

CITY OF DAVID

The City of David refers to the oldest part of Jerusalem, located on a narrow ridge south of the temple mount. This walled city is where King David chose to establish his capital and build his palace. The City of David was easier to defend since it was naturally secure with the Tyropoean Valley on the west, the Hinnom Valley on the south, and the Kidron Valley on the east.

Although denied by some scholars, Eilat Mazar believed that she found David's palace in the City of David. After David conquered Jerusalem, King Hiram of Tyre sent cedar logs, carpenters, and stonemasons to aid him in building a palace there (2 Sam. 5:11). The stronghold of Jerusalem was below his palace, since in times of attack, David's household could seek refuge inside the fortress south of them (2 Sam. 5:17). This was "the fortress of Zion, the City of David" (2 Sam. 5:7). To the north of the palace was Mount Moriah, where David purchased land from Araunah the Jebusite for the building of the temple (2 Sam. 24:18-25; 2 Chron. 3:1). Mount Moriah was the same area where Abraham almost sacrificed Isaac, the son of the promise (Gen. 22:1-2).

Mazar found ashlar and pillars with proto-Aeolic (proto-Ionic) capitals. The remains of the public building are being called the "Large Stone Structure" and could be part of King David's palace. It is located in today's City of David, south of the Old City, but modern residences hinder further digging.



Drawing of Proto-Ionic Capital



Large Stone Structure
(David's Palace?)

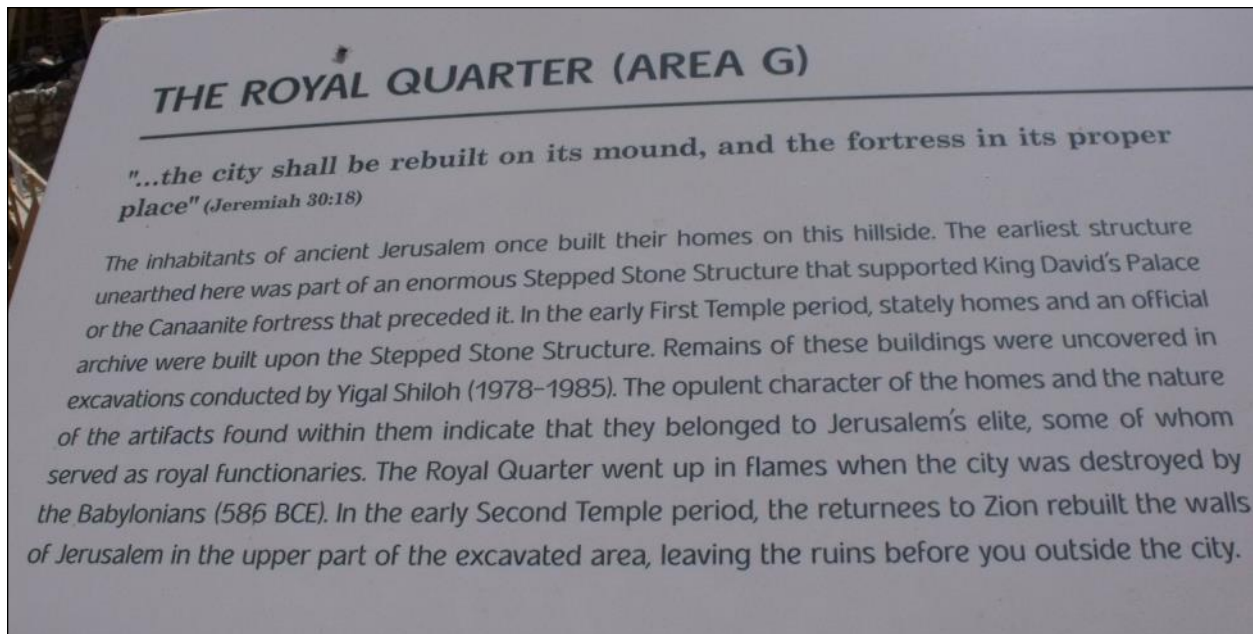


A “Stone Stepped Structure” has also been found that could be the “Millo” or “House of Millo,” also translated “supporting terraces” (1 Kings 9:24; 2 Kings 12:20; 2 Chron. 32:4-5). The Large Stone Structure and Stone Stepped Structure may have been in use throughout most of the monarchy (10th century to 586 B.C.).

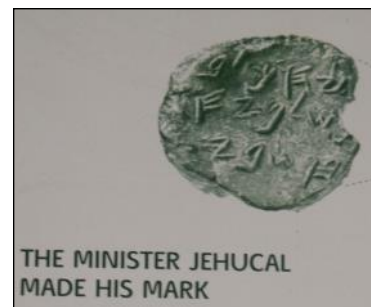


Stone Stepped Structure





Bullae—that is, clay seal impressions—were also found in Mazar's excavations in the City of David. One bulla mentions Yehuchal (Jehucal), the man who was sent to Jeremiah by King Zedekiah to pray to the Lord (Jer. 37:3). It reads, "Belonging to Yehuchal ben Shelemiyahu ben Shovi." Another mentions "Gedaliah son of Pashhur" (Jer. 38:1). These bullae all date to before the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. and support the idea that this structure was the palace of King David.



Stone Toilet
from the City of David



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