

HEROD'S TEMPLE

Temple History. The first temple was finished by Solomon about 960 B.C. After the division of the kingdom in 930 B.C., the people continued to stray from the Lord. In 722 B.C., Samaria, the northern capital of Israel, was defeated by the Assyrians, and the people were taken into captivity. Judah was spared at that time, but later Jerusalem was conquered by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., and the temple was destroyed. Their people were also taken into exile. In 538 B.C., after the Persians defeated the Babylonians, the Jews were allowed to return to Judah to rebuild their temple. After being delayed by opposition, the temple was finally completed under the leadership of Zerubbabel in 516 B.C.

In the days of Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.), Zerubbabel's temple was about 500 years old and in need of repair. Herod thought that he could find favor with his resentful Jewish subjects and also bring glory to himself by rebuilding the temple. According to Josephus, the king justified the rebuilding project by claiming that the old temple was not high enough. Work on the temple began about 20 B.C. with a force of ten thousand workers; one thousand of these men were priests. Since they were holy and could enter the Court of the Priests, they rebuilt the actual temple which took about 1.5 years. The colonnades took an additional 8 years to complete (*Antiquities* 15.11.1-2, 5-6). However, the Jews continued to work on the temple complex, even after Herod's death. During Jesus' ministry, work on the temple had been ongoing for 46 years (Jn. 2:20). It continued until about the time of the First Jewish Revolt. A few years later, Herod's temple was destroyed in A.D. 70, when the Romans overtook Jerusalem.



Model of Herod's Temple



Model of Jerusalem in the First Century A.D.
(Israel Museum, Jerusalem)

Jerusalem Model. This model recreates Jerusalem as it was in the first century, prior to its destruction in A.D. 70. The size of the city peaked during that period, covering an area of about 445 acres. The scale of the model is 1:50 (two centimeters equal one meter of the ancient city).

The model was originally built at the Holyland Hotel. It was constructed at the initiative of the owner of the hotel, Hans Kroch, in memory of his son Jacob, who died in Israel's War of Independence in 1948. The model took four years to complete, and it was opened to the public in 1966.

In 2006, the Jerusalem model was renovated and relocated to the Israel Museum. This model, plus the Shrine of the Book and the Bronfman Archaeological Wing, make the Israel Museum a must-see for Bible students visiting Jerusalem. Literary sources for the city model include the Gospels, Josephus' works, the Mishnah, and the Talmud. Recent archaeological discoveries have allowed the model to be updated and improved.

Photos of this model have been featured in other sections dealing with Jerusalem, including: *Bethesda Pool, Gordon's Calvary & the Garden Tomb, Herod's Palace, Kidron Valley, Siloam Pool, and Via Dolorosa.*



Temple Mount

The Temple. The façade of the temple, measuring 146 by 146 feet, was decorated with gold plating (Mt. 23:16-17). Since the temple faced the east, Josephus said that when the sun first rose, “the plates of gold . . . reflected back a very fiery splendor.” At other times, the exceedingly white stones gave the temple the appearance of a snow-capped mountain (*Wars* 5.5.6). The façade also had a golden vine made from “gifts dedicated to God” (Lk. 21:5-6; *Antiquities* 15.11.3).

The temple porch extended past the rest of the building. Therefore, the temple was shaped “like a lion,” being “narrow behind and wide in front.” Chambers in either side of the porch were used for storing knives (*Mishnah Middoth* 4.7). An outer veil, made of blue (or purple) material, was visible through the porch (*Antiquities* 15.11.3). If this was the veil that was torn at the time Jesus died (Mk. 15:38), it would have been visible not only to the priests but also to the worshipers assembled at the temple. (The other option is the inner veil.)

Inside the outer veil was the holy place, which contained these important pieces of furniture: (1) the menorah, a lampstand holding seven lamps which represented the light of God’s presence; (2) the table of showbread with the twelve loaves, symbolizing God’s fellowship with the twelve tribes; and (3) the altar of incense, which gave off a sweet aroma to God. (Gabriel was standing on the right side of this altar when he spoke with Zechariah the priest concerning the birth of John the Baptist; Lk. 1:8-20.) These sacred objects are visible on a plaster drawing found in Jerusalem, which dates from the first century A.D. The menorah and table of showbread also appear on the Roman triumphal scene within the Arch of Titus. After the Romans sacked Jerusalem in A.D. 70, these items were stored in the Temple of Peace in Rome, whereas the Book of the Law and the temple veils were placed in the imperial palace (*Wars* 7.5.7).

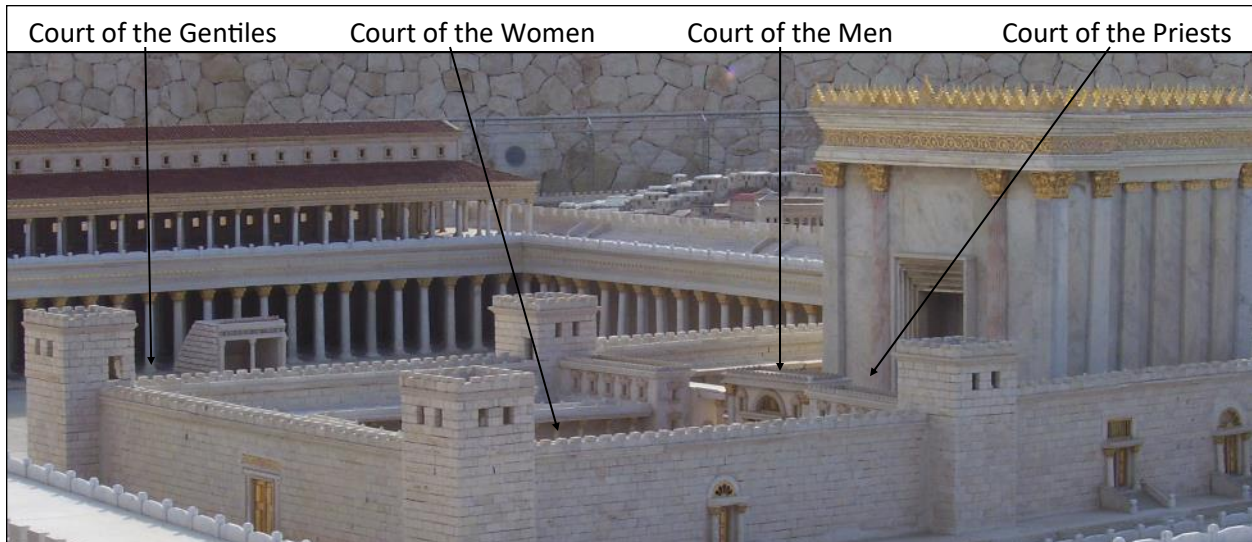
Menorah, Altar of Incense, and Table of Showbread
Incised in the Plaster of a House
1st Century A.D.
(Israel Museum)



Triumphal Scene Featuring the Menorah, Table of Showbread, and Sacred Trumpets
(Arch of Titus, Rome)

Beyond the inner veil was the most holy place, or holy of holies. In the Second Temple period, this room was empty. The ark of the covenant with the mercy seat and cherubim had rested in this room in Solomon's temple. However, the ark had disappeared in the days of Jeremiah, about the time the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians (586 B.C.).

Herod's temple also had three stories of outer rooms that were used for storage. These held vessels, oil, spices, and temple treasures. The sharp spikes on the roof kept birds from perching there and polluting it (*Wars* 5.5.6).



The Temple Courts. Three Jewish courts surrounded the temple: the Court of the Priests, the Court of the Men, and the Court of the Women. Surrounding this inner sanctuary was a wall or barrier. The outer space of the temple mount was the Court of the Gentiles.

The Court of the Priests. The innermost court next to the temple belonged to Israel's priests. The Court of the Priests was used to offer the sacrifices commanded in the law of Moses. There was a laver for the priests to wash, marble tables for flaying the animals, rows of beams with hooks to hang them, a huge altar for sacrificing the animals, and a drainage system for the blood. Surrounding the priestly court were storage chambers for items such as lamps, incense, gold and silver vessels, salt, and wood. One chamber was used for making the showbread. (See Mishnah *Middoth* 5.1-6.)

"These are the regulations for the woman who gives birth to a boy or a girl. If she cannot afford a lamb, she is to bring two doves or two young pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. In this way the priest will make atonement for her, and she will be clean" (Lev. 12:7b-8).

"When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took [Jesus] to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord . . . , and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: 'a pair of doves or two young pigeons'" (Lk. 2:22-24).



Two Doves or Pigeons Inscribed with the Word *qrbn*, "Offering" or "Gift" ("Corban"; Mk. 7:11) (Israel Museum)

The Court of the Men. The next court was for Israel’s men. It was long and narrow (197 by 16 feet) and had a low partition wall separating it from the Court of the Priests. Its doors leading into the Court of the Women were made of Corinthian bronze (*Wars* 5.5.3) and should probably be identified as the legendary Nicanor Gate (*Mishnah Middoth* 1.4).

The Court of the Women. The next court was open to Israel’s men and women. Fifteen steps led down from the Court of the Men into the Court of the Women. On these steps, the Levites used to sing and play their instruments, including harps, lyres, cymbals, and trumpets. The Mishnah says that these steps corresponded to the fifteen Psalms of Ascent (*Sukkah* 5.4).

The temple treasury was located in the Court of the Women. According to the Mishnah, there were thirteen coffers, each resembling an inverted trumpet (*shophar*) and inscribed in Aramaic for a specific purpose (*Mishnah Shekalim* 6.5). Some think that this imagery suggested to Jesus the idea of announcing one’s giving “with trumpets” (Mt. 6:2). The Court of the Women was where Jesus taught about giving, having observed the poor widow (Mk. 12:41-44). Perhaps this is also the court where Judas threw the thirty shekels of silver (Mt. 27:3-10).

The Court of the Women was constructed in the shape of a square (197 by 197 feet) and had four chambers, one at each corner (each 58 by 58 feet). One was for storing oil, and a second was for sorting wood. A third chamber was where the priests inspected lepers (see Mk. 1:40-44). A fourth chamber was used for the Nazirite vow. After the time of the vow was completed, a man’s hair would be cut and he would offer sacrifices (Num. 6:18). Paul paid the expenses of four men who were Jewish Christians undergoing a Nazirite vow. It was in this setting that the apostle was attacked at the temple and eventually arrested by the Romans. The Jews likely removed him from the Court of the Women and closed the gate; so he was in the Court of the Gentiles when the Romans intervened (Acts 21:26-32). The Romans had spotted the commotion from Antonia Fortress, which overlooked the temple complex.



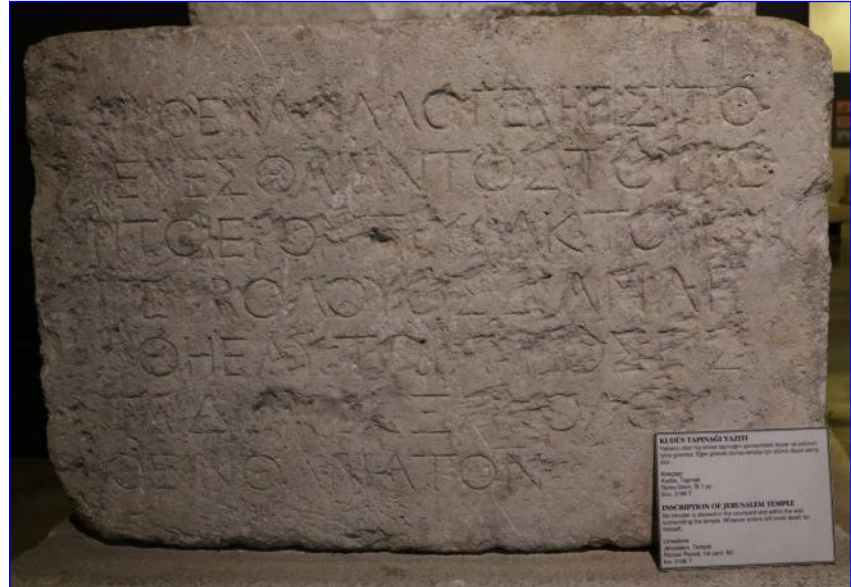


The Barrier Surrounding the Inner Sanctuary

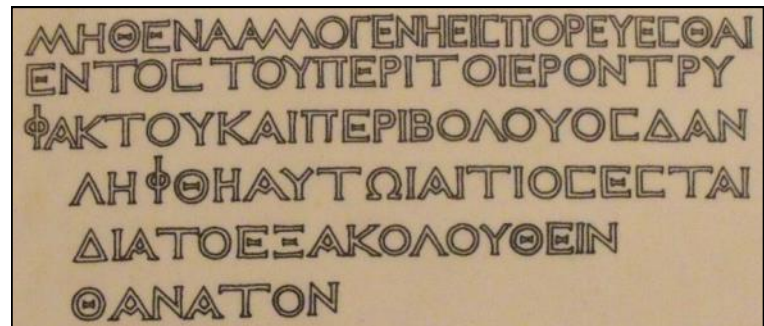
The Barrier. Ten steps led down from the Court of the Women to the barrier, which had several gates. It was about five feet in height and had columns on top. The purpose of this wall was to keep the Gentiles from entering into the sacred area reserved for the Jews. Several signs were posted on the barrier, which were written in Greek, Latin, and Aramaic (*Antiquities* 15.11.5; *Wars* 5.5.2; 6.2.4). Two of these signs have been found at the temple site. A complete copy in Greek was discovered in 1871, which is on display in Istanbul. A fragmentary copy in Greek was found in 1935, which is now at the Israel Museum. A translation of the complete copy is as follows: “No foreigner shall enter into the balustrade of the temple, or within the precinct, and whoever is caught doing this will be responsible for his death that will follow as a consequence.” In other words, if a Gentile entered into the inner Israelite courts, he would be put to death. The apostle Paul was falsely accused of bringing Trophimus the Ephesian, a Gentile, past this barrier and thus profaning the temple (Acts 21:28-30; 24:5-6, 13). When Paul wrote to the Ephesians, he likely used this imagery when he said that in Christ “the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” had been broken down (Eph. 2:14).

The barrier and inscriptions raise an important question: Why would the Gentiles want to approach the Jewish temple in the first place? Many foreign peoples were attracted to the monotheistic faith of the Jews and wanted to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Several texts mention that Gentiles made offerings to the Lord (Mishnah *Shekalim* 7.6; *Zebachim* 4.5), although the precise logistics of these activities are not spelled out.

Complete Warning Sign
(Museum of the Ancient Orient,
Istanbul)

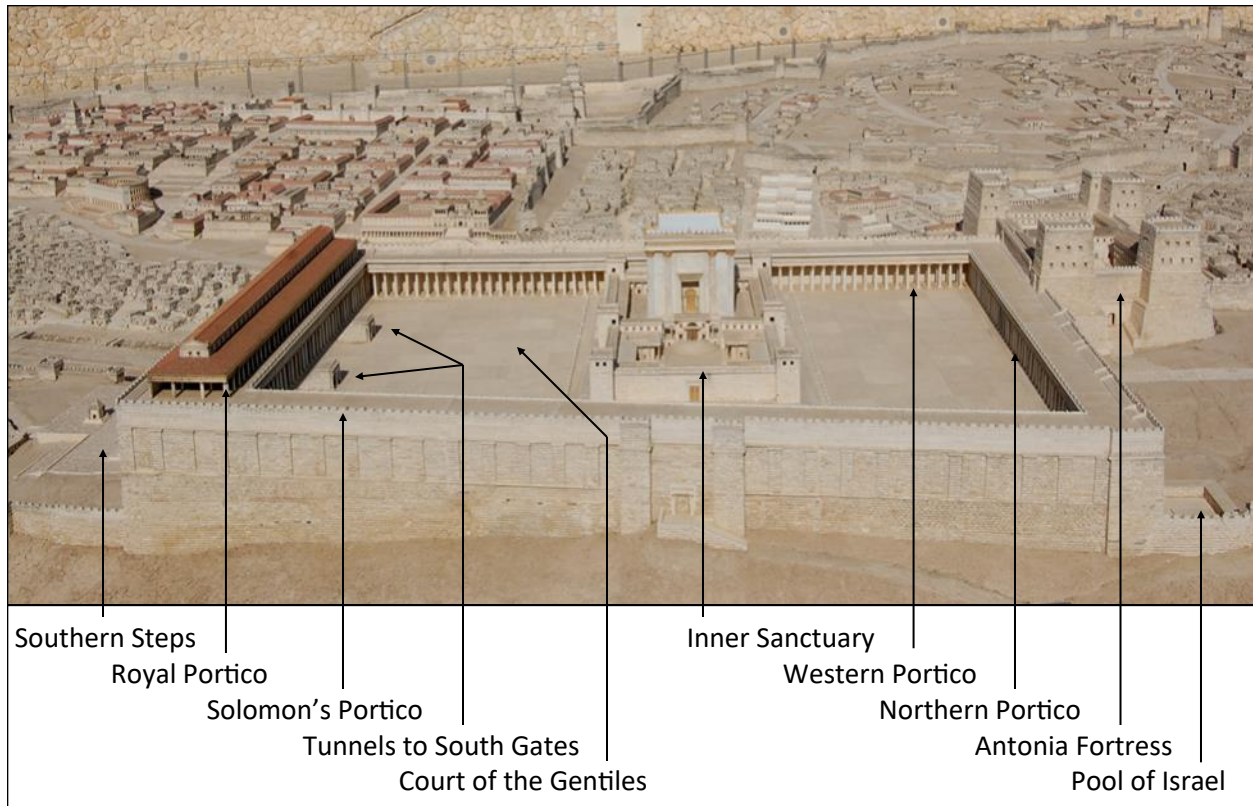


Fragment of a Warning Sign
from the Temple
1st Century A.D.
(Israel Museum)



Full Text in Greek
Reconstructed from Complete Sign

This fragmentary text is in agreement with the fuller text. Several of these signs were posted along the barrier dividing the Court of the Gentiles from the Courts of Israel and the temple. Josephus wrote that, between these two areas, “there was a partition made of stone all round, whose height was three cubits [4.5 feet]; its construction was very elegant; upon it stood pillars, at equal distances from one another, declaring the law of purity, some in Greek, and some in Roman letters, that ‘no foreigner should go within that sanctuary’” (*Wars* 5.5.2).



The Court of the Gentiles. Other peoples besides Jews lived in Jerusalem and visited the holy city. In John's Gospel, we read about some Greeks who had come to Jerusalem to worship at the Passover and wanted to see Jesus (Jn. 12:20-21). Some Gentiles had become converts ("proselytes") to Judaism, while others fit into a category known as "God-fearers." Those in this latter group believed in the one true God, but they had not been circumcised or taken on the yoke of the Law. The Court of the Gentiles allowed non-Jews to worship God without getting too close to the temple itself. This court was also open to Jews, whether they were ceremonially clean or not. Jesus often taught in the Court of the Gentiles. He drove out those who were selling sacrificial animals and changing money there, and he would not allow merchants to use this court as a shortcut (Mk. 11:15-16). He healed the blind and the lame there, and the children praised him (Mt. 21:14-15). This court had more room on the southern end, which was where the tunnel ramps came up from the southern gates.

Denarius of Tiberius (Rockefeller Museum, Jerusalem). While teaching in the temple courts (Mt. 21:23), Jesus discussed the payment of taxes to Caesar with the Pharisees, who were trying to trap him. He had them produce a denarius, which was used to pay this tax. He asked them, "Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?" After they responded "Caesar's," Jesus told them, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (Mt. 22:15-22). The inscription on the coin says, "Tiberius Caesar, son of the divine Augustus, emperor."





Tyrian Half Shekel for the Temple Tax
 (See Ex. 30:11-16; Mt. 17:24-27)
 (Israel Museum)

Surrounding Porticos. Colonnades surrounded the temple mount on each side. The ones on the north, west, and east each had three rows of columns with two aisles. The eastern porch was known as Solomon’s Colonnade; its name was derived from an ancient portico that Solomon had built (*Wars* 5.5.1). This was where Jesus was walking in the wintertime, at the Feast of Dedication or Hanukkah (Jn. 10:22-23). (This feast commemorated Judas Maccabeus’ rededication of the temple in 165 B.C.) Peter and John taught in Solomon’s Colonnade after healing the lame man (Acts 3:11-26), and the early church met there (Acts 5:12).

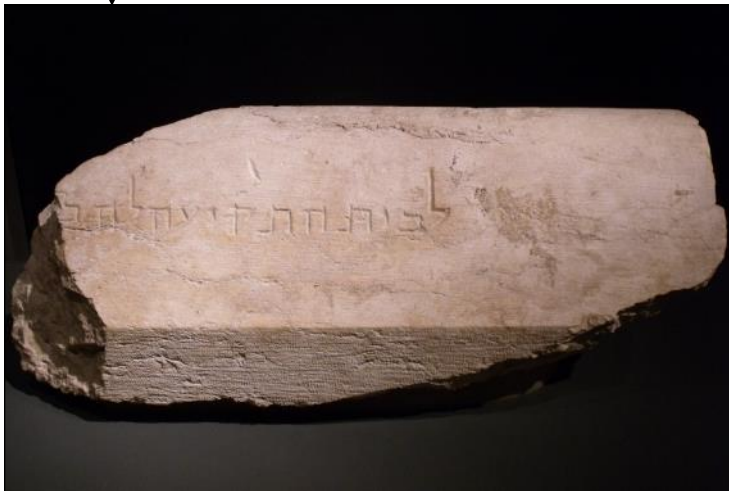
The southern colonnade was known as the Royal Portico. It was larger, having four rows of columns and three aisles. This colonnade was extremely high, having multiple stories. Josephus said that it was dizzying to look down from the top of the Royal Portico on the southeastern corner into the Kidron Valley below (*Antiquities* 15.11.5). This is the most likely site for Satan tempting Jesus to jump from the pinnacle of the temple (Mt. 4:5-7). On the southwestern corner, there was an upper cornerstone with this inscription: “To the place of trumpeting.” A priest blew a trumpet to signal the beginning and end of each Sabbath day as well as the feasts (*Wars* 4.9.12). Some suggest that the inscription was just a note to the construction workers where this stone was to be placed.



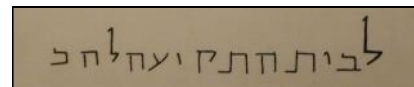
The Royal Portico of the Temple Mount (Southern End)



This large stone fell from the parapet of the southwestern corner of the temple mount during the destruction of the temple by the Romans in A.D. 70. There is an indentation in the stone where the priest stood (see below). An inscription appears on the upper left hand corner of the stone. Part of the inscription was broken off as a result of the fall. The remaining piece of the stone with the Hebrew inscription is a replica.



The original stone with the inscription is in the Israel Museum. It says, "To [or for] the place of trumpeting." It marks the place where the priest would stand to signal the beginning and end of each Sabbath.



At the southwest corner of the temple mount, "one of the priests stood . . . and gave a signal beforehand, with a trumpet, at the beginning of every seventh day, in the evening twilight, as also at the evening when the day was finished, as giving notice to the people when they were to leave off work, and when they were to go to work again" (*Wars* 4.9.12).



The structures on the temple mount were astonishing to those who beheld them (*Antiquities* 15.11.5). It was said that “he who has not seen the Temple of Herod has never seen a beautiful building” (Talmud *Baba Bathra* 4a). The disciples of Jesus, who grew up in Galilee and saw the temple only on feast days, were in awe of its grandeur. Nevertheless, because Jerusalem had rejected him, Jesus stated that these buildings would all “be thrown down”; “not one stone here [would] be left on another” (Mt. 24:1-2). His prophecy was fulfilled when the Roman general (and later emperor) Titus defeated Jerusalem and destroyed the temple in A.D. 70. When he returned to Rome, Titus and his father Vespasian had a triumphal procession in the summer of A.D. 71. The triumphal arch, which still stands in Rome, commemorates the event. It was built by the emperor Domitian in A.D. 81 or 82, shortly after his older brother Titus had died.

Arch of Titus (Rome)

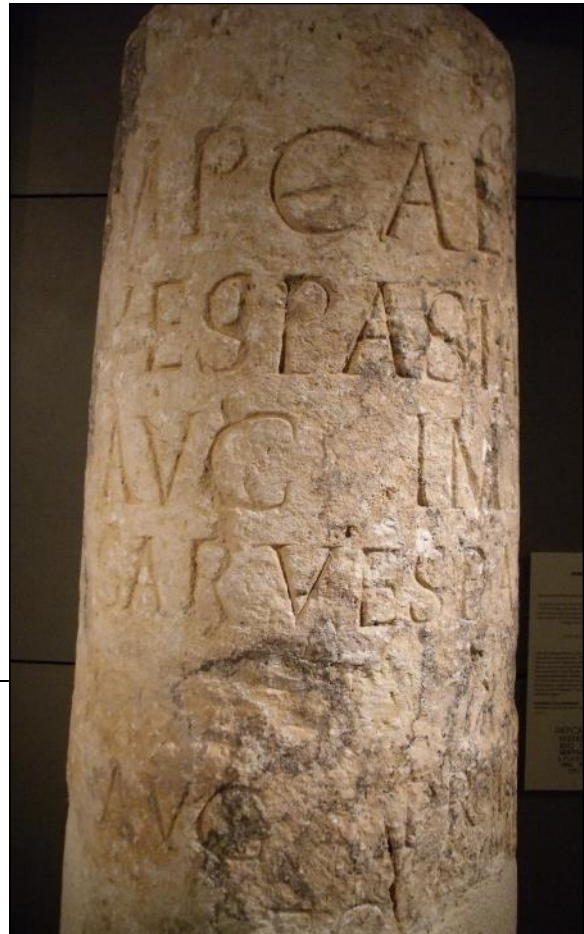
SENATVS
POPVLVSQVE.ROMANVS
DIVO.TITO.DIVI.VESPASIANI.F[ILIO]
VESPASIANO.AVGVSTO

“The Senate and People of Rome (dedicate this) to the divine Titus Vespasianus Augustus, son of the divine Vespasian.”

Roman Milestone (Israel Museum)

Dating from A.D. 72 to 79, this Latin inscription mentions both Vespasian and his son Titus. It also may have mentioned Flavius Silva, the commander of the Tenth Legion and procurator of Judea (A.D. 72-81). Silva is most famous for his role in conquering Masada.

IMPCAESAR
VESPASIANVS
AVG IMPTCAE
SARVESP AVG
L FLAVIVS SILVA
AVG PR PR
LEG X FR



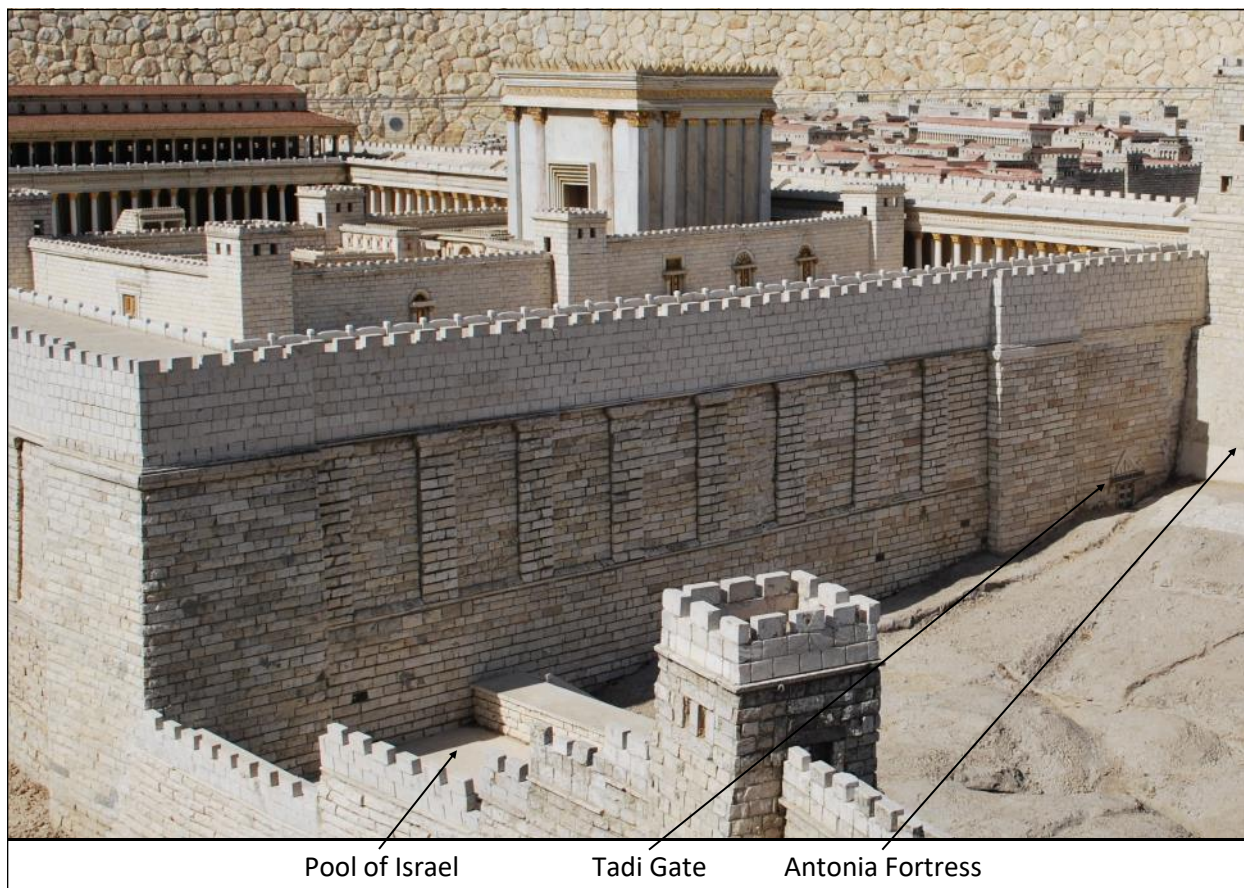


Model in Western Wall Tunnel
Illustrating Herod's Enlargement of the Temple Mount

The Platform and Walls. One amazing feat that Herod's workers achieved was essentially doubling the size of the temple mount. The northern part was much higher, so thousands of tons of dirt were used to fill in the southern valley. Further, a series of arches were constructed to support the temple platform. They have been dubbed "Solomon's Stables," even though they have nothing to do with Solomon. The area was probably used for extra storage; it was accessed through a gate in the eastern wall. The temple mount was shaped like a rhombus, and the total perimeter was about a mile.

Huge stones were quarried and dressed in the vicinity of Jerusalem and used for the retaining walls of the temple mount. Several methods were used to lift and transport the stones to the construction site: (1) Hoisting with the aid of a tripod, (2) attaching wheels like a wagon and pulling with oxen, (3) putting wheels around the outside of the stones (see photo), (4) putting logs underneath and pulling with oxen, and (5) building up an earthen ramp for each successive course of stones. The underground stones of the retaining wall went down to the bedrock. Most of these stones were left undressed (without a boss) because they did not show. The stones were precisely cut, so there was no need for mortar.





The Northern Wall. Just above the northern wall, on the northeastern corner, was the Pool of Israel. The Jerusalem model suggests that this water reservoir was Herodian, but some argue that it was built during the second century A.D. in the time of Hadrian.

The Tadi Gate in the northern wall was formed by two stones making a pointed arch; it had no traditional lintel (Mishnah *Middoth* 2.3). Apparently, it was not used very often, since the Mishnah says that it served “no purpose at all” (*Middoth* 1.3).

The Antonia Fortress was built on the northwest corner of the temple mount, just above the northern portico. Herod rebuilt and expanded a previous tower that had been used in the Hasmonean period. It was originally built by John Hyrcanus as a residence and place for storing the priestly garments (*Antiquities* 18.4.3). Herod named the new structure after his patron, Mark Antony (*Antiquities* 15.11.4). Josephus wrote about the Antonia Fortress:

The inward parts had the largeness and form of a palace, it being parted into all kinds of rooms and other conveniences, such as courts, and places for bathing, and broad spaces for camps; insomuch that, by having all conveniences that cities wanted, it might seem to be composed of several cities, but by its magnificence, it seemed [like] a palace (*Wars* 5.5.8).

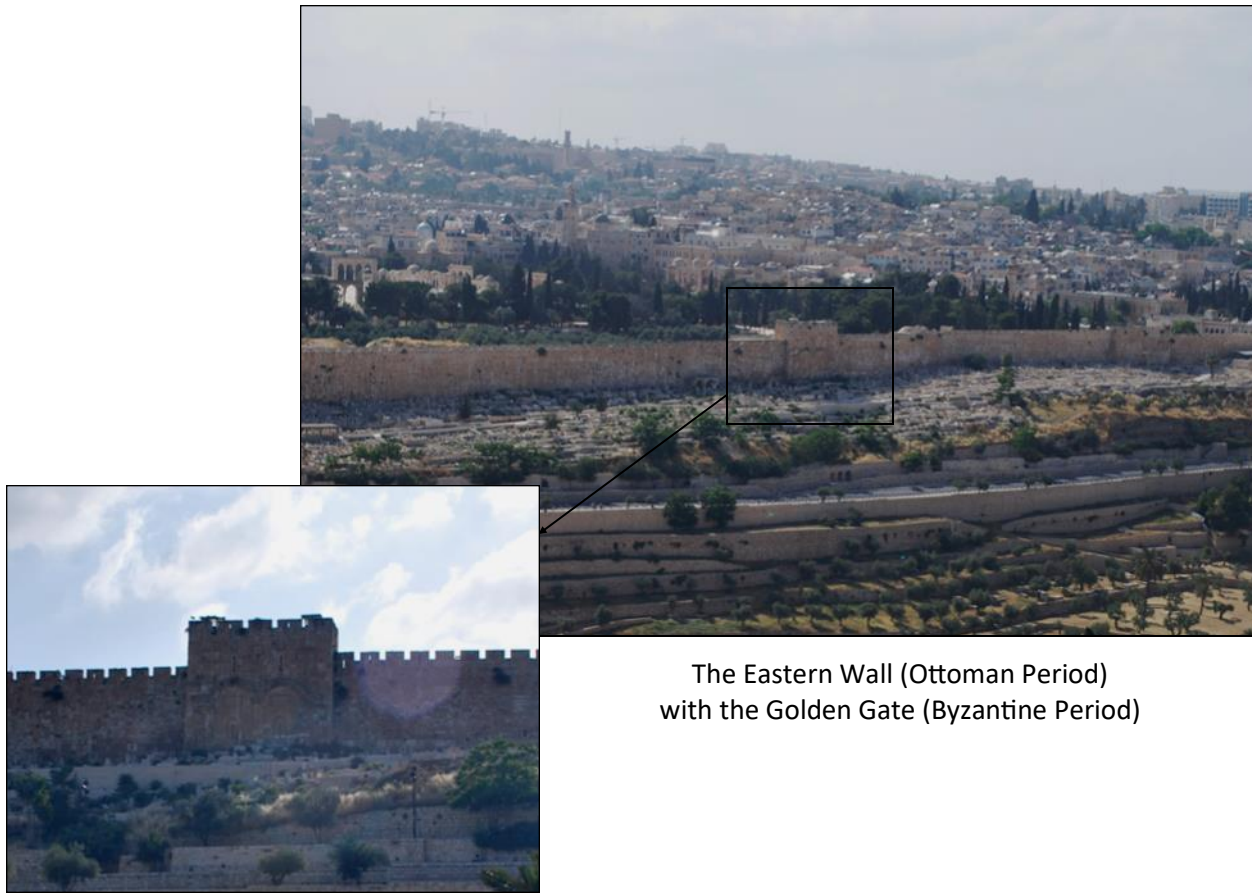


Antonia Fortress

The Jewish historian went on to say that the fortress had four towers, one at each corner, and that the one on the southeast corner overlooked the temple mount. It had passageways leading down to the temple courts. He also noted that a Roman legion stayed there and watched over the people at the temple during the Jewish festivals (*Wars* 5.5.8).

This all agrees with Luke's description regarding Paul's arrest in Acts 21:30-40. In that text, a Roman commander saved Paul's life from a Jewish mob on the temple mount, after his soldiers had spotted a commotion from the Antonia Fortress above. The fortress is referred to in this text as "the barracks" (Acts 21:34). At the end of the chapter, Paul gained permission to speak to the crowd while standing "on the steps" leading up to the fortress (Acts 21:40).

When Jerusalem was penetrated in A.D. 70, Titus gave orders to dig up the foundations of the Antonia Fortress in order to gain access to the temple mount (*Wars* 6.2.1, 7). Ultimately, the fortress was destroyed. The area where it once stood is now occupied by the Convent of the Sisters of Zion. Traditionally, the Antonia Fortress has been viewed as containing the place where Jesus was tried and beaten. Therefore, it is the starting point for the Via Dolorosa, or "Way of Sorrows." This view, however, is doubtful (see the *Via Dolorosa* section).



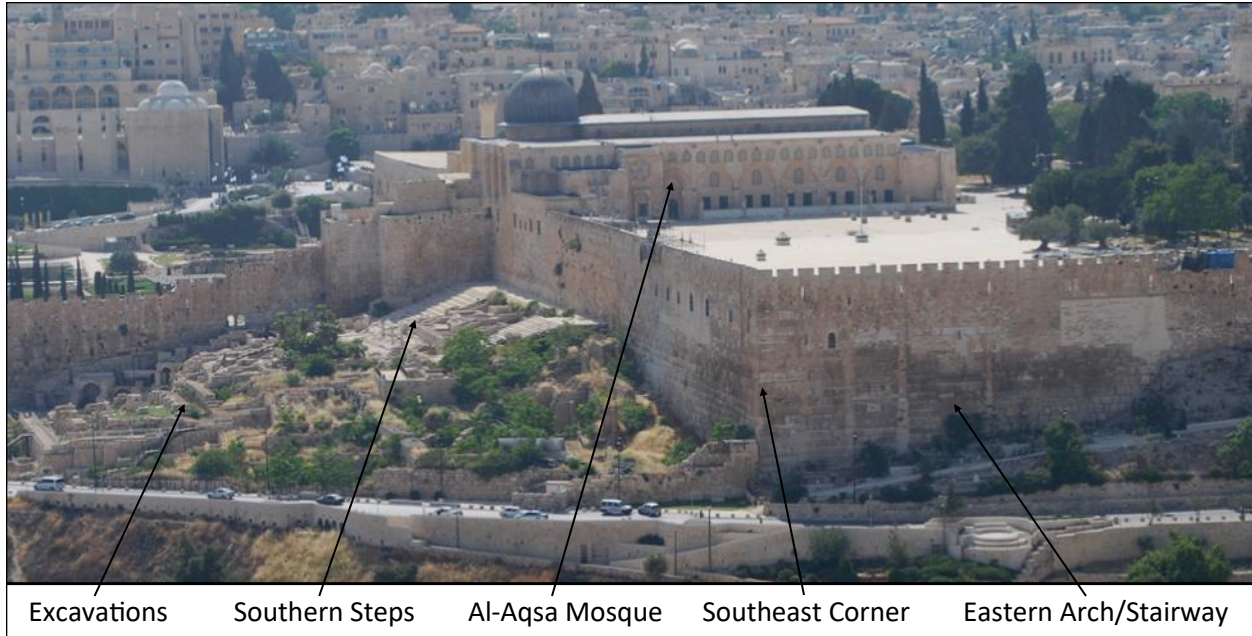
The Eastern Wall (Ottoman Period)
with the Golden Gate (Byzantine Period)

The Eastern Wall. Josephus implied that at least portions of the eastern wall of Herod's temple were comprised of stones from earlier periods (*Wars* 5.5.1). The main gate in this wall was likely the one referred to in the book of Nehemiah as "the East Gate" (Neh. 3:29). Later sources call it the Shushan Gate (or Susa Gate), since it portrayed the city or palace of Susa (Mishnah *Middoth* 1.3). This gate honored the Persians, since Susa was one of the capitals of the Persian Empire and Cyrus the Persian had allowed the Jews to return from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Jerusalem temple in 538 B.C. (Ezra 1:1-10).

The Shushan Gate was used by the high priest for the red heifer ritual, as he went to the Mount of Olives (Mishnah *Middoth* 1.3; see Num. 19:1-10). To facilitate this journey, a bridge had been built over the Kidron Valley, connecting the temple mount with the Mount of Olives (Mishnah *Parah* 3.6; *Shekalim* 4.2).

The Shushan Gate gave temple access to worshipers coming from the Mount of Olives. It was most likely the gate used by Jesus in the triumphal entry (Mt. 21:1-12; see Lk. 21:37). Many have identified it as the Beautiful Gate, where the lame man was begging prior to being healed by Peter and John (Acts 3:2), but this is not certain.

The Golden Gate was built during the Byzantine period over the ruins of the earlier Shushan Gate, but it was eventually sealed by the Arabs and is no longer in use.



In the lower courses of the eastern wall, near the southeast corner, there are remnants of an arch/stairway similar to Robinson’s Arch on the southwest corner (although they are not as visible). It seems that matching stairways existed on the eastern and western sides of the temple mount. It seems logical that a street ran parallel to the eastern side of the temple mount, just as it did on the western side. The entry above the stairway probably led to a level underneath the temple mount, where the supporting arches were located (the area known as “Solomon’s Stables”). An eastern arch/stairway does not appear on the Jerusalem model.



Southern Wall, Gates, and Steps

The Southern Wall. The southern wall has two sets of gates, which are known as the Huldah Gates. One was used for entering the temple mount, and the other was for exiting (Mishnah *Middoth* 1.3). Tunnels led from the gates up to the temple courts. On the temple model, both sets of gates are double; however, the gate on the eastern side of the existing wall is triple. Some argue that the Herodian gates were both double, and the eastern gate was altered later. Others believe that they were originally a double gate and a triple gate. Fragments from the inner domes of the gates have been found with floral and geometric patterns.



Western Huldah Double Gate
(Only Visible Portion)



Eastern Huldah Triple Gate
(Rebuilt in a Later Period)

Today, a stone with an inscription appears upside down above the western Huldah Gate. (It is not visible in the picture above.) The stone was re-used from a Roman statue on the temple mount. The statue was dedicated to Antoninus Pius, Hadrian's successor. Hadrian was the emperor who built the Temple of Jupiter on the temple mount after he had quelled the Bar Kochba Revolt in A.D. 135.

The stone reads:
TITO AEL HADRIANO
ANTONINO AVG PIO
P P PONTIF AVGVR
D D

"To Titus Ael[ius] Hadrianus
Antoninus Aug[ustus] Pius
the f[ather] of the f[atherland], pontif[ex], augur.
D[ecreed] by the D[ecurions]."



Fragments with Floral and Geometric Patterns



Excavations (Foreground) with Southern Wall and Huldah Gates (Background)



Southern Wall and Artifacts from the Herodian Temple



Southern Steps

The original southern steps leading up to the temple mount have been excavated. A street ran parallel with the southern wall, and it intersected with the street that was parallel to the western wall. Several *miqwaoth* (Jewish ritual baths) were located below the southern steps. Therefore, events from at least three New Testament texts may have taken place in this vicinity: (1) Jewish pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover underwent ritual immersions before entering the temple (Jn. 11:55; see 13:10). (2) The 3,000 people who responded to the gospel on the day of Pentecost were immersed into Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38, 41). (3) Paul purified himself when he was with the four Jewish Christians (Acts 21:26).



Street Running Parallel
with the Southern Wall



Jewish Ritual Baths Below the Southern Steps

Larger ritual baths have been discovered in this area, south of the temple mount. The excavation was undertaken in past decades by Benjamin Mazar. In more recent times, his granddaughter, Eilat Mazar, discovered a *miqweh* further south (at Mount Ophel) measuring about 32 by 32 feet. Its appearance is more like a pool encompassed by sets of steps. Water installations near the temple mount no doubt facilitated the immersion of 3,000 people into Christ on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 41).



Excavations Below the Southern Steps



The Western Wall. Four gates gave access from the temple mount through the western wall to the city below. These gates (or the arches next to them) are named after the nineteenth century archaeologists and explorers who discovered them.

(1) The southwestern gate led from the Royal Portico to Robinson's Arch (and stairway) and the valley below. Remnants of Robinson's Arch can still be seen in the western wall today. It was named after the American scholar Edward Robinson, who first identified the remnants of the arch in 1838. Shops were located beneath the arch. From this stairway, one could take the street running parallel to the western wall and travel south to the Pool of Siloam. Josephus said that the southwestern gate "led to the other city, where the road descended down into the valley by a great number of steps, and then up again by the ascent" (*Antiquities* 15.11.5).



Remnants of Robinson's Arch
(With Filled-in Gate Above It)



Artist's Reconstruction of the Monumental Stairway



(Above) Dressed stones remain here in the southwest corner from Herod's construction of the retaining wall.

(Left) The Herodian Street was about thirty feet wide, being paved with large slabs of stone. They were damaged when the Romans threw down the stones from the upper courses of the wall and the temple courts.

(2) The next entryway to the north was Barclay's Gate. A tunnel led from the temple mount down through this gate and out to the Tyropoean Valley street. Some associate it with the Kiponus Gate mentioned in the Mishnah (*Middoth* 1.3), but this is uncertain. Barclay's Gate receives its name from Dr. James T. Barclay, a missionary to Jerusalem from the Restoration Movement in the 1850s who also discovered Solomon's Quarries.

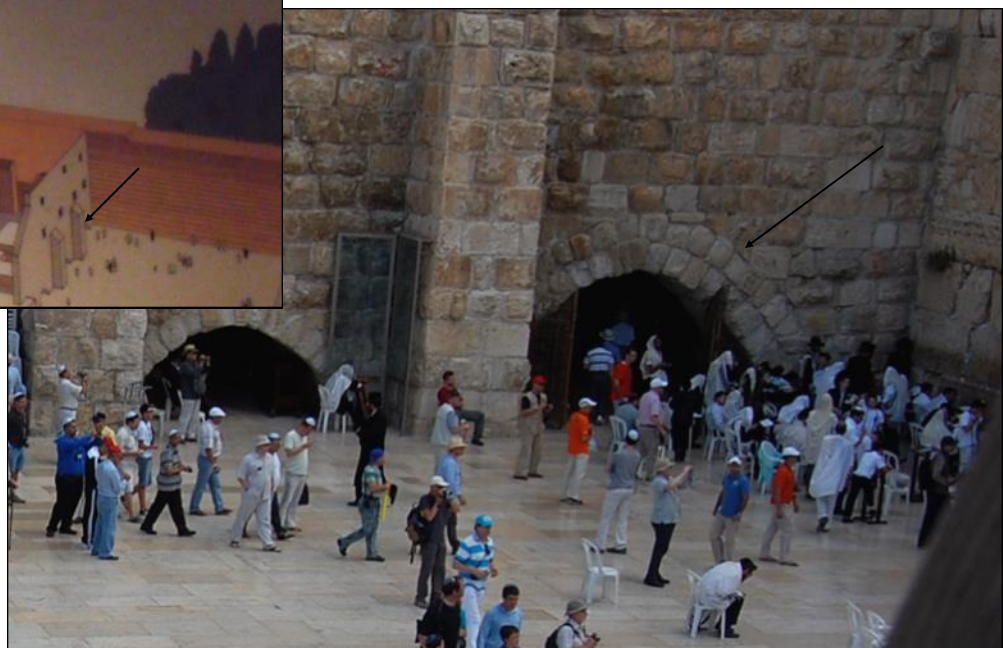
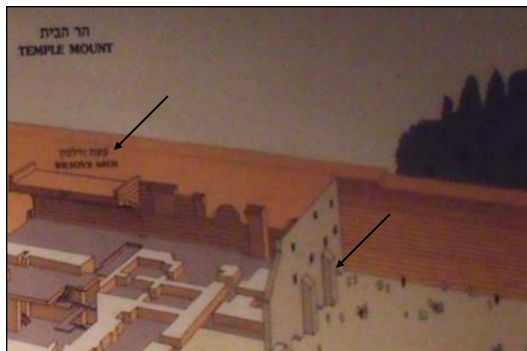
Barclay's Gate, which has been filled in with stones, is obscured today by the modern ramp. It is located on the right hand side of the women's area of the Western Wall.



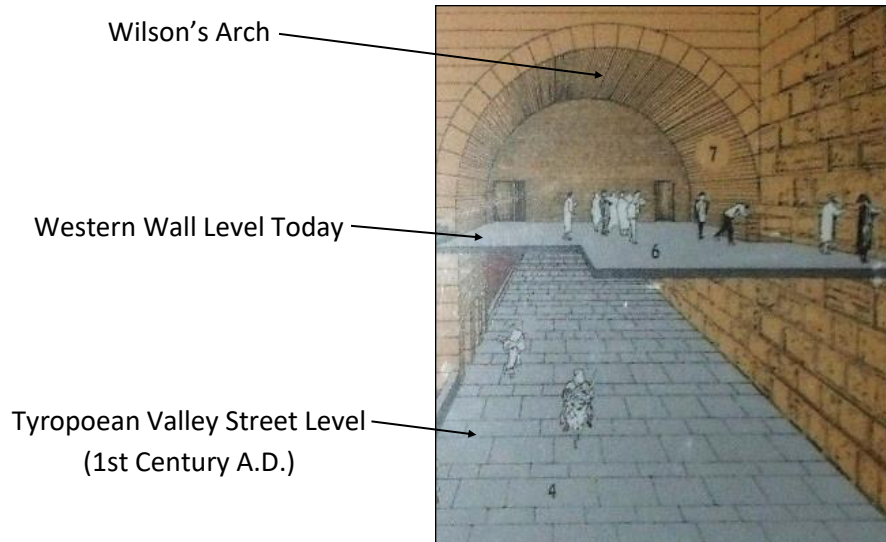


Wilson's Arch and the Bridge Spanning the Tyropoean Valley

(3) Still further north, the gate above Wilson's Arch gave access from the temple mount to a bridge over the Tyropoean Valley, which led to the western part of Jerusalem (where Herod's palace was located). Wilson's Arch was the first of a series of arches forming the bridge. The road on the bridge was some seventy-five feet above the Herodian street below (ground level is much higher today). Wilson's Arch was discovered by Charles Wilson in 1864. Today, the area above Wilson's Arch is known as the Street of the Chain and the Gate of the Chain. It gives Muslims access to the Al-Aqsa mosque located on the temple mount.



More Modern Archway Just South of Wilson's Arch
(Left Hand Side of the Men's Area at the Western Wall)



(4) The fourth entryway, a little farther north, was Warren's Gate—which was almost directly behind the temple itself. A tunnel led down from the temple mount to this gate, where one entered the Tyropoean Valley street, which had many shops and markets. Warren's Gate was discovered by Charles Warren, who worked under the Palestinian Exploration Fund in the 1860s. He was a British archaeologist who also discovered and explored Warren's Shaft near the Gihon Spring.

Many centuries after the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), the Jews reportedly used the area of Warren's Gate as a synagogue; it was known as "the Cave." However, the Crusaders came and filled the gate with stones, sealing it shut.

In 2009, about sixty-five feet from the western wall between Wilson's Arch and Warren's Gate, a large *miqweh* (ritual bath) was discovered. It would have been used for purification by Jews going up to the temple from the west side of the city through those access points.

The Western Wall Today. In modern times, the Western Wall has great significance, being considered the holiest shrine of the Jewish people. Since the temple mount is controlled by the Muslims with the Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque, the Western Wall is an area where the Jews can gather to pray and read the Torah. The lower and middle courses of the wall are comprised of the original Herodian stones; these are some of the remnants of the last temple.

After the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the Jews were banned from Jerusalem. Later, during the Byzantine period, they were allowed to come and weep over the ruins of the temple. Therefore, the Western Wall became known as the "Wailing Wall." When the Jordanians maintained control over eastern Jerusalem (1948-1967), the Jews were not allowed to come to this site. However, after the Six Day War, the Western Wall became a place of worship for the Jewish people.



Western Wall (Foreground); Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque (Background)



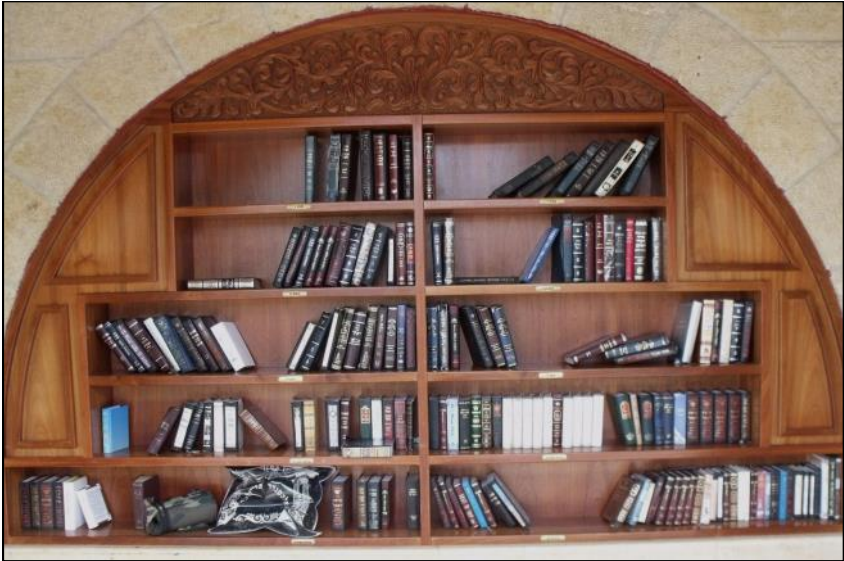
Western Wall with Men's Area and Women's Area



Written Prayers Put in the Crevices of the Wall



Torah Ark



Hebrew Bibles and Prayer Books Used at the Western Wall



At the Western Wall, conservative Jewish men strap phylactery boxes on their foreheads and left arms, as many Jews did in the time of Christ. Jesus did not oppose the practice—which is based on a literal interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:8—but he did criticize the Pharisees for making their phylactery boxes wider than the other Jews did (Mt. 23:5). In addition, many conservative Jewish men do not clip the hair on the sides of their heads (Lev. 19:27).





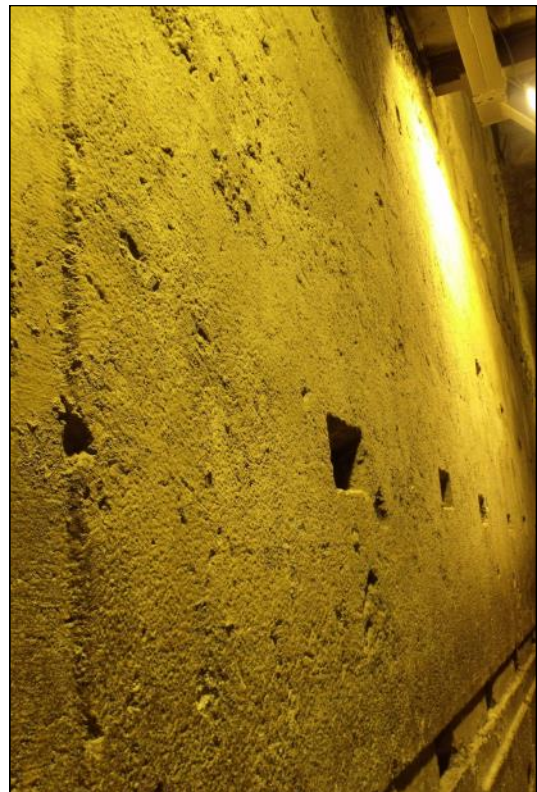
The Fence Separating Men (Left) and Women (Right)
(Women Stand on Chairs and Lean over the Fence, Watching the Bar Mitzvahs)



The Western Stone

Western Wall Tunnel. A tunnel along the western wall reveals remains from the Herodian street that ran parallel to the temple mount. Jews (especially women) go there to pray, being able to get closer to the foundation stone where the most holy place of the temple once stood. It is also believed to be the same place where Abraham offered Isaac on Mount Moriah (Gen. 22:1-18). This is the site that David purchased from Araunah the Jebusite (2 Sam. 24:18-25).

The largest stone of the temple walls, sometimes referred to as “the Western Stone,” is located in the tunnel. It is 45 feet long and 10 feet high. The stone is estimated to be 10 to 15 feet thick. Estimates for its weight usually range from 415 to 510 tons. In later centuries, rectangular holes were bored into the stone in order to apply plaster to the wall to make a cistern.





Western Wall Tunnel



This site in the tunnel is opposite the foundation stone (on the temple mount), just a little distance north of Warren's Gate. It is the place that many Jewish women come to pray.

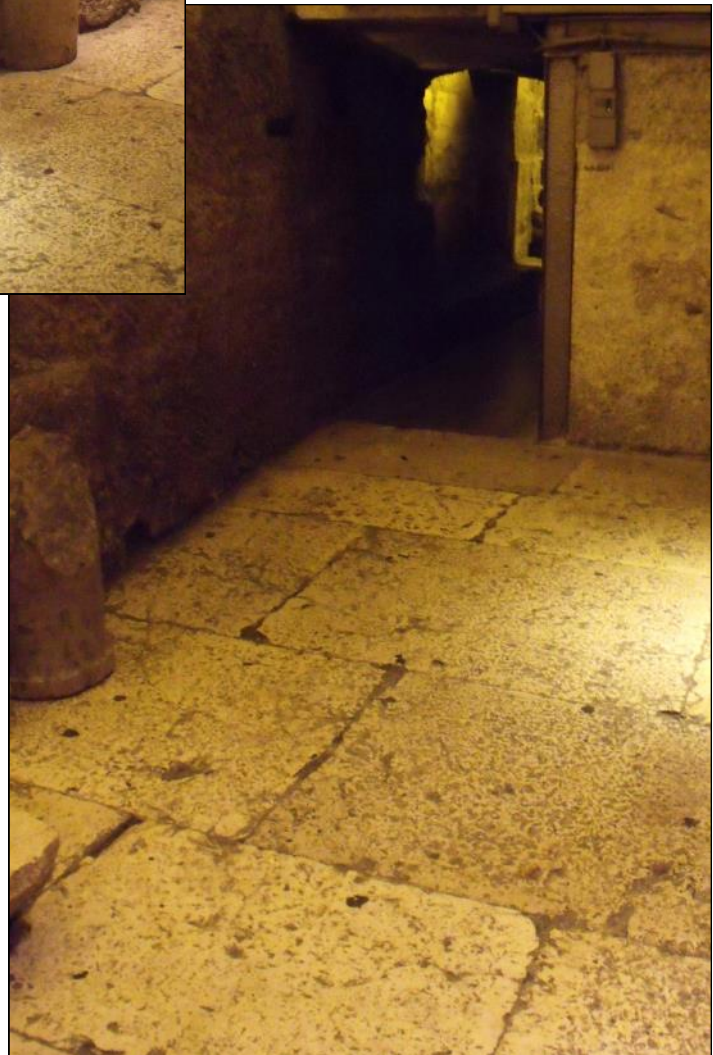


Ancient Guardrail Protecting People from Falling into an Open Cistern



Herodian Columns and Street

The Herodian street ran from near the northwest corner of the temple mount to the southwest corner and then through the City of David, terminating near the Pool of Siloam. It is sometimes referred to as the Tyropoan Valley street.





This channel was cut in the stone wall to serve as an aqueduct.

Quarry workers started to cut out this stone, but then they quit.



This cistern, known as the Struthion Pool, is located at the northern end of the tunnel.