo, Geography 16:2.40
Josephus, Wars 5.243;
6.148-151
Ant 14.57-63;
14.464-466



And this view looking from the North East towards the Fortress of the Temple. It is clearly visible just from looking at the topography of the land that the weakest point in the defense of Jerusalem in Solomon's time was coming across from Bezetha. This is why it is my view that Solomon built the original Fortress of the Temple around what would later become the Dome of the Rock. This protected his Palace which was next in line of attack and then the Temple of Yehovah built over the Gihon Spring. We will look at this subject in future News Letters.





Speaking of the moat, the Fosse area Leen Ritmeyer says the following.

We need to remember, of course, that this area became part of the Temple Mount for the first time only in the Herodian period. During the First Temple period, this area was located outside and north of the Temple Mount and the city of Jerusalem. The northern wall of the Temple Mount of that time was also part of the northern city wall of Jerusalem.

Charles Warren uncovered the most important archaeological remains in this area, namely the “Fosse” or “Moat” that separated the original square Temple Mount from the northern continuation of the Eastern Hill of Jerusalem. Although never excavated, the remains can clearly be seen in old photographs.

Looking south towards the Dome of the Rock. The Northern wall of the Baris is where the buildings start above the word Fosse. These are where the northern walls destroyed by Pompey in 63 BC once stood and then repaired by Herod and again destroyed by Vespasian in 70 CE.



1 Kings 5:13 King Solomon drafted forced labor out of all Israel, and the draft numbered 30,000 men. And he sent them to Lebanon, 10,000 a month in shifts. They would be a month in Lebanon and two months at home. Adoniram was in charge of the draft. Solomon also had 70,000 burden bearers and 80,000 stonecutters in the hill country, besides Solomon's 3,300 chief officers who were over the work, who had charge of the people who carried on the work. At the king's command they quarried out great, costly stones in order to lay the foundation of the house with dressed stones. So Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal did the cutting and prepared the timber and the stone to build the house.

1 Kings 7:1 Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished his entire house. He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon. Its length was a hundred cubits and its breadth fifty cubits and its height thirty cubits, and it was built on four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams on the pillars. And it was covered with cedar above the chambers that were on the forty-five pillars, fifteen in each row. There were window frames in three rows, and window opposite window in three tiers. All the doorways and windows had square frames, and window was opposite window in three tiers.

And he made the Hall of Pillars; its length was fifty cubits, and its breadth thirty cubits. There was a porch in front with pillars, and a canopy in front of them.

And he made the Hall of the Throne where he was to pronounce judgment, even the Hall of Judgment. It was finished with cedar from floor to rafters.

His own house where he was to dwell, in the other court back of the hall, was of like workmanship. Solomon also made a house like this hall for Pharaoh's daughter whom he had taken in marriage.

All these were made of costly stones, cut according to measure, sawed with saws, back and front, even from the foundation to the coping, and from the outside to the great court. The foundation was of costly stones, huge stones, stones of eight and ten cubits. And above were costly stones, cut according to measurement, and cedar. The great court had three courses of cut stone all around, and a course of cedar beams; so had the inner court of the house of the Lord and the vestibule of the house.

Solomon builds cedar pillars for the palace. There were no stonework's for his palace

In conclusion, it was Solomon using the plans of David, that built the Temple Mount in the original form, starting way back in 967 BC. It took him 7 years to build the Temple and 13 years to build what today is the Temple Mount. Two very distinct places that are separate from each other.

I am also challenging whether or not Justinian built those columns in what today is known as Solomon's Stables. I now think it was Solomon himself that raised them up to make the level platform for His Palace and the other buildings that made up the Government of Israel. My future trips to Israel, I will now have to go and look at the Milo and the eastern wall and the northern wall if any remains to be seen. As well as I will have to go and look at the structures on the Temple Mount with fresh eyes to see what I can detect. I will be spending more time in the Muslim quarter. I will also have to search the Herodium and Caesarea for those "Herodian Stones"

I am not an archeologist, but if these trained experts could do their research knowing where the Temples were and where the Palace or Fortress was, I do believe we would have much better information to go on instead of the confusion of theories that now dominates three major religions of the world.

I will close with this map by Sir Charles Warren and Charles Wilson of 1864 as drawn by Leen Ritmeyer. To learn more about Jerusalem in 1864 and later go [to this link](#)

It is because of the topography of the mountain that the area was built up to form what is now the Temple Mount and what is recorded as the Akra.

