

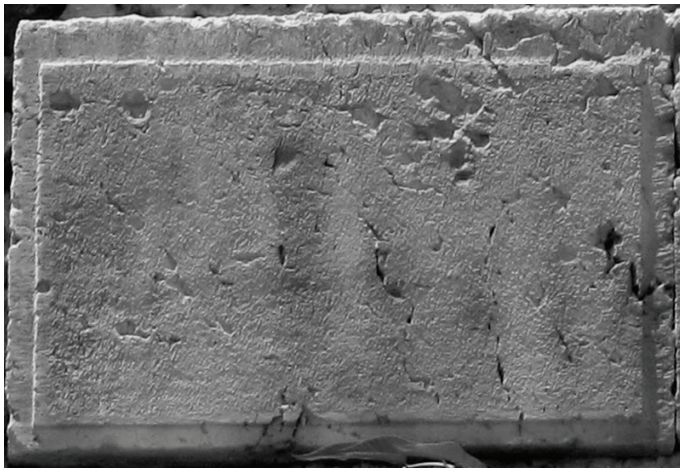
Section E: New Testament

Chapter 37

Herod's Building Projects and Ashlar Stones

Herod the Great was king in Jerusalem under the Roman Empire from 37 to 4 BC. Herod's colorful career was highlighted by the wide range of buildings he constructed in Jerusalem for a variety of reasons. Herod's ambition to fulfill his architectural dreams overcame not only financial and political opposition, but he also ingeniously overcame every natural obstacle with innovative solutions. In Jerusalem, Herod built a theater, an amphitheater called the Hippodrome, the Antonia Fortress, aqueducts, and paved streets. For himself, Herod built a luxurious palace with highly-decorated towers and walls surrounding the complex, which included reception halls, royal apartments, a fortress for his personal guard, fountains, gardens and bath houses. Herod decorated his buildings by employing talented artisans who produced beautiful mosaics and frescoes. He even adapted the Jewish mikveh (ritual bath) for use as a Roman-style bathhouse.

Despite all these wonders, the rebuilding of the Temple and the doubling of the size of the Temple Mount were Herod's most memorable architectural projects. When the Temple was finished, nothing in the Roman world could equal it. The Temple building stood higher than fifteen stories and was made out of marble and gold. The temple wall and retaining wall were constructed out of limestone blocks called ashlar. The typical building of this time during Herod's extensive building projects were built with what are known as "Herodian ashlar".



A Herodian ashlar located on the east side of the Temple Mount wall. The 2 to 3 inch edge that is cut about 1/2 inch deep is called the margin. The raised center of the block is called the boss. This ashlar has a smooth boss. Some ashlar had an uneven, or course, boss – as did many ashlar used in the Hasmonean construction.

Ashlars are large stone blocks cut smooth, with narrow margins around the edges and smooth slightly raised bosses in the center. They are easy to identify and locate in the Western Wall and in the rest of the Temple Mount wall. Many can be seen in other walls and buildings throughout the city as well, having been reused for the last 2,000 years since the Romans toppled the temple and much of its retaining wall. Another stone design used by Herod's builders is the simple plain and smooth rectangular block. This design is more difficult for the average visitor to identify.



Detail showing the tight joints of these Herodian ashlar stones found in the tunnel along the Western Wall. The ashlar were stacked on top of each other with surfaces cut to a perfect match. No mortar, cement or adhesive was used to attach the ashlar blocks to each other. They still stand after 2,000 years, but the fact that they were not attached to each other with mortar makes it easier to understand how the Romans dismantled the Temple. When Jesus spoke of the Temple he said, "not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down" (Matthew 24:2). These stones remain from the very base of the Temple Mount wall. Notice that each course of ashlar was set back 1/2 inch to help stabilize the wall. They were not stacked evenly. Also notice the smooth-cut 2 inch margin around the edge of each ashlar.



A very large corner stone with margin and boss, located on the southwest corner of the Temple Mount. This southwest corner has some of the largest ashlar stones of the entire Temple Mount complex, measuring 39 feet 4 inches long by 7 feet 10 inches wide and 43 inches high. The large stone shown here is called the master course stone and weighs about 80 tons. All these stones form a strong corner as they alternate back and forth as headers and stretchers all the way up. The larger stones helped stabilize the smaller stones stacked below.



Looking east at another cornerstone on the southwest corner. The pavement and steps are original Herodian pavement placed here in the first century. The pavement and steps continued along this south wall of the Temple Mount. They will be seen again at the Double and Triple Gates further down this wall.



Details of the original perfectly tight horizontal and vertical joints. The workmanship of Herod's construction team still maintains its impressive quality, even after sitting in the middle of all the wars and activities in Jerusalem for the past 2,000 years.



Four courses of original Herodian ashlar can be seen on the Western Wall of the Temple Mount.



This Cornerstone is about 33 feet long, 7 feet wide and 3 feet tall. It weighs about 50 tons.



Some of the largest ashlar are found in the southwest corner of the Temple Mount wall. These stones weigh as much as 80 tons and are about 40 feet long, 8 feet wide and 3.5 feet tall. As seen in this photo, the workers used what is called header and stretcher construction where the stones are laid west and south in an alternating pattern. Because of the great size of the stones and this style of interlocking construction, all the corners of Herod's Temple have been preserved to a great height - the Romans were unable to move them. This southwest corner has been preserved to the height of twelve Herodian courses of original ashlar; eight are visible here and the other four courses can be seen in photos above. Notice the edge of Robinson's Arch on the left side of the photo.



Looking up at the Western Wall on the Western Wall prayer plaza. Estimates by experts tell us that 200 workers could produce about eight cubic meters of cut stone each day. That means one cubic meter of stone ashlar would require about 120 hours of labor to cut and dress.



The tight horizontal joints of ashlars sit on top of each other in the Temple Mount wall.



The margins, the raised bosses with the smooth face, and the tight joints in Herod's Temple Mount wall.



Ashlars were placed in rollers like this to be moved to location. This was one of several ways the stones were moved. Stones were also pulled by teams of oxen on rollers.



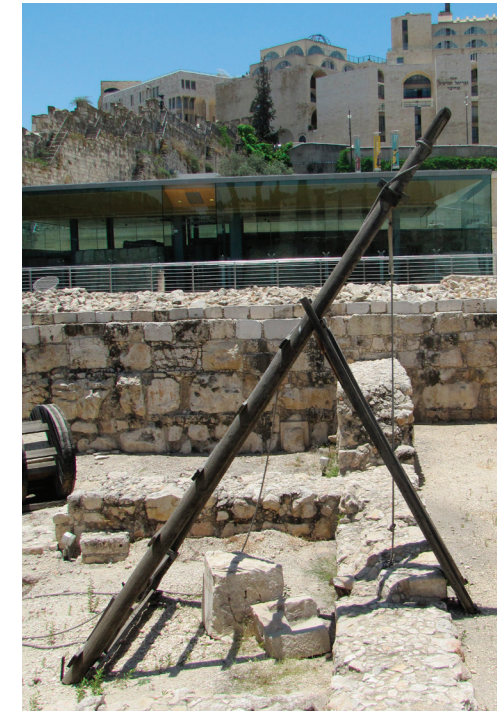
This is an example of a stone on rollers. The stone would be pulled by a team of oxen attached to a harness connected to the ashlar by projections of rock left uncut on both sides. Below are photos of projections left on the ashlar stones by Herod's workers.



Galyn points at a projection left on an ashlar. These rock projections (one on both sides of the block) would have served as handles for the workers to attach ropes in order to pull and then lift the ashlar block into place. Several ashlars on the south and east side (particularly in the southeast corner) of the Temple Mount can still be seen.



This is a Herodian ashlar stone on the SE corner of the Temple Mount retaining wall in Jerusalem. The protruding square knob on the side was used for attaching ropes to pull and position the block into place on the wall. Once the block was set in place this knob was usually removed by the stonemasons.



This "A" framed crane is an example of how the blocks were manipulated into place once they arrived at the construction site. If Herod's people worked from the inside of the retaining wall they were building, they did not have to lift the blocks to the top of the Temple Mount. The workers would simply build the first course of ashlars, add the fill, and then use the fill as a surface to pull, roll, or drag the next ashlar into place. The ropes of the crane would have connected to the ashlar using the projections left on the face and the inside of the stone. The hoist would only have to raise the ashlar slightly for it to be positioned, if it were setting on the inside on the fill at the same level as the first course. When the second course was complete, fill would be added to bring the inside surface level with the second course, and the third course would begin from the inside.



These ashlars along the southern wall of the Temple Mount between the Double Gate and the Triple Gate are twice the height of the other Herodian courses. These were a stabilizing band known as the great course.



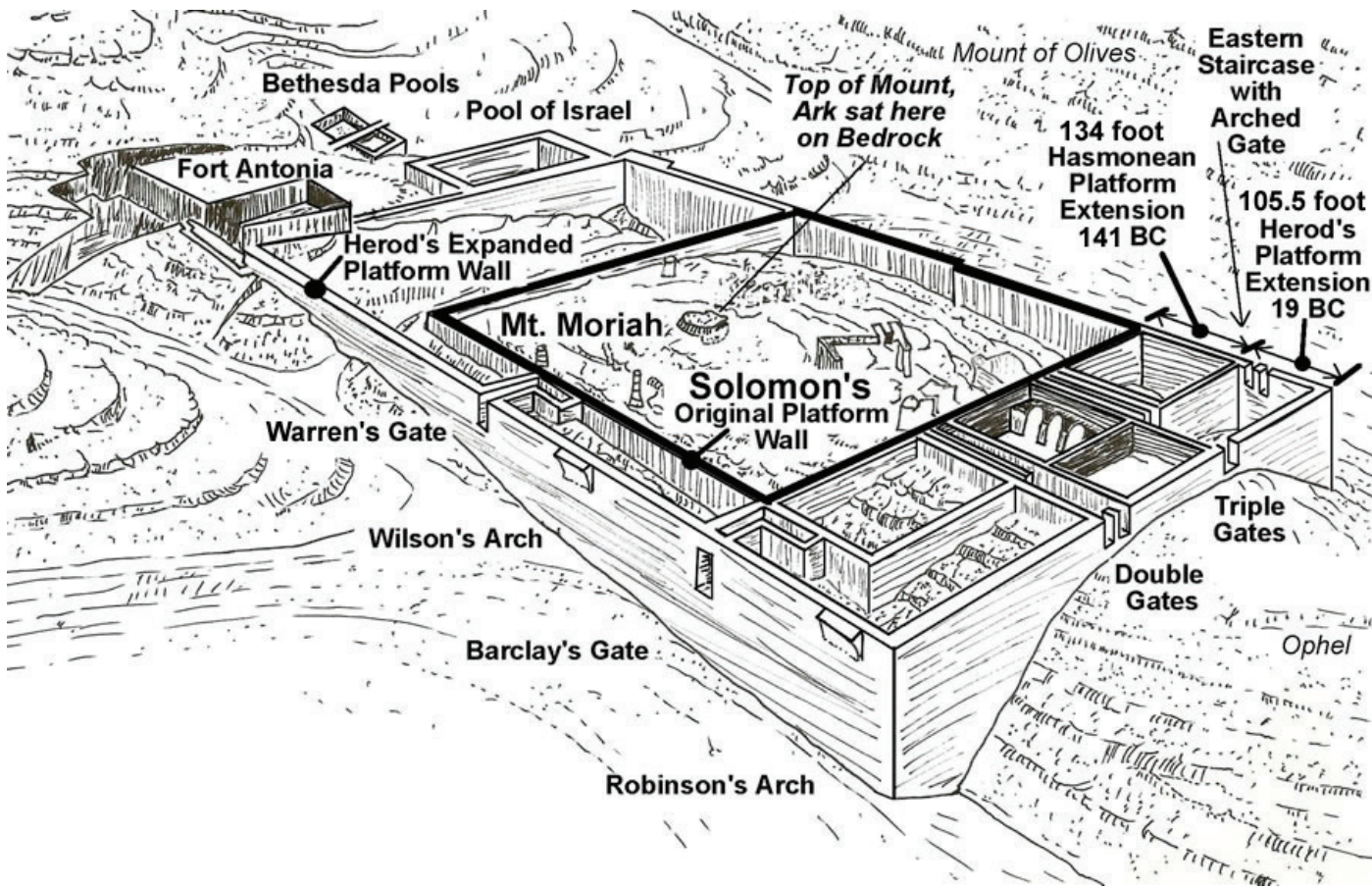
Toni stands in front of the only course of Herodian ashlars visible at the top of the large stairway on the south wall of the Temple Mount. The courses of stones above it are not Herodian. The Romans dismantled the southern wall down to this course. Notice that this course of ashlars (also seen below) is twice as tall as the other ashlars we have seen (about 6 feet instead of 3 feet). The Double Gate is to the left (west) of this photo and the Triple Gate is to the right (east).



The stone on the top is the Master Course Stone found in the Western Wall Tunnels. Notice again the 1/2 inch set back as each course is stacked on the other. We will see more later about this stone, possibly the largest stone in the Temple Mount wall. The rectangular notches were cut at a later time when this wall was used as part of an underground cistern. Plaster needed to be applied to the entire cistern in order to make it watertight. Holes were cut in the stones to keep the plaster attached, and long stones were placed in each hole. The plaster was then applied to the wall. In this photo you can see the Herodian Ashlars, the rectangular holes, the long brick-shaped stone placed in the hole, and a very thick layer of plaster attached to the ashlars and strengthened by the stone connector.

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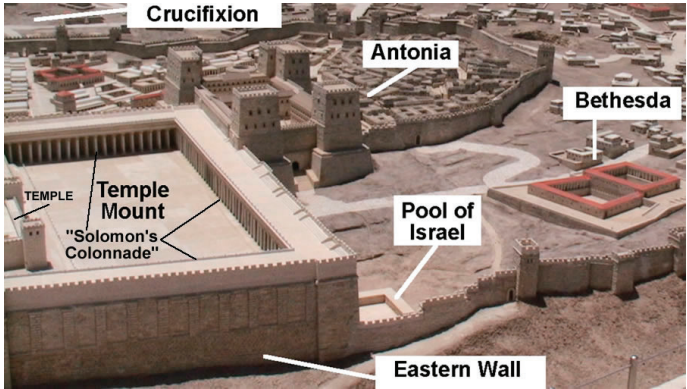
Herod's Temple Mount



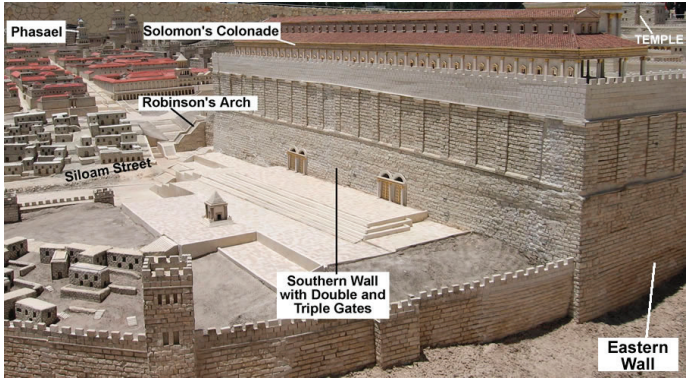
This is a diagram of the retaining walls that created today's Temple Mount. The Ark of the Covenant was located on the exposed bedrock, which is still visible under the Dome of the Rock. The original platform for the Temple Mount that served Solomon's Temple was 500 cubits by 500 cubits (861 feet x 861 feet). This is designated by the inside square walls labeled "Solomon's Original Platform Wall". This square was filled in, and the Temple of the Old Testament stood there. The Hasmoneans extended the Temple Mount to the south by adding about 134 feet. At the point that the Hasmoneans began to build on the eastern Temple Mount wall there is a slight bend in the wall. This bend is slight but can be seen drifting slightly towards the east. That bend begins at the 500 cubit (861 foot) mark. The Herodian addition to the Temple Mount platform, or the distance from the southeast corner to the Straight Joint, is 105.5 feet. The Straight Joint is a very visible straight line created by courses of stones butted up against the Hasmonean stones on the east Temple Mount wall by Herod the Great when he began to expand the Temple Mount in 19 BC.



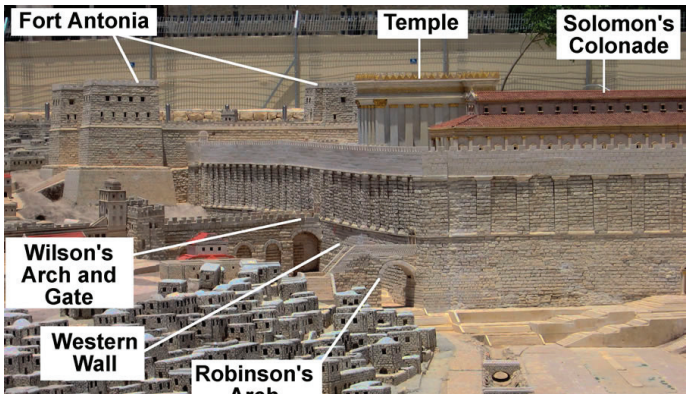
A model of Herod's Temple as seen from the east looking west at the eastern gates and courts.



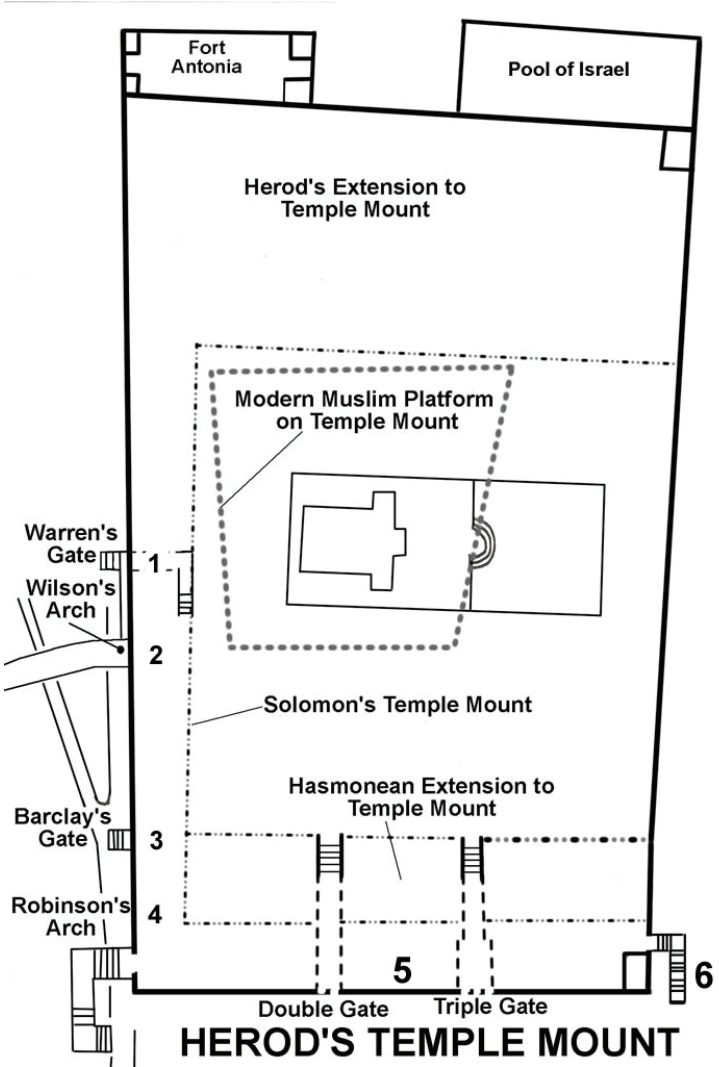
Details of a model showing the northeast corner of the Temple Mount in Jesus' day.



Details of the south wall of the Herodian Temple Mount. Notice the stairway, the Double Gate, and the Triple Gate. All of them are still visible today. Also, the base of the stairway leading to Robinson's arch has been identified by archaeologists.



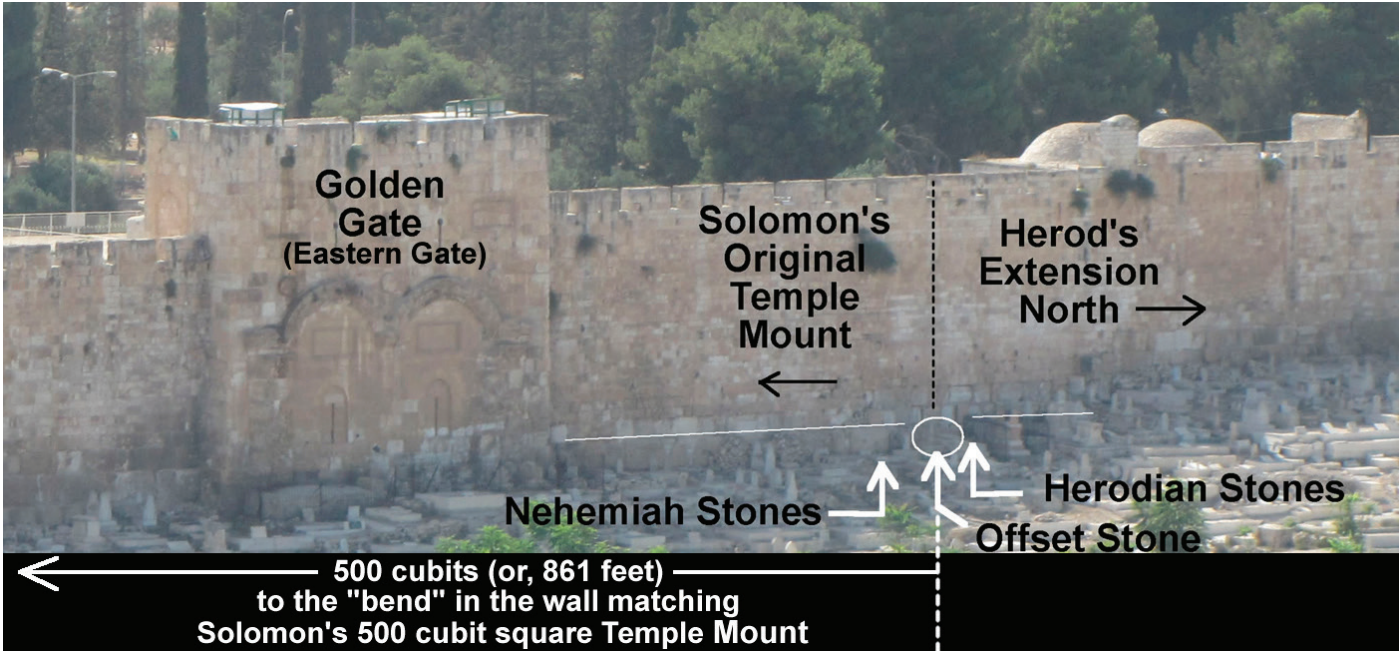
This photo is looking at the southern wall on the right and the Western Wall on the left. The original Western Wall of Herod seen at the Western Wall Plaza today is the portion of the wall from where the white line makes contact with the "Western Wall" and down. These are the seven courses of stone that are still visible and remain from Herod's wall. The courses of stone below these seven are below today's street level at the Western Wall Plaza.



- Several details of Herod's Temple are included in this diagram:
- 1) Warren's Gate (visible today in the Western Wall Tunnels) which is the closest the Jews can get to the Most Holy Place. Warren's Gate still has a stairway and tunnel that lead up to the Temple Mount, but it has been blocked
 - 2) Wilson's Arch
 - 3) Barclay's Gate
 - 4) Robinson's Arch, the location and remains of the stairway and gate are still visible today
 - 5) The Double and Triple Gates with their tunneled entrance and stairs leading up to the Temple Mount. The tunnels and stairway still exist, but are inaccessible to non-Muslims
 - 6) Hints of an arched stairway opposite Robinson's Arch on the eastern wall at the SE corner. Only the supporting springer stones built into the wall and the filled-in openings of the double gate at the top of the former staircase are visible today.

Chapter 39

Northeast End of Eastern Temple Mount Wall



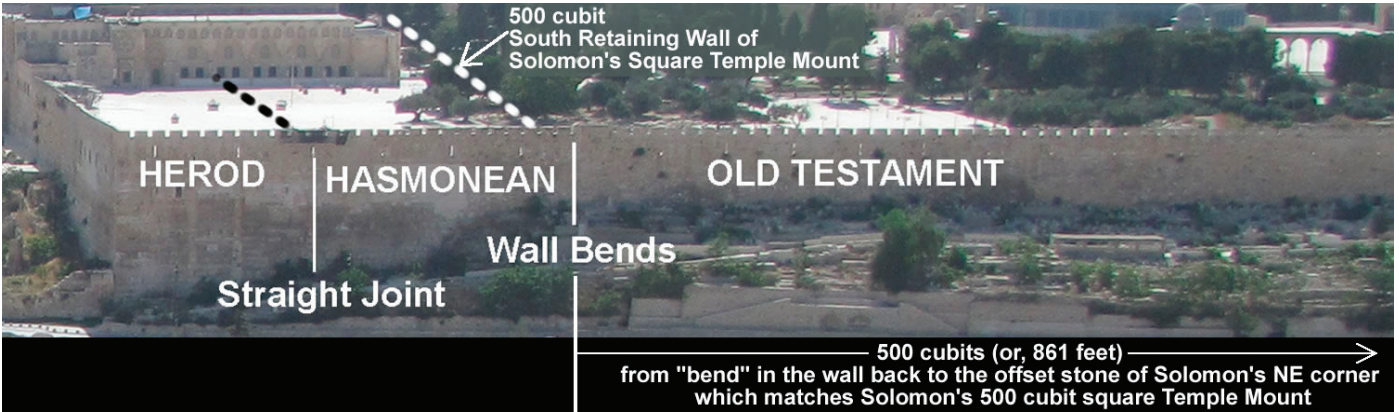
The distance from the "Offset Stone" (NE corner) to the Hasmonean bend (SE corner) is 500 cubits (or, 861 feet) along the east wall. The distance from this same "Offset Stone" to the corner of the northwest stairway, that does

not set parallel with the Muslim platform, is 500 cubits along what would have been the north retaining wall of Solomon's Temple Mount.

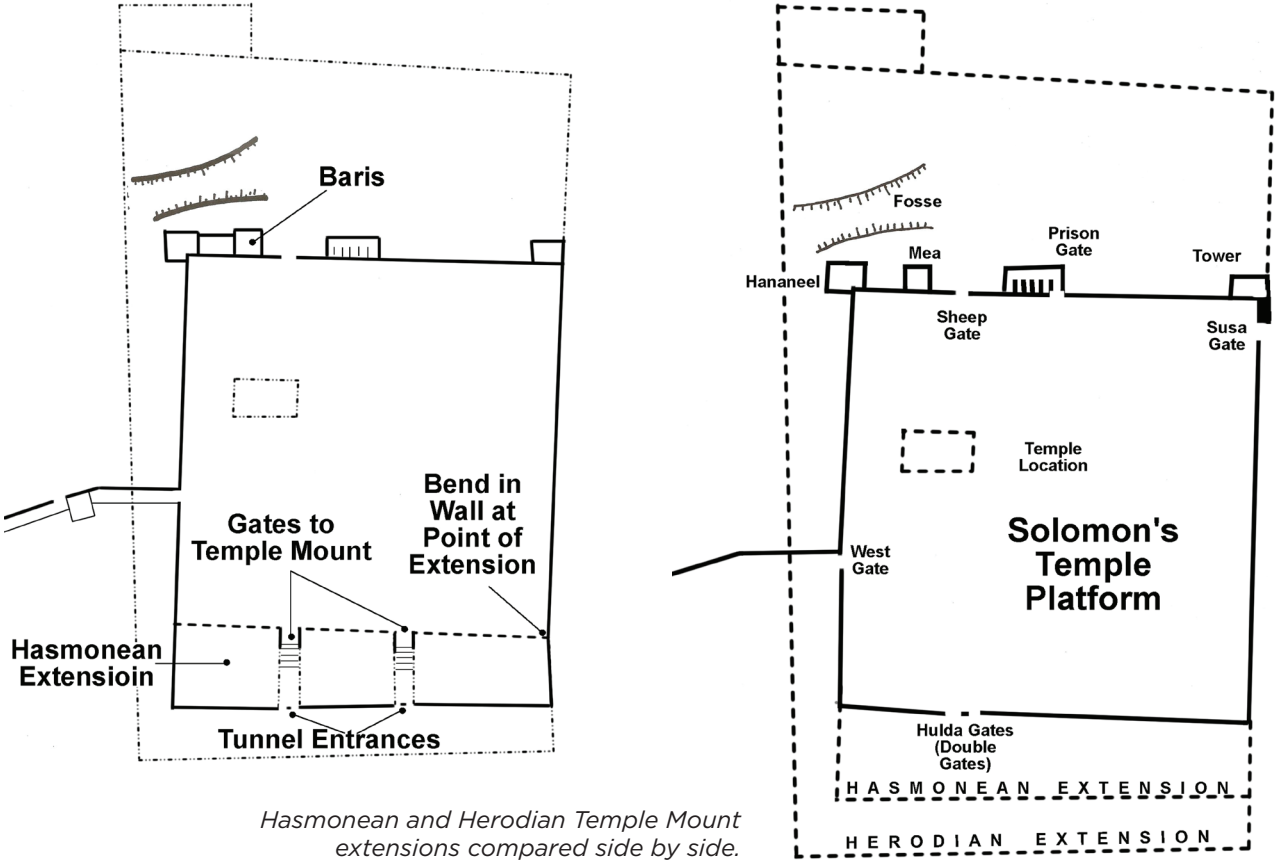


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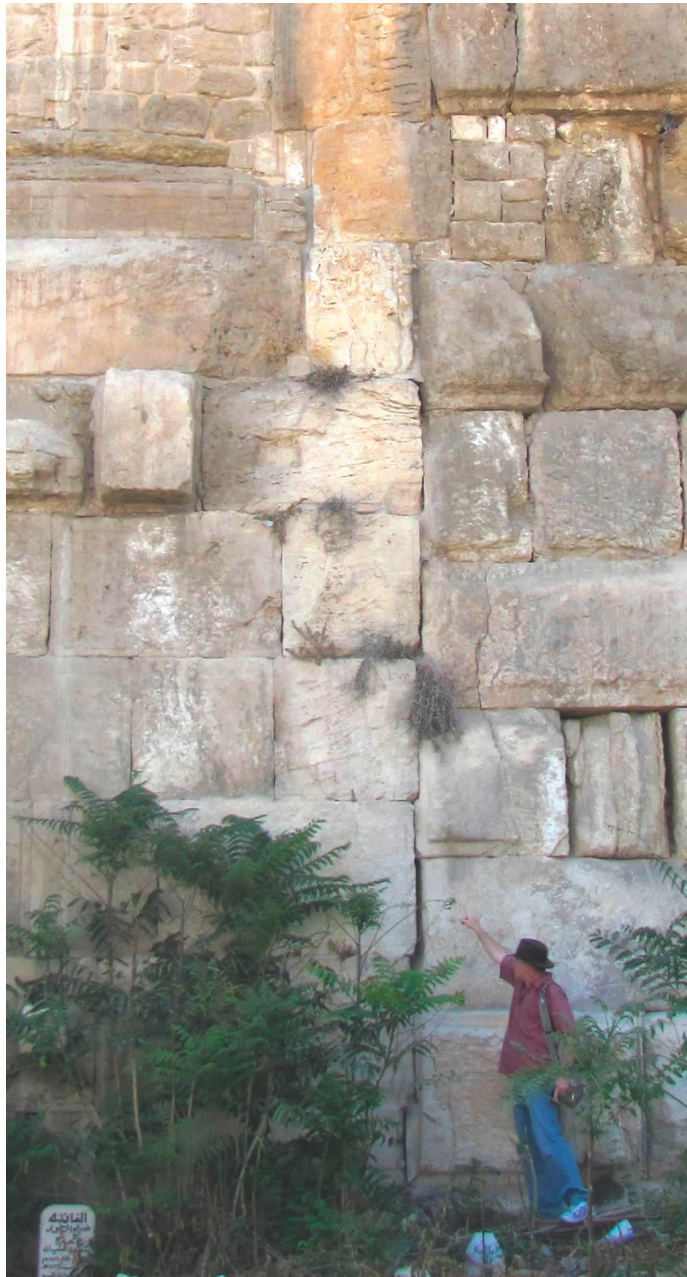
Southeast End of Eastern Temple Mount Wall



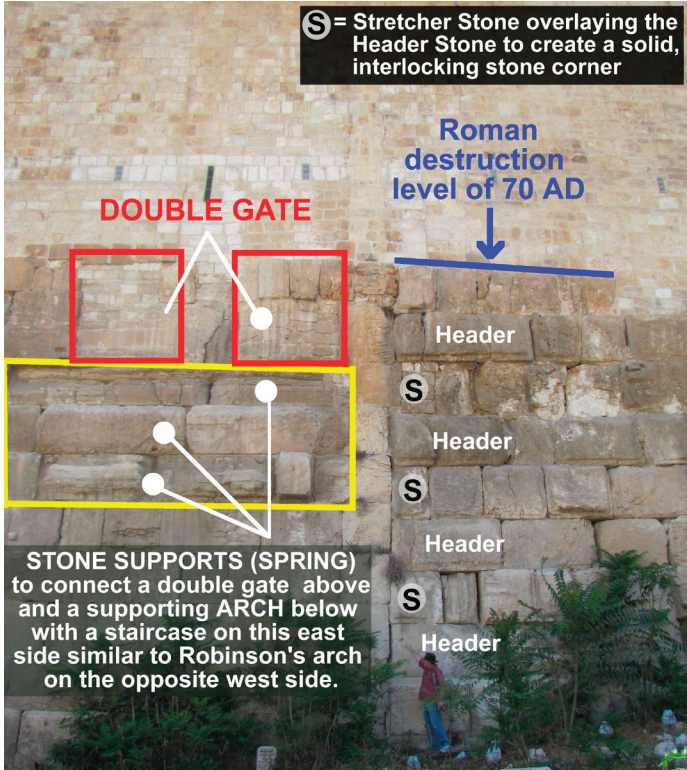
This is the southern end of the eastern city wall. It is clear where the Hasmoneans added on to Solomon's walls since there is a slight bend in the wall at this location. It is also very clear where Herod added onto the Hasmonean walls since the blocks do not overlap but instead have a straight joint where Herod's ashlar blocks butt up against the Hasmonean blocks. This portion of the east wall also serves as the east side of the Temple Mount wall. The dotted white line across the surface of the Temple Mount indicates where Solomon's platform (500 cubits by 500 cubits) would have ended in the south. The dotted black line across the surface is how far the Hasmoneans extended the Temple Mount to the south. This would have covered over a portion of the Seleucid Acra fortress. Herod then extended the Temple from the dotted black line (or, the straight joint) to the present southern wall which includes the Double and Triple Gate.



Hasmonean and Herodian Temple Mount extensions compared side by side.

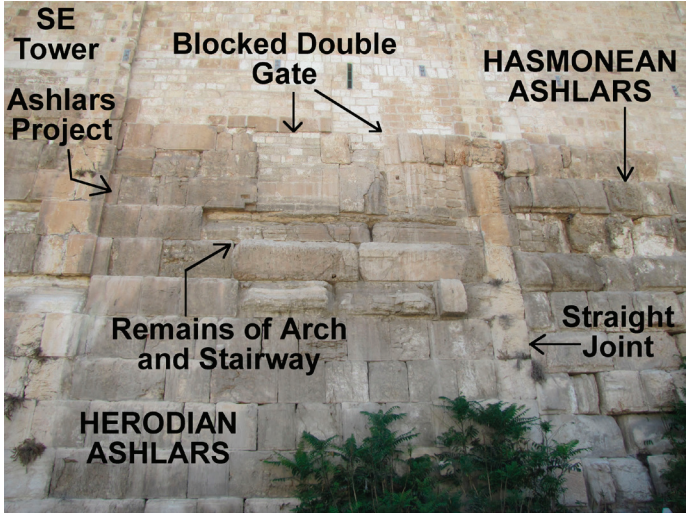


Galyn points at the Straight Joint that separates the 19 BC Herodian ashlar stones (left, south) from the 141 BC Hasmonean ashlar stones (right, north).

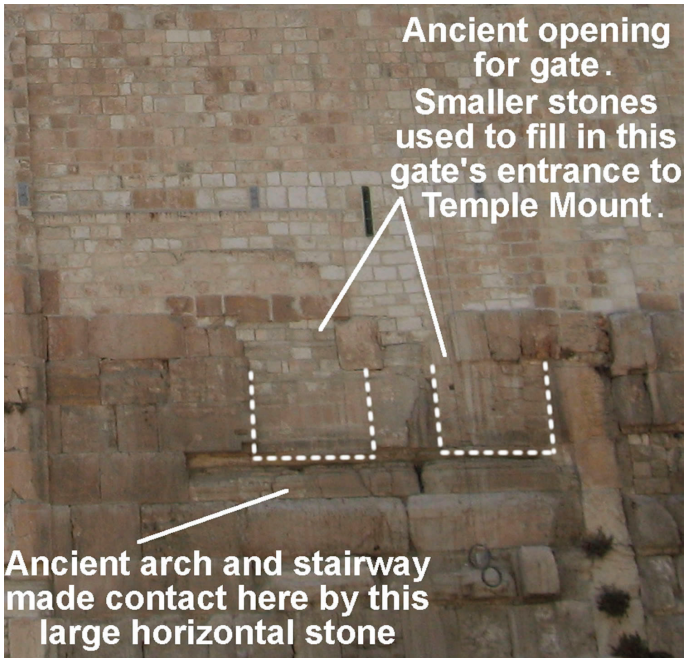


There are several things to notice in this photo:

1. Galyn points at the Straight Joint that was formed when Herod added onto the southern side of the Temple Mount in 19 BC. The Hasmonean ashlar stones can be seen on the right with their margins and their course bosses. To the left of the straight joint Herodian ashlar stones can be seen. The Herodian ashlars also have a margin cut on them, but the bosses have been cut smooth.
2. The Hasmonean stones were clearly built as a corner, since the corner edge was worn off and chipped before it was enclosed into the wall in 19 BC. This is also clear from the fact that the stones were laid as headers and stretchers (i.e., the direction of the longer length of the stones alternate as they go up the corner). For example, the stone behind Galyn's head is long on the outside, but the one above it runs long to the inside.
3. Notice that once the wall reaches about the ninth course the stones change and the seam is no longer visible. This is because this wall was dismantled by the Romans in 70 AD to about that level. Over the years the wall above the ninth course has been rebuilt by a variety of people with a variety of stones.
4. To the left at about the ninth row, the remains of an arch and gate from the days of Herod can be seen. This would be very similar in style to Robinson's Arch on the west side of the Temple Mount, directly opposite this one.



This is the south end of the eastern Temple Mount wall. A stairway led up to a gate that took worshippers to the surface of the Temple Mount. The projected ashlars to the left (south) of this photo indicate the position of a tower. The location of three windows in the tower can be seen in other photos.



This is a close up of the wall above and the location of an eastern arched gate at the top of a stairway. It can be thought of as the eastern wall's version of Robinson's arch found on the west side.



This photo is the view looking north from the southeast corner outside the Temple Mount wall. At the point of the arrow, the wall bends and begins to drift to the east (right) at the place where the Hasmoneans added onto the existing Temple Mount wall.



View of the southeast corner of the Temple Mount. This is where Satan tempted Jesus to jump. In 26 AD there would have been a high tower at the top of this corner.

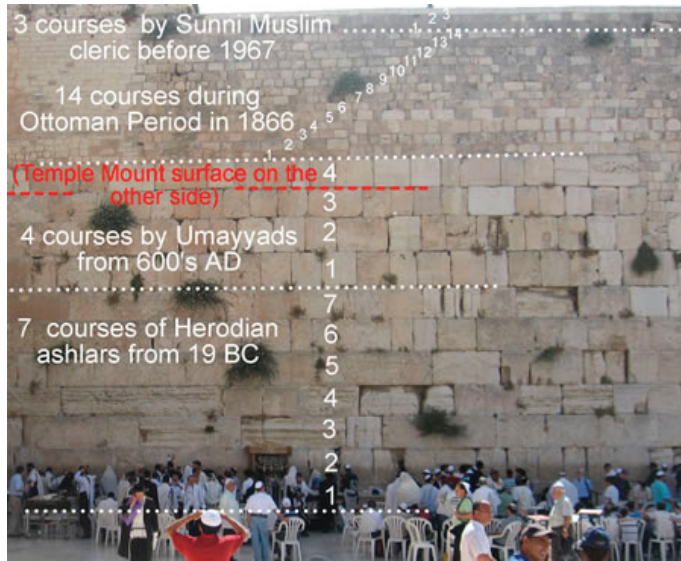
Chapter 41

Western Wall of the Temple Mount

The entire west side of the Temple Mount retaining wall can be called the western wall (1,600 feet), but there is a section of this wall that is commonly called the Western Wall. It is a 187 foot section of the wall with a large plaza area where the seven courses (or layers) of stones of the retaining wall of Herod's Temple Mount can still be seen.



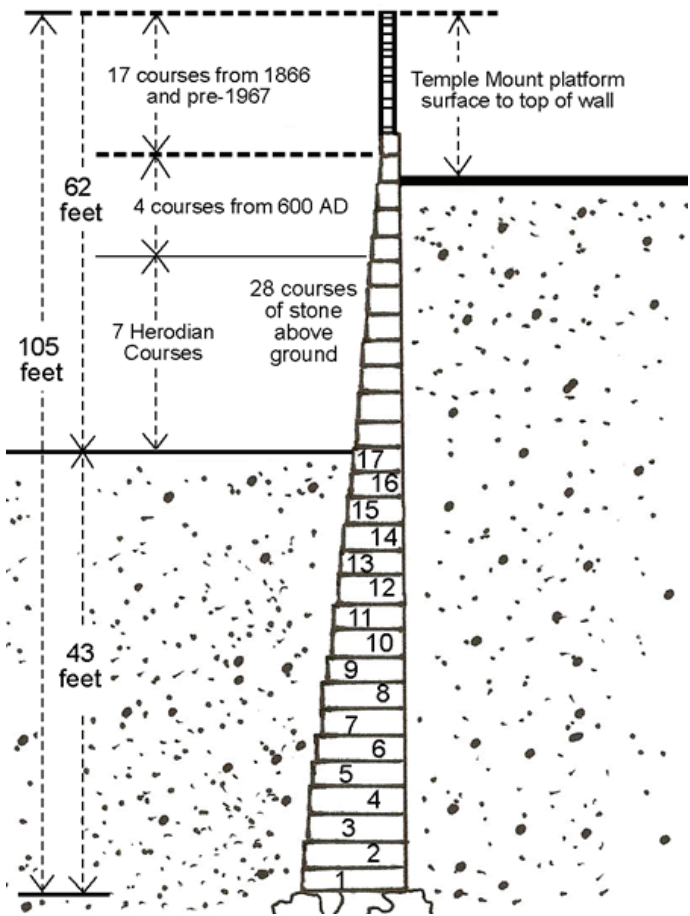
The Western Wall



The Western Wall at the Western Wall Prayer Plaza. This is also known as the Kotel or "Wall". Kotel ha-Ma'aravi means "Western Wall."

Some interesting facts about the Western Wall:

- The wall consists of a total of 45 courses of stone with 17 still underground and 28 above ground.
- The overall height of the wall from the foundation to the top is 105 feet.
- 43 feet of the wall (17 courses) remains buried below the level of the plaza.
- 62 feet of the wall is above ground.



There are 17 courses of Herodian ashlars still buried at the Western Wall. The bottom course is 50 feet wide. Seven courses from Herod's retaining wall are presently visible above ground. The 21 courses on top of those 7 Herodian courses are, from lowest to highest:

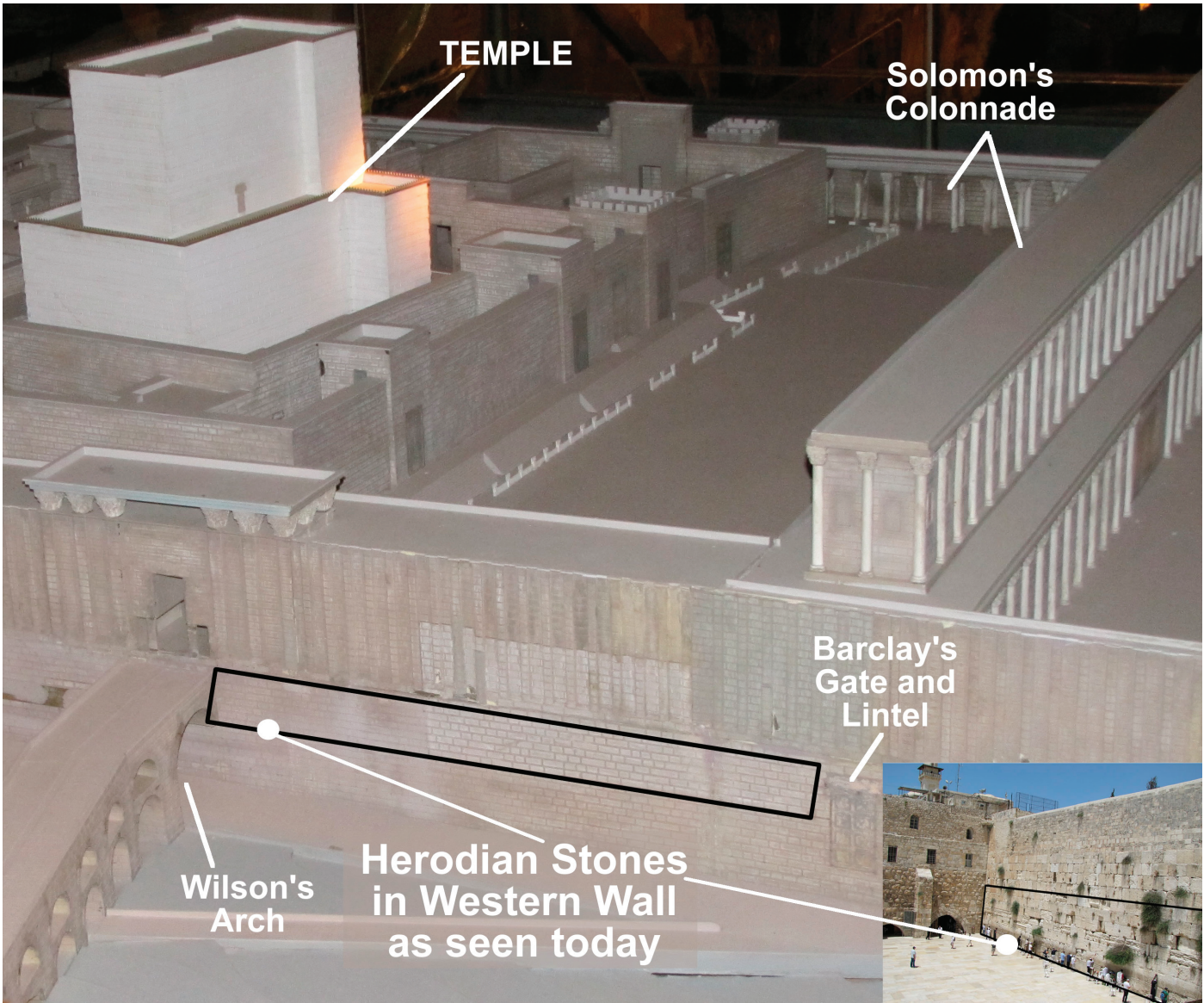
1. Four Courses added in the 600's by Umayyads
2. Fourteen layers added in 1866 during the Ottoman period
3. Three courses added before 1967 by the Sunni Muslim cleric in charge of Jerusalem's Islamic holy places



A typical midnight in June at the Western Wall Prayer Plaza. Wilson's Arch is to the left and the ramp for non-Muslim entrance to the Temple Mount through the Morocco Gate is to the right. The men's section is the larger portion to the left and the women's prayer section can be seen to the right next to the ramp. There is a thin five foot wall called a mehitza separating the men's and women's sections.

Before the plaza was built in front of the Western Wall, there was nothing but a 12-foot-wide alley running along this area. It ran for about 92 feet. After the war of 1967 the Jews removed buildings and expanded the plaza. Excavation work has exposed much of this west wall of the temple mount to the south. An additional section called the Small Western Wall can also be seen in the Muslim Quarter.

The Herodian stones in the Western Wall are limestone ashlars that were likely quarried from Solomon's Quarries (Zedekiah's Cave), located today under the Muslim Quarter in the Old City. The average stone weighs between two and eight tons and is about 15 feet wide. Each stone has finely chiseled borders cut around the edges a little more than 1/2 an inch deep and between 2-8 inches wide. In the northern section of the western wall, located in the tunnels cut along the base of the wall (below the surface to the left of this photo), one stone weighs 570 tons and is 44.6 feet long and almost 11 feet wide. This stone is called the Master Course.



Compare the section of Herodian ashlars in the small photo from today with the same stones seen in the model of the 70 AD Temple Mount. Notice how high today's pavement is and how much of the wall is still buried under rubble.



Looking up the Western Wall.



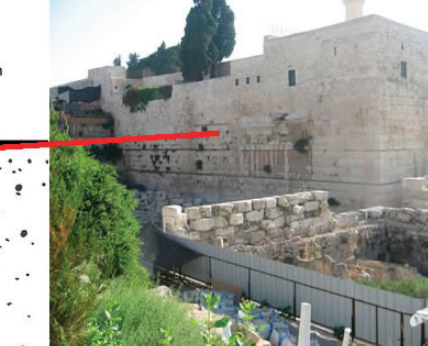
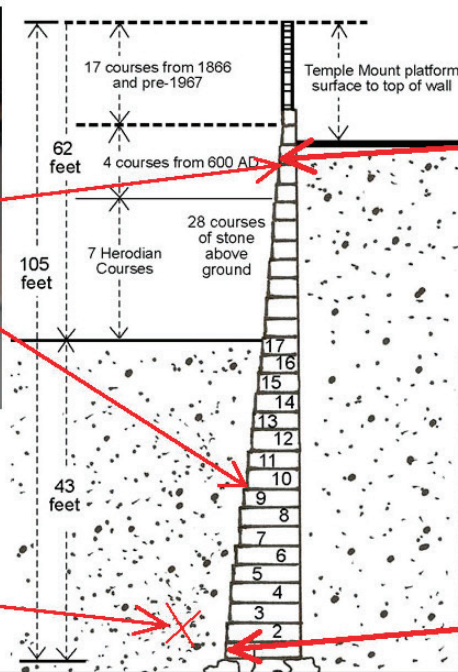
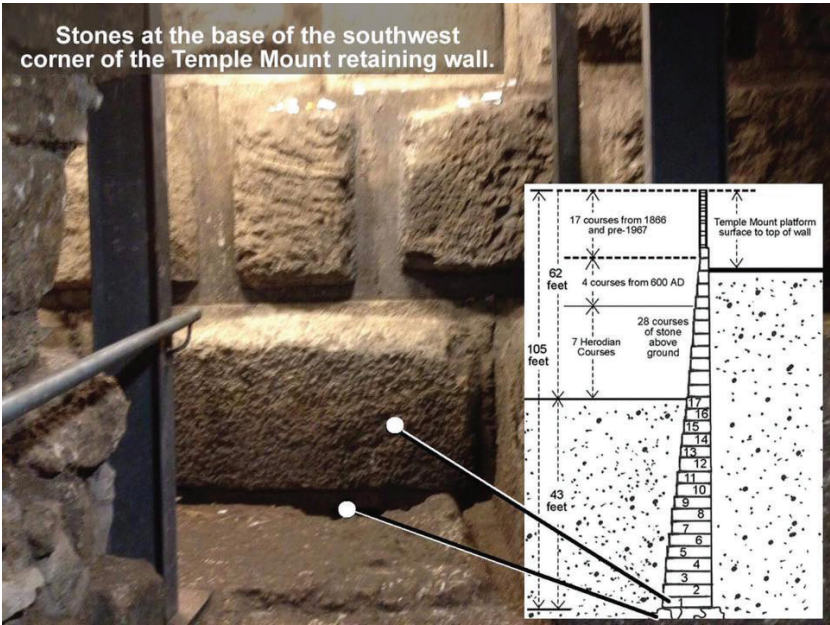
Notice the tourist, the orthodox Jews, a Jewish man, an Israeli soldier, and others at the wall. All the stones in this photo are Herodian ashlar placed here by Herod's workers.

A diagram showing the layers, or courses, of ashlar stones in the west wall. This helps show the depth and location of the bedrock and the first few courses of Herodian ashlar stones on that bedrock, which are seen in the photo.

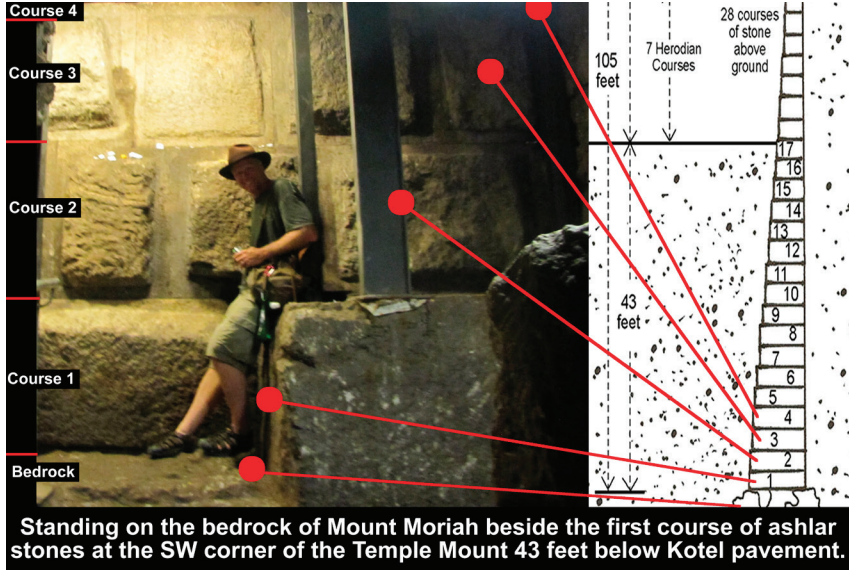
Four entrances or gates to the ancient Temple Mount can still be identified and seen along the Western Wall:

1. Warren's Gate
2. Wilson's Gate
3. Barclay's Arch
4. Robinson's Arch

The following photos show stones at the base of the western retaining wall near the south west corner. This area is under the pavement of the New Testament street that can now be seen along the south end of the west wall under Robinson's Arch. Most of these stones do not have a finished boss on the front face of the stone. The boss was left rough and was not finished smooth like the typical Herodian ashlar because these stones were set in place below the street level of the first century. These stones would never be seen by the public. Today, they still set below street level and can be accessed under Robinson's Arch or by walking up the gutter leading from the Pool of Siloam to this location, underground at the bedrock level, at the base of the Temple Mount.



UNDER THE JEWISH TEMPLE MOUNT



Standing on the bedrock of Mount Moriah beside the first course of ashlar stones at the SW corner of the Temple Mount 43 feet below Kotel pavement.

Galyn is seen here standing on the bedrock of Mount Moriah at the base of the SW corner of the Temple Mount retaining wall where the first course of stone is directly on the bedrock.



Herodian ashlar stones with unfinished bosses. These stones were left unfinished since they were set in place far below the street level and were never intended to be seen by the public.



Ashlars with unfinished bosses near the base of the retaining wall are still set perfectly in place with their tight vertical joints, 2,000 years after having been set in place. Also, notice the course of ashlar stones is set back about 1/2 inch. This 1/2 inch set back continued all the way up the wall to help stabilize the stacked stone wall.



Bottom Course of Western Wall
Bedrock
Herodian ashlar stones at base of temple mount



Interestingly, a couple of ashlars with finished bosses are found below street level in the first three courses alongside unfinished ashlars.



This is the deepest part of a mikveh. Notice two of the steps (or, three of the water levels) starting in the bottom left corner of this photo. This ritual bath is cut into the bedrock of Mount Moriah at the base of the SW corner of the western retaining wall.



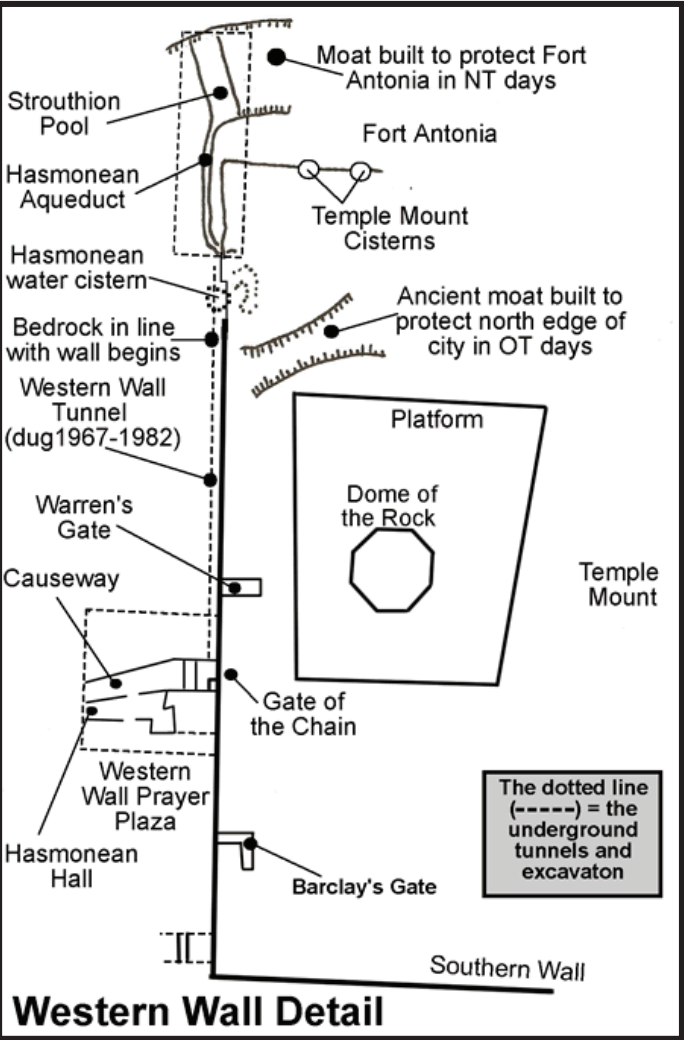
Part of the steps cut into the bedrock for the mikveh, or ritual bath, can be seen in the front of this photo.



A depression carved for a channel for an Old Testament mikveh, or ritual bath, at the base of the west wall of the retaining wall. This small mikveh was cut and covered by the builders around 19 BC.

Chapter 42

Western Wall Tunnels



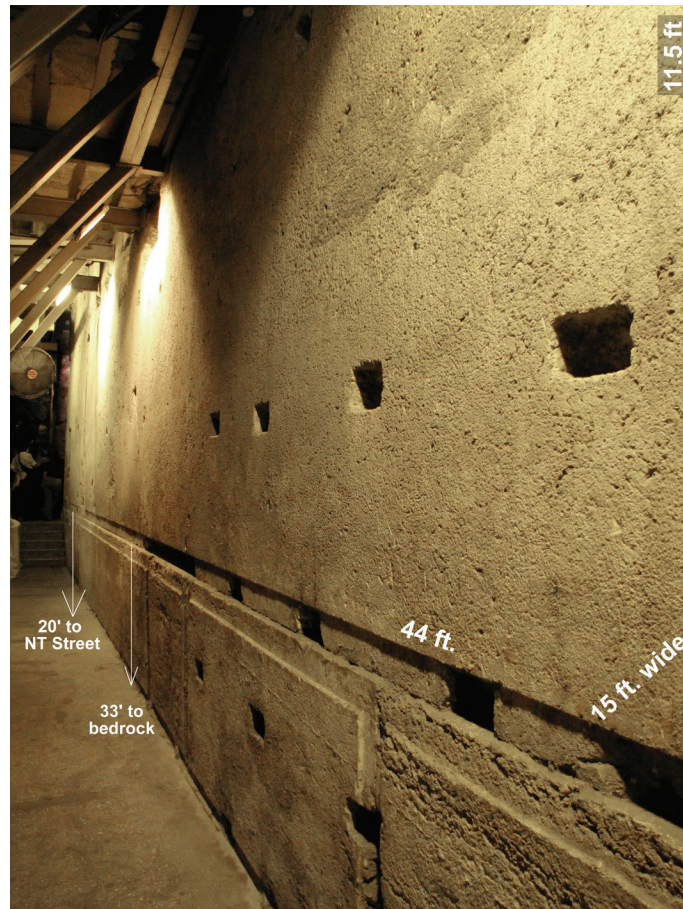
When Herod doubled the size of the Old Testament Temple Mount he expanded to the north, to the south and to the west. The walls along the west side were set on the bedrock. The west wall of the Temple Mount's retaining wall is 1,591 feet long, making it the longest of the four Temple Mount walls. In 70 AD the Romans completely destroyed the Temple, the Temple Mount buildings, and most of the Temple Mount wall except for the lower portions that were buried in the rubble from the debris of the dismantled Temple precincts and walls above. From the Western Wall Prayer Plaza beside Wilson's Arch a tunnel can be entered that runs along the northern portion of the west wall up to its northwest corner.



A vaulted passageway entered from the Western Wall Prayer Plaza. It leads to Wilson's Arch and the tunnels along the northern portion of the Western Wall.



The Master Course Stone: This stone is 44 feet long, 11.5 feet high, and 15 feet wide. It is estimated to weigh 570-630 tons. This stone is the master course. It was used to stabilize the smaller stones under it. It sits 20 feet above the Herodian street level and 33 feet above the bedrock. The master course extends to the left of the edge of this photo and past the right edge. The small stones set above were used to fill in where the Romans chipped away at it in 70 AD, while attempting to dismantle the whole Western Wall. They reached the level of this Master Course Stone and stopped. The rectangular holes in the stone were bored centuries later to help secure plaster to the wall in order to create an underground cistern to hold water for the homes above.

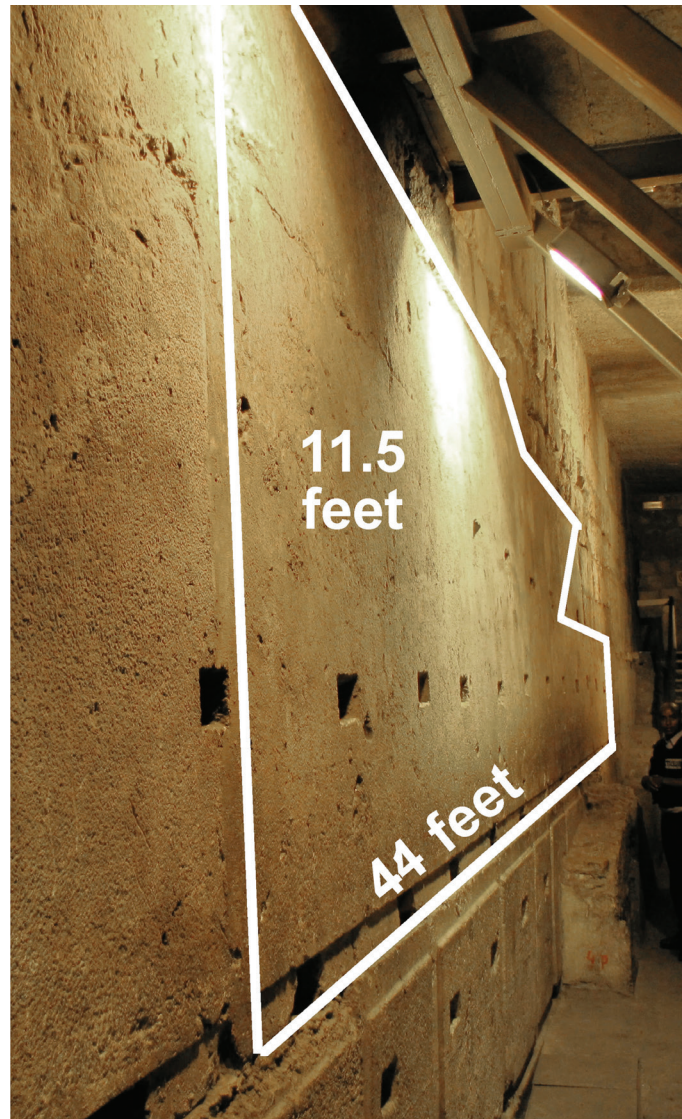


Another view of the Master Course Stone.



This master course stone is used to stabilize the stones under it. It weighs 570-630 ton and is 44 feet long, 11.5 feet high and 15 feet wide. It is setting 20 feet above the Herodian street level of the New Testament day.

Galyn in the Western Wall tunnels by the largest Herodian ashlar in the Temple Mount walls.



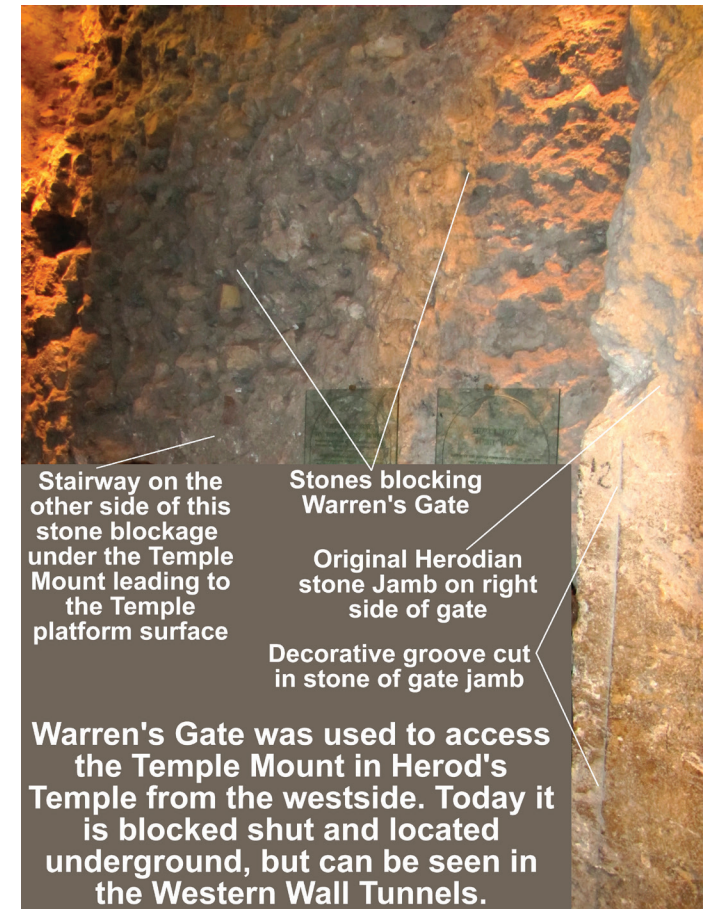
Looking north down the long Western Wall Tunnel.



The rectangle holes in the ashlar were cut around 135 AD when Hadrian converted this area under the rubble into cisterns. The rectangle holes were cut so that wooden blocks or stones could be inserted into them to help secure the plaster to the walls. The plaster made the walls of the cisterns watertight. Some plaster can still be seen attached to part of the wall.



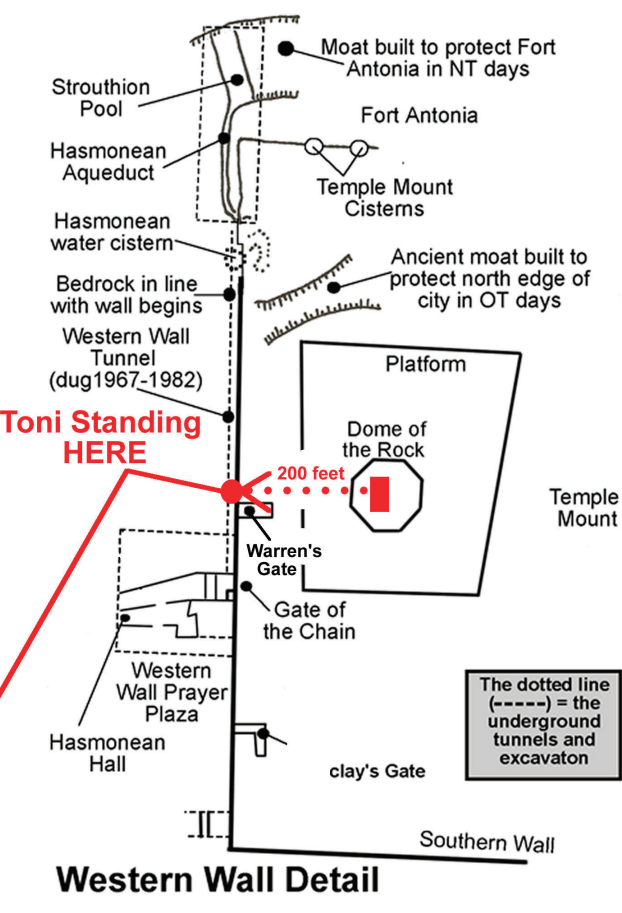
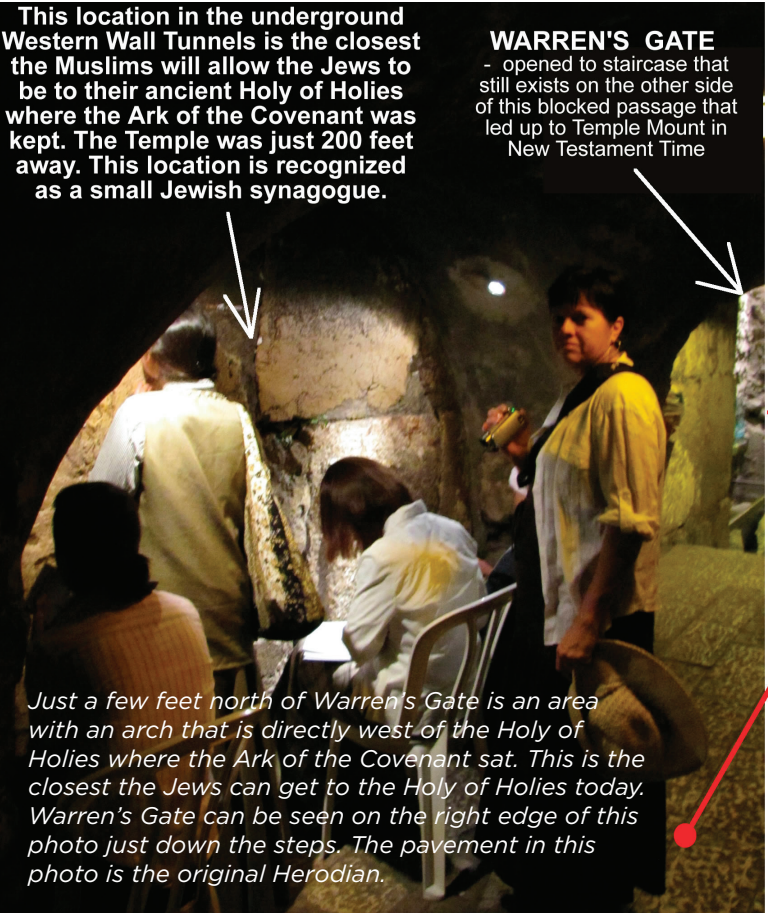
A close look at the ashlar with the wooden (stone) block holding the plaster in place in the Western Wall tunnel.



Warren's Gate was used to access the Temple Mount in Herod's Temple from the westside. Today it is blocked shut and located underground, but can be seen in the Western Wall Tunnels.

This is a photo of Warren's Gate that was used to access the Temple Mount. Notice the decorative engraving on the door jamb on the right side of the photo (the straight groove beginning by the number 12). Warren's Gate is about 150 feet into the Western Wall Tunnel. The paving stones are from the original Herodian street that led to this gate. On the other side of this blocked gateway is a stairway under the Temple Mount leading up to the Temple Mount surface, which the Jews used in the Middle Ages as a synagogue called "The Cave."

Warren's Gate was discovered in 1867 by Charles Warren. The single stone that makes the gate's threshold is original from Herod's Temple. Warren's Gate led to a tunnel and a staircase that worshippers could use to ascend to the Temple Mount. The Jews continued to use this gate and tunnel as a synagogue until the Crusaders conquered Jerusalem in 1099 and banned them from entering Jerusalem. In 1187 Saladin made the area inaccessible. This is the nearest point the Jews can get to the Most Holy Place. It is also believed to be the hiding place of the Ark of the Covenant.



Maimonides wrote in The Book of Temple Service in the 1100's: "When Solomon built the Temple, knowing that it was destined to be destroyed, he built underneath, in deep and winding tunnels, a place in which to hide the Ark. It was King Josiah who commanded the Ark be hidden in the place which Solomon had prepared." Second Chronicles 35:3 might refer to Josiah removing the Ark of the Covenant from the Temple to the hiding place Solomon had made, before the Babylonian invasion: "And he said to the Levites who taught all Israel and who were holy to the Lord, 'Put the holy ark in the house that Solomon the son of David, king of Israel, built.'"



This photo was taken from the tunnel along the Western Wall looking down into an excavated area of the wall. (The Western Wall is at the top of the photo.) This view shows how deep the courses of ashlar stones go before they reach bedrock.



The tunnel continues further and further to the north along the Western Wall.



Another view looking down at the ashlars. Details of the preserved stones show the quality of workmanship that is not seen on stones that have been exposed to wars and elements for 2,000 years. Notice, the depth is not as great as before since the bedrock level rises the further north the tunnel goes.



More tunnel and more ashlars as we continue toward the north.



A Herodian street near the north end of the Western Wall tunnels. The two pillars on the left were part of a colonnaded street that ran to the west of this street. This photo was taken looking north with the Western Wall on the right. This Herodian street would have run north-to-south, and the colonnaded street would have made a "T" intersection with it and run toward the west (left).



Galyn at the "T" intersection of the Herodian street at the north end of the Western Wall tunnels.



Toni stands on first century pavement of a north/south street that was ground level and open to the sun in New Testament times. There are two pillars that began a colonnade of a covered street that ran west at this "T" intersection. These streets ran alongside and led to the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount. They provided thousands of people access to the Temple gates. Today this pavement is below ground in the Western Wall Tunnels on the NW corner of the Temple Mount.



Toni stands by an unfinished quarried stone. Wooden blocks would have been wedged into the groove in the middle and then soaked with water to make the stone split.

Toni stands on the Herodian pavement between two pillars that are part of the road that led to the left of the picture. 2,000 years ago this area was under open sky, and the road continued straight (north) and to the left (west). Other pillars going west have been excavated further down the road that would have been in line with these two pillars.



This quarry, only a few feet north of the Herodian road and the Hasmonean cistern, is where most of the Herodian stones for the Western Wall were taken from.



This is the Hasmonean Aqueduct cut through bedrock. It goes to the pool on the northwest corner of the western wall of the Temple Mount. The bedrock walls have been worn smooth by the water.

Walking through a water system that Herod redirected to the Temple Mount.



North of the Western Wall and Temple Mount





In 1996 Benjamin Netanyahu allowed the Jews to open the northern end of this Western Wall tunnel. When the tunnel was blasted through, it opened onto the Ummariya Madrasah, which is the street adjacent to the Via Dolorosa. This action resulted in riots by the Muslims who believed that the Jews were tunneling under the Temple Mount and that they were attempting to lay claim to the area of territory in the Muslim Quarter (which is, either way, in Israel and under Israeli control). Over the next two weeks 14 people were killed in the riots protesting the opening of the north end of the Western Wall Tunnel. Today a wall has been built across the north end of the tunnel. The Tunnel must now be accessed from the north side in the Convent of the Sisters of Zion. The Struthion Pool lies below this covenant.



The Struthion Pool was an open pool that served as a water reservoir for the city and as a moat for Fort Antonia. It collected rain water and also received water from the Hasmonean aqueduct.



The vaulted ceiling was installed by Hadrian in 135 to cover the open pools of water. The holes in the roof were used by people above to access the water by lowering buckets on ropes. Hadrian built a market place at street level above these vaulted ceilings.

Chapter 43

Mikvah, the Ritual Baths



A first century mikvah used during the days of Jesus and the book of Acts, located south of the Temple Mount at the base of the Double Gate stairs. This could easily have been one of the many mikvah used to baptize some of the 3,000 new Jewish believers on the Day of Pentecost as described in Acts 2.

The word “mikvah” (also, mikveh, mikva, miqve) means “collection” and refers to a collection of water that was used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. They are ritual baths. The Jews would purify themselves before several activities or after certain events that made them unclean. Conversion to Judaism requires submersion into a mikvah.



One of the many mikvah, or ritual baths, located south of the Temple Mount that would have been used by the Jews for ceremonial cleansing before entering the Temple grounds above, and also by the apostles when they baptized the multitudes on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

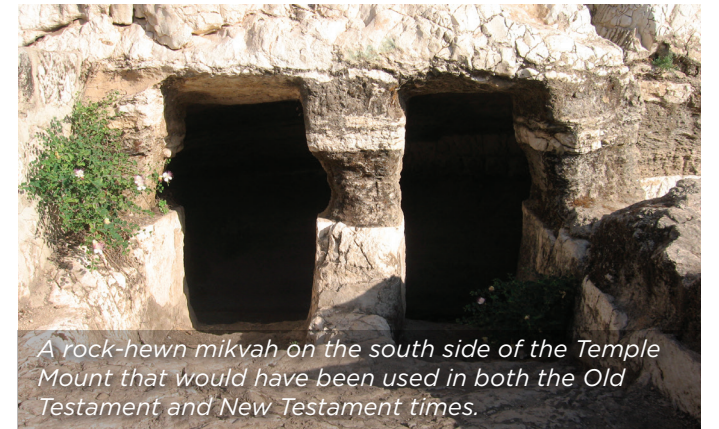
The area around the Temple Mount, especially to the south, is filled with mikvah. Many of them were most likely used on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) to baptize the converted Jews in Jesus' name. It signified a major change in their understanding of who Jesus was and was a sign of their new faith and allegiance. A mikvah had to have a source of running water, such as a spring, or other fresh water, such as rain. A mikvah had to be large enough to allow an average sized person to immerse his whole body. Stairs would be used to descend into and ascend from the mikvah. Often there was a wall separating the clean side from the unclean side.



The wall in this mikvah may have separated the clean side from the unclean side.



Galyn and Toni in the entrance of a mikvah on the outside of the southern wall of the Old City.



A rock-hewn mikvah on the south side of the Temple Mount that would have been used in both the Old Testament and New Testament times.



A nice example of a mikvah used by Jews for ritual cleansing before ascending to the Temple grounds.



Looking down on the large mikvah discovered in 2009 just 65 feet west of the Temple Mount's Western Wall. There are a total of eleven broad steps that descend into this immersion pool. Apparently this large mikvah was built into a government administrative building that stood alongside the west retaining wall of the Temple Mount.

Chapter 44

The Large Mikvah

In 2009 a large 2,000-year-old mikvah was uncovered along the Western Wall Tunnel only 65 feet from the Western Wall itself. This was one of the largest mikvah ever discovered. It has 11 steps and was used by the multitude of Jews entering the Temple Mount near Wilson's Arch or Warren's Gate.

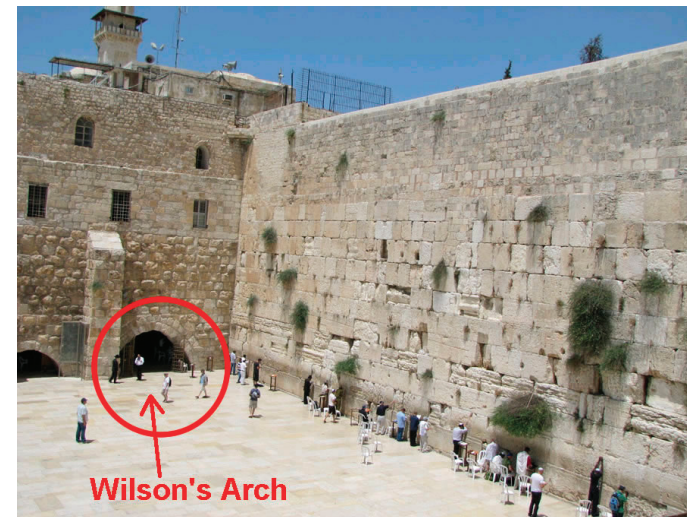
Josephus wrote that the Jewish government's administrative center was located in this area at the foot of the Temple on the west side. The Talmud says that the Sanhedrin would meet in this building. This highly decorated mikvah has the architectural and artistic style of some of Herod's most magnificent works with finely dressed ashlar stones and the highest quality craftsmanship in decorating. This could be part of the Sanhedrin's governmental building as well as their ritual bath.



Chapter 45

Wilson's Arch

Wilson's Arch is the modern name for an arch that spanned 42 feet and supported a road that ran 75 feet above the Herodian pavement and valley below. The road at the top of Wilson's Arch accessed a gate which was level with the surface of the Temple Mount in Jesus' day. Although the arch stood high above the Herodian pavement, only the top is still visible today, where it is still supported against the Western Wall. Josephus mentions the bridge that this arch was a part of and says it connected the Temple Mount to the Upper City on the Western Hill on the other side of the Central (Tyropoeon) Valley. This bridge also carried water through an aqueduct to the Temple Mount from Solomon's Pools. The arch was identified in 1864 by Charles Wilson.



Wilson's Arch can be seen in the corner of the Western Wall. Today the height from the bottom of the arch to the pavement below is only 20 feet. In 30 AD the height was 75 feet.



Wilson's Arch on the Western Wall as it would have looked in the days of the New Testament.



Wilson's Arch is seen spanning the Western Wall road in this model showing the area in New Testament times.



Stones from inside and under Wilson's arch. The original pavement would have been about 50 feet lower than it is now.



Entering Wilson's Arch where Jewish men pray and study Scripture.



Jewish men study and pray inside the arch today.



The right (east) side of the arch before entering Wilson's Arch.



Prayer under Wilson's Arch beside a wooden cabinet which contains large scrolls of the Torah.

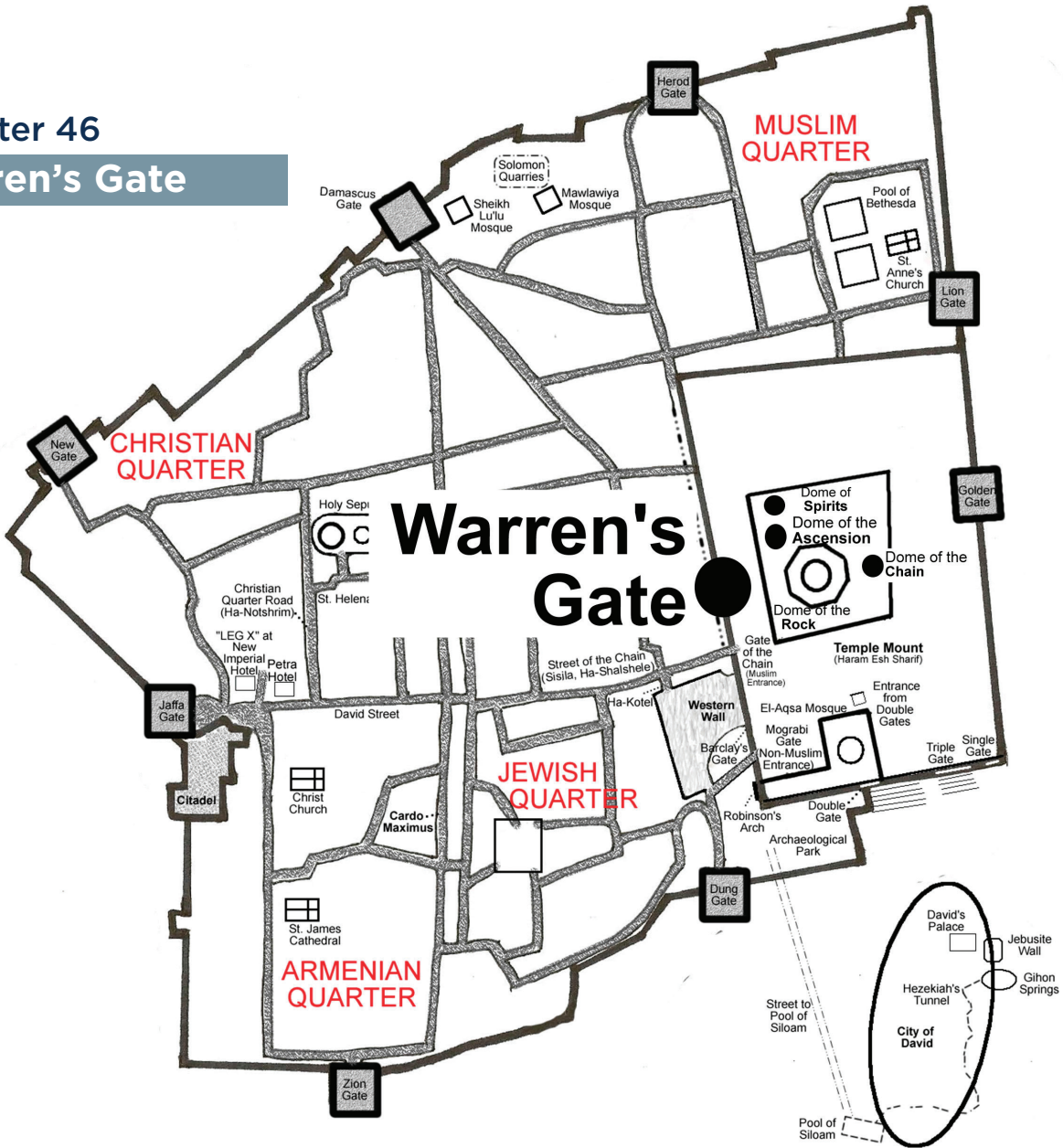


Inside and under the arch that supported the road that accessed the Temple Mount in the New Testament days.

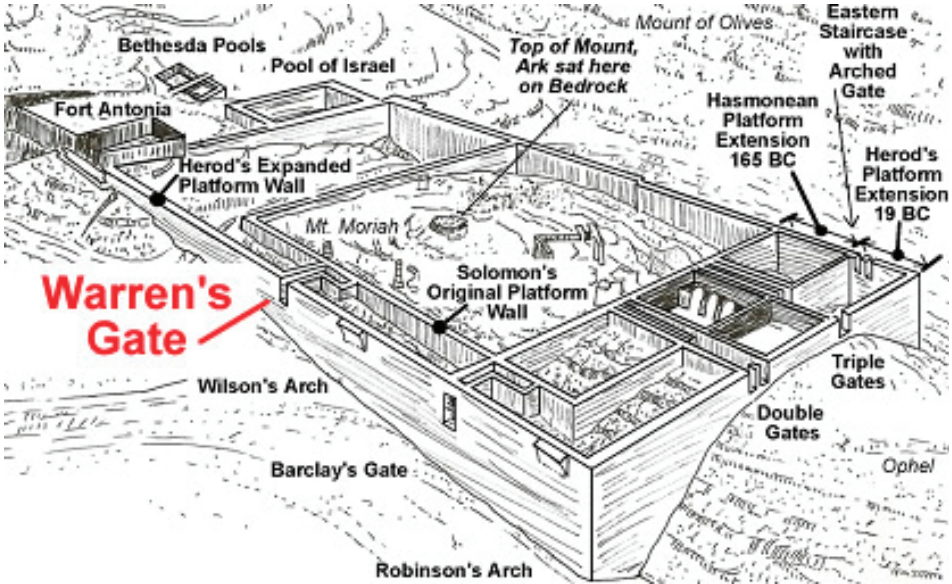


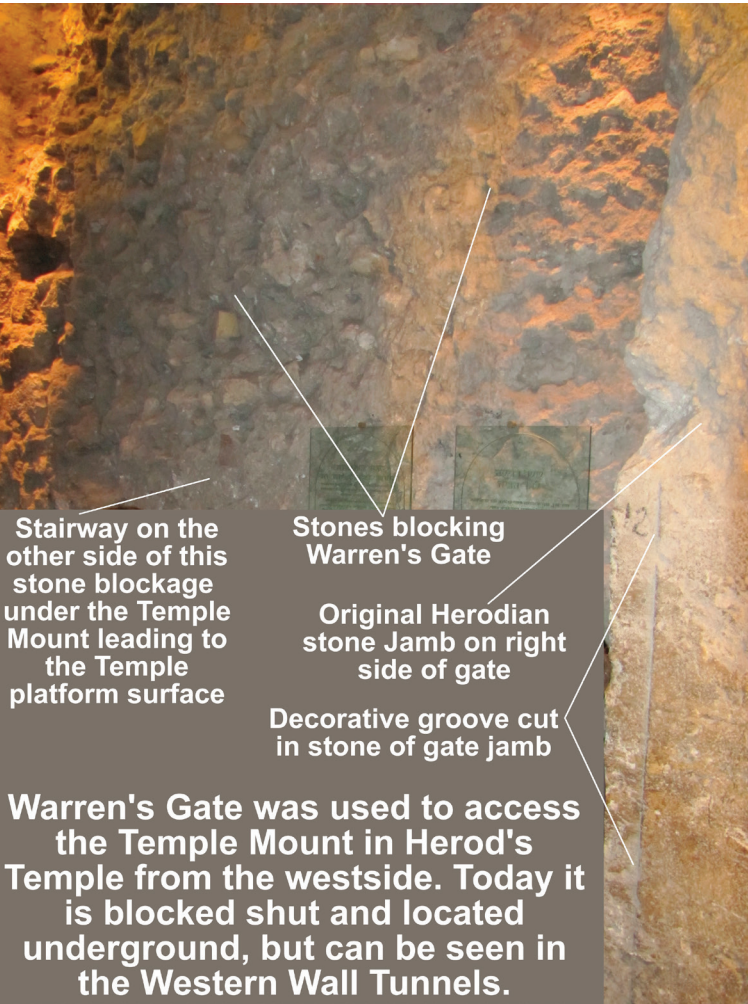
Chapter 46

Warren's Gate



Warren's Gate was one of four entrances into the Temple Mount from the west side. It is located about 150 feet into the Western Wall Tunnel. On the other side of this now blocked gate is a tunnel and a staircase that lead up to the surface of the Temple Mount. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire (Christians), the Muslim conquerors allowed the Jews to pray in this tunnel, and the Jews created a synagogue here at the base of the stairs below the Temple Mount. But, in 1099 the Crusaders (Christians) destroyed the synagogue, which the Jews had called "the Cave", and turned it into a cistern. This was the closest gate to the Holy of Holies.





The gate post, or jamb, on the lower right dates from the time of Herod's Temple. The gate has since been blocked shut. This northernmost gate of Herod's Temple is known today as Warren's Gate, discovered by Charles Warren, the British archaeologist who worked in Jerusalem under an association called the Palestine Exploration Fund in the 1800's.



Jewish women in prayer at a point in the Western Wall tunnel that is the closest location to the Holy of Holies available to the Jews. About 15 steps back and down a flight of stairs is Warren's Gate. In July of 1981 a riot erupted here between the Jewish archaeologists excavating this tunnel and some Muslims who came down from the Temple Mount through the stairway leading to Warren's Gate. A few Jews had begun removing stones that blocked Warren's Gate and the noise alerted the Muslims on the Temple Mount above.

The decorated Herodian gate jamb from the right side of this gate still remains. The left side was damaged in an earthquake and has been replaced.



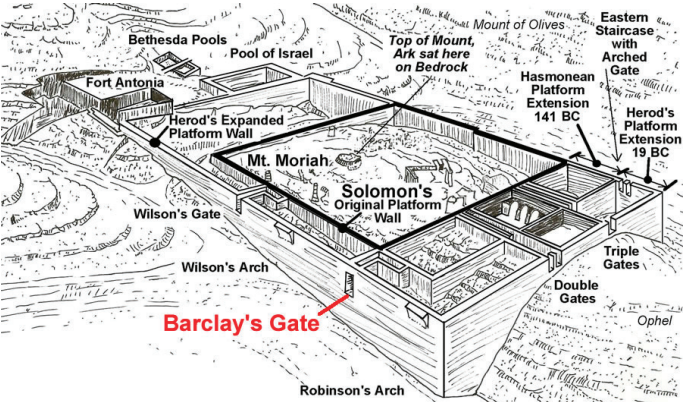
Chapter 47

Barclay's Gate

This gate was first recognized by James Barclay, an American consul in 1855. It is referred to as the Kiponus Gate in the Mishna.



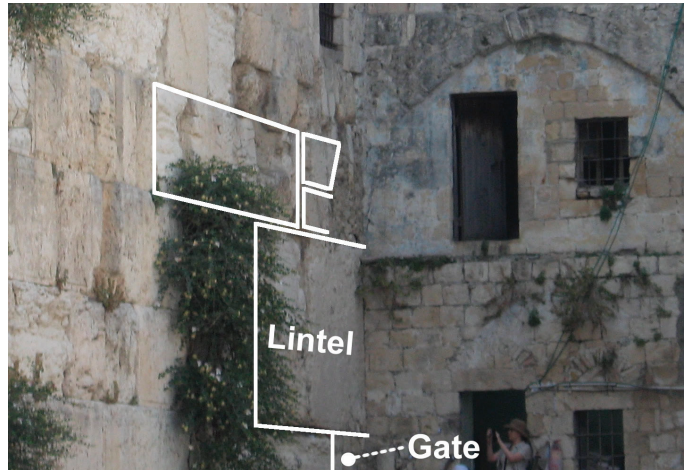
This large stone (which looks like a square) is itself about 21 feet long, 6.5 feet wide, and weighs 50 tons. This stone was the massive lintel (or, top stone) that spanned a gate into the temple of Herod's day. The gate entrance was almost 27 feet high. The building to the right was attached to the Western Wall and was originally part of a ramp that led to the Mugrabi Gate, which was above Barclay's Gate. The lintel can be seen from the inside of the building. Barclay's Gate is beside the women's court for prayer along the Western Wall.



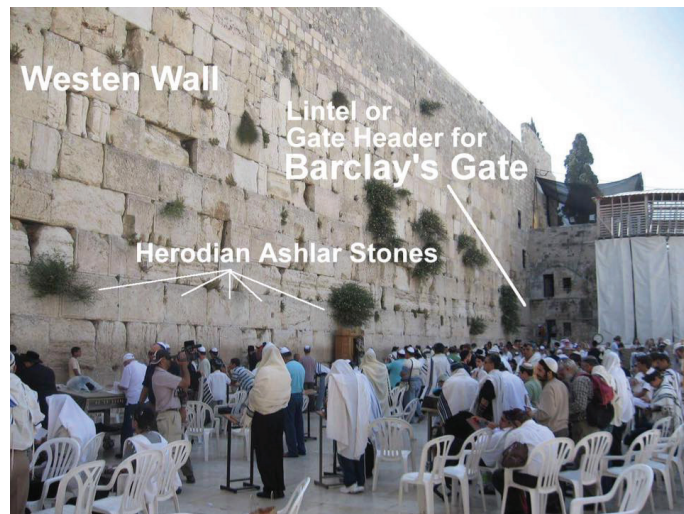
The gate used to enter the Temple Mount today is above the lintel of Barclay's Gate and is called the Moroccans' Gate, the Gate of the Moors, or the Mugrabi Gate.



Below the lintel, before the building was added, the gate was closed in with smaller stones



The stairway is still on the other side of the wall and still leads to the Temple Mount. This staircase is accessed from the Temple Mount just north of the Mugrabi Gate. The Muslims descend these stairs today to a room they call El-Buraq Mosque.



A close view of the Herodian lintel over Barclay's Gate in the Western Wall.

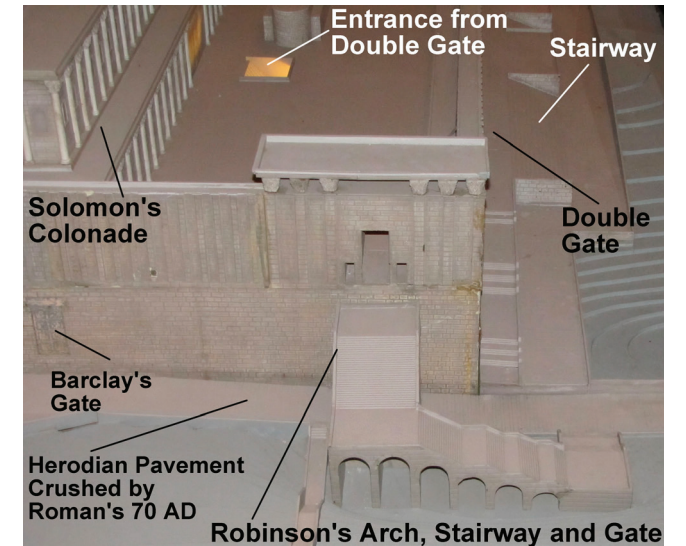
A view looking down along the Western Wall into the court where the Jewish women pray. The large rectangular lintel stone of Barclay's Gate can be seen along with the gate opening that is now filled in with small stones below the lintel. Some of the original gate stones can be seen above the lintel.

Chapter 48

Robinson's Arch

Robinson's Arch is on the south end of the western wall. It supported a staircase that led up to a gate into the Temple Mount. The arch is named after Edward Robinson, the American scholar who first identified it in 1838. What remains of this arch is about 39 feet north of the southwest corner of the Temple Mount wall, and it measures about 50 feet long. In 1867 Charles Warren located the large pier built on the bedrock 41 feet directly west of the arch, which is also 50 feet long.

Details of a model showing the southwest corner of the Temple Mount. The staircase leading up to Robinson's Arch can be seen near the middle. The arches under the stairs were shops. These shops and others along the Western Wall directly under Robinson's Arch and gate have been located and excavated.



The southwest corner of the Temple Mount. The remains of where Robinson's Arch made contact with the Western Wall can still be seen. The entrance gate would have been directly above this.





In this photo Robinson's Arch is seen high on the western wall of the Herodian Temple mount retaining wall. Lintels of the entrances to shops along the western wall road are seen at the bottom left of this photo.



Benjamin Mazar excavated this area after 1967. Before that time the ground level was up to Robinson's Arch so that a person could walk up and touch it. Below, in the excavation you can see (from left to right):

1. The square openings of shops that were under Robinson's Arch
2. The remains of the piers that supported the arch and the staircase
3. Steps at the base of the Temple Mount corner that led up to a pavement which ran over the top of the shops that sat under Robinson's Arch
4. Located just to the left of those steps are the remains of walls (3 or 4) from the shops that were perpendicular to and butted up against the west wall (facing the camera),
5. The pavement and steps that ran along the south (right) side of the Temple Mount



Robinson's Arch - all that remains of this Herodian structure is the spring of the arch which was embedded into the wall to support the arch and pavement. The gate was designed to provide access to the Temple Mount, directly above this spring. (A spring of an arch is the point at which the arch begins to rise from its support.) The groove seen along the wall running below Robinson's Arch on both the west and south walls was cut into the Herodian ashlar by the Muslim Umayyad Dynasty between the years 651 and 750. The Muslims used these grooves to hold pipes that supplied water to the buildings constructed to the south of the Temple Mount. The walls of one of those buildings can be seen in the right of this photo directly behind the Temple Mount's southern wall. A close look at the walls of this building reveal that it was built with reused Herodian ashlar stones that were left from the Roman destruction of the Temple site in 70 AD. Reused Herodian ashlar are very common throughout the city.



A view looking up at Robinson's Arch from the original Herodian pavement below. The blocks and windows above the arch are not original. The windows open into the Islamic Museum that can be visited on the Temple Mount. The Muslims call the Temple Mount Hara mesh-Sherif, "The Noble Sanctuary." This arch, the spring, and all the stones in the wall below the arch are original from the Days of Herod's construction, which began in 19 BC. The arch, the staircase, and the gate were in use in the days of Jesus when he spent time on the Temple Mount.



A photo taken from on top of rubble that has not yet been removed looking south at Robinson's Arch. Until 1967 the rubble under Robinson's Arch brought the ground level up to the arch. Older photos of Robinson's Arch show people touching and sitting on the Arch from ground level.



This close-up shows the Herodian ashlar stones that surround the arch.



A Hebrew inscription was engraved and is visible in one of the ashlar blocks under Robinson's Arch.

וְדֹאֵתְכֶם וּשְׁשׁ לְבַבְכֶם
וְעִנְיֹתֵיכֶם כִּדְשָׁא

The inscription may have been engraved around 900 AD to commemorate the Jewish graves found in the rubble under the arch from that same time period. The inscription comes from Isaiah 66:14.

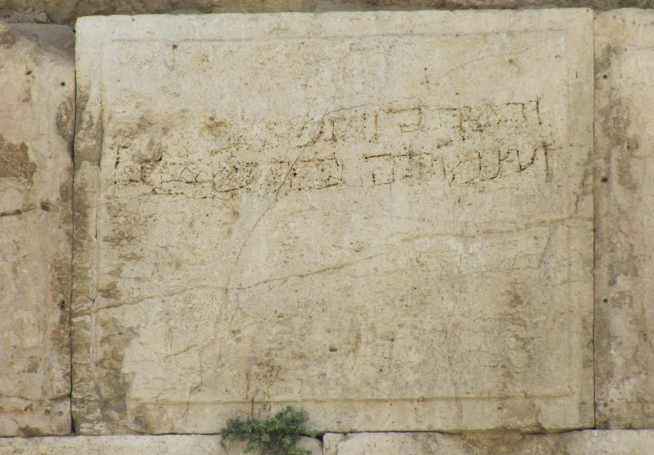
This inscription was discovered by Benjamin Mazar during his excavations that began after the Six-Day war in 1967. The inscription reads:

You shall see and your heart shall rejoice. Their bones shall flourish like grass.

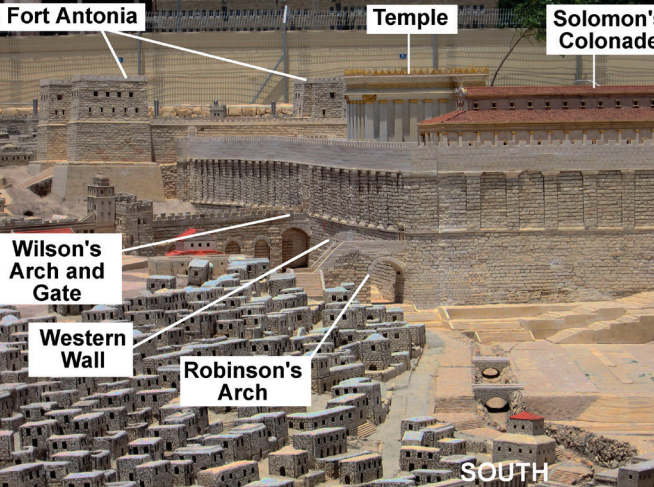
It appears to be a paraphrase of Isaiah 66:14:

When you see this, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass.

Mazar believes this inscription was placed here on the west wall of the Temple Mount by the Jews who were allowed back into the city to rebuild the Temple in Emperor Julian's day in 363. Others recognize that about four feet below the inscription, 30-40 burials had taken place around 900 AD.



A close up view of a Herodian ashlar from 19 BC shows a Hebrew inscription of Isaiah 66:14 from 363 AD.



Some time during the construction of Robinson's Arch between 19 BC-20 AD, an ashlar stone fell while being set in place. That stone crashed through a pavement stone that covered the gutter below, under the Western Wall road, through which water flowed down the Tyropoeon Valley. Since the stone was so heavy and it was embedded in the gutter below street level the builders simply left it where it fell. In 1867 Charles Warren saw this fallen ashlar that had been lodged in the top of the gutter since the first century and sketched a drawing of it. Recently this same fallen ashlar has been located under Robinson's Arch - still lodged in the ceiling of the gutter it crashed into 2,000 years ago. Here are some photos Galyn took while exploring in the gutter under the Western Wall pavement near Robinson's Arch.



A sketch by Charles Warren from the 1860's that captures the detail of what he saw deep underground in Jerusalem in his day. In Warren's day, rubble and debris covered the New Testament streets below Robinson's arch so high up the wall that Robinson's Arch could be touched while standing at ground level beside the arch.



A photo from 2012 of the same gutter with the same fallen ashlar stone protruding through the ceiling under the pavement of the Western Wall road.



Walking north looking at the south side of the fallen ashlar

Walking south looking at the north side of the fallen ashlar



Looking up at the arched ceiling of this gutter under Robinson's Arch that runs through the Tyropoeon Valley south to the Pool of Siloam. A portion of the fallen ashlar can be seen at the bottom of this photo of the arched ceiling.



A view of the fallen ashlar from directly underneath.



Galyn walks in the gutter of the Tyropoeon Valley under the fallen ashlar.

Chapter 49

Western Wall Street

A Herodian street from the days of Jesus and the New Testament runs along the west side of the Western Wall. A portion of this street has been found at the northwest edge of the Western Wall inside the tunnels (as seen in a photo earlier in the book). This same street ran from the northwest corner all along the Western Wall of the Temple Mount to the southwest corner (see photo below). It then continued all the way down through the City of David to the Pool of Siloam, where a large portion of it has been excavated.

The street was originally built by Herod the Great and later repaved by Herod Agrippa I around 40-44 AD. Under the street is a gutter that is large enough to walk in, which collected rain water and ran it south, out of the city. The pavement is supported by three rows of vaults which created vaulted rooms built on the bedrock. During the Roman destruction of the Temple and Temple Mount huge chunks of rock and ashlar stones were pushed over the edge onto this pavement, where the force of the falling objects crushed portions of the pavement down into the gutter beneath the streets. During the excavation process much of this rubble was removed, but some was left to help communicate the magnitude of the devastation caused by the Roman Legions. The stones that were left in place can still be seen lying on the street in the piles where they landed almost 2,000 years ago.

A 246 foot portion of the street was excavated below Robinson's Arch. The street there is 28 feet wide and is bordered with raised curbstones.

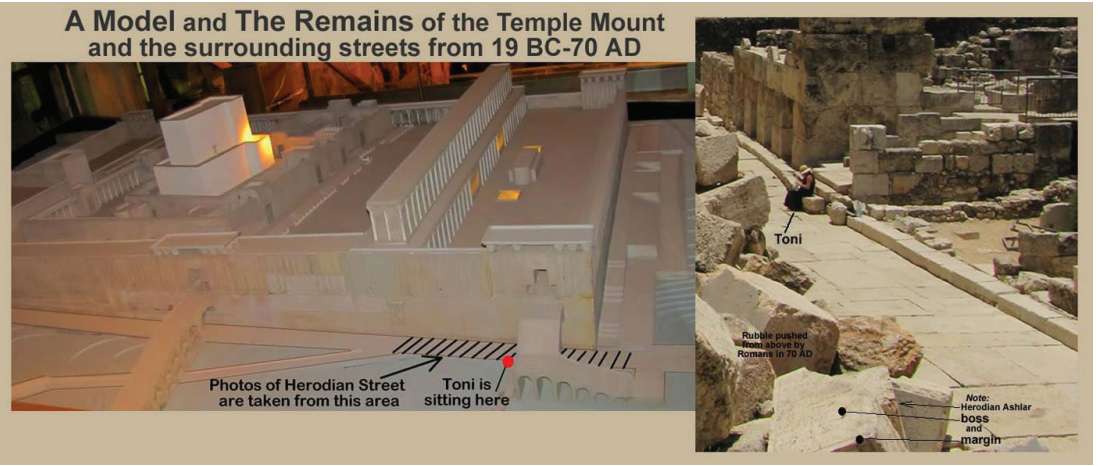
Looking south down the Herodian street along the Western Wall at the southwest end of the Temple Mount. Notice the flat paving stones used in the street. Notice also the straight stone curb running along the right side. Toni sits toward the end of the street on the curb in front of shops that were under the staircase of Robinson's Arch. Stones from the Jewish Temple and broken Herodian ashlar lay at the base of the Temple Mount wall right where they landed in 70 AD when the Tenth Roman Legion destroyed the temple and its courts.



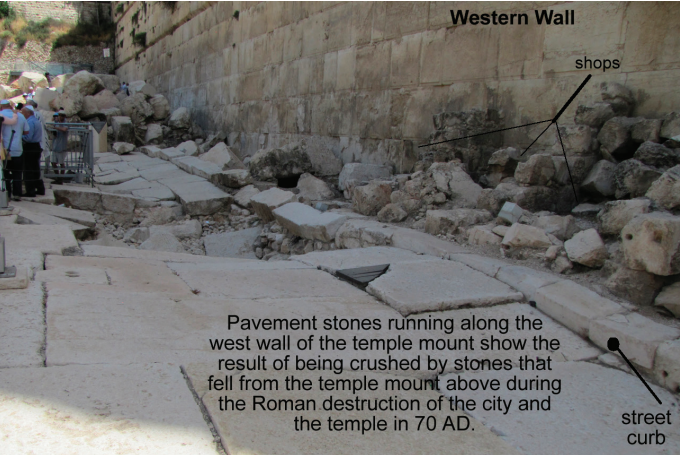
This photo, looking north with the Western Wall on the right, shows the pavement crushed by falling blocks of stone from the Roman destruction in 70 AD. In the bottom right quadrant of the photo the remains of shops built against the Western Wall can be seen. Shops lined both sides of this street and may have been controlled by the High Priest Annas.



The damaged pavement of the street is seen as we look south. To the right are the shops that were under Robinson's Arch, and a decorated piece of stone that was hurled from the Temple complex above (top right). To the left we see the curb of the street and the remains of the walls of the shops near the southwest corner. To the south are a couple of Muslim buildings constructed during the Umayyad Dynasty from 661 to 750 AD. To the back left is the Umayyad palace. To the back right is the Umayyad hostel. Both of these buildings were made of Herodian ashlar found in the Roman rubble.



Compare Toni's position sitting on the curb in the photo to her same location marked on the model showing the New Testament Temple, pavement and shops.



As is seen in this photo, shops were built up against the western wall along the street and curb under Robinson's Arch.



Two interesting pieces of the Temple complex are seen here. 1) In the front right is a stone that fell from the Temple Mount above. It is a piece of the railing from the course of stones at the top of the southwest corner, and is called the Trumpeting Stone. The priestly trumpeter would have stood on this stone to sound the trumpet signaling the beginning and end of Sabbath days and festivals. The sharp corner that has been cut out of this block is where the priest would have stood, and the beveled edge served as a guard railing. In the top left portion of the guard rail is a Hebrew inscription. It is likely that James, the pastor of the Jerusalem church who wrote the book of James, was forced to stand on this stone in 63 AD to proclaim that Jesus was not the Messiah. Instead, James confessed Jesus by announcing to the crowd that Jesus was the Christ, that he sits at God's right hand, and that he will return in the clouds from heaven. The scribes and Pharisees responded by pushing James, the brother of the Lord, over this railing to his death. 2) Behind the Trumpeting Stone on the pavement is a nicely carved block that was a decorative piece from the Temple complex. Also notice the four shops on the curb of the pavement on the left side, at the back of the photo.



A close up of the Trumpeting Stone that was found directly under the southwest corner. The Hebrew inscription can be clearly seen on the railing. It is read right to left, and says: "For the place of trumpeting to . . ." It appears the rest of the inscription was broken off when Charles Warren dug a tunnel through the rubble in the 1800's, and went right through this stone. The rest of the inscription may have said "For the place of trumpeting 'to the temple,' or, 'to herald the Sabbath.'" Josephus describes this place on the Temple Mount wall when he writes:
Above the roof of the priests' chambers, . . . it was the custom for one of the priests to stand and to give notice, by sound of trumpet, in the afternoon of the approach, and on the following evening of the close, of every seventh day, announcing to the people the respective hours for ceasing work and for resuming their labors.
- Josephus IV:9:12



The Hebrew inscription on the Trumpeting Stone from the Temple that Herod built.



This is the outside view of the trumpeting stone, which would have been seen from outside the Temple Mount looking up to the top of the SW corner where the priest sounded the trumpet.



This carved stone block was used to decorate the temple complex. It was found at the base of the western wall in the rubble that covered the pavement.



This view is looking at the back of the shops (see the lintel of the shop door, middle left) and at the southwest corner of the Temple Mount. In the middle of the photo is a bakery where circular floor ovens were found.

Looking north over the Trumpeting Stone (in the forefront of the photo) at the pavement along the Western Wall. The curbs on both sides of the Herodian pavement are visible, as well as four shops on the west side (left) of the street. The ruins of shops on the east side (right) that sat against the Western Wall can also be seen. The full width of the street is recognizable even though the right side is crushed and rubble remains on the street in the background.





This photo shows the southwest corner of the Temple Mount wall. The Herodian ashlar cornerstones are clearly visible. To the right (east) are the pavement and steps that lead along the southern wall. To the left (going north) are the stair steps that led up to the top of the shops that sat along the Western Wall.

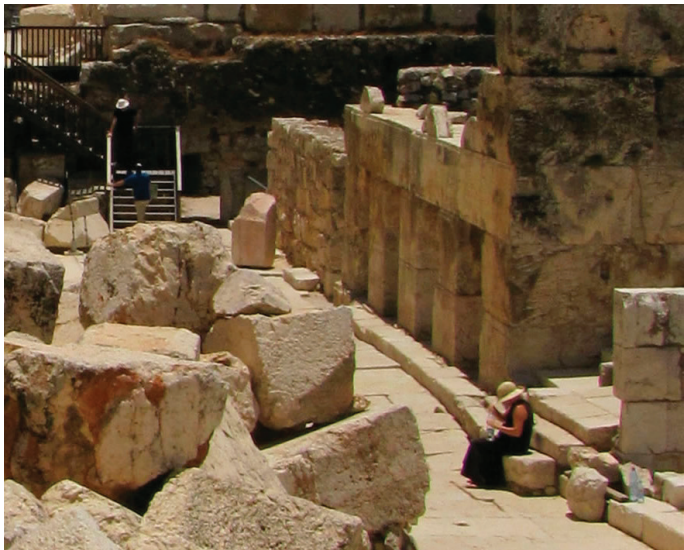


A covered channel runs north-south along the Western Wall. The southwest corner of the Temple Mount is in the top right-hand corner of the photo.

This photo was taken from the southwest corner of the Temple Mount looking west toward the Western Hill (Western Ridge) where the Upper City was located in the first century. The remains of the stairs and pavement that led people back and forth from the Temple to the Upper City still remain. The base, or pier, of Robinson's Arch is on the right.

Chapter 50

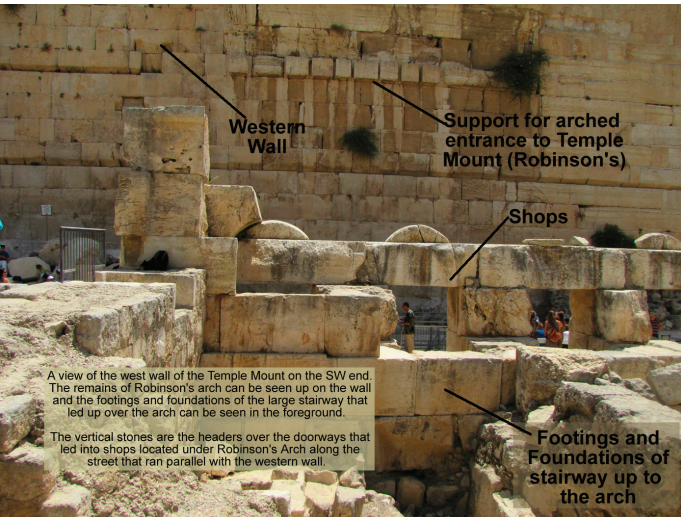
Western Wall Shops



Shops along the Herodian Street can be seen to the right of the curb. The lintels (top stone over the doorways) of these shops provided support for Robinson's Arch, which in turn supported the staircase that led to the southwestern gate of the Temple Mount. Toni is sitting on the curb of this New Testament street.



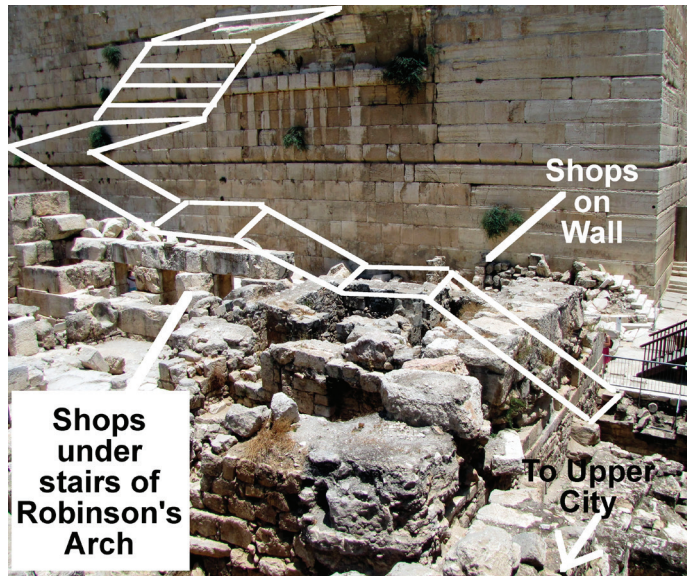
A close up of the front of the shops sitting along the Herodian road. Notice the nicely cut ashlar stones that formed the door jambs and supported the lintels above the doorways. This street was lined with shops on both sides.



A view of the shops from the back side (the Upper City side), with Robinson's Arch in the background on the Western Wall.



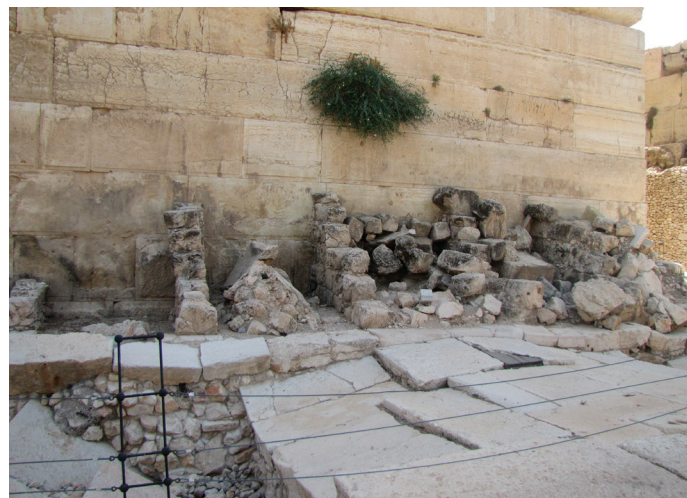
Detail of the Herodian ashlars in the door jambs and lintels of the shops.



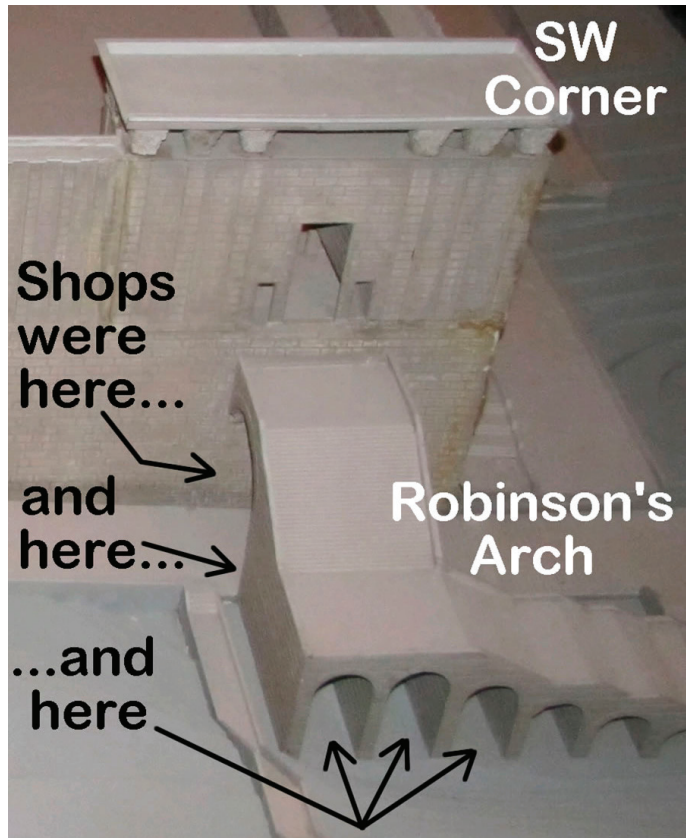
A general idea of how the stairway would have been laid out.



The archaeological site behind the shops, looking northwest.



These are the remains of three or four of the shops on the east side of the pavement that were built perpendicular to the Western Wall. Crushed pavement and curbs are seen in the bottom left quadrant of the photo.



A close up of the stairs that go to the top of the shops on the east side of the road. The shops on the west side can be seen to the left of the road.



A view from above looking at the southwest corner of the Western Wall. Notice the shops along the Western Wall and the stairs that begin at the base of the southwest corner and go over the top of the shops.

Josephus' Account of Jerusalem's Destruction in 70 AD

While the holy house was on fire, everything was plundered that came to hand, and ten thousand of those that were caught were slain . . . children, and old men, and profane persons, and priests were all slain in the same manner; so that this war went round all sorts of men, and brought them to destruction, and as well those that made supplication for their lives, as those that defended themselves by fighting. The flame was also carried a long way, and made an echo, together with the groans of those that were slain. . . Nor can one imagine anything either greater or more terrible than this noise; for there was at once a shout of the Roman legions, who were marching all together, and a sad clamor of the seditious, who were now surrounded with fire and sword. . . Yet was the misery itself more terrible than this disorder; for one would have thought that the hill itself, on which the temple stood, was seething hot, as full of fire on every part of it, that the blood was larger in quantity than the fire, and those that were slain more in number than those that slew them; for the ground did nowhere appear visible, for the dead bodies that lay on it; but the soldiers went over heaps of those bodies, as they ran upon such as fled from them. . . As for the priests, some of them plucked up from the holy house the spikes that were upon it, with their bases, which were made of lead, and shot them at the Romans instead of darts. But then as they gained nothing by so doing, . . . Now the Romans, judging that it was in vain to spare what was round about the holy house, burnt all those places, as also the remains of the cloisters and the gates, two excepted; the one on the east side, and the other on the south; both which, however, they burnt afterward. They also burnt down the treasury chambers, in which was an immense quantity of money, and an immense number of garments, and other precious goods . . . before Caesar had determined any thing about these people, or given the commanders any orders relating to them, the soldiers were in such a rage, that they set that cloister on fire; by which means it came to pass that some of these were destroyed by throwing themselves down headlong, and some were burnt in the cloisters themselves. Nor

did any one of them escape with his life. A false prophet was the occasion of these people's destruction, who had made a public proclamation in the city that very day, that God commanded them to get upon the temple, and that there they should receive miraculous signs of their deliverance. Now there was then a great number of false prophets suborned by the tyrants to impose on the people, who denounced this to them, that they should wait for deliverance from God; and this was in order to keep them from deserting, and that they might be buoyed up above fear and care by such hopes. . . Thus were the miserable people persuaded by these deceivers, and such as belied God himself.

- Wars of the Jews, book VI, chapter V

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,) Caesar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency; that is, Phasaelus, and Hippicus, and Mariamne; and so much of the wall as 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, as were the towers 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, 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 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. But Caesar resolved to leave there, as a guard, the tenth legion, with certain troops of horsemen, and companies of footmen.

- Josephus, Wars of the Jews, book VII, chapter I



This is a view of the eastern two-thirds of the southern wall. Notice how quickly the ground level drops off as the wall continues toward the east (right). The dome of the Al Aqsa Mosque can be seen where Solomon's Porch, or the Royal Stoa, of the Jews once stood on the south side of the Temple Mount.

Chapter 51

Southern Wall: Double Gate, Triple Gate, Stair Steps, Single Gate, Burnt Shops

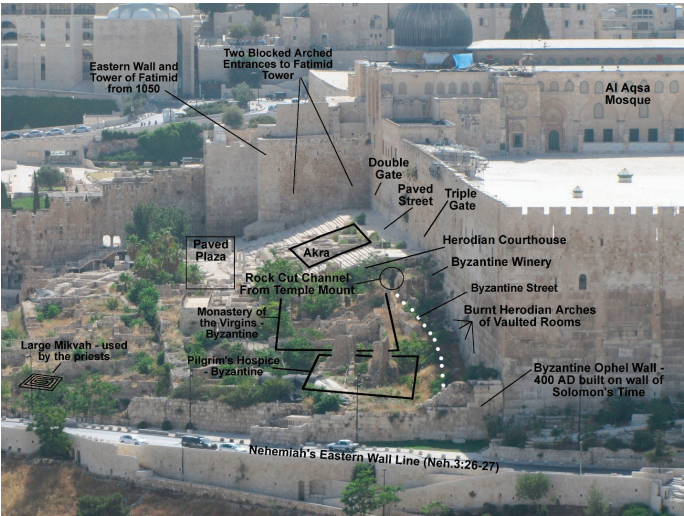
A 22-foot wide street also ran along the southern wall of the Temple. About 37 feet of this street can still be seen at the southwest corner, where it begins to ascend rapidly through a series of stairs until it reaches the Double Gate. Although we know the route, the street is not visible after the initial 37-foot section until it reaches the Double Gate. At the Double Gate it is again visible down to the Triple Gate.

Stairs run up to this street from the south, coming up the Ophel from the south. The remains of these stairs are also still visible. In fact, they are still useful to visitors. As the street continues along the southern wall toward the east a series of vaults, similar to the vaults under the street along the Western Wall, were built to support it. These vaults, or arches, supported the street along the southern wall and were also used as shops.

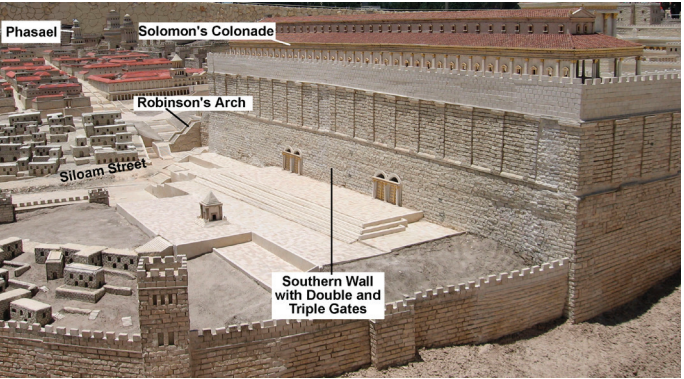


The south side of the Jewish Temple Mount. The steps led up to the Double Gate and the Triple Gate and into the New Testament Temple court.

Since 1967 when the Israelis took control of eastern Jerusalem, extensive excavation has been done in this area called the Ophel south of the Temple Mount.



A view of the southern wall and the excavation done in the Ophel area. Notice the location of these things: 1) paved street, 2) the Double Gate, 3) the Triple Gate, 4) marks from the Burnt Herodian Arches, and 5) the two large sets of stairs (not labeled) leading up to the Double and Triple Gates. It may also be of interest to recognize where the remains of the Akra, the old Seleucid fortress, is.



This flight of stairs is 210 feet wide. The stairs are a combination of smooth stone slabs and carved bedrock. The stairs alternate between a 35 inch run (the length of the step) and a 12 inch run, except for the first and last three steps, which are all 12 inches. The alternating step width caused the Jewish worshippers to proceed toward the Temple Mount with a steady, unrushed pace. Jewish writings record Gamaliel (the Apostle Paul's Jewish instructor and the man who suggested the release of the Apostles in Acts 5:34) sitting on these steps with the elders:

It happened once with Rabban Gamaliel and the elders, that they were sitting on the stairs in the Temple Mount.
-Tosefta Sanhedrin 2:6

In this photo, Galyn leans against a tower of the Knights Templar that was built right up against the Double Gate by the Crusaders to protect the city from Muslim invaders. A lintel from the Umayyad Period (661-750 AD) can be seen over the Double Gate. Part of the lintel was covered up by the Knights Templar when they built their fortification in about 1129 AD.



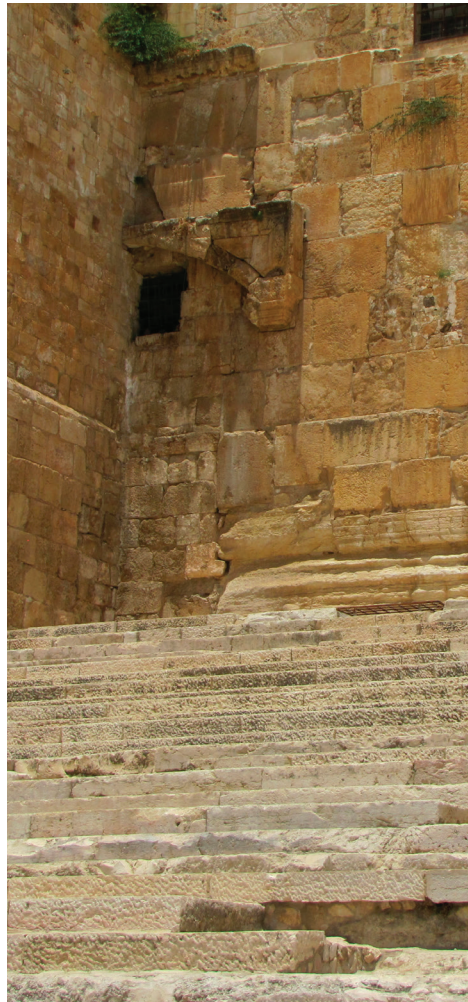
The worn steps cut into the bedrock of Mount Moriah as it ascends to the Temple Mount in front of the Double Gate in the Ophel.



Processional steps cut from the bedrock of Mount Moriah south of the Temple Mount. This stairway was used daily to go up to the gates of the temple on the south side in the New Testament times. Jesus likely taught while sitting on these steps. Notice that although the rise (height) of each step is consistent, the run (length) of the tread of the step alternates between 35 inches to 12 inches. This inconsistency was intentional and forced worshippers to walk in a more processional movement rather than in a rapid walk or hurried climb as they ascended the mountain of the Lord.



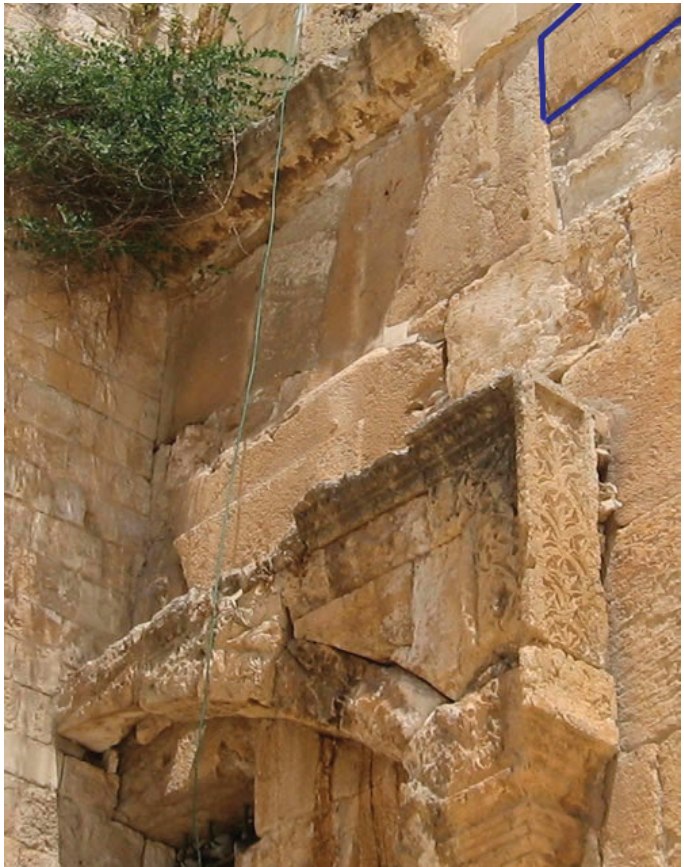
A view looking east-southeast down the steps over the Kidron Valley toward the southern summit of the Mount of Olives. At the foot of these stairs are numerous mikvah (ritual baths) used by the Jews for purification. These mikvah were likely used by the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2 for baptizing the 3,000 new Jewish believers in the name of Jesus. On that day, these steps would have been crowded - first, because it was the Jewish feast of Pentecost, and second, because of the events recorded in Acts chapter 2.



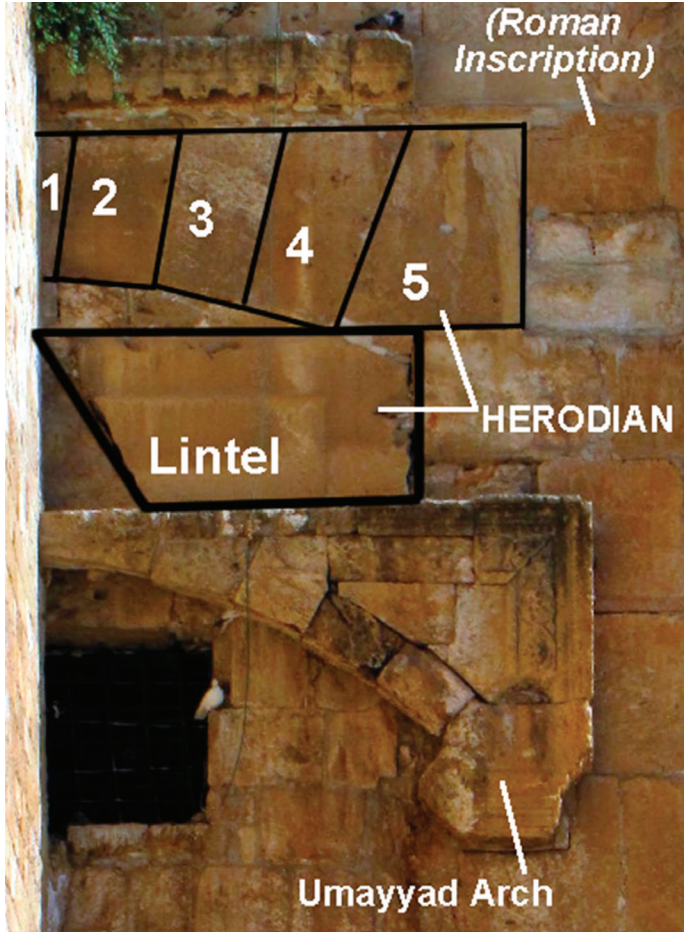
A view of the eastern half of the Double Gate. This gate led into a magnificently decorated tunnel under the Temple Mount's Royal Stoa (Solomon's Porch) which led to a set of stairs that brought the worshiper up to the surface of the Temple Mount. The distance from the street level in front of the Double Gate up the stairs to the Temple Mount surface is about 46 feet.



This is a photo from the Temple Mount where the worshiper would emerge after entering the Double Gate. Today this entrance is only accessible to Muslims (although, I have to admit that I was tempted to run down the stairs into the tunnel to see and photograph the decorations in the rock walls and domed ceilings). The building behind this is the Al Aqsa Mosque which is considered the third most holy site in the world for Muslims after Mecca and Medina.



Notice the four trapezoidal stones forming the arch of the Double Gate from the days of Herod, and the large horizontal lintel directly below them with the wide margin and boss. The decorative arch attached to the face of the wall is from the late 600's AD. Also notice the square stone that sets immediately to the right (east) of the fourth trapezoidal stone, even with the top of the arch. This stone is etched with a Roman inscription and was placed in the wall upside down. It is the base of a Roman statue that sat on the Temple Mount in the days of Hadrian after the second Jewish revolt was quenched in 135 AD.



Above the Umayyad Arch (built in the 600's AD by the Muslims) are four trapezoidal stones which form the arch of Herod's New Testament Temple Mount entrance. Below the trapezoidal stones is a large horizontal stone with a wide margin and boss carved into it. This is the lintel for the Herodian Double Gate. To the left behind the Crusader wall, the rest of the gate can be seen.



The upside down inscription is from the Roman statue of Emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161 AD) that the Bordeaux Pilgrim recorded seeing when he was on the Temple Mount in 333 AD. The statue was destroyed by the Byzantine Christians after 333 AD, the Jews in 614 AD or the Muslims in 638 AD. This reused block is the only part found so far of the two statues (one of Hadrian, and this one of Antoninus Pius.)

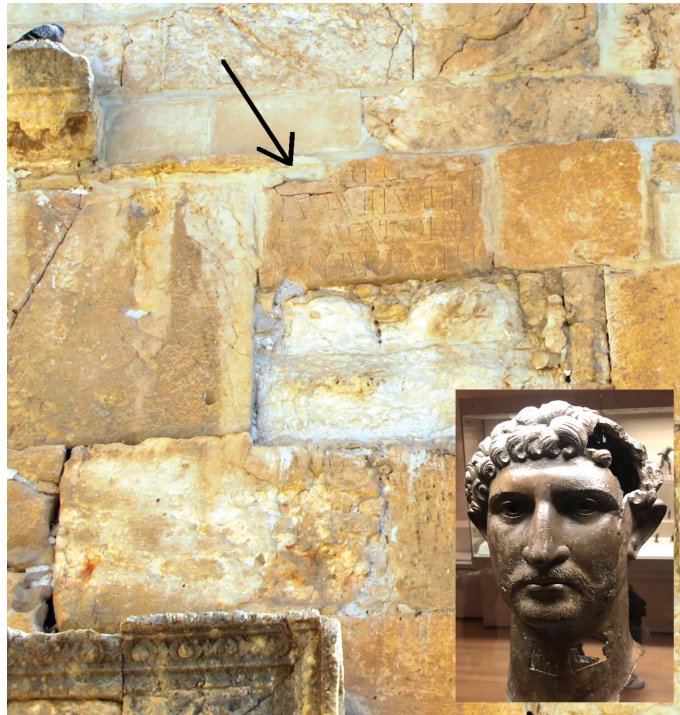
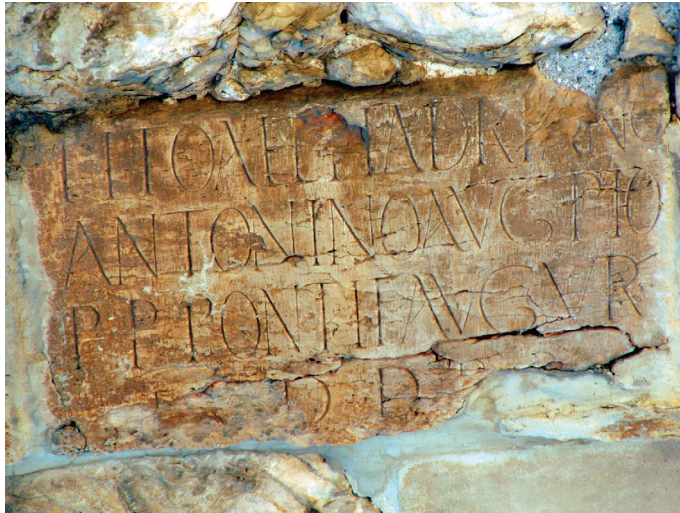


Image of Emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD) and the second century inscription from around 138 AD.



Shown rightside-up, the inscription reads:
To Titus Aelius Hadrianus
Antoninus Augustus Pius
The father of the fatherland, pontifex, augur
Decreed by the Decurions



Toni stands on the street pavement along the southern Temple Mount wall between the Double and Triple Gates at the top of the large staircases. The large six-foot-tall ashlar behind her are original Herodian stones remaining from the Temple Mount that was destroyed in 70 AD. This course of ashlar is double the height of the average ashlar because they served as the “master course.” Notice that at the street level, the margin and bosses of a lower course of ashlar can be seen directly behind Toni’s feet.



This photo is looking west toward the Double Gate and the wall of the tower of the Knights Templar. The Triple Gate was directly behind me when the photo was taken. The Double Gate and Triple Gate are 230 feet apart. The course of six-foot ashlar from the New Testament days can be seen in this course which is just left of the Triple Gate and continues to the Double Gate. The stones above this course are the work of Muslims 661-1200 AD who rebuilt the southern wall of the Temple Mount.



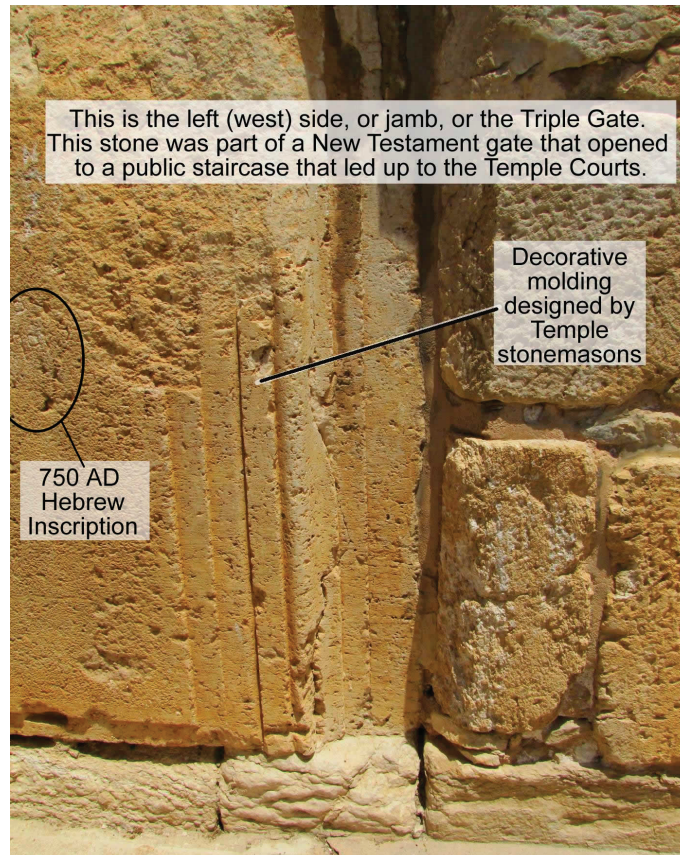
Galyn touches the carved top margin of one of the six foot tall Herodian ashlar in the master course of large stones. This stone is set on a smaller course of three foot tall Herodian ashlar. The Mount of Olives is in the background to the east.



A Hebrew inscription of the name Berachia Bar Gedalya Bayrav in one of the large six-foot ashlar located between the Double and Triple Gates can be seen. All we know for sure is the name that is inscribed. The details of who, when and why are unknown.



The Triple Gate can be seen at the top of these rebuilt stairs. The Triple Gate is 230 feet east of the Double Gate and is 51 feet wide. Each of the three gates is 13 feet wide with two 6 foot piers separating them. The Triple Gate led visitors under the Temple Mount through a decorated tunnel beneath the Royal Stoa on the south end of Solomon’s Colonnade, then to a stairway which took worshippers up to the outer courtyard of the Temple Mount.



The door jamb can still be seen on the ashlar stone that was part of the Triple Gate. Jesus and the apostles would have surely walked through this gate that led up to the outer courts and Solomon's Porch, where the early church in Jerusalem met daily.

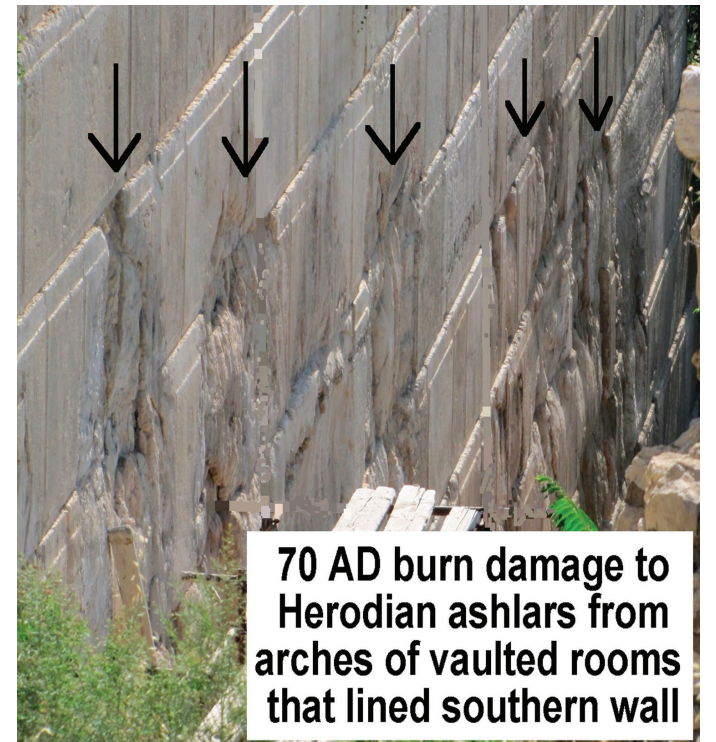
A close up of the stone carvings from the west door jamb of the Triple Gate. This is all that remains of Herod's original gate that served as an entrance to the tunnel and staircase that still exist behind this blocked gate. This ashlar is 48 inches long. Eighteen inches are decorated with a classical gate profile, and the remaining 30 inches are carved in a style typical of Herodian ashlars. The Triple Gate was rebuilt during the Umayyad Dynasty (661-750). The Crusaders blocked it shut to protect themselves from the Muslims around 1100.

There is a Hebrew inscription on the carved molding of the jamb of the Triple Gate. The inscription, possibly a memorial, consists of the names of two Jews who had died. The inscription is dated at around 750 AD when the Muslim Abassid dynasty ruled, and Jews could only worship at the gates of the Temple Mount.

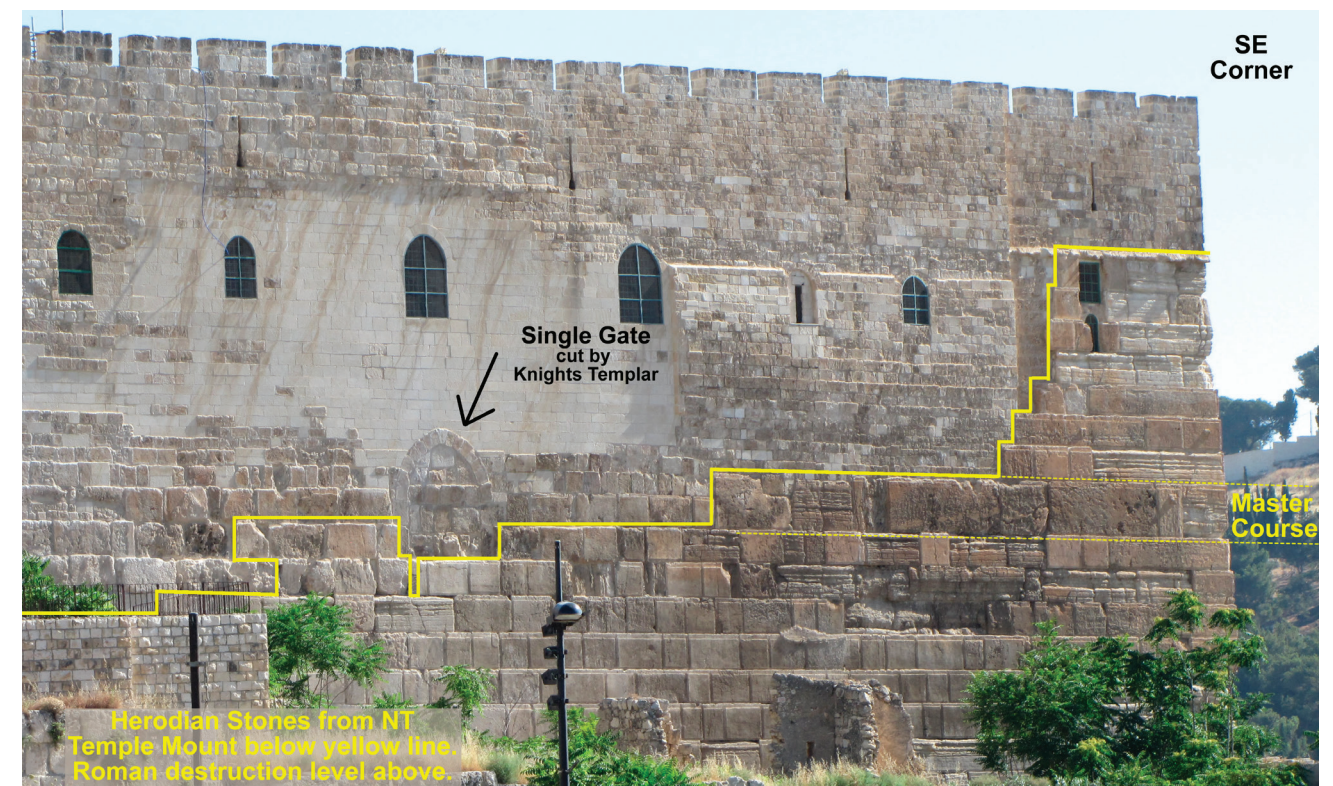
לכלב נ
ב יוסקן נמ אחרק



Further to the east on the south wall is the Single Gate. It was cut by the Knights Templar and is not original to the Temple Mount. The Crusaders used this gate to access the caverns below the Temple Mount, where they kept their horses. The caverns are called "Solomon's Stables." The gate was blocked shut by Saladin in 1187 when the Muslims returned. Below this arch are the remains of other arches that supported the Herodian street that ran the full length of the southern wall. The vaulted rooms created by this arched support system were used as shops. The intense heat from the Roman fire in 70 AD seared the wall below the Single Gate, and created burnt impressions of the arches. The impressions burnt onto the Herodian ashlars still clearly show where these shops and their vaulted walls stood.

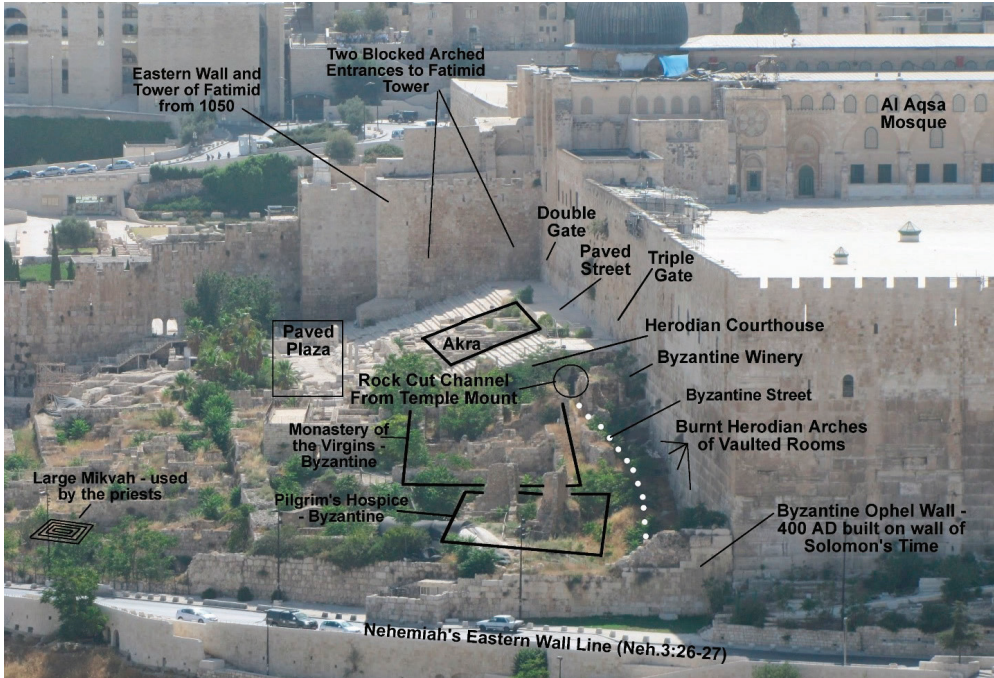


In the Herodian stones near the base of the SE corner of the southern wall, arched rooms burned by the Roman fires of 70 AD scarred the rock that they were attached to at the New Testament street level. The intense heat of the Roman destruction created burnt impressions near the SE corner on the southern wall of the Temple Mount, outlining the arches of the vaulted rooms that supported the paved street as it descended. Shops were located in these vaulted rooms under the street.

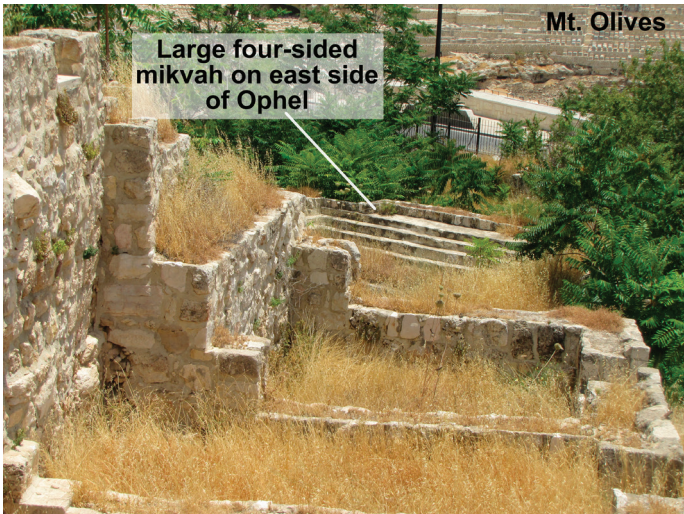


Chapter 52

Archaeology on the Ophel (Jerusalem Archaeology Park)



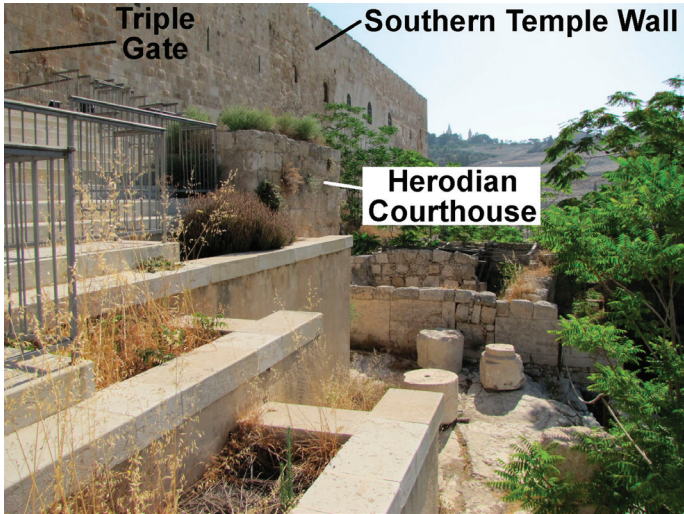
A photo taken from the Mount of Olives looking west at the SE corner and the south wall of the Temple Mount retaining wall. Excavation of the Ophel is visible and detailed. A channel cut into the rock (dotted white line in photo above) moved water eastward from a large cistern below the Double and Triple Gates on the Temple Mount to the ritual baths. Water then ran southward under the stairs of the Triple Gate to fill the mikvah.



The north corner of the large four-sided mikvah on the east side of the Ophel.



Overlooking the Ophel where heavy excavation south of the Temple Mount began in 1967 and continues today. The Double Gate and the large stairs are to the right side in the background.



This photo is looking east toward the Kidron Valley and the Mount of Olives along the southern wall of the Temple Mount. The walls of a large Herodian building were found east of the Triple Gate. The Mishnah mentions a courthouse that "used to sit at the entrance to the Temple Mount." Fragments of a finely carved stone inscription were found in this location that says "the elders." This is assumed to refer to the elders of the Sanhedrin who managed and met in this courthouse. Two other courthouses were also mentioned in the Mishnah: one on the Temple Mount, and one in the "Hall of Hewn Stones."



Looking southeast over the Archaeological Park and excavation south of the Temple Mount from the processional stairs.



Excavated remains south of the Temple Mount looking east/southeast.



Pavement (or floor) among the ruins.



Excavated remains south of the Temple Mount, looking west on the Ophel.



Mikvah by the stairs south of the Temple. Looking south from near the Triple Gate. The Apostles of Jesus likely used these mivah for Christian baptism in Acts 2.



A portion of the remains of the Seleucid Akra, which overlooked the Temple Mount during the days of the Maccabean Revolt. The Maccabees tore it down and built a southern extension of the Temple Mount over the northern portion of this structure. The Triple Gate stairs can be seen in the top left of this photo.



Excavation south of the Temple Mount on the Ophel.



Excavation south of the Temple Mount on the Ophel.



Three different walls can be distinguished as we look up at the Ophel toward the southern Temple Mount wall in the back.



Herodian ashlars setting south of the Temple Mount.



Archaeological remains on the south of the southern Temple Mount wall.



The columned courtyard of a public building in the Muslim palace complex, from around 700 AD. These pillars were taken from Byzantine Christian churches that had been destroyed.



A close up of some fallen pillars.



These columns (and many others like them) were taken by Muslims from churches that had been built in Jerusalem during the Christian Byzantine period (324-638 AD). Muslim armies arrived to conquer Jerusalem in 638 AD, just six years after Mohammed's death. The Muslim Umayyad Dynasty (661-750 AD) used these pillars in a columned courtyard of the palatial complex during their reign.



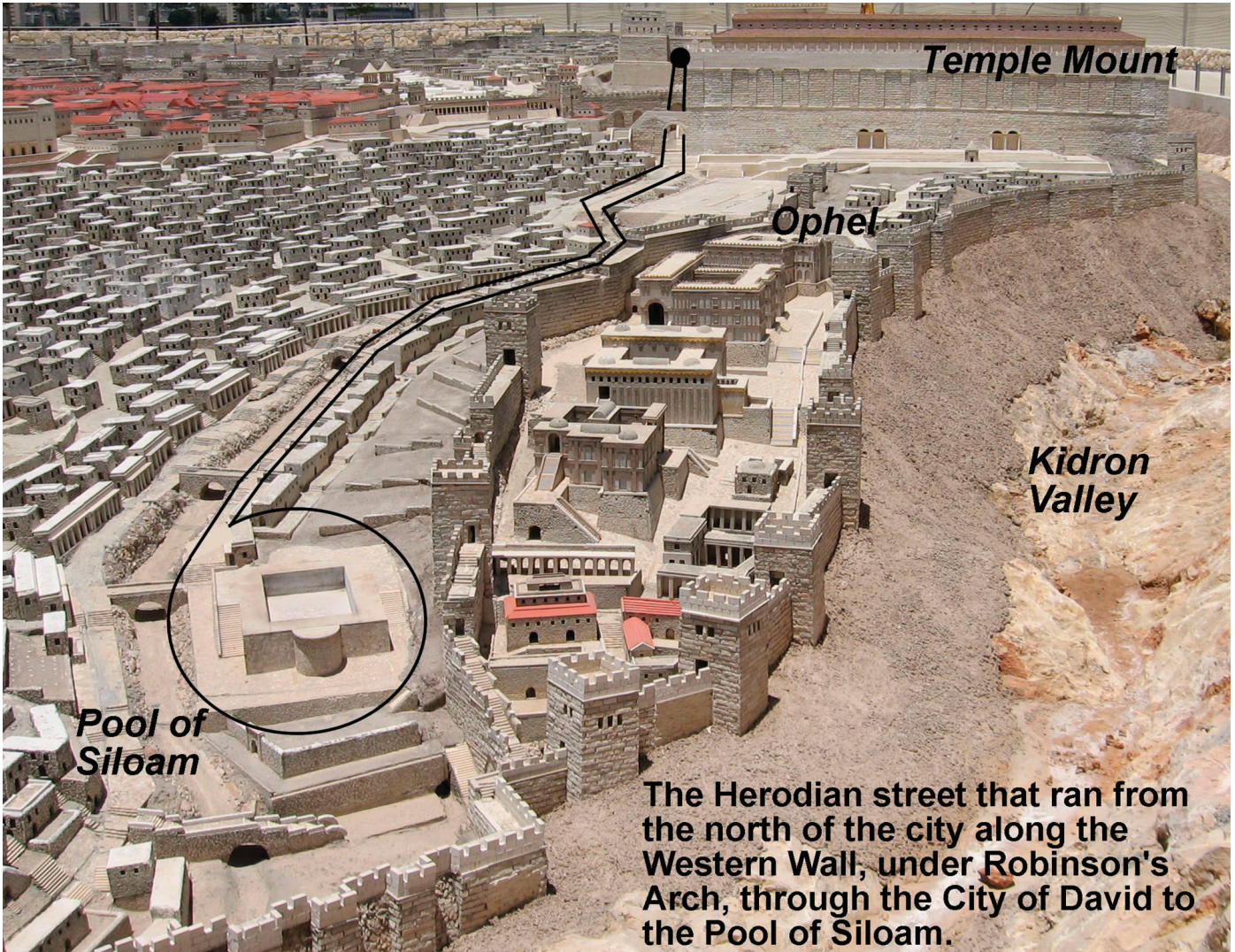
Looking down into an excavated room and doorway. Notice the original stonework on the floor.

Chapter 53

Siloam Road, or the Stepped Street or "Pilgrimage Road"

The paved Herodian street at the northwest corner of the Temple Mount continues south along the Western

Wall until it reaches the Pool of Siloam on the south end of the City of David.



The Herodian street that ran from the north of the city along the Western Wall, under Robinson's Arch, through the City of David to the Pool of Siloam.

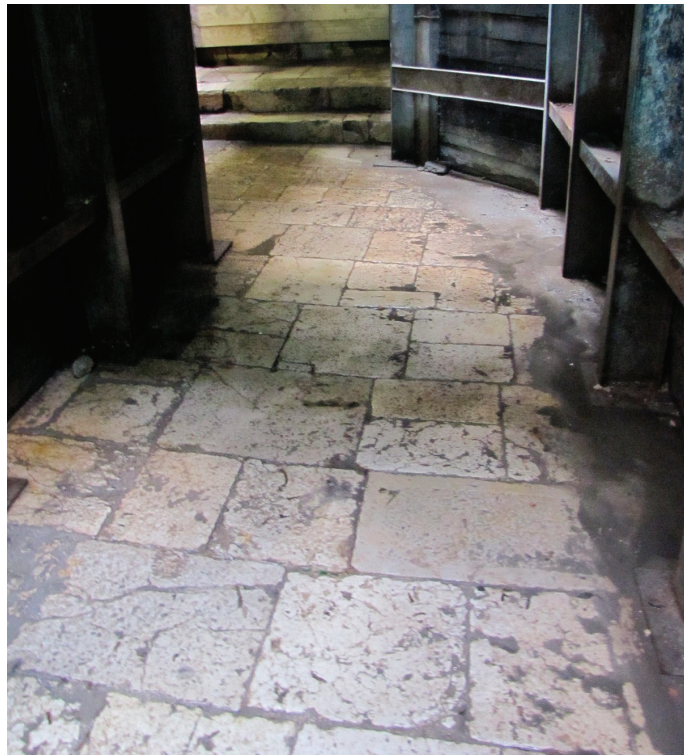
The Herodian street that ran from the north of the city along the Western Wall, under Robinson's arch, and down the eastern hill through the City of David until it reached the Pool of Siloam. The Pool of Siloam is circled.



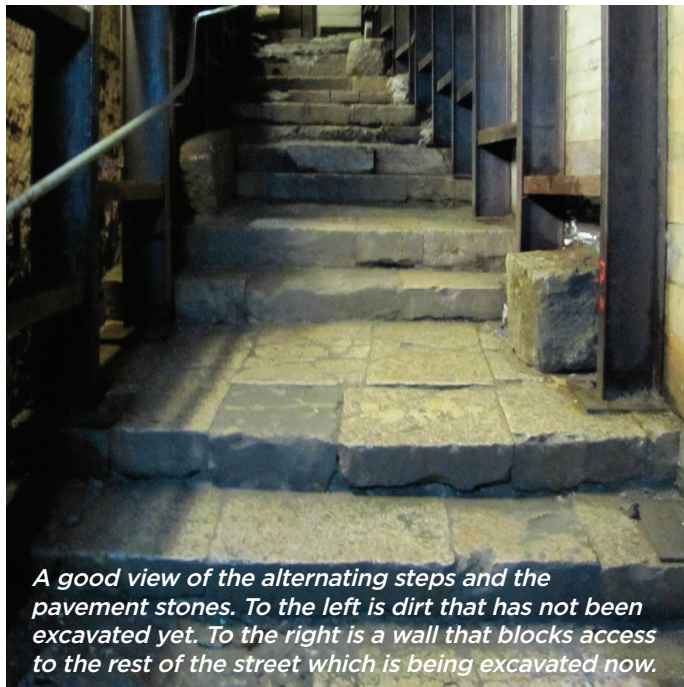
Herodian pavement stones from the first century. This style of pavement stone is seen in many places where streets from the days of the New Testament have been excavated



The pavement along the edge of the Pool of Siloam that leads to the street.



Recent excavation of this area has uncovered a stepped stone street that ascends from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple Mount. Notice in the back of this photo that the front of three steps can be seen. The style of the stairs is similar to the large staircases in front of the Double and Triple Gates, in that the steps alternate between narrow and wide runs. In this photo the first step is a narrow run while the second step is wider. This created a slow, steady procession as people ascended from the Pool of Siloam to the Temple Mount. In this photo the excavation turns toward the left and then follows a section of this wide street up through the City of David.



A good view of the alternating steps and the pavement stones. To the left is dirt that has not been excavated yet. To the right is a wall that blocks access to the rest of the street which is being excavated now.



A portion of the width of the street can be seen here. Only the left side (top of photo) was excavated and accessible when this photo was taken. Again, notice the steps beginning to ascend through the City of David on the eastern ridge of the city as we approach the Ophel and Mount Moriah. This street and these stairs would have been used by the blind man as he approached the Pool of Siloam to wash the mud from his eyes:

Having said this, Jesus spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put in on the man's eyes. 'Go,' Jesus told him, 'wash in the Pool of Siloam.' So the man went and washed, and came home seeing. - John 9:6-7



Galyn, ready to ascend the recently excavated stepped stone street that leads from the Pool of Siloam up to the Temple Mount. The continuation of the street can be seen in the opening further up on the left side of the street. The Temple Mount is 1600 feet (a little more than a quarter mile) up these stairs to the north, but the excavation does not continue all the way to the Temple Mount.



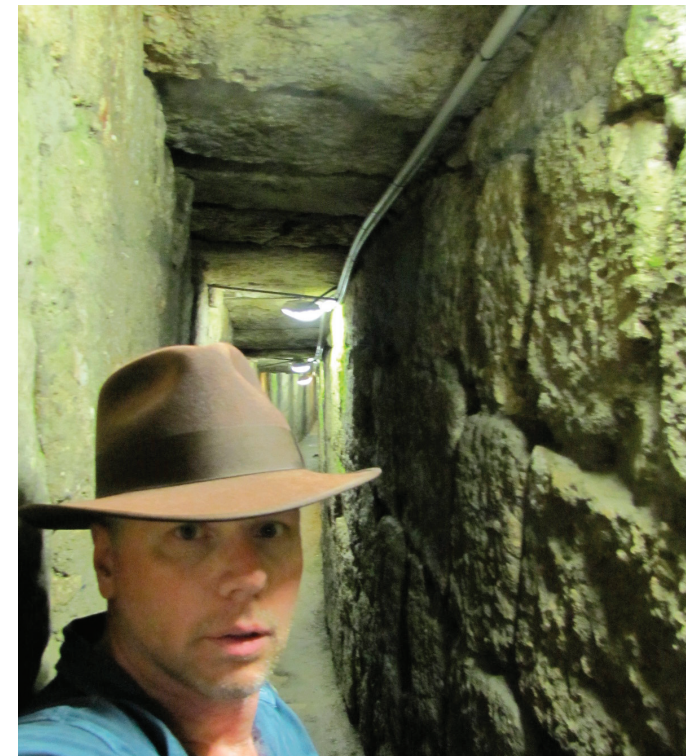
The stepped stone street is much wider than this, but this narrow portion was excavated and accessible in June of 2010.



Looking down the stepped stone street that leads to the Pool of Siloam. Only 6 feet of the 25-foot-wide street has been excavated so far.



This is a photo of the gutter that runs under the stepped stone street. This gutter system would collect runoff rainwater from the city and drain it toward the Pool of Siloam. Notice that it has been completely excavated, since both sides reveal a wall made of blocks that support the stone paved street above.



A close up of the right (east) stone wall of the gutter under the street. Pavement stones that cover the New Testament street line the ceiling of this gutter.



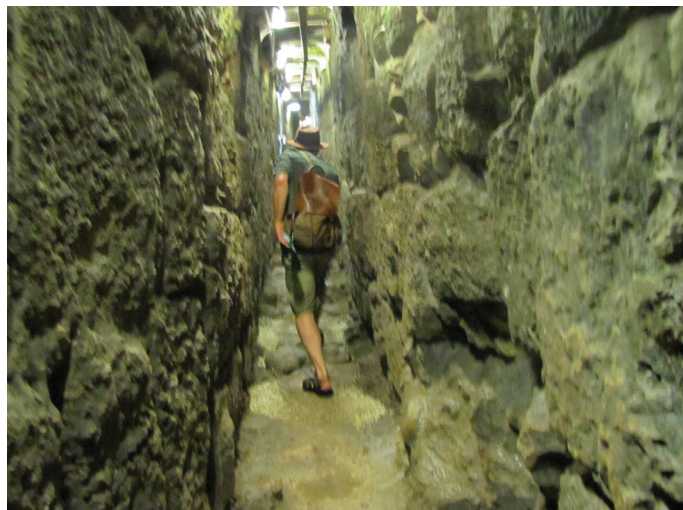
The east wall of the gutter and a view of the tunnel ahead.



In 70 AD the Jews used this gutter system to escape from the city of Jerusalem by fleeing south under the walls. When the Romans finally entered the city they found these tunnels crowded with Jews, who they then slaughtered. Josephus records Simon, the Jewish leader, and other Jews hiding in tunnels like these:

This Simon, during the siege of Jerusalem, was in the upper city; but when the Roman army was gotten within the walls, and were laying the city waste, he then took the most faithful of his friends with him . . . and let himself and all them down into a certain subterraneous cavern that was not visible above ground. Now, so far as had been dug before, they went onward along it without disturbance; but where they met with solid earth, they dug a mine under ground, and this in hopes that they should be able to proceed so far as to rise from under ground in a safe place, and by that means escape. But when they came to make the experiment, they were disappointed of their hope; for the miners could make but small progress, and that with difficulty also; insomuch that their provisions, though they distributed them by measure, began to fail them. And now Simon, thinking he might be able to astonish and elude the Romans, put on a white frock, and buttoned upon him a purple cloak, and appeared out of the ground in the place where the temple had formerly been. At the first, indeed, those that saw him were greatly astonished, and stood still where they were; but afterward they came nearer to him, and asked him who he was. Now Simon would not tell them, but bid them call for their captain; and when they ran to call him, Terentius Rufus who was left to command the army there, came to Simon, and learned of him the whole truth, and kept him in bonds, and let Caesar know that he was taken. Thus did God bring this man to be punished for what bitter and savage tyranny he had exercised against his countrymen by those who were his worst enemies . . . This rise of his out of the ground did also occasion the discovery of a great number of others of the seditious at that time, who had hidden themselves under ground.

- Josephus, Wars of the Jews, book VII chapter II



In 2012 Galyn again walked up the Siloam Street, eventually entering the gutter under this New Testament street, and continuing to walk in it until he reached the base of the SW corner of the Temple Mount under Robinson's Arch.

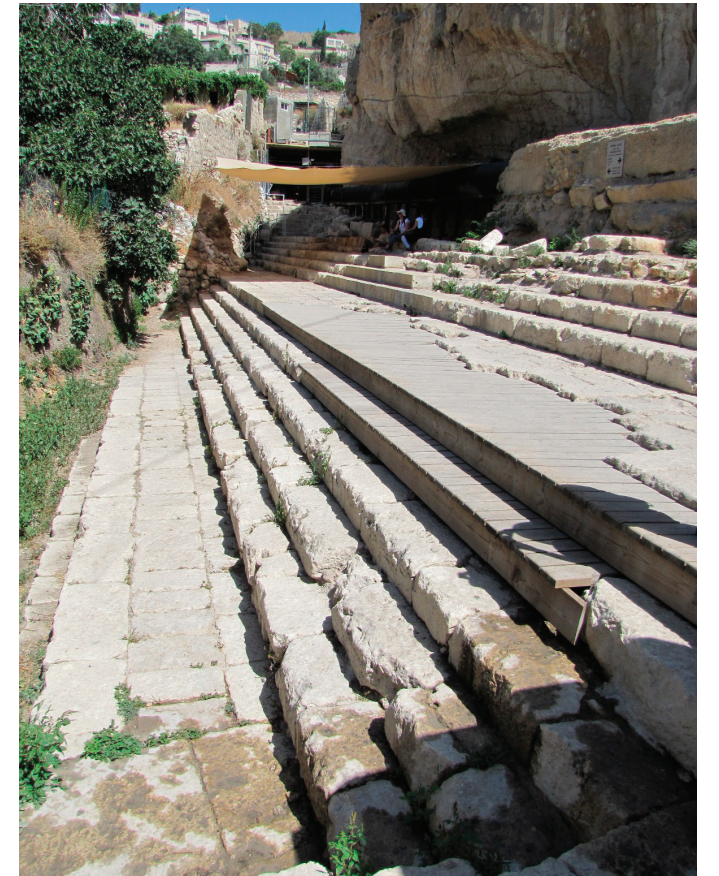
Chapter 54

Siloam Pool

The Pool of Siloam sits to the south of the City of David on the west side of the eastern hill. It received water from Hezekiah's Tunnel, which came originally from the Gihon Springs.



In the Pool of Siloam looking west from the side. Water enters from the channel and connects to Hezekiah's Tunnel.



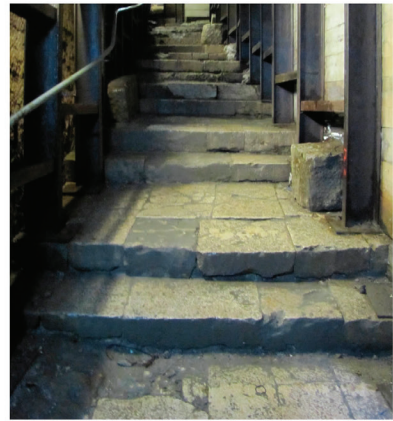
In the Pool of Siloam, looking east back towards where the water enters.



Water from Hezekiah's Tunnel still flows through a covered channel near the Pool of Siloam, and some of the original covering stones are still in place. Notice the stone pavement in the bottom left corner and the steps in the top left. This pool was discovered in 2004 during the preliminary stages of a public works project in the area.



The stones of the covered channel that brings water from Hezekiah's Tunnel into the area.



North to Temple Mount



Pavement

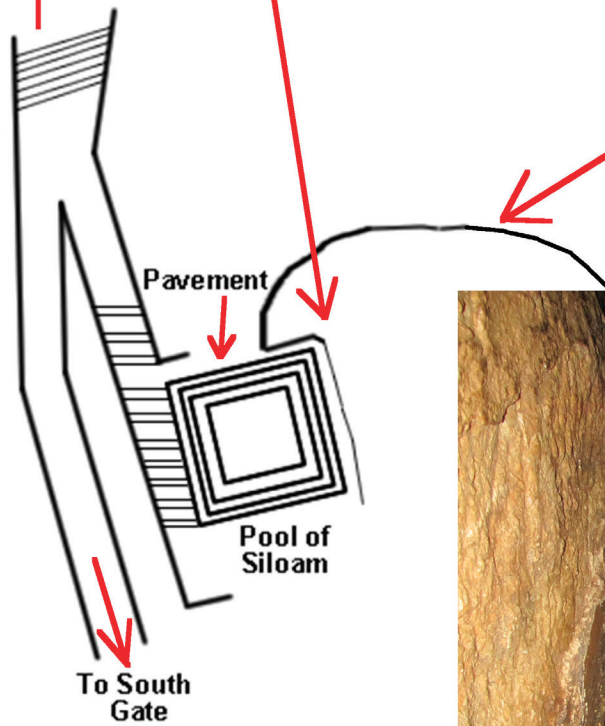
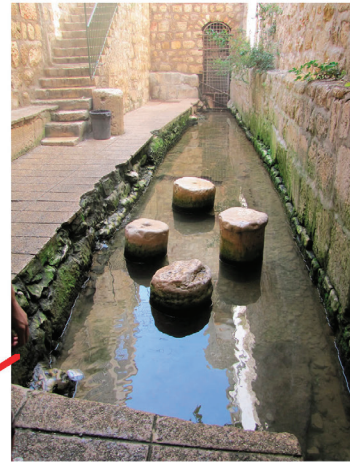


Pool of Siloam

Covered Channel filling Pool of Siloam



Channel at end of Hezekiah's Tunnel where Byzantine Siloam Church stood over water.



Hezekiah's Tunnel



Notice the relationship of the stepped stone street to the Pool of Siloam and Hezekiah's Tunnel.



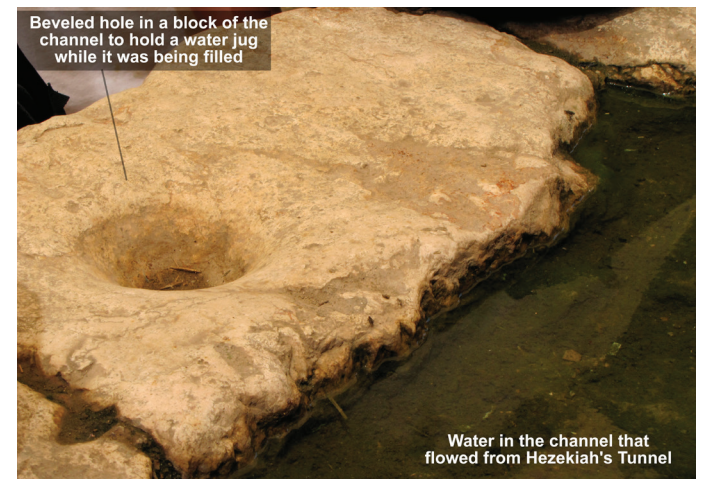
This is the water channel. The Pool of Siloam is to the right in this photo. The circular holes in the pavement were designed to hold water jugs while they were being filled.



A drain in the Herodian pavement by the Pool of Siloam.



A water trough beside the Pool of Siloam has holes to support water jugs as they were being filled.



A beveled hole in one of the steps at the Pool of Siloam, used to hold a beveled water jug.

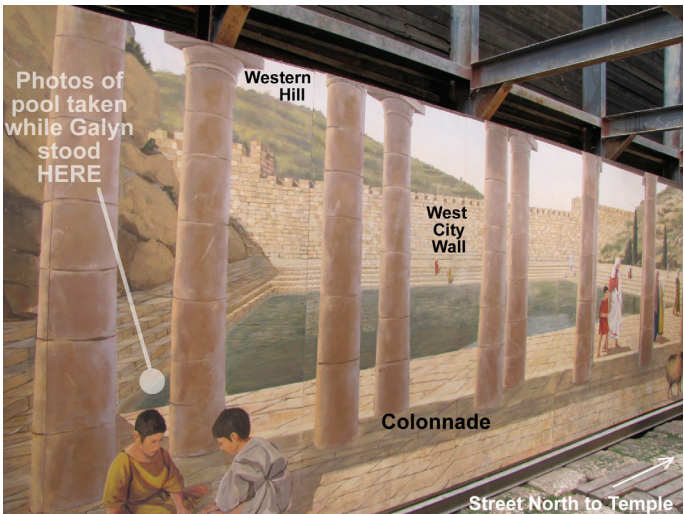


The same angle as the photo above, but just standing about two steps up out of the pool in 2012. Use the labels "A" and "B" on these three photos to get a perspective of the size in the photo above compared to the fuller size in the photo below. Also, notice in the photo below the water coming into the pool in the water channel can be seen. The bottom photo is taken about three steps higher than the one above.

This is an illustration of what the Pool of Siloam would have looked like. The photo above corresponds to the left side of this image. The area shown on the right side of the image is still unexcavated and so, still buried. The actual Herodian pavement can be seen in the bottom right corner of this picture in its actual relative position to the pool.



Photo taken standing down about two steps showing the steps of the Pool of Siloam in 2010. The corner of the pool can be seen in the background. This view captures a sense of the size of this important pool from the days of the New Testament, where Jesus sent a blind man to wash the mud from his eyes in John 9.



A photo from inside the Pool of Siloam looking east and up at the excavated side. The left of the photo remains unexcavated as of 2012. This site was discovered in 2004.



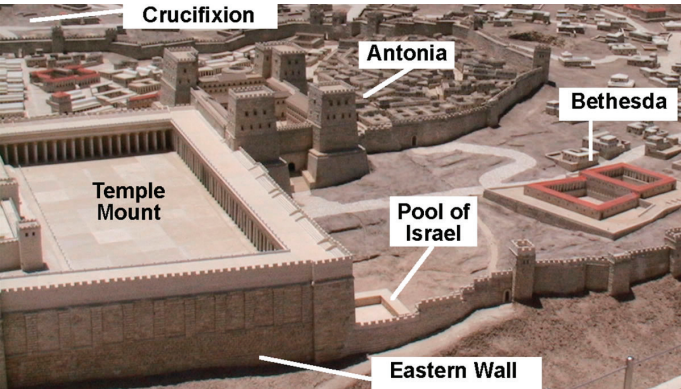
One of the four corners of the Pool of Siloam.



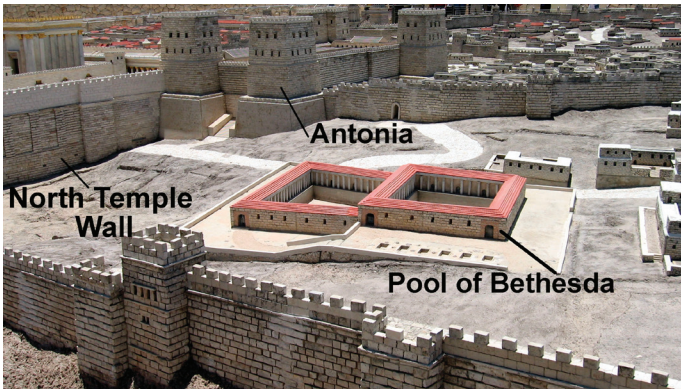
Toni and Galyn exchange photos from the top and bottom of the Pool of Siloam while excavation continues at the site.

Chapter 55

Pool of Bethesda (also called Bethseda, Beth-zatha)

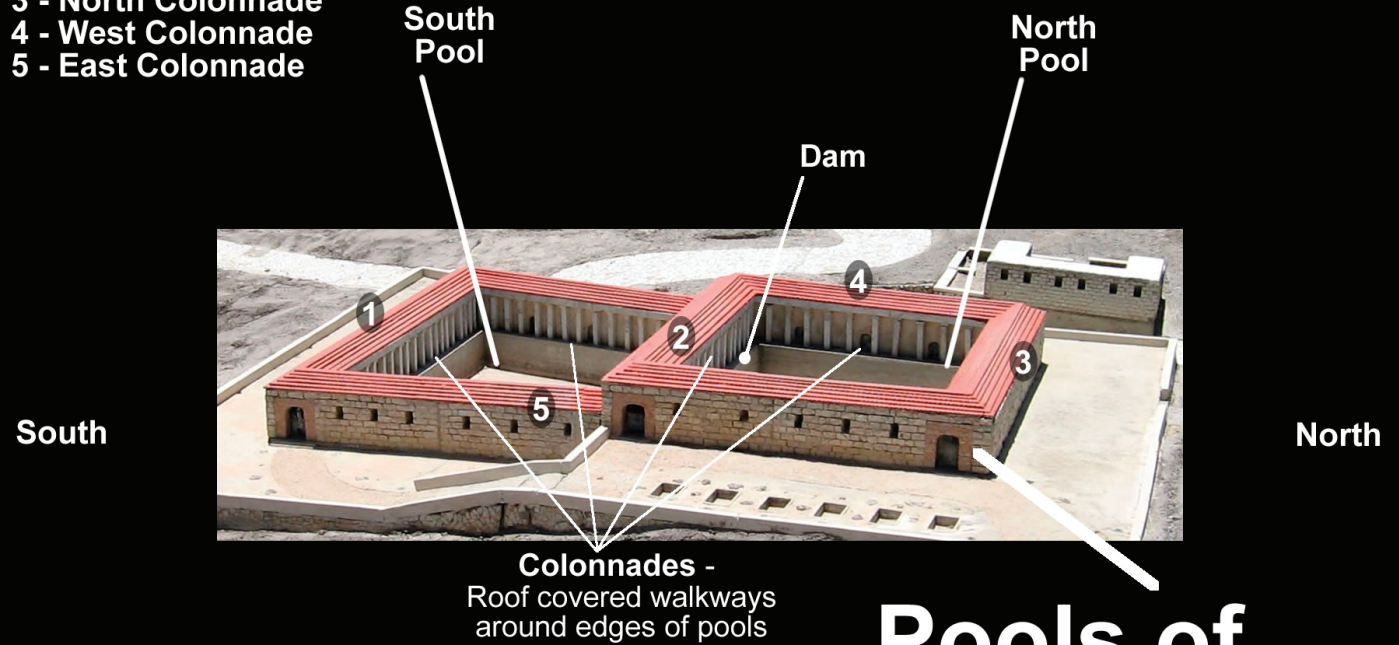


This is a model of Jerusalem as it appeared in 70 AD. Notice the two pools that made up the Pools of Bethesda. The south and north pools can be seen, along with the five colonnaded porches that surrounded it. Each of the four sides had a colonnaded porch. The fifth colonnaded porch would be the covered dam that



separated the two pools. The southern pool had broad steps like the pool of Siloam since the south pool served as a mikveh. The northern pool served as a reservoir that continually replenished and purified the water in the southern pool with fresh water flowing south through the dam between them.

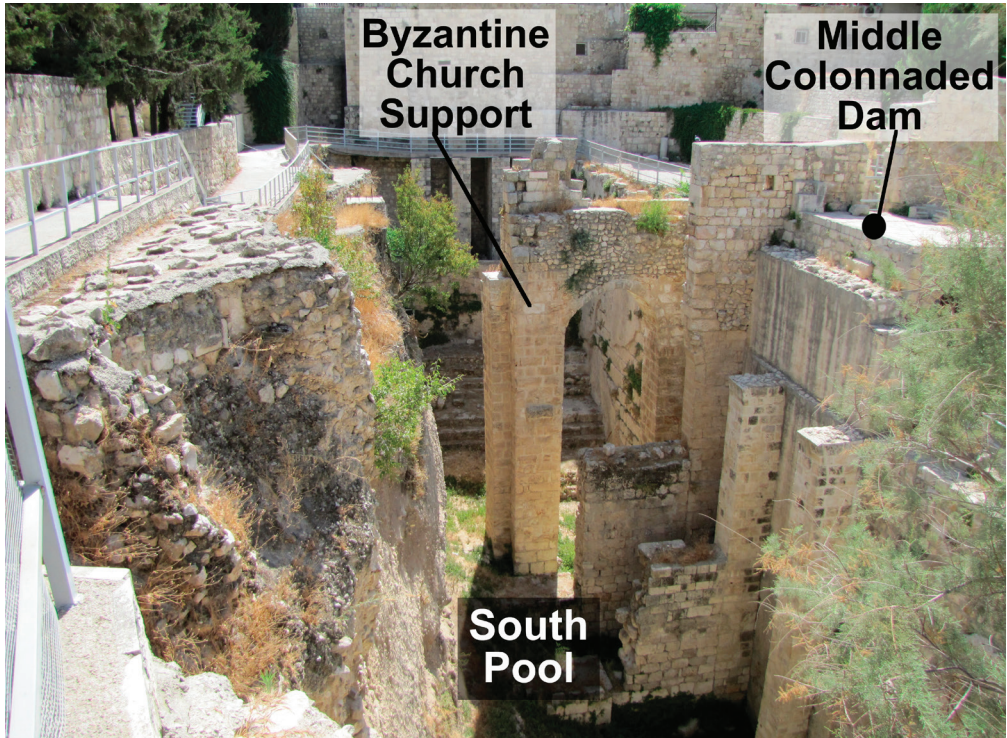
- Five Colonnades -
- 1 - South Colonnade
 - 2 - Middle Colonnade on Dam
 - 3 - North Colonnade
 - 4 - West Colonnade
 - 5 - East Colonnade



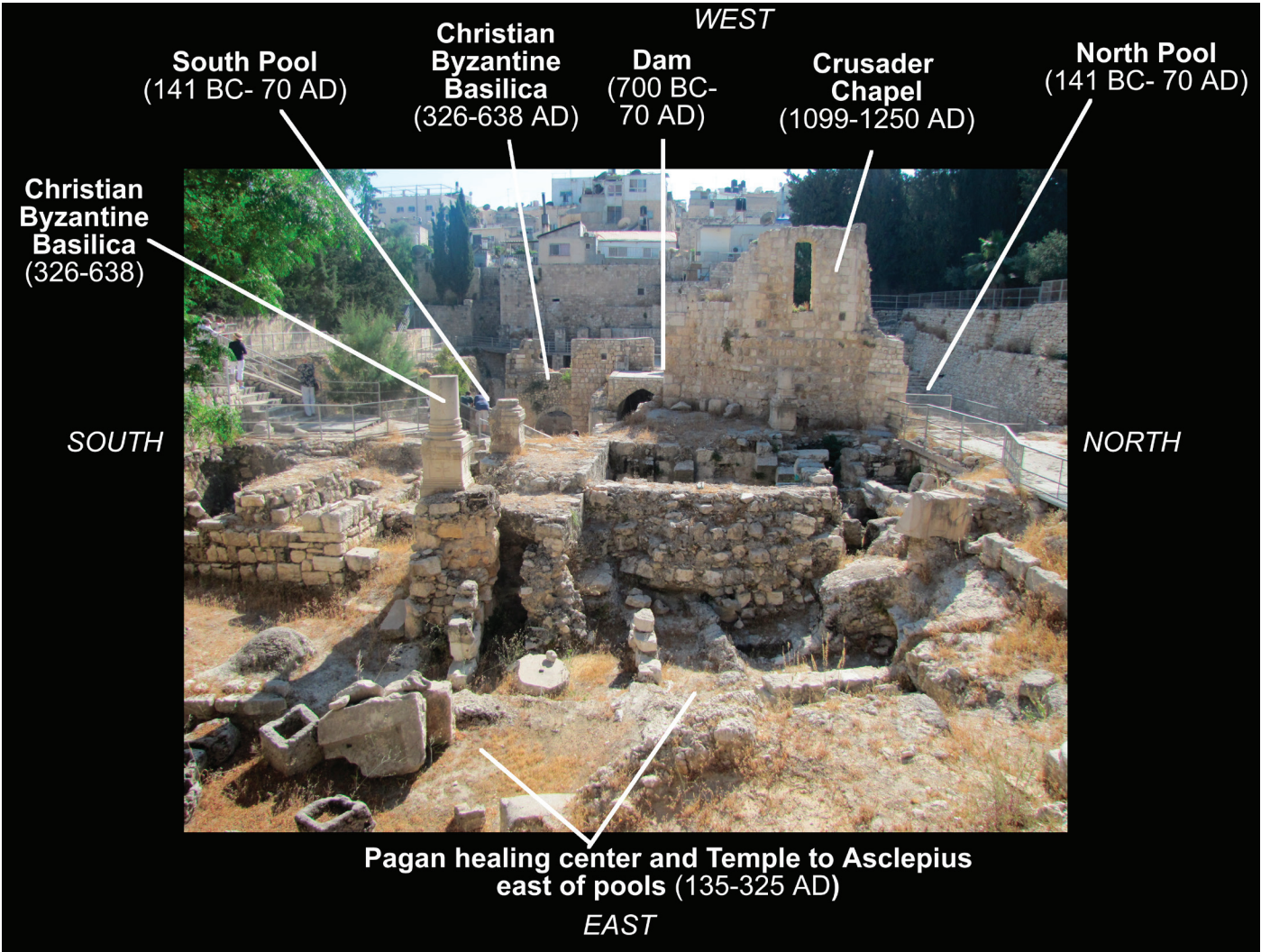
"Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades." - John 5:2

Pools of Bethesda

30-70 AD

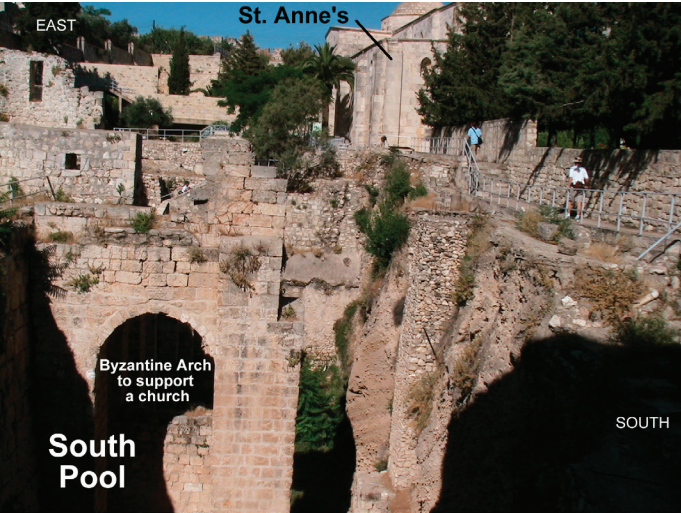
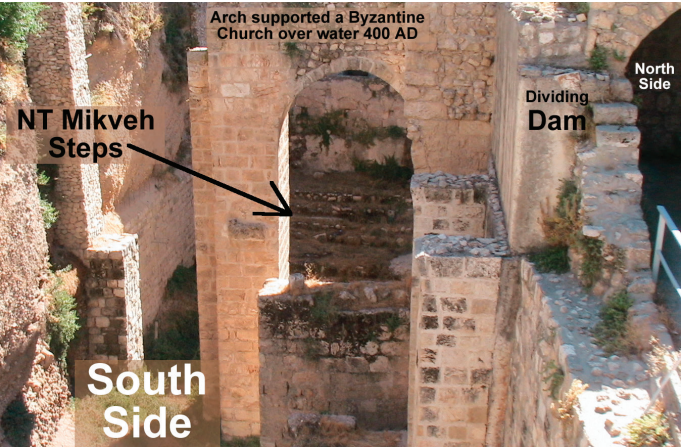


The bridge-like structure on the right side of the photo is the dam that separated the south (left) side of the Pools of Bethesda from the north pool (to the right of the photo). The depth of the pool can be seen in this photo. When the Roman Empire became Christian (i.e., the Byzantine Empire of 326-638), it built a church over these two pools. One of the many arches that supported the large Byzantine structure can be seen in the middle of this photo.

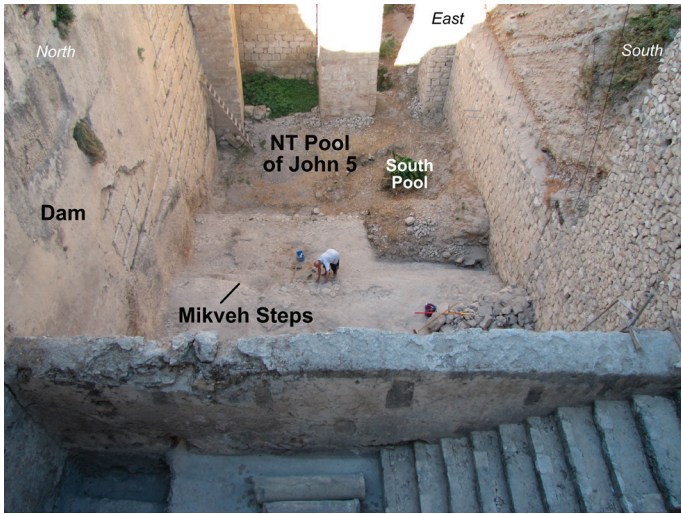
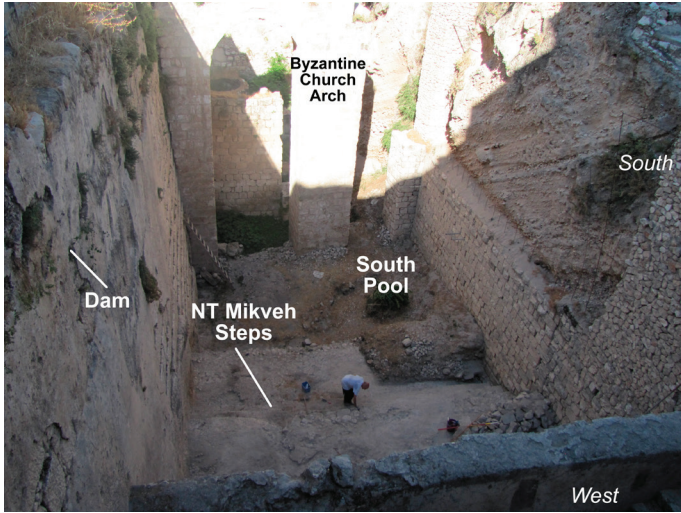


The area of the Pools of Bethesda has always had a source of water. In the days of the Old Testament, the area was outside the city of Jerusalem to the north. It had a large pool that shepherds used and was called the Sheep Pool. The gate on the north side of Jerusalem was thus called the Sheep Gate. In the 700's BC a dam was built to turn the spring into a reservoir that would collect rainwater which could then be channeled into the city. The area was associated with sheep, sacrifice, and the Temple because of its proximity to the Temple.

The Hasmoneans added a second pool on the south side of the dam and covered the channel to improve water quality. By the time of the New Testament this southern pool had become a stepped pool with broad steps and landings to serve as a ritual bath or mikveh. The northern pool, which was connected to the original spring which was the source of the original pool used by shepherds, served as a fresh water reservoir that allowed water to flow through the dam that separated the two pools.



Excavating the steps and landings of a first century mikveh in the south pool of the Pool of Bethesda.



A view from the west looking east over the section built in front of the mikveh, that was a settling basin. This section was added to allow the sediments in the water flowing into the southern pool to settle to the bottom of this basin before the water flowed into the southern pool.



Mikveh steps and landings found at the lower level of the Pool of Bethesda in the south pool, which was used for ritual washing in New Testament times. This photo was taken while standing on the dam that divides the south pool from the north reservoir pool.



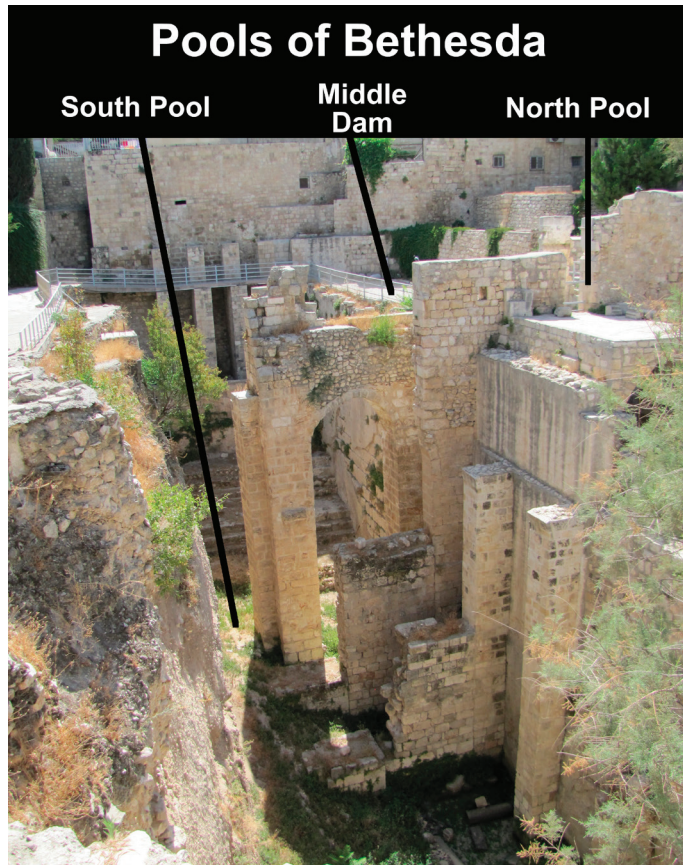
Looking down from the west wall at the settling basin in the southern pool with water setting in the bottom. Columns from the Byzantine basilica are lying at the base of the stairs.



This is a view from the dam that separates the two pools looking down into the depths of the southern pool. The dam this photo was taken from would have supported one of the five colonnaded streets. Jesus visited here in April of 28 AD during the second Passover of his ministry. The steps below are the steps of a first century mikveh in the south pool of Bethesda. It would have been in this pool and on one of the ledges at the top of the sets of stairs that the 38-year-old invalid was waiting:

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a feast of the Jews. Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. Here a great number of disabled people used to lie – the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, ‘Do you want to get well.’ ‘Sir,’ the invalid replied, ‘I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.’ Then Jesus said to him, ‘Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.’ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

- John 5:1-9



This site was uncovered in 1888 by K. Schick, but it had been known since the days of the Byzantines and Crusaders, as evidenced by the remains of the church that was built over it. No ancient Jewish writers refer to this pool, although Josephus did write of the Pool of the Sheep-market. Some early Christian writers recorded a spring of water here that flowed with a red, ruddy color that some people have tried to associate with the blood of the Temple sacrifices. The spring that feeds the pools has been located, and water still collects in the lower areas.



Water located under an arch of the large Byzantine church built over the New Testament Pool of Bethesda. This photo was taken inside the northern pool against one of the edges of the pool.



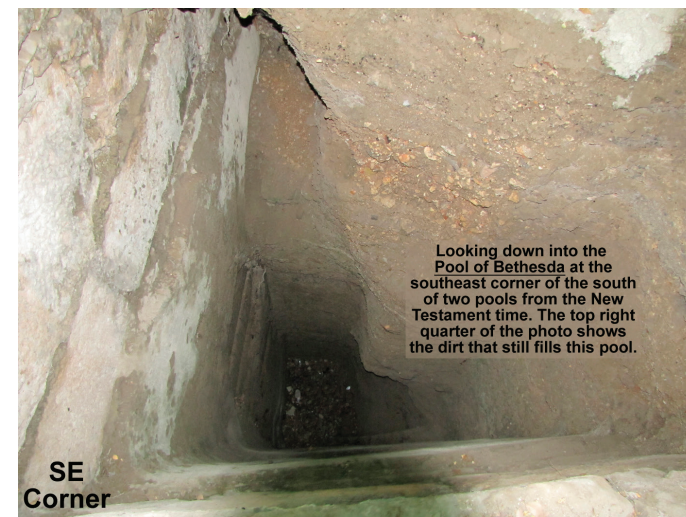
Water is still found under the vaulted rooms that supported the Byzantine church which was built over the northern pool around 350. It was destroyed in approximately 614.



The center of this photo (between the two bases of a missing arch) shows the location of the central cistern of the Pools of Bethesda in the days of the New Testament. In the layer above that, we can see the remains of a temple to Asclepius, the Roman snake god of healing. The temple, called an Asclepium, was built by the Romans in the 200's AD after Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem and renamed it "Aelia Capitolina". An offering in the shape of a snake inside a shrine was found during excavation of this site. Above that, we see the two stubs of columns from the Byzantine church that later stood on this site before it was destroyed in 614.



Here is the place the Romans came to seek healing from their gods. In particular, they honored the snake god, Asclepius, for healing here. This sets on the east side of the Pools of Bethesda east of the Byzantine basilica (seen at the top right of this photo) and the Crusader Chapel.



This is the excavated southeast corner of the southern pool of the Pools of Bethesda. Notice the stone blocks used to build the walls of the pool on the left and bottom edges of the photo. The top right section of the photo shows unexcavated rubble, soil, rock, and fill.



In this view of the site from the east we see the Crusader Chapel setting on the remains of the Byzantine Basilica. The remains of a pagan shrine is below and in front of the Byzantine Basilica. All three of these are east of the biblical Pools of Bethesda. Stone arches were set up to support churches built over the waters of these pools.



The remains of a Byzantine basilica stone column built on a base with a cross carved into the stone.



This is the north pool. This was built over the water source and served as a water reservoir that fed the pool to the south.



A Crusader chapel (1099-1250 AD) lies just to the east of the Pools of Bethesda on top of the remains of a Byzantine basilica (326-638 AD).

Chapter 56

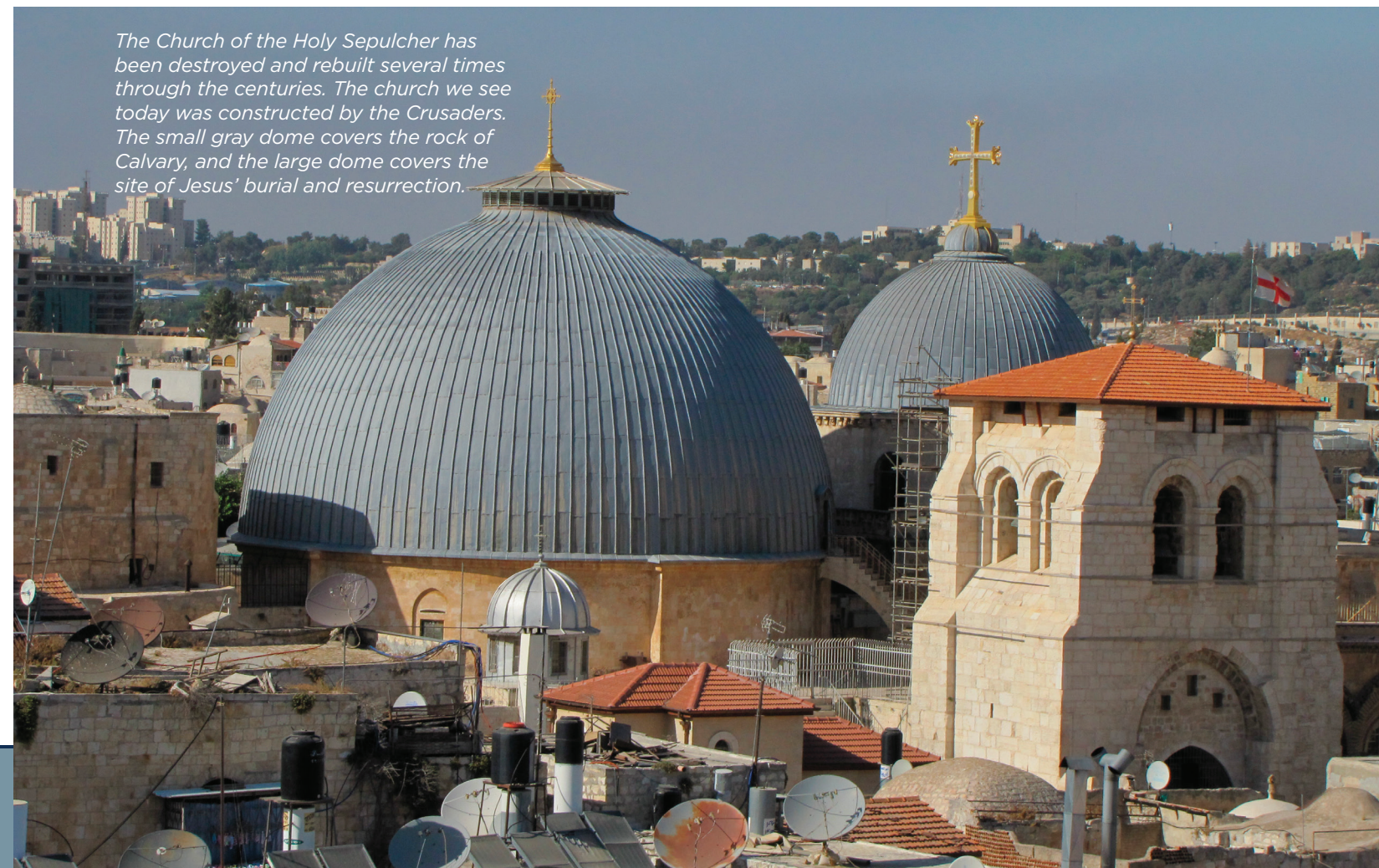
Church of the Holy Sepulcher



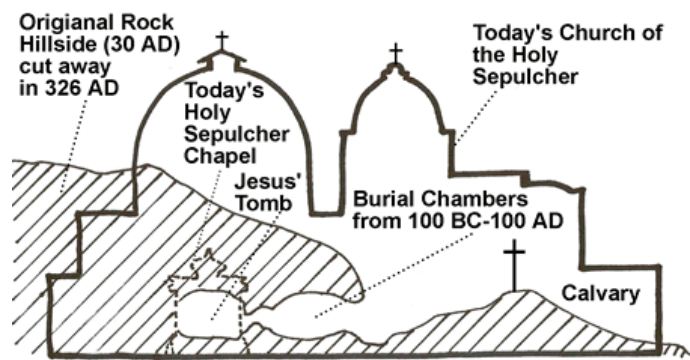
The two gray domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher can be seen in the skyline of this photo looking west from the Mount of Olives. The Dome of the rock, which sets in the middle of this photo on the Temple Mount, was built 300 years later to rival the proclamation of Constantine and the Christian world made by the then magnificent Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The church was later totally destroyed by the Muslims in 1009, only to be rebuilt by the Crusaders after 1100.



The cross on the gray dome over Calvary in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.



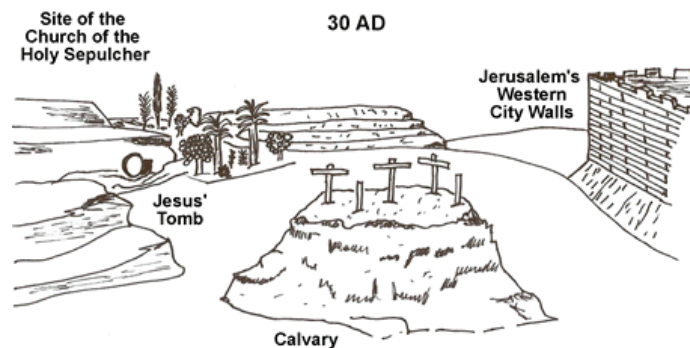
The Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been destroyed and rebuilt several times through the centuries. The church we see today was constructed by the Crusaders. The small gray dome covers the rock of Calvary, and the large dome covers the site of Jesus' burial and resurrection.



Today's Church of the Holy Sepulcher sets over two sites: Calvary and the tomb of Jesus. Both these sites were in the same garden outside the walls of Jerusalem in 30 AD, and now they are under one roof. John wrote that they were close to each other:

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and *since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.* - John 19:41-42

The area where the Church sits today was a large limestone quarry in 600-700 BC. The city of Jerusalem was to the SE and expanded first to the west before it came north toward the quarry. In an area east of St. Helena's Chapel in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher the quarry was over 40 feet deep.



The drawing above shows the abandoned quarry that was covered with reddish-brown soil in the 100's BC in order to create a garden. The area also supported cereal crops and an orchard of fig, carob, and olive trees.

In 30 AD, this was the perfect place to cut new graves because of the bedrock left exposed around the quarry, because it had only recently become available so still had lots of available space, and because it was close to the city yet still outside the walls. Jerusalem was, and still is, surrounded by graves that had been used for a thousand years leading up to 30 AD. This new garden was indeed a great opportunity for Joseph to be able to cut a grave so close to the city:

Now there was a man named Joseph, a member of the Council, a good and upright man, who had not consented to their decision and action. He came from the Judean town of Arimathea and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. Going to Pilate, he asked for Jesus' body. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen cloth and placed it in a tomb cut in the rock, one in which no one had yet been laid. - Luke 23:50-53

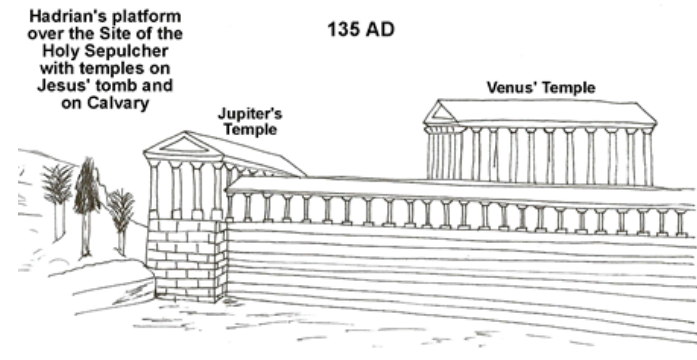
Four tombs from this period have been excavated. One of the tombs was a kokh, a long, narrow recess carved for the placement of a body. Bones were left in the kokh for a period of time, then later collected and placed in an ossuary. Due to this method of dealing with dead bodies, tombs would rarely be "new" tombs, since they were used over and over by a family or a group of people. Another tomb found in this area was an arcosolium, or a shallow, rock-hewn coffin cut into the side of a wall with an arch-shaped top. This tomb has been chipped away by centuries of pilgrims. The third is a large tomb that, like the kokh mentioned above, was found in front of the church in the entry courtyard. Constantine cut this tomb larger to use as a cistern. Finally, another kokh tomb was found under the Coptic convent. It is clear and undeniable that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher stands on the site of a burial ground from the time of Jesus in the first-century.

The Jews buried their dead outside the city walls. Jesus himself was crucified outside the city walls:

And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore. -Hebrews 13:12, 13

Not only that, but Jesus was also buried outside the city in a garden:

At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid. -John 19:41



In 135, after the second Jewish revolt (132-135), Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem as the Roman city Aelia Capitolina. He also renamed Judea "Palaestina" (that is, Palestine), after the ancient enemies of the Jews, the Philistines, who had ceased to be a people after the Babylonian invasions around 586 BC. Hadrian built a huge raised platform (a rectangular retaining wall filled with dirt) on the location of this ancient quarry covered with gardens and tombs in an effort to bury Calvary and the tomb of Jesus, an honored site of the Christians between the years of 30-135 AD. The platform was needed to level the stone surface that was cut up by the quarry and the tombs. Hadrian built the retaining wall of this platform with Herodian ashlar (most likely from the Jewish Temple Mount destroyed in 70 AD). These stones are identical in size and facing to the Herodian ashlar in the retaining wall of the Temple Mount, which made Hadrian's wall here look like Herod's Western Wall. Hadrian then built a temple to Venus on top of this platform.

Eusebius writes about this pagan shrine in his work entitled, *The Life of Constantine*, written around 339 AD:

*For it had been in time past the endeavor of impious men (or rather let me say of the whole race of evil spirits through their means), to consign to the darkness of oblivion that divine monument of immortality to which the radiant angel had descended from heaven, and rolled away the stone for those who still had stony hearts, and who supposed that the living One still lay among the dead; and had declared glad tidings to the women also, and removed their stony-hearted unbelief by the conviction that he whom they sought was alive. This sacred cave, then, certain impious and godless persons had thought to remove entirely from the eyes of men, supposing in their folly that thus they should be able effectually to obscure the truth. **Accordingly they brought a quantity of earth from a distance with much labor, and covered the entire spot; then, having raised this to a moderate height, they paved it with stone, concealing the holy cave beneath this massive mound.** Then, as though their purpose had been effectually accomplished, **they prepared on this foundation a truly dreadful sepulchre of souls, by building a gloomy shrine of lifeless idols to the impure spirit whom they call Venus, and offering detestable oblations therein on profane and accursed altars.** For they supposed that their object could not otherwise be fully attained, than by thus burying the sacred cave beneath these foul pollutions. Unhappy men!*

they were unable to comprehend how impossible it was that their attempt should remain unknown to him who had been crowned with victory over death, any more than the blazing sun, when he rises above the earth, and holds his wonted course through the midst of heaven, is unseen by the whole race of mankind. Indeed, his saving power, shining with still greater brightness, and illumining, not the bodies, but the souls of men, was already filling the world with the effulgence of its own light.

In 325 at the Council of Nicea, Macarius, the bishop of Jerusalem from 314 to 333, petitioned Constantine to demolish Hadrian's temple and uncover the tomb of Christ. In 326 AD Helena, Constantine's mother, visited Jerusalem and was told the site of Hadrian's temple was the site of Jesus' burial and resurrection. Constantine then ordered a rotunda to be built around Jesus' tomb which sat in front of Calvary, and on the other side of Calvary, Constantine built a long basilica church.

Eusebius goes on to record how Constantine ordered the destruction of Hadrian's pagan shrine and the removal of the material and soil used to cover up the tomb of Jesus:

He (Constantine) could not consent to see the sacred spot of which we have spoken, thus buried, through the devices of the adversaries, under every kind of impurity, and abandoned to forgetfulness and neglect; nor would he yield to the malice of those who had contracted this guilt, but calling on the divine aid, gave orders that the place should be thoroughly purified . . . As soon, then, as his commands were issued, these engines of deceit were cast down from their proud eminence to the very ground, and the dwelling-places of error, with the statues and the evil spirits which they represented, were overthrown and utterly destroyed. . . Nor did the emperor's zeal stop here; but he gave further orders that the materials of what was thus destroyed, both stone and timber, should be removed and thrown as far from the spot as possible; and this command also was speedily executed. The emperor, however, was not satisfied with having proceeded thus far: once more, fired with holy ardor, he directed that the ground itself should be dug up to a considerable depth, and the soil which had been polluted by the foul impurities of demon worship transported to a far distant place. (The Life of Constantine, book III, chapter XXVI and XXVII)

As mentioned earlier, the stones that Constantine removed from the destroyed pagan shrine may have been Herodian ashlar from the Temple Mount. Still today there are Herodian ashlar stones at the depths of the foundations of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

When all the stone, debris, and soil were removed from Hadrian's shrine the original rock quarry and tomb of Christ became visible. Eusebius, the church historian and biographer of Constantine continues to write around 329 AD:

As soon as the original surface of the ground, beneath the covering of earth, appeared, immediately, and contrary to all expectation, the venerable and hallowed monument of our Savior's resurrection was discovered. Then indeed did this most holy cave present a faithful

similitude of his return to life, in that, after lying buried in darkness, it again emerged to light, and afforded to all who came to witness the sight, a clear and visible proof of the wonders of which that spot had once been the scene, a testimony to the resurrection of the Savior clearer than any voice could give.
(The Life of Constantine, Book III, Chapter XXVIII)

Constantine then gave orders to the governors of the Eastern provinces to build a house of prayer. Eusebius records the order this way:

The emperor sent forth injunctions which breathed a truly pious spirit, at the same time granting ample supplies of money, and commanding that a house of prayer worthy of the worship of God should be erected near the Saviour's tomb on a scale of rich and royal greatness.
(The Life of Constantine, Book III, Chapter XXIX)

Eusebius even records the letter Constantine sent to Macarius, the presiding bishop over the church at Jerusalem at that time. In the letter Constantine describes his plans for the new construction and asks for Macarius' advice concerning the ceiling of the church:

It will be well, therefore, for your sagacity to make such arrangements and provision of all things needful for the work, that not only the church itself as a whole may surpass all others whatsoever in beauty, but that the details of the building may be of such a kind that the fairest structures in any city of the empire may be excelled by this . . . and as to the columns and marbles, whatever you shall judge, after actual inspection of the plan, to be especially precious and serviceable, be diligent to send information to us in writing, in order that whatever quantity or sort of materials we shall esteem from your letter to be needful, may be procured from every quarter, as required, for it is fitting that the most marvelous place in the world should be worthily decorated. With respect to the ceiling of the church, I wish to know from you whether in your judgment it should be panel-ceiled, or finished with any other kind of workmanship. If the panel ceiling be adopted, it may also be ornamented with gold.
(The Life of Constantine, Book III, Chapter XXX, XXX1)

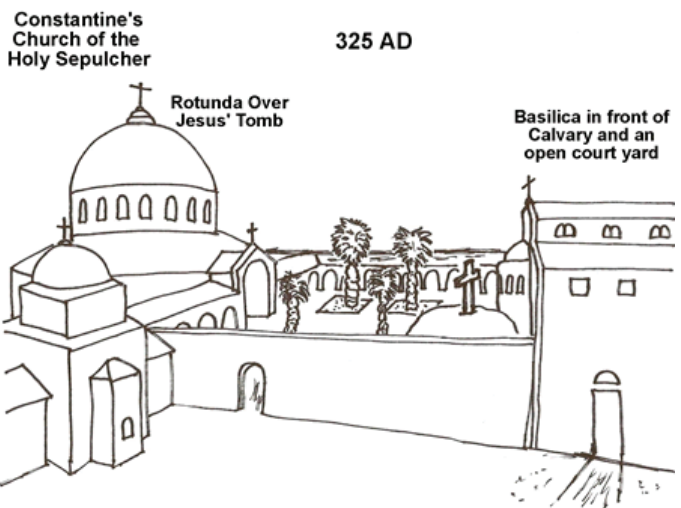
Construction of Constantine's Church of the Holy Sepulcher was begun in 326, and the building was dedicated on September 17, 335. The removal of all rock around the tomb located inside the rotunda was not completed until 384. By 384 a freestanding monumental rock structure, shaped from the bedrock of this abandoned quarry, would have stood over Christ's tomb inside the rotunda building, along with the burial bench that Jesus' body had been laid on, which was preserved inside the rock monument, similar to some of the tombs in the Kidron Valley.



The tomb around the burial bench of Christ that Constantine had cut from the rock would have had some similarities to other rock-cut monumental tombs seen around Jerusalem and in the Roman world. This photo is an example of one of the rock-cut monumental tombs in the Kidron Valley. The tomb that surrounded the cave and burial bench of Christ would have stood independently, though still attached to the bedrock. The rotunda would have been assembled around it, with the doomed ceiling supported by the great pillars of the rotunda. All this was carved out of the stone or built by the order of Constantine.

It is interesting to note Eusebius' understanding of the eschatological value of these events, and it is worth noting that Eusebius' view reflected the attitude of Constantine and the general Christian of that day. Eusebius' interpretation of scripture and his understanding of eschatological events led him and Constantine to consider this building project part of the New Jerusalem, and Constantine's reign as the reappearance of Christ on earth to rule through his church. This was one of several corruptions of eschatological interpretation that was to happen throughout church history. Eusebius wrote:

Accordingly, on the very spot which witnessed the Savior's sufferings, a new Jerusalem was constructed, over against the one so celebrated of old, which, since the foul stain of guilt brought on it by the murder of the Lord, had experienced the last extremity of desolation, the effect of Divine judgment on its impious people. It was opposite this city that the emperor now began to rear a monument to the Savior's victory over death, with rich

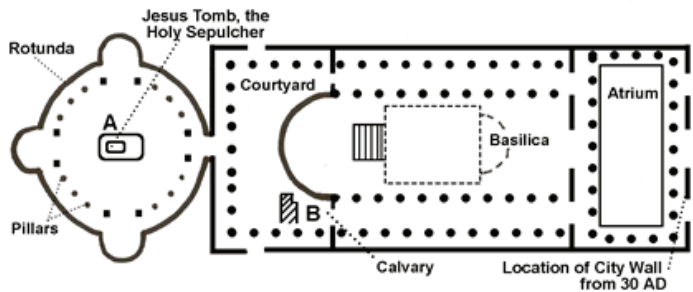


and lavish magnificence. And it may be that this was that second and new Jerusalem spoken of in the predictions of the prophets, concerning which such abundant testimony is given in the divinely inspired records.
(The Life of Constantine, Book III, Chapter XXXIII)

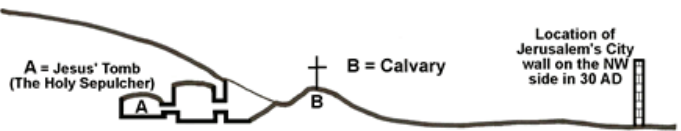
The Persians destroyed Christian churches, including the Holy Sepulcher church in 638, but they did not remove the monumental stone-cut block sepulcher that included the cave and burial bench of Christ. It wasn't until 1009 when the Muslim Caliph hacked and chiseled the monumental stone sepulcher into a pile of rubble that this structure was destroyed. The chipped pieces and piles of rubble were left in a mound of destruction, covering the still standing 4-5 feet of the north and south walls and the limestone burial bench of Christ. These remained hidden in the debris, to be uncovered and recovered by the Crusaders ninety years later.

Of course, the destruction of all Christian churches including the original Church of the Holy Sepulcher by the Persian hordes in 638, and the total destruction of the rebuilt Church of the Holy Sepulcher by the Muslim Egyptian Caliph al-Hakim in 1009, both provided clear evidence that the New Jerusalem had not yet come.

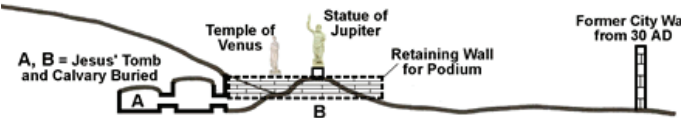
When the crusaders arrived in 1099 they rebuilt the ruined church with parts of Hadrian's temple that can be seen in eight different locations in the church today. The crusaders also used the remains of Constantine's glorious rotunda and basilica, including marble pillars, which they reduced to half their original size. These are the columns seen in the rotunda around the Holy Sepulcher today. The pillars that are seen today are original to Constantine's rotunda, but were reduced in size in order to be reused in the less glorious Crusader Church of the Holy Sepulcher that still exists today. Godfrey of Bouillon became the first Crusader king of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099 and called himself the "Defender of the Holy Sepulcher." The Crusader church was completed fifty years later in 1149.



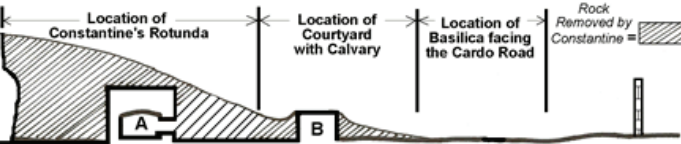
This is the floor plan of Constantine's magnificent and extravagant Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It consisted of a Basilica, a colonnaded courtyard around Calvary, and a large colonnaded rotunda around Jesus' tomb.



This is how the abandoned quarry/garden with graves would have looked in 30 AD. Notice the location of the northwest wall of the city on the right.



After Roman Emperor Hadrian squelched the Second Jewish Revolt in 135 AD, he desecrated the Temple Mount with pagan temples and a statue of himself. He also built a platform with pagan shrines on top of Calvary and the tomb of the Christian's God and Savior, Jesus. This made the Jewish Temple Mount and both of the Christian sites inaccessible to worshippers, yet at the same time, it preserved the knowledge of their location so that Constantine was able to build the Church of the Holy Sepulcher here.



This diagram shows the large amount of stone that was chipped away by Constantine's workers in order to prepare Calvary and the tomb for the Byzantine building project. Notice the tomb of Christ (A). The letter "A" is on the inside of the tomb where the burial slab that held Jesus' body is located. The white box around the tomb is rock that was left intact. The rest of the rock was chipped away to form a square rock box around the tomb and burial bench of Jesus. Constantine then built a rotunda around this rock box with the tomb inside.

Recent excavations have revealed Herodian ashlar in the remains of Hadrian's foundation walls at the lowest levels of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The presence of these stones helps confirm that this is the actual site of Jesus' burial.

Further evidence comes from a time even before Constantine built his church in 326. When Constantine's mother visited Jerusalem she was told that this exact spot was the location of Calvary and Christ's tomb. The fact that by 326 this area was inside the busy city of Jerusalem is strong evidence that they were right.

Based on the testimony of scripture and our knowledge of ancient Jewish practice, it is certain that Jesus was buried outside the city walls. But this site was inside the city of 326 AD. Had they not actually known and been merely guessing, they would have picked what seemed like a more logical place outside the city walls in 326 AD. For example, the Garden Tomb, also known as Gordon's Calvary, would have been a much better guess. Even

today it looks like a better location for Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection, but it is not. The fact that Helena was shown this unlikely site in 326 gives it credibility.

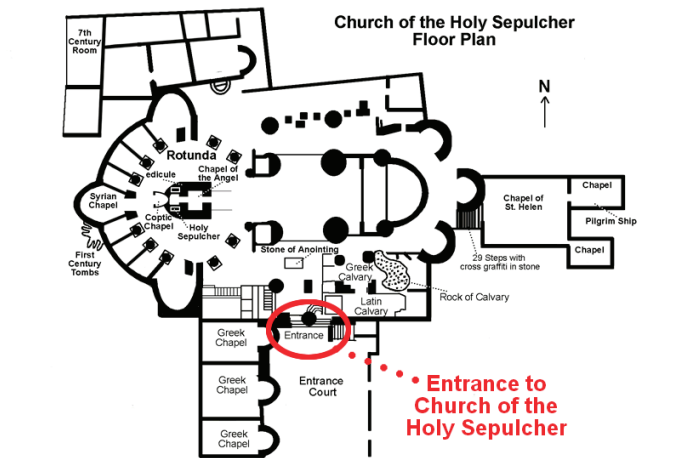
In addition to the location being inside the walls in 326, another fact lends credibility to the Christians’ assertion: Hadrian’s pagan shrine was still standing there when Helena visited. If they did not know for certain they were right, why would the Christians have believed the burial site of their resurrected Lord had been buried under a vile temple of corrupt pagan worship for 190 years?

Archaeology has now confirmed three important facts about the current site of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher:

- 1. It was outside the city walls of Jerusalem in 30 AD
- 2. It had many tombs in the first century (and they are clearly seen yet today)
- 3. There is an earlier building here that was built before the time of Constantine and Helena (i.e., Hadrian’s temple to Venus)



This is the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The current building was inaugurated by the Crusaders who rebuilt it in 1149. This site was honored by first century Christians, buried by Hadrian in 135, identified by local believers in 326, covered by Constantine’s church by 335, which was then destroyed by the Persians in 614, only to be rebuilt and destroyed again by the Muslim Caliph Hakim in 1009. The right (east) half of the main entrance to the church was walled shut by the Muslims after the Crusaders lost Jerusalem in 1187.



Today this church is shared by six groups of Christians: Latin Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Syrians, Copts, and Ethiopians.



This ladder is located on a ledge above the main entrance. It was placed there some time in the late 1800’s to take food to Armenian monks who were locked inside the church. This ladder can be seen in photos from at least 1890. The ladder remains where it is because the various Christian groups that control the church cannot agree on who is responsible for putting it away. Each of the six groups - Greek Orthodox, Roman (Latin) Catholics, Armenians, Copts, Syrians, and Ethiopians - have their own areas of jurisdiction which were precisely defined in 1852.



This is the view standing in the main entrance of the church. The doors for this entrance are on the left and right sides of the photo. On the floor directly in front is the Stone of Anointing where (it is believed, but not provable) according to tradition or legend Jesus’ body was laid for anointing after he was taken down from the cross. Calvary is directly to the right about five more steps into the building. The tomb of Jesus is to the left of the anointing stone, about 70 steps away. The anointing stone was placed between Calvary and the tomb, in the general area where Joseph would have wrapped Jesus’ body and women may have applied the spices. The stone that is here today dates to 1808 when it was put here to replace the crusader period stone that was destroyed by fire.



The door tracks on the floor at the entrance to the church of the Holy Sepulcher.



The left door of the entrance to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.



The handle and lock of the left door of the Holy Sepulcher. Notice the Greek and Arabic inscriptions.

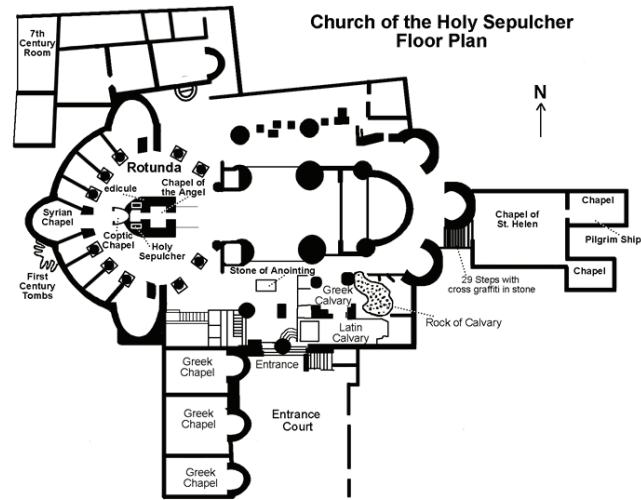
The front door on the left side of the entryway of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher shows charred remains near the metal handles and locks from a serious fire in the church in 1808. In 1927 an earthquake also caused great damage to the church. Damage from the earthquake was not repaired until 1959 because it took 32 years for the Latin, Greek and Armenian Christians to come to an agreement on how the church was to be repaired.



Photo of the left door showing the tracks on the floor that the door moves on.



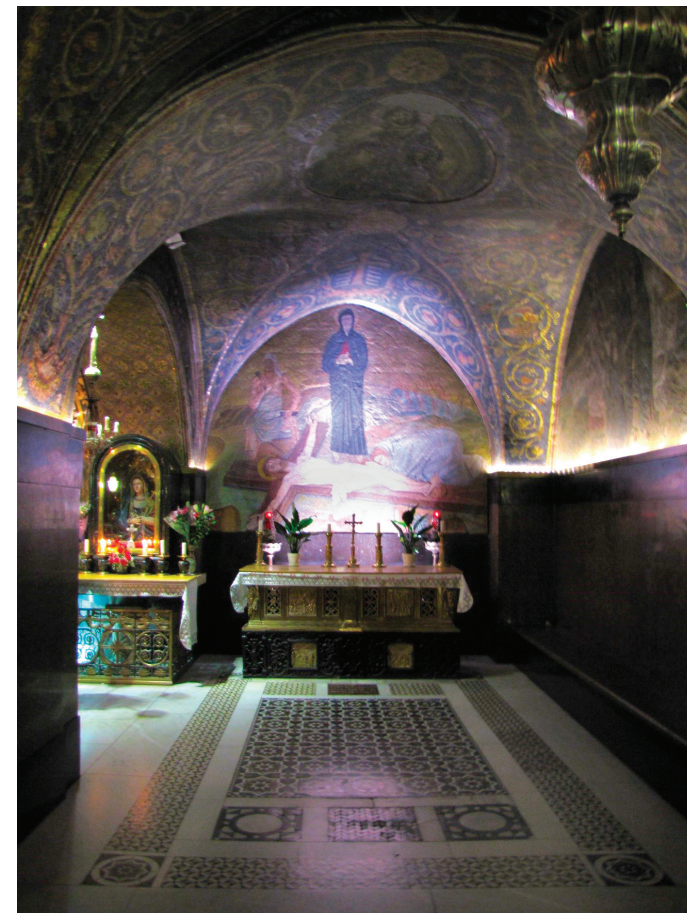
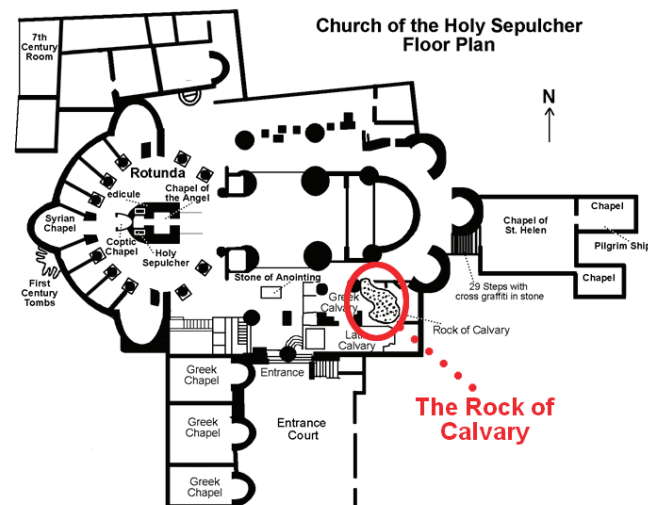
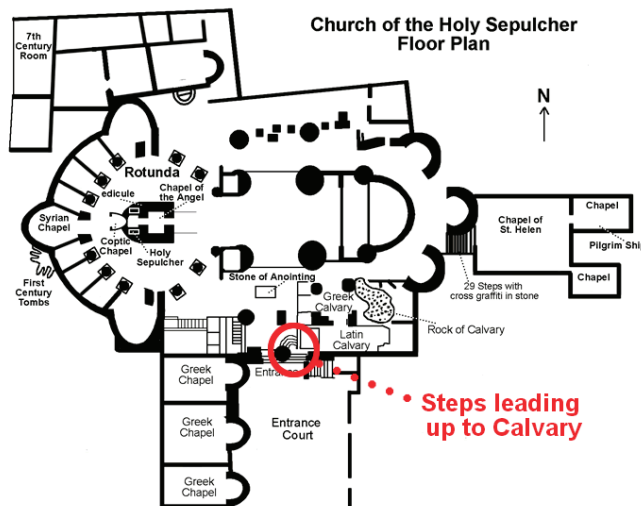
The right door and the track on the floor.



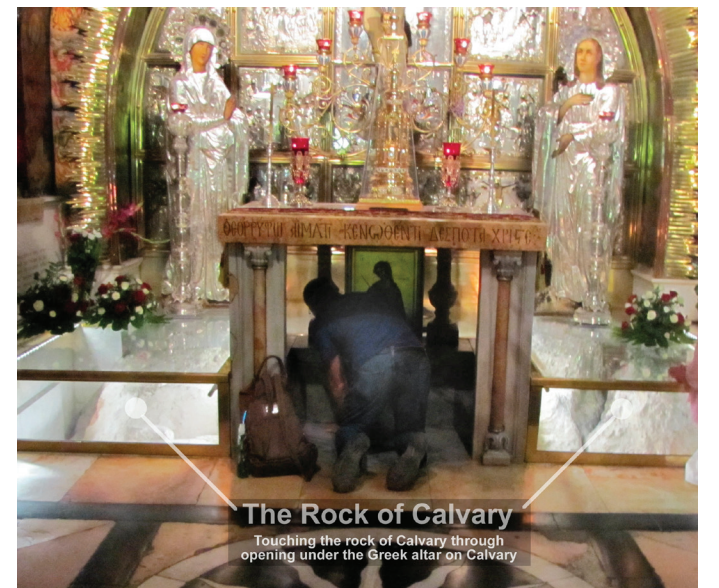
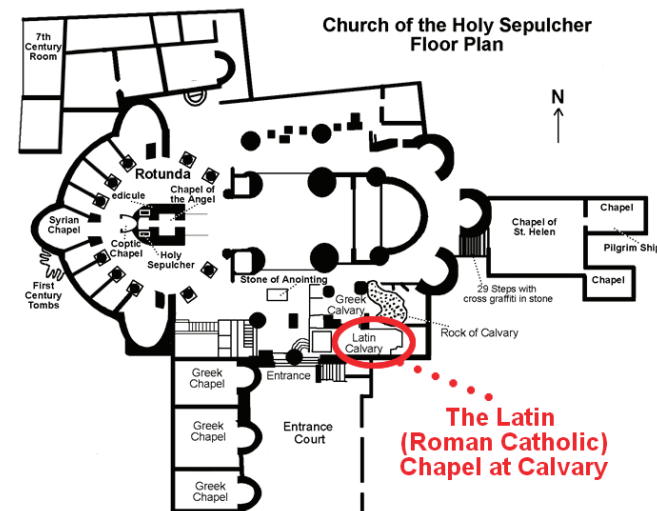
This is a floor plan of today's Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Locate the "Entrance" (right above the "Entrance Court) and the unblocked door seen above. Some areas we will visit in the next few pages are: 1) the steps up to Calvary located behind the blocked entrance, 2) the two views of Calvary up stairs that are called "Latin Calvary" and "Greek Calvary", 3) the "Chapel of Adam" (directly below the Greek Calvary, but not marked on this diagram), 4) the "Stone of Anointing" in the main entryway, 5) the "Rotunda" with columns and an arched dome, 6) the "Holy Sepulcher" and the burial bench of Jesus, 7) the "Syrian Chapel" with access to "First Century Tombs". We will then move to the right side of the diagram passing through some unmarked hallways and chapels to 8) the "29 Steps with Cross Graffiti", down into the 9) "Chapel of St. Helen." We will then return to the "Entrance" to watch the Muslim gate keeper lock the door of the church at the end of the day for the divided Christian groups who worship here.



These are the eighteen steps up to Calvary. The steps are directly behind the blocked gateway seen outside at the front of the church at the entrance. The right entry door is seen along the right edge of this photo. The stones that block the western entrance gate can be seen making up the wall behind the steps alongside the column that is seen alongside the open door. This column can be seen on the outside of the church at the entrance. The steps are worn with dips, and the stairs tilt to the left. The rock of Calvary is located a few feet on the other side of this wall. At the top of the stairs we emerge into the Roman (Latin) Catholic Chapel for Calvary.

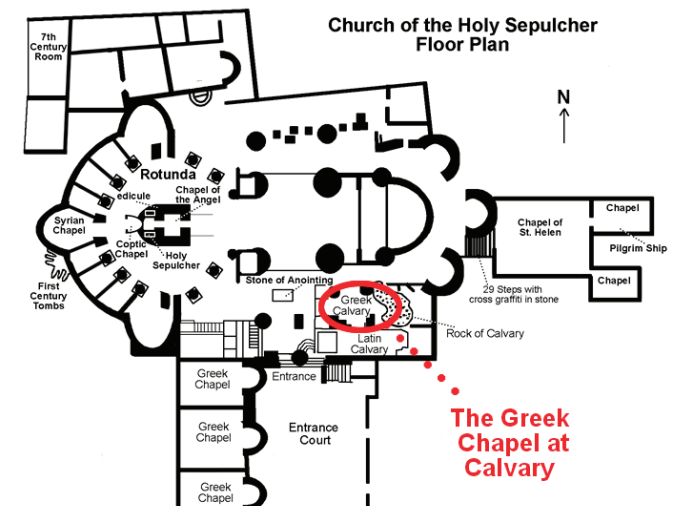


This is the Roman Catholic, or Latin, Chapel next to Calvary. It is upstairs and to the right of the main entrance. A few steps ahead and to the left we enter the Greek Chapel, or the Greek Orthodox altar at Calvary. The altar you see here was made in Florence, Italy in 1588 and was donated by Cardinal Medici. On the front of the altar are four scenes from Jesus' suffering hammered into silver panels – two panels are on the bottom and the other two are directly above them.



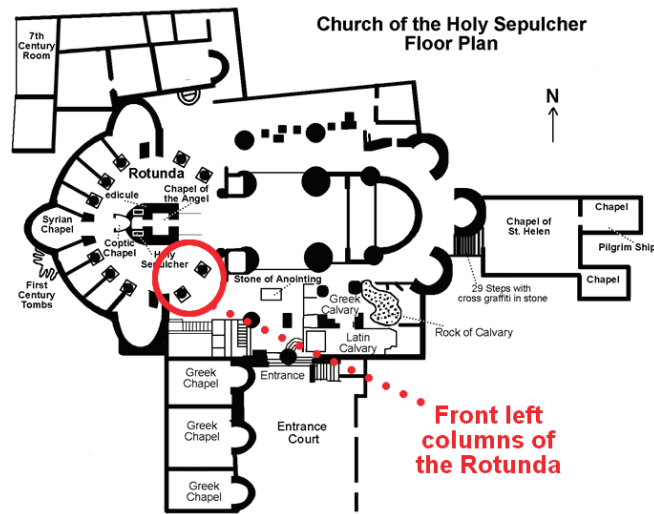
This is the Greek Altar in the Greek Chapel at Calvary. Under the altar and just in front of the picture (seen over Galyn's right shoulder) is an opening through which you can actually touch the bedrock of Calvary at a spot that is traditionally believed to be near the place where the base of the cross was placed. In this photo Galyn is touching the rock of Calvary. On both sides of the altar the original bedrock of the rock known as Calvary (Golgotha or "The Skull") can be seen through the viewing glass. The glass is there because, through the centuries, visiting pilgrims have chipped off souvenirs from these holy sites, including the original burial bench in Jesus' tomb.

Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). Here they crucified him. . . . for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city. - John 19:17, 18, 20





We enter the rotunda that encircles the tomb of Jesus. These are the columns at the front on the left side of the Rotunda.

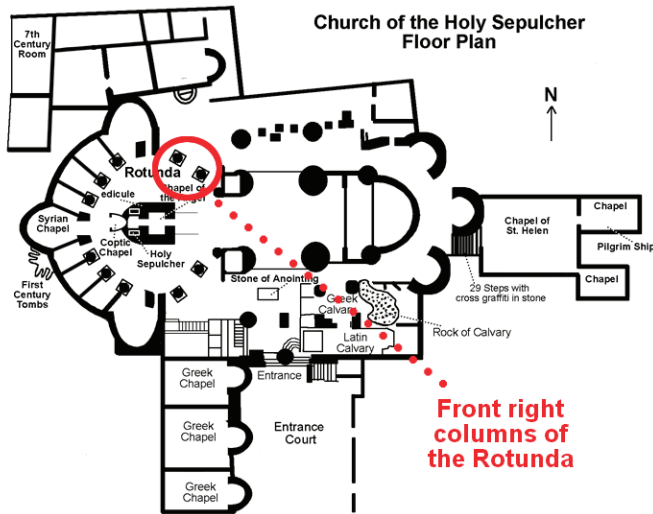


The columns in today's rotunda over the tomb of Christ are parts of Constantine's original rotunda built in the 300's. This means the original columns were taller and much more magnificent than what we see today.

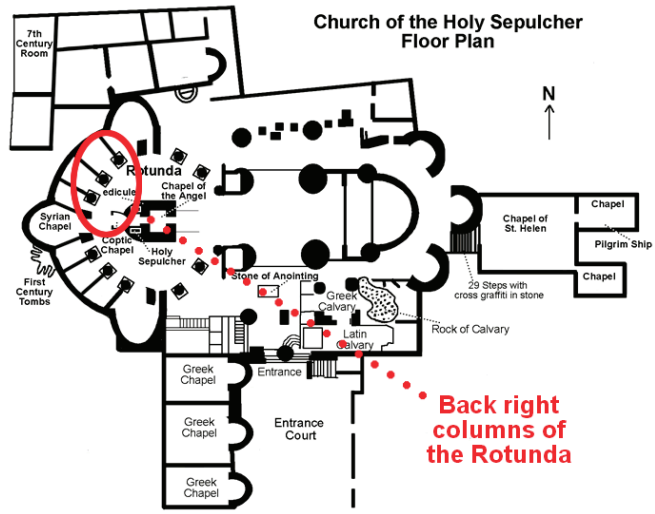
Constantine's spectacular rotunda with its large dome covering the tomb of Christ was intended to declare Christ's victory and reign. Eusebius, the church historian from the days of Constantine, quoted Constantine as ordering a rotunda built for Christ that was "of a magnificence worthy of his wealth and of his crown."



In the rotunda that encircles the tomb of Jesus, these are the columns at the front on the right side of the Rotunda as a visitor faces the opening of the tomb of Christ.



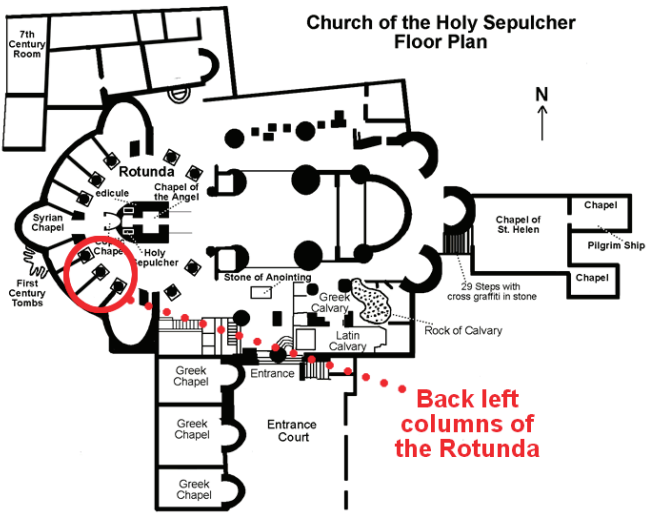
These columns are on the right side in the back of the Rotunda as we face the tomb.



The columns at the back of the tomb on the left side.



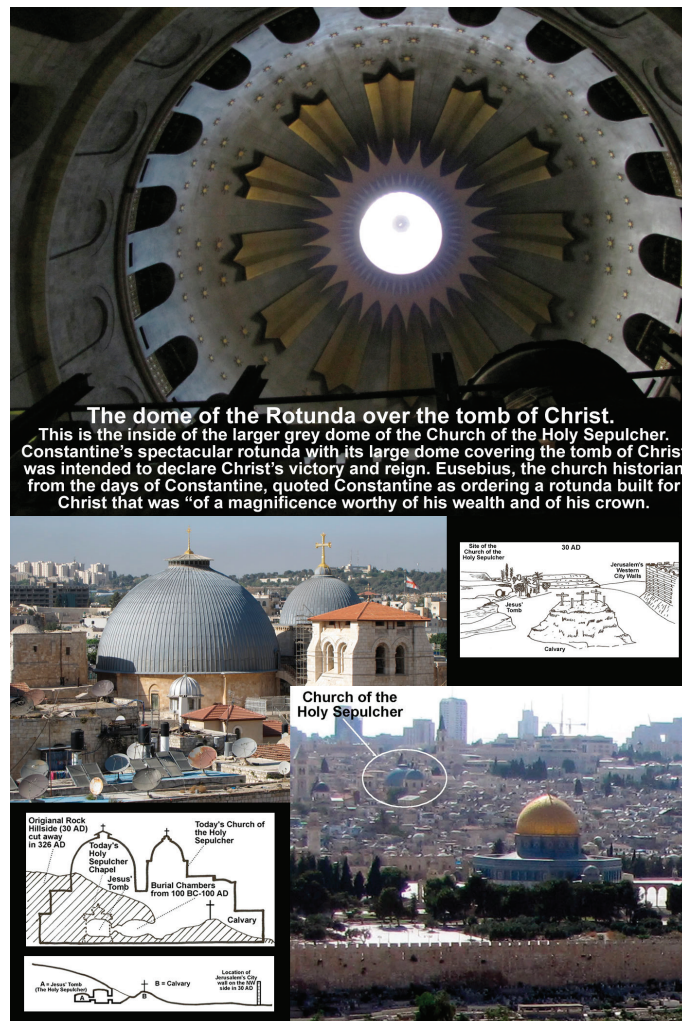
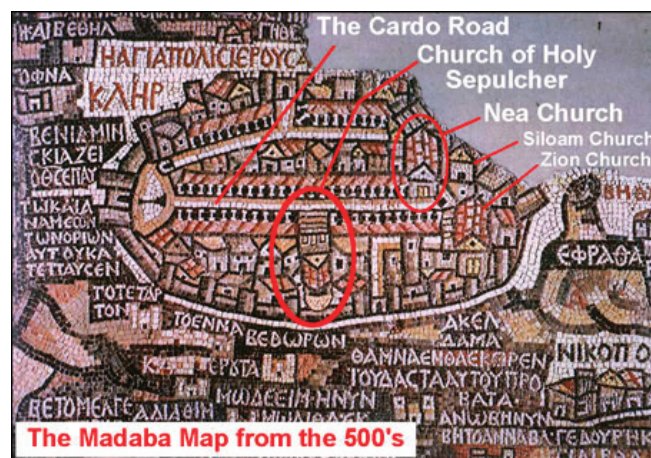
These columns are on the left side toward the back of the tomb.





Columns, with the dome of the Rotunda above. This is inside the larger of the two gray domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

Originally, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was constructed as two sites. The first was a rotunda (a building with a circular ground plan) with a dome marking the tomb of Christ. The second was a basilica church on the site of the crucifixion. (A basilica is a large-roofed hall with interior colonnades that divides the space, giving aisles or arcaded spaces at one or both sides. There is also an apse at one end where the church leaders sit. The central aisle is usually wider and higher than the flanking aisles. This design allows light to enter through the clerestory windows, the upper row of windows, in order to bring light all the way to the center of the large building).



The large gray dome (west side) covers the rotunda, which itself covers the tomb of Christ - the Holy Sepulcher. The smaller gray (east side) dome with the cross at the top covers Calvary.

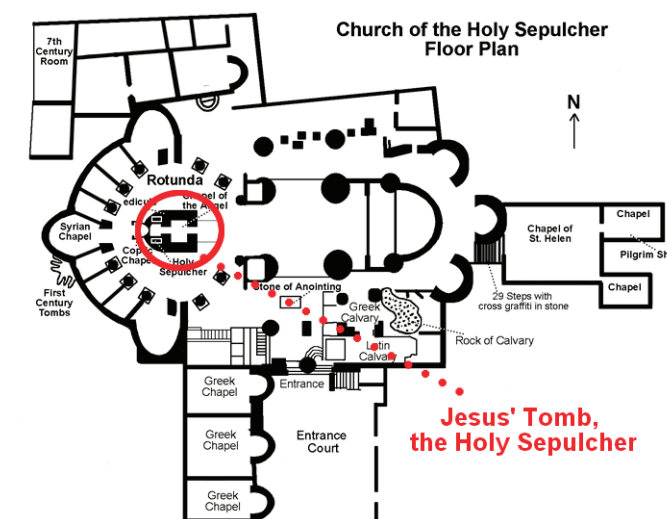
Between these two buildings was a courtyard enclosed in a columned portico. All this was located on the west side of the Cardo, Jerusalem's main street at that time. The Basilica faced the street and was the front entrance of the complex.

In 1876 a mosaic called the Madaba Map was found on the floor of a Byzantine church from the 500's in Madaba, Jordan. The Church of the Holy Sepulcher is shown with its basilica built in front of Calvary so that it extends all the way to the Cardo. Also, shown on the map are the Nea Church, the Siloam Church and the Zion Church. On Easter each year during the Byzantine era, a very large procession began at the Nea Church and progressed down the Cardo Street to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The full map was of Israel, and included the area from Bethshan to the Nile River in Egypt, and from the Mediterranean Sea in the west to the Arabian Desert in the east. It is the oldest map of Israel in existence. The map is about 65 feet by 16 feet, and was made from more than 2 million tesserae. There are 150 captions, all in Greek.



The front of the Holy Sepulcher. The only original part of Jesus' tomb that remains is the burial bench and portions of the walls.



*The front of the Holy Sepulcher
seen from the left side.*

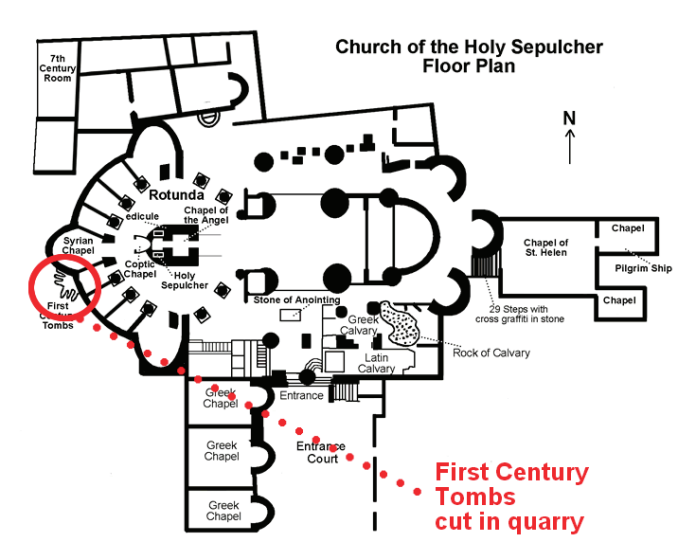




Inside the small opening we can see the original bedrock and tombs in the back. There is a small door to the right that blocks access into one of the tombs.



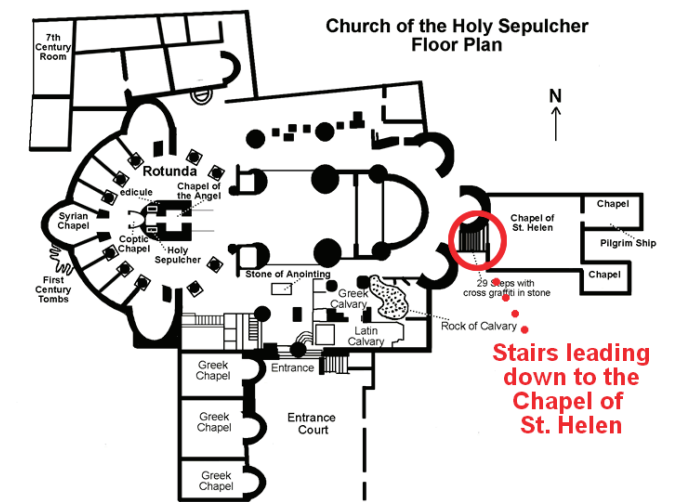
Inside the chamber we can see the long, narrow tombs. These are just a few feet from Jesus' tomb and are cut into the same rock.



Here we look inside the areas where bodies were laid after they were wrapped in cloth and spices. After about a year, the body would have decayed, and the bones would then be collected and placed in an ossuary box.



Crosses cut in the walls on both sides of the stairs leading down to the church of St. Helen. This cross graffiti has been carved by pilgrims through the centuries. The design of most of these crosses is from the Crusader period.



This is a photo of the Chapel of the True Cross. Tradition says that Constantine's mother found the true cross of Jesus hidden in this chapel when they uncovered the area in 326. A cross that was considered the "true" cross existed, but was taken by the Persians. It was later recovered and restored to the church. Ironically, it eventually disappeared completely due to Christian pilgrims picking pieces of wood from it and taking them home.

The Chapel of the True Cross is the lowest and easternmost point in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The chapel got its name from a legend that says Helena found the true cross of Christ there. This "cave" is on the opposite side of other first century tombs and was once a quarry, but after the quarry was abandoned it was converted into a cistern.

To the right of the altar is a fresco painted by the Crusaders, now protected by plexiglass. To the left of the altar is a small room called the Chapel of St. Vartan. Inside this room are Herodian ashlar stones from the Temple Mount, remains of Hadrian's foundation walls built in 135 AD for his pagan temples. On one of these ashlars is a painting of a ship with the Latin inscription "DOMINE IVIMUS" ("Lord, we came") drawn by a Christian pilgrim sometime between 135 and 200 AD. This inscription confirms the belief that early Christians visited this site to honor Jesus, even while a pagan shrine stood here. The boat could be a Byzantine sailing ship with the mast lowered. The bow of the ship is to the left,

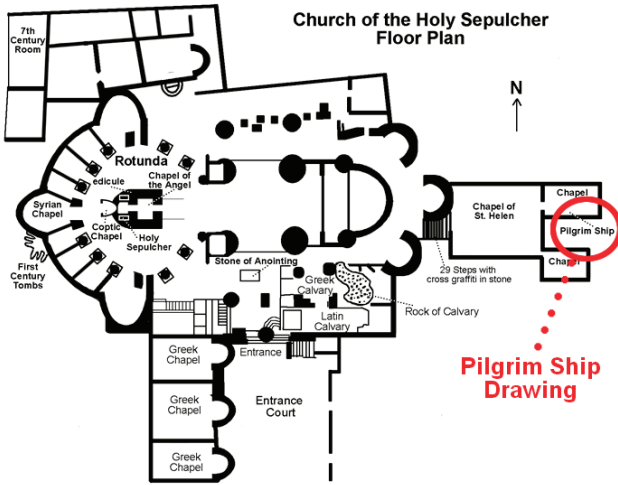
and the stern and two steering rudders at the back are on the right side. If that is the case, the inscription would be from around the time of Constantine, probably after Constantine had ordered the destruction of Hadrian's temples but before the Church of the Holy Sepulcher had been built. The inscription is from the traditional Psalm of the pilgrim to Jerusalem:

I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.' Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem. - Psalm 122:1

Another interpretation of the Latin inscription is "DD M NOMINUS" ("the gift of Marcus Nominus").



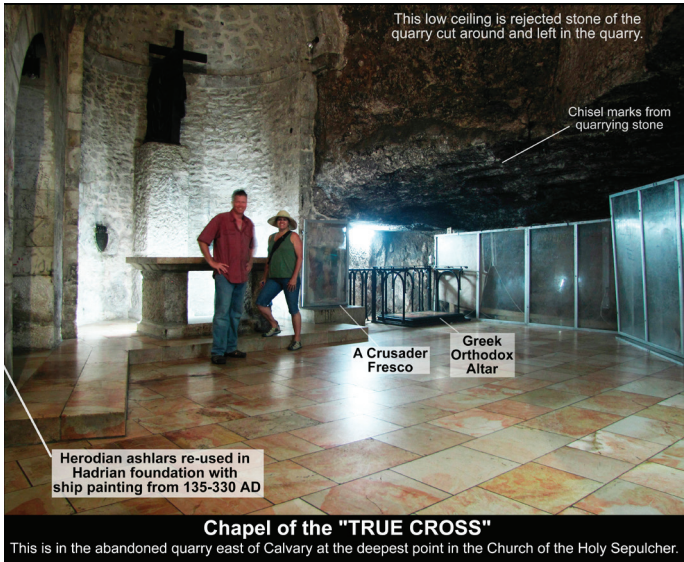
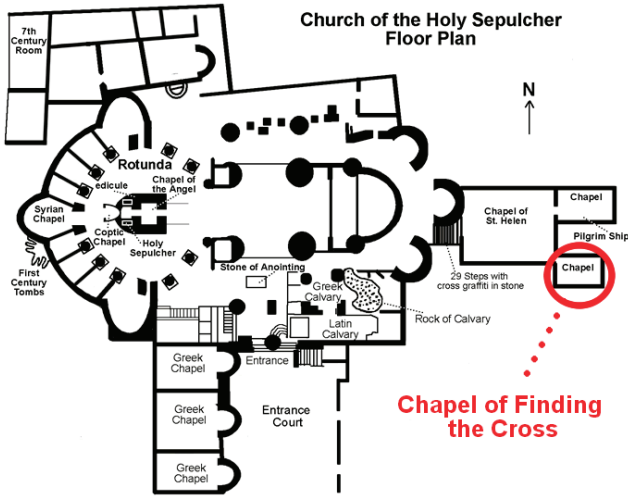
The image of a ship painted on a Herodian ashlar found at the bottom of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in the Chapel of St. Vartan. It is accessed from the left side of the altar in the Chapel of St. Helen, and is next to the Chapel of the True Cross. Hadrian reused the Herodian stones from the Temple to build his pagan shrine over the tomb of Jesus. It appears a Christian pilgrim visited this site after sailing here from a foreign land. He drew the image of his ship with a lowered sail and wrote, "Lord, we came."



Galyn and Toni in the lowest part of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, in the Chapel of the True Cross. (When we reached this location we set the camera on automatic-timer and took a photo of ourselves.) The Herodian ashlar with the ship painting is to the left of this photo but is only accessible by returning to the Chapel of St. Helen up the stairs, and then entering the Chapel of St. Vartan from the left side of the altar.



This is the ceiling of the Chapel of the True Cross. The large rock portion at the top of the photo was rejected by the cutters and was left in the quarry. The square openings at the top of the vaulted ceiling were used to lower buckets into this part of the quarry when it had been converted into a cistern before the time of Constantine.



Looking out the entrance doors into the courtyard in front of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher moments before closing time.



This photo shows the doors of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher being locked by a Muslim man whose family has done it every day since 1178 AD when the Muslim Nuseibeh family was appointed by Saladin to take care of the key and manage the locking and unlocking of the 3 ton doors for the constantly fighting Christian groups. During the 1700's there were tensions between the Ottoman Empire authorities and the Nuseibeh family, so in 1789 the Joudeh family was given the responsibility of assisting the Nuseibeh family. Since that time, a member of the Joudeh family brings the key to a member of the Nuseibeh family who then unlocks and locks the Church door for the Christians.



Chapter 57

Garden Tomb and Gordon's Calvary



This site is called Gordon's Calvary because in 1883 British General Charles Gordon suggested that this outcropping of rock just across the street from the north city wall was Golgotha, the Place of the Skull. The proposal that this was the original Calvary gained some momentum since a garden tomb had been found near this location in 1867. This site soon began to challenge the legitimacy of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher as the location of Jesus' crucifixion, burial and resurrection. This is an interesting location but there are many reasons why it cannot be the actual site. Notice the impression of a face that can be seen in this rock: the two eye sockets in the middle of the photo with the forehead above, and the bridge of the nose below.



About 300 feet to the left (west) of the "skull" of Gordon's Calvary is a rolling stone tomb (there is a track or groove cut in the rock in front of the entrance of the tomb for a rolling stone) with a burial bench inside. This tomb was discovered in 1867, and because of its proximity to "the Skull" it was assumed by the British to be the tomb of Christ. Of course, this assumption went against 1,800 years of history and tradition (and now, today, archaeological evidence as well) that pointed to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher as being the authentic place of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. This tomb was not an unused "new" tomb in the time of Christ, nor did Joseph cut it in the first century. Tombs of the New Testament era had burial chambers, or burial benches, cut out of rock behind the entrance room (called the vestibule), similar to those seen in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The style of this tomb, however, is typical of tombs from 800-600 BC, with two burial benches cut into the wall. The Byzantine Christians of 300-600 AD did not consider this a holy site, since they cut down the burial benches to create a sarcophagus to bury their dead. Even the Christian Crusaders used this site as a stable.

Notice the burial bench was carved away by the Byzantine Christians to create a rock sarcophagus.



A carved water channel cut in the pavement in front of the tomb entrance.



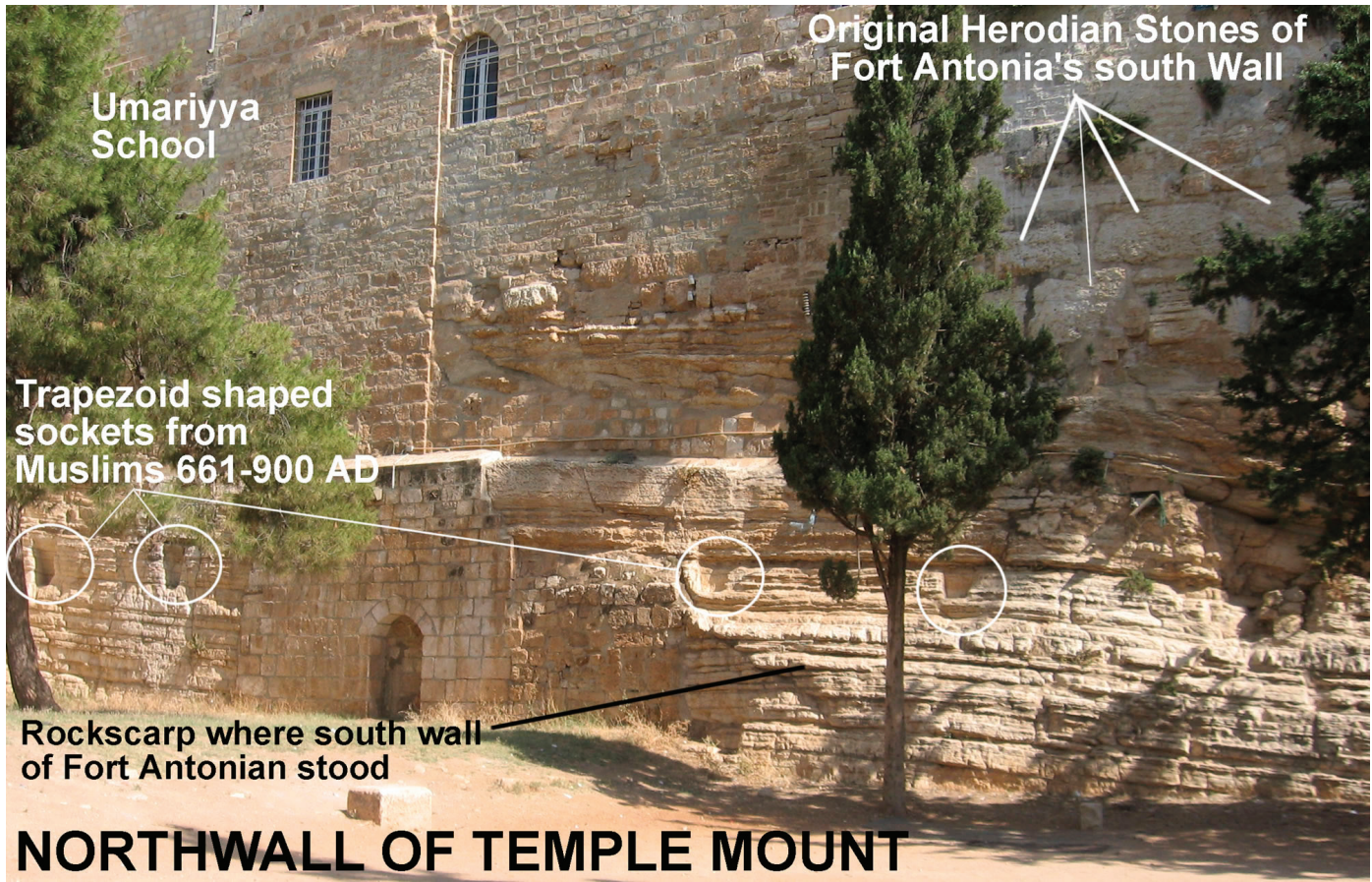
Galyn steps out of the Garden Tomb.

One of the reasons this site is promoted by Protestant groups and receives attention in Protestant Bible dictionaries, atlases, and other study books is because the Protestants are newcomers to Christianity and have no designated place in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Protestant groups did not emerge from the Roman (Latin) Catholic branch of church history until the 1500 and 1600's, long after the church building was controlled by six ancient Christian "denominations" powerful in the Eastern World - Latin Catholic, Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, and Ethiopian. In fact, many Protestant churches show no interest in Jerusalem or the Holy Land at all. Nonetheless, the Garden Tomb is not the original site of Jesus' burial and resurrection. There is no reason to even consider this location, other than the fact that it is a tomb outside the walls of Jerusalem. But then, there are hundreds of tombs outside the walls of Jerusalem, many with outcroppings of rock near tombs set in ancient gardens. This site is interesting, but it is not unique.



Chapter 58

Fort Antonia

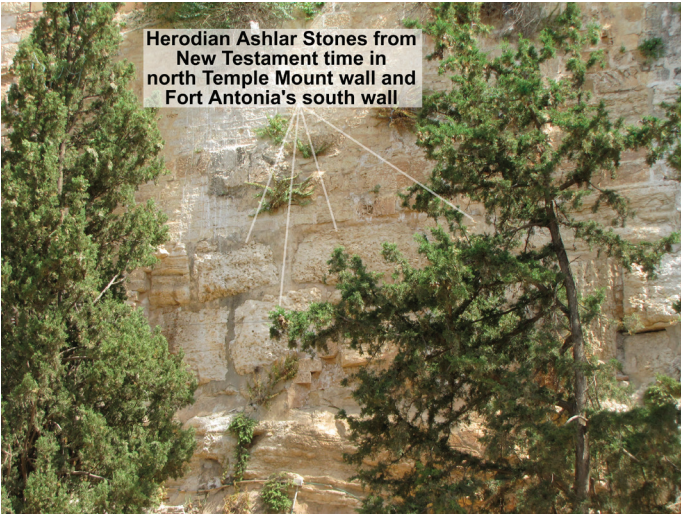


Fort Antonia, Herod's fortress used to oversee the Temple Mount, sat on this outcropping of rock that served as the foundation of the north wall of the Temple Mount. There are several things to notice in this photo: 1) the outcropping of bedrock from Mount Moriah seen in the bottom right corner, 2) the remains of the original Herodian ashlar stones (about 26 remain) that were placed on the rockscarp and served as the outside of Fort Antonia's south wall and also as the inside of the Temple Mount's north wall, 3) trapezoidal notches in the wall called sockets that were cut by Muslims at a later time for extended beams that supported a roof, 4) the current location of a Muslim boys' school called the Umariyya School, 5) not visible in this photo but located east (right) of the Herodian ashlar are five or more 19-inch square sockets about 29 feet above the ground; these sockets supported beams for the colonnade that covered a pavement which ran around the inside of the Temple Mount walls in the days of Jesus and the New Testament.

Herod built a fortress on the higher bedrock in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount to keep an eye on activities and oversee the Jews in the Temple. He named this stronghold Fort Antonia after his friend Marc Antony. The south wall of Fort Antonia was built

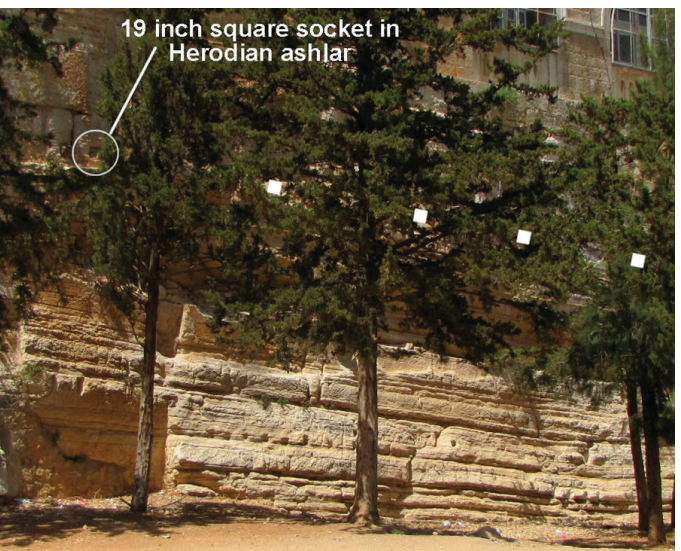
in line with the north wall of the Temple Mount on an outcropping of rock. This rockscarp can still be seen today protruding above ground level. The south wall of a Muslim boys' school sets on this rockscarp on the outside. Still remaining in this wall are about 26 Herodian ashlar stones, still in contact with the bedrock where they were originally placed. In addition to the typical margins and bosses of the ashlar, a couple of interesting things can be seen in these blocks and on the rockscarp itself. In the rockscarp below the school are two sets of sockets (notches cut into the rock to support a beam that extends out from the wall to support the roof of a structure):

1. The lower trapezoidal sockets are in the photo (9 feet above the ground). They are from 661-900 AD and were made to hold the vaulting springs, or beams of the roof, of a portico built by the Muslims at that time.
2. 20 feet above them is a series of sockets 19 inches square, which held the massive roof beams of a majestic portico (or a covered colonnade) whose columns were 29 feet high. This portico, which Josephus says was 50 feet wide (War, 5:190), was built by Herod and went all the way around the Temple Mount.

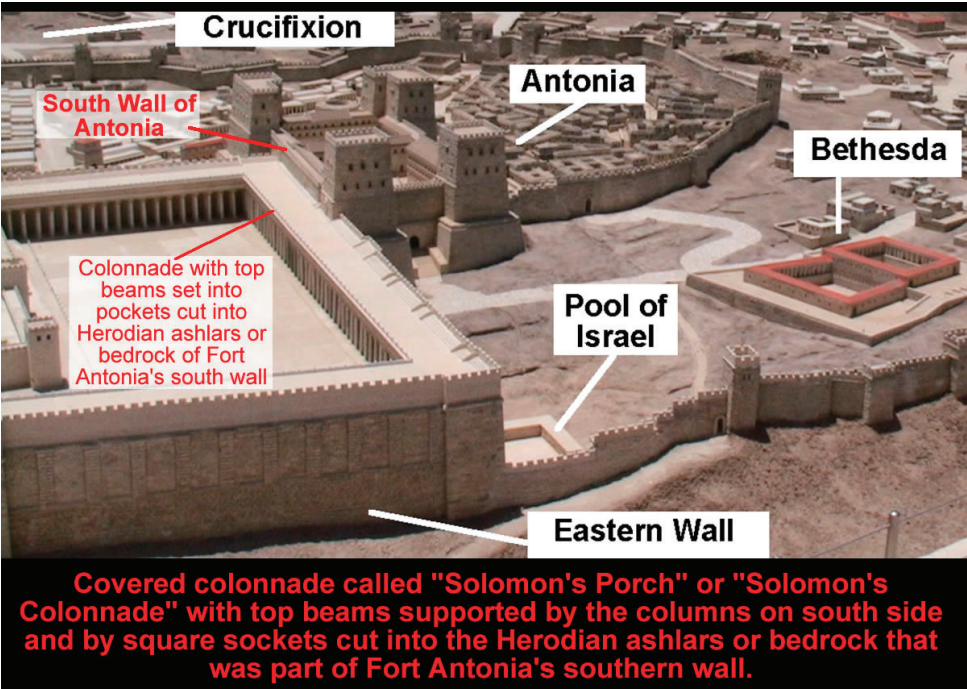


A close-up view of Herodian ashlar on the bedrock that made up the north wall of the Temple Mount and the south wall of Fort Antonia.

The pillared portico, or colonnade (a walkway lined with columns and covered with a roof), would have run along the front of this rockscarp. The roof was supported by wooden beams extending upward from the 19-inch square sockets cut into Herodian ashlar stones 29 feet up the wall. The location and spacing of the columns can be identified by simply extending a perpendicular line out from the remaining 19-inch sockets. The wooden beams placed in these sockets would have lain on the columns, which would have made them about 27 feet tall. The original Herodian paving stones from this colonnaded pavement were visible until recently, but they, like many other evidences of the ancient Jewish presence on the Temple Mount, have been covered up or removed by the Muslims. Even the trees growing along this wall block a clear view of the sockets.



The first of five 19-inch square sockets that supported beams above the colonnade of the Jewish Temple is circled in one of the Herodian ashlar 29 feet above the ground. The location of the other four sockets, which are blocked by the trees, is marked by small white squares. Below them, just right of the first tree trunk, is a trapezoidal socket cut later by Muslims.



This is a model of the northwest corner of the Temple Mount. Fort Antonia is outside, but shared the north wall with the Temple complex, which then served as Fort Antonia's south wall. The portico, or covered colonnade, continued all around the inside of the Temple Mount. At the south end, above the Double Gate and Triple Gate, the covered colonnade became a higher and wider section with four columns instead of two. This area was known as Solomon's Porch, Solomon's Colonnade, or the Royal Stoa.



A close up of one of the 19-inch square sockets cut into the Temple Mount that was used to support a wooden beam that sat on the columns and served as part of the roofing structure in the colonnade.



One of the many sockets cut later in the rockscarp by Muslims.



Today, above the rockscarp is the Umariyya School, a Muslim school for boys. Herodian stones from the outside south wall of Fort Antonia can be seen in the south wall of the Umariyya School. A 13-foot ancient wall can be seen inside the southern rooms of the Umariyya School. This thick wall would have been the southern wall of Fort Antonia. To the east of the school is another building that still has six and a half feet of a Herodian pilaster, which would have decorated the outside of the Jewish Temple Mount wall in the first century.



This is a photo of the trapezoidal sockets cut about 9 feet high in the bedrock. They were cut between 650 and 900 AD by Muslims to support wooden beams for one of the roof systems in their buildings.

Chapter 59

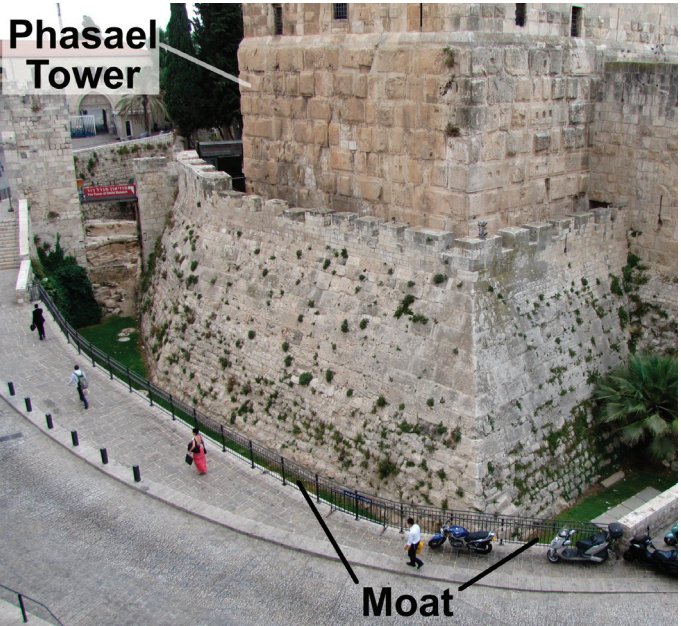
Phasael Tower



Herod built three towers on the north side of his palace, which sat along the inside of the west wall of the city of Jerusalem. The towers were called:

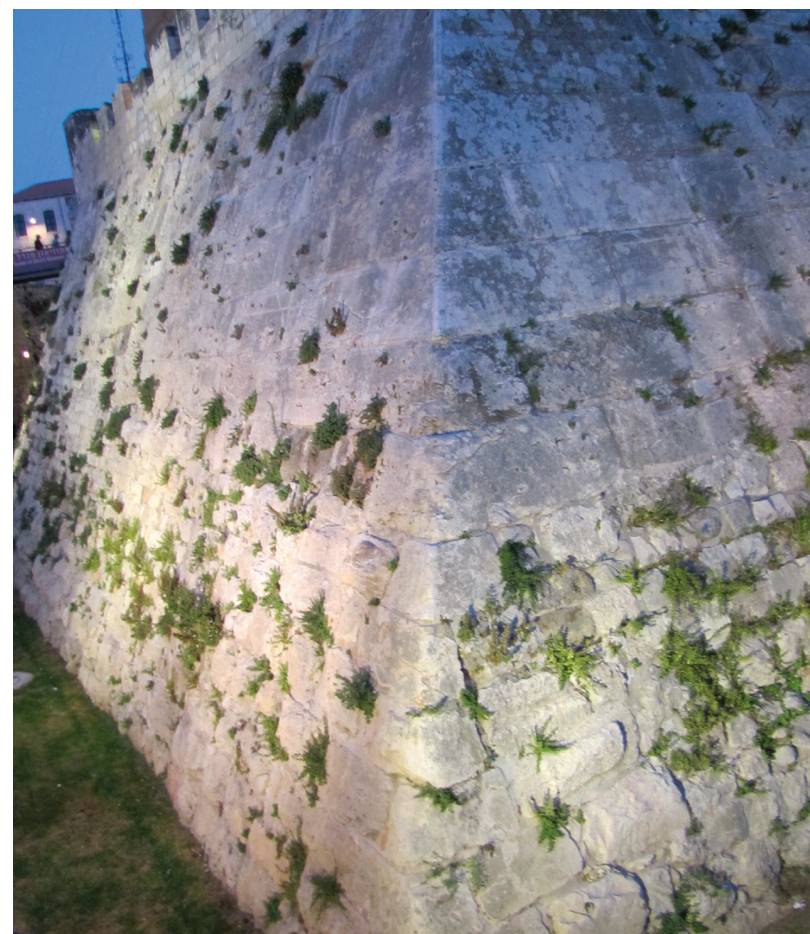
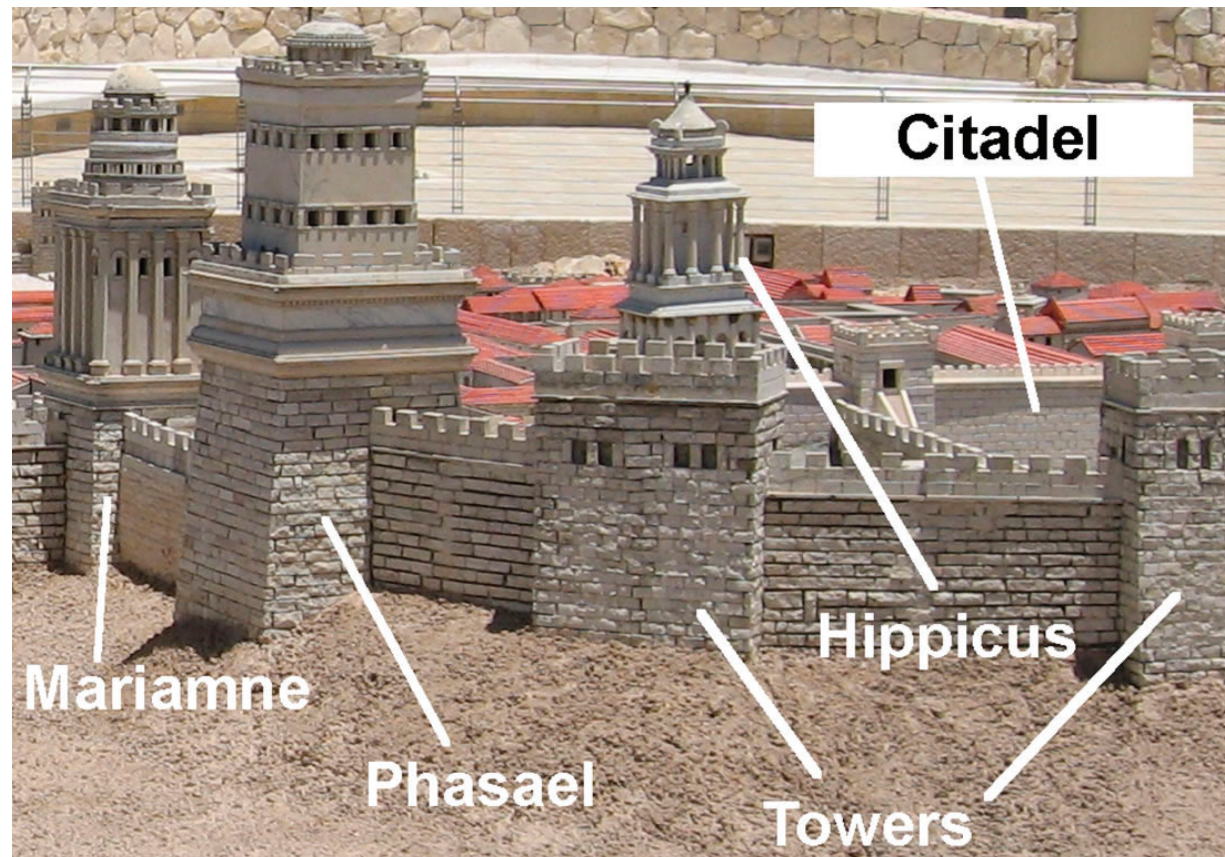
- Phasael**, after Herod's brother; this tower was housed a luxury apartment
- Hippicus**, after Herod's friend; this tower was for water storage
- Mariamne**, after Herod's favorite wife; this tower was the location of another extravagant luxury apartment

Three portions of Herod's Phasael tower can be seen in the photo above. The lower portion is built on an incline like a glacis (an artificial slope built against a fortification for military defense). The middle portion is part of Herod's original tower of Phasael built around 20 BC, along with the base. The upper portion was built by Suleiman the Magnificent in 1537.



The base of Phasael Tower sits in a dry moat inside the Jaffa Gate by the Citadel. This used to be the northwest corner of Herod's city of Jerusalem before his grandson Herod Agrippa I began the Third Wall in 41-44 AD.





Courses of blocks set to create an angled rampart or a glacis.

Chapter 60

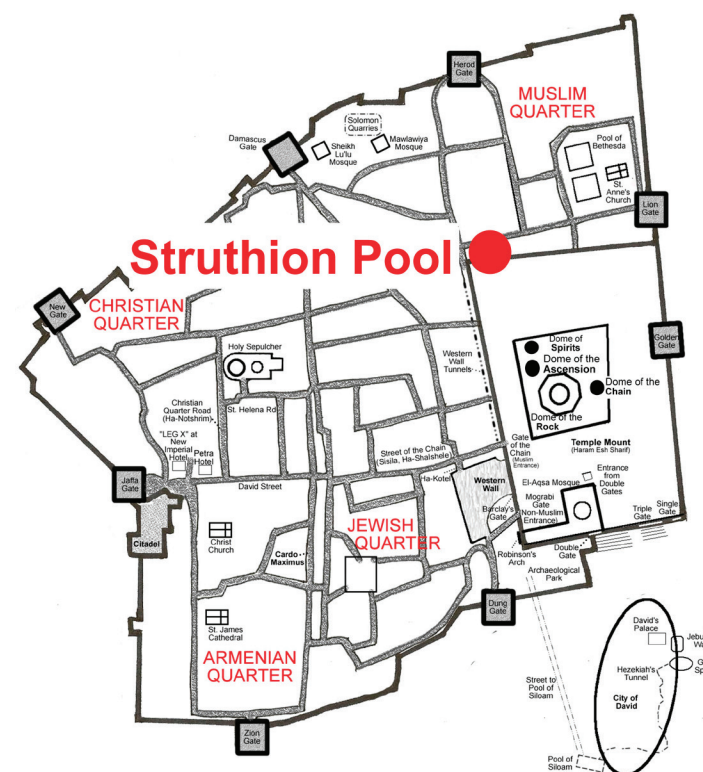
Struthion Pool

The Hasmoneans built an open air aqueduct to bring water from the north side of the Temple Mount into the city and the Temple Mount. The water was collected in the Struthion pool. Herod later cut through the aqueduct and converted the water supply into a moat and water reservoir around Fort Antonia. He continued to use the aqueduct to fill this pool, cutting off the supply of water to the city and the Temple Mount from this location. Josephus describes this reservoir and calls it Struthius ("sparrow" or "lark"). It was one of the smaller reservoirs in Jerusalem.

After Hadrian took the city in 135 he covered it with an arched roof to create water cisterns below, and then built a marketplace above. Hadrian's arches split the pool into two halves. The pool was eventually forgotten until the Convent of the Sisters of Zion was built on this location in the 1800's, and the pools were exposed. Today the Struthion Pool still collects water and can be seen at the north end of the Western Wall Tunnels.



This is one of the vaulted arches built in 135 AD to cover this open aired Struthion Pool. The opening or hole seen in the top of the arch provided access from the pavement above to the water below by lowering a bucket on a rope.



The Struthion Pool measures about 171 by 46 feet and sets below the pavement of the plaza and market place supported by the vaulted arches built by Hadrian for his city Aelia Capitolina in 135 AD.





Chapter 61

Garden of Gethsemane

The Garden of Gethsemane is a 10 minute walk from the Temple Mount through the Kidron Valley and part way up the Mount of Olives.

The age of these olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane easily date back to the days of the Crusades. A few of the trees (between 3 to 8 trees) are possibly 2,000 years old. This olive grove was stripped of trees between 68-70 AD by the Romans who used the wood to fuel fires or to build siege equipment to use against the city of Jerusalem. This means it is unlikely that any of these exact trees were here at the time of Christ in 30 AD, but scholars do estimate the age of these trees to be anywhere between one and two thousand years.

Ancient olive trees in the Garden of Gethsemane.



Toni sits alongside the Garden of Gethsemane. In the distance the eastern wall of Jerusalem can be seen.

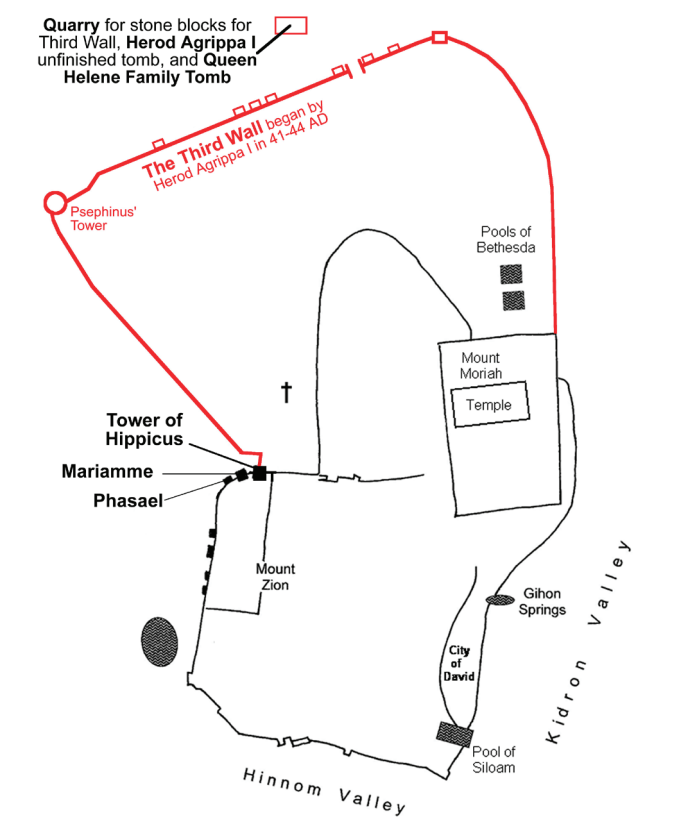


A view looking west from the Garden of Gethsemane over the Kidron Valley at the Eastern Gate (or, Golden Gate) in the east wall of Jerusalem.



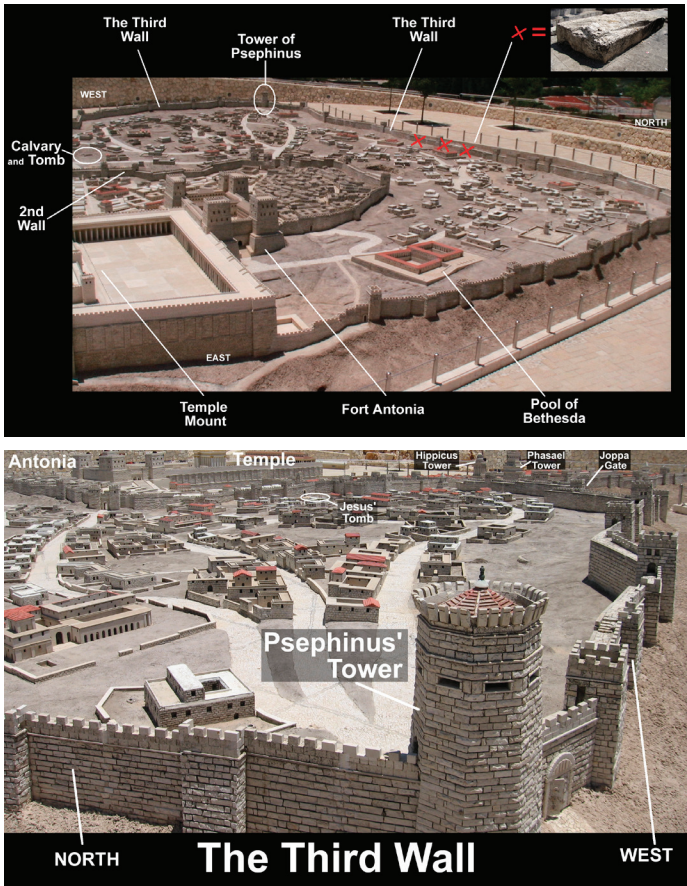
Chapter 62

The Third Wall



After the death of Jesus in 30 AD the city of Jerusalem continued to expand to the north and northwest beyond the tomb of Christ. Jesus was buried outside the city walls of 30 AD, but Josephus records that King Agrippa I (41-44 AD; Acts 12) began to expand the fortification of the city of Jerusalem by building an additional wall around this north/northwest expansion of the city. The expansion of the wall began at the Joppa Gate by the Citadel, or Herod's Palace fortress in the west wall of the city, and ran northwest to the Tower of Psephinus. The NW corner of this third city wall turned east at this tower and continued to the Kidron Valley where it turned south to connect with the present eastern wall of the city which was the NE corner of the Temple Mount retaining wall. (Josephus War 5.4.2-3)

Soon after the foundation of this Third Wall was laid by Agrippa I he became concerned that the Roman Emperor Claudius would consider the construction of this wall as a sign that Agrippa I and the Jewish population were preparing for a revolt against Rome. So, Agrippa I stopped construction of the wall. However, as the Jewish momentum for a revolt against Rome began to rise around 65-66 AD the rebels rapidly completed it. The Jewish War with Rome broke out in 66 AD and continued until Jerusalem fell in 70 AD. Rome had to fight their way through this Third Wall to enter the city and lay siege to the Second Wall.



Due to the topography around Jerusalem the north side of Jerusalem was always the easiest to attack and the hardest to defend. Agrippa I's wall was built with the intention of strengthening the weakest point of the city. According to Josephus (War 5.144, 158), this Third Wall had 90 towers for defensive purposes built into it.

The NW corner of the Third Wall was reinforced and defended by a 115 foot tower that, according again to Josephus, was high enough a man could stand on the top and view the Mediterranean Sea to the west and the mountains on the other side of the Dead Sea (in Jordan today) to the east.

Recent excavations in 2016 (https://www.antiquities.org.il/Article_eng.aspx?sec_id=25&subj_id=240&id=4225) at this wall are believed to have discovered the location of Psephinus' Tower and a portion of the Third Wall in this area. Archaeologists found 70 ballista and sling stones used by the Romans against Jerusalem in 70 AD at this excavated location. The well-shaped Roman sling stones found here were generally the size of a pool ball or a baseball and were traveling at 70-100 mph. But, the sling stones were heavier than pool balls or baseballs and would have had a much greater force when hitting a tower, decapitating a defender, or crushing skulls at impact.



These are two Roman lead slingshots used in Israel in the years 10-90 AD. These shots could travel up to 100 mph with the force of bullets from a modern handgun. The artillery ballista and sling stones found at a recent excavation on the Third Wall included spherical stones the size of pool balls or baseballs.



Notice the right side of this lead sling stone shot maintains its original shape, while the left side is collapsed and dull, since this was the point that made impact after spiraling like a thrown football through the air at 100 mph. Sometimes these lead sling stones were engraved with a symbol, a message or the name of a Roman legion, general or emperor.



A stone from the Third Wall that was started by Herod Agrippa I 41-44 AD, but abandoned by him because he feared the Roman Emperor Claudius would consider it an indication of an intent to revolt. This wall was hastily finished twenty-two years later in 65-66 AD by the Jewish rebels, since they did plan to revolt against Rome. The portion of the wall built by the rebels fell within 15 days of the start of the Roman siege in 70 AD. Josephus writes what he believed would have been the result had Agrippa not abandoned the Third Wall project: "Indeed the city would have been impregnable, had the wall been continued as it began..."
—Josephus, *The Jewish War*, V:153

Construction of the Third Wall was started by Herod Agrippa I but was soon abandoned by him, for fear he would upset the Roman emperor. It was finished hastily by the Jewish rebels before their rebellion against Rome broke out in 66 AD. Josephus writes about it in "Jewish Wars" (JW 5:147):

The third wall began at the tower of Hippicus, whence it stretched northwards to the tower of Psephinus, and then descending opposite the monuments of Helena (queen of Adiabene and daughter of king Izates), and proceeding past the royal caverns it bent round a corner tower over against the so-called Fuller's tomb and joining the ancient rampart terminated at the valley called Kidron

According to Josephus' account, the Romans arrived at Jerusalem just four years after the rebels completed their hasty attempt to finish the Third Wall, which Herod Agrippa I had abandoned in 44 BC. In the summer of 70 AD, the Roman Legions broke through this outer wall in only fifteen days. The Roman Legions then moved through the city to begin their assault on the Second Wall, which had stood since before the time of Jesus.



Foundation stone in the bedrock of the Third Wall.



Carved stone still in the line of the Third Wall north of Jerusalem.



A carved stone block that served as a foundation for Herod Agrippa I's Third Wall of 41-44 AD.



Looking down the line of foundation stones of Agrippa I's Third Wall of 41-44 AD.



A view looking down the line of the Third Wall north of Jerusalem.



Quarried stone removed from the bedrock along the line of the Third Wall.



Spaces in the bedrock reveal removed square cornered blocks. This section has the appearance of a quarry along the line of the Third Wall. There are three places in this photo where stone blocks with square corners have been removed. This indicates it was a quarry.