

Section F: Roman, Muslim and Crusader Periods

Chapter 63

Palace of Queen Helena of Adiabene

Around the year 30 AD, Helena the Queen of Adiabene converted to Judaism due to the influence of Jewish merchants traveling to her country of Adiabene (northern Iraq, in the Kurdistan Region today). Adiabene was a vassal state of the Parthian Empire (247 BC-224 AD) in what is today Iran. Josephus, who would have been a contemporary of hers, records many details of her life in a positive and flattering way. The Talmud also records information about Helena.

According to Acts 11:27-30 in 44 AD Agabus prophesied a famine was to strike Judea when it spread over the Roman Empire:

*“During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named **Agabus**, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, as each one was able, decided to provide help for the brothers and sisters living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.”*

Claudius was emperor 41-54 AD. This particular famine that affected Jerusalem occurred in 45 AD. Paul began to preach in Antioch in 43-44 AD along with Barnabas. In 44 AD, after the prophet Agabus had prophesied to the church in Antioch that the Jerusalem church would need financial aid, money was sent from the Antioch church to Jerusalem to relieve the believers in Jerusalem.

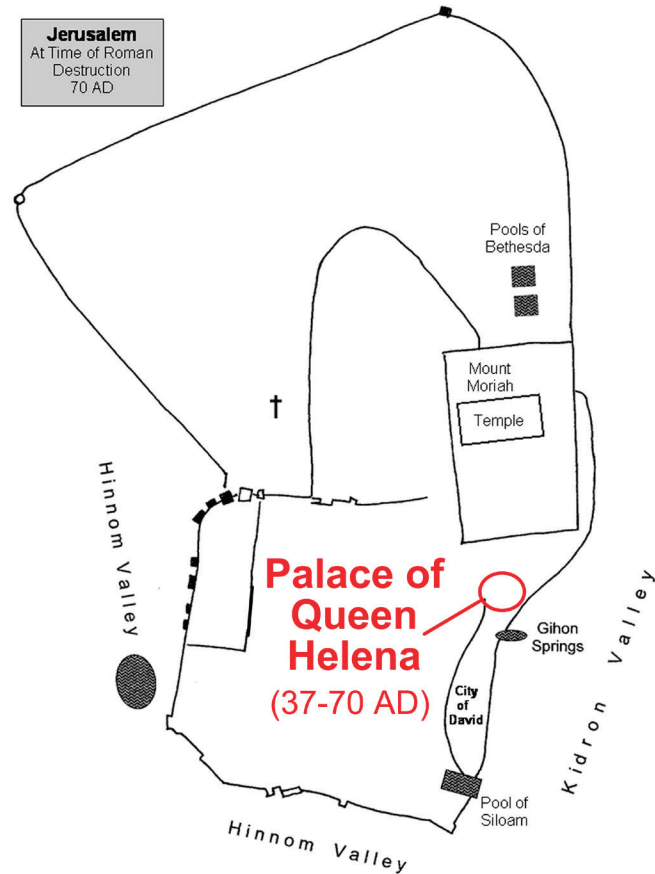
Josephus and the Talmud record that during this same famine of 45-46 AD Helena paid for and shipped grain from Egypt and figs from Cyprus to be distributed in Jerusalem. Both Josephus and the Talmud also record Helena's devotion to the Law of Moses.

Josephus records that Helena moved to Jerusalem and built a magnificent palace in the lower city (Wars 5.6.1). When describing the Jewish rebels' control of Jerusalem in 66-70 AD Josephus uses “the palace of Queen Helena” as an identification landmark when he writes: *“He (Simon) also held that fountain; and the Acra, which was no other than the lower city. He also held all that reached to the palace of Queen Helena, the mother of Monobazus. But John held the temple.”*

In 2007 Doron Ben Ami and Yana Tchekhanovets (of the Israel Antiquities Authority) discovered this palace south of the Temple Mount and Ophel next to the City of David. This area is “the lower city” spoken of by Josephus.

This palace was destroyed in 70 AD in the Roman's destruction of the city.

Helena died sometime in 50-56 AD and was buried in the unfinished tomb of Agrippa I that she had purchased and prepared for her royal family north of the Third Wall.



Chapter 64

Ecce Homo (Roman)

One of the areas the Romans attacked when they laid siege to Jerusalem in 70 AD was the stronghold of Fort Antonia, which Jewish rebels had taken over and barricaded themselves inside of when they drove the Romans out in 66 AD. In order to reach the north wall of Fort Antonia, the Romans had to build a ramp across the Struthion Pool that served as a moat on the north wall of the fort. The ramp they built was supported by an arch, and this arch is known today as the Ecce Homo Arch. Ecce Homo is Latin for “Behold the man”.

The arch got its name because it was once believed that the ancient pavement that covers the Struthion Pool had been the floor of Fort Antonia. If that were true, this could have been where Pilate stood when he spoke to the crowd and condemned Jesus with those words. The pavement has since been identified as the stone covering built by Hadrian in 135 AD when the Struthion Pool was covered.

The Struthion Pool was an open-air reservoir in the days of the Hasmoneans and Herod. It collected rainwater that ran from the roofs of buildings. In 135 Hadrian covered the Struthion Pool and supported the pavement with underground arches that can still be seen today at the north end of the Western Wall tunnels. The pavement that Hadrian laid over the Struthion Pool in 135 served as the ground of a Roman market. This pavement can be seen inside the Convent of the Sisters of Zion.

Inscribed on one of the stones in the pavement inside the convent is a pattern for a Roman game. It was previously assumed that the pavement was from the floor of Fort Antonia where Jesus stood trial before Pilate. It was also imagined that the game could have been played by Roman soldiers as they waited for Jesus’ trial and execution. Recent and more accurate archaeology places this pavement on the streets of the open market from around 135 AD. The game board that is etched into the paving stone was indeed cut by Roman soldiers, but most likely by soldiers waiting in the streets at the market, not at Christ’s trial.

The arch that supported the ramp the Romans used to attack Fort Antonia still stands today and spans the Via Dolorosa. In 135 after Hadrian had defeated the Jews in the Second Jewish Revolt (Bar Kochba Revolt) this same arch was converted into a monument to his victory. It was similar in purpose to the Arch of Titus in Rome commemorating the 70 AD victory over the Jews. The Ecce Homo Arch was flanked by two smaller arches, one of which can still be seen in the basement of the Convent of the Sisters of Zion.



The Ecce Homo Arch remains from the Roman attack on Fort Antonia in 70 AD. In this photo looking east, the Convent of the Sisters of Zion is on the right. One side of the original arch is still seen in the convent wall.



Chapter 65

Roman Inscription



This photo shows the southern double gate. This wall contains a stone fragment from the base of a Roman statue from the Temple Mount dedicated to Antoninus Pius. The Bordeaux Pilgrim saw this inscription and the statue that went with it on the Temple Mount when he visited Jerusalem 333 AD. The Bordeaux Pilgrim records that there were two statues of Hadrian on the Temple Mount, but actually, one would have been of Hadrian and the other of his adopted son, Antoninus Pius, who became emperor after him. They both had beards and even as you look at the inscription today you can see why the Bordeaux Pilgrim thought it was a second statue of Hadrian.

The Jews revolted against Rome in 132. They may have regained control of Jerusalem at that time, and while they held it, began to rebuild their temple on the Temple Mount. Two ancient documents speak of Hadrian destroying the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. One source is rabbinic material. The second comes from a remaining portion of “Chronicon Paschale”, a Christian chronicle written around 630 AD, which is an important source of information about the Byzantine Empire of that time and earlier Jewish history. When Emperor Julian gave the Jews permission to rebuild the temple during his reign in 361 AD, he spoke of three previous destructions of the Jewish Temple: by Babylon in 586 BC, by Rome under Titus in 70 AD and by Hadrian in 135 AD following the Second Jewish revolt. One of the first things Bar Kochba did in 132 was to mint and issue a coin for the newly-restored kingdom of Israel. The coin’s image included the front of the new Temple in Jerusalem on one side, and on the other side two silver trumpets used to call Israel to war from the Temple.

Hadrian followed the suppression of this revolt by building a temple to Jupiter on the Temple Mount and placing a statue of himself there also.



A closer shot of the stone outlined in white in the previous photo. This stone bears the following inscription.



Hadrian's inscription reads:

**TITO AEL HADRIANO
ANTONINO AUG PIO
P P PONTIF AUGUR
D D**

Translation of Latin:

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

The stone inscription that is reused in the wall upside down has been rotated to read it correctly.

The Roman Temple of Jupiter was torn down by Constantine. The stones were later used by the Muslims to build the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The stone with the inscription was apparently found and placed upside down to replace a broken block above the gate.

Hershel Shanks (archaeologist and editor of Biblical Archaeology Review) says:

Hadrian erected an equestrian statue of himself on the Temple Mount. The anonymous fourth-century pilgrim known only as the Bordeaux Pilgrim reports that he saw two statues of Hadrian on the Temple Mount when he visited the site. The Bordeaux Pilgrim probably mistakenly identified the second statue; Hadrian's successor, Antonius Pius (138-161 AD), probably added an equestrian statue of himself, which the Bordeaux Pilgrim saw. . . It is quite possible that the Bordeaux Pilgrim saw this inscription when it was part of a statue on the Temple Mount. But he misread it. Antonius had been adopted by Hadrian and named as his successor in 138 A.D. Thus, Antoninus's name included the name of Hadrian. The Bordeaux Pilgrim apparently looked only at the first two lines and concluded that it was a second statue of Hadrian. Both had a thick beard and looked much alike when they were older. Some modern scholars have made the same mistake and read the same inscription now in secondary use as referring to Hadrian instead of Antoninus. They apparently focused on the name Hadrianus, ignoring the following name, Antoninus.

- Hershel Shanks, *Jerusalem's Temple Mount: From Solomon to the Golden Dome*, p. 48



This is a bronze image of Emperor Hadrian from a statue that was set up in London after his visit to Britain in 122 AD. This bronze head was found in the River Thames in 1834 near the London Bridge and is kept in the British Museum.

Chapter 66

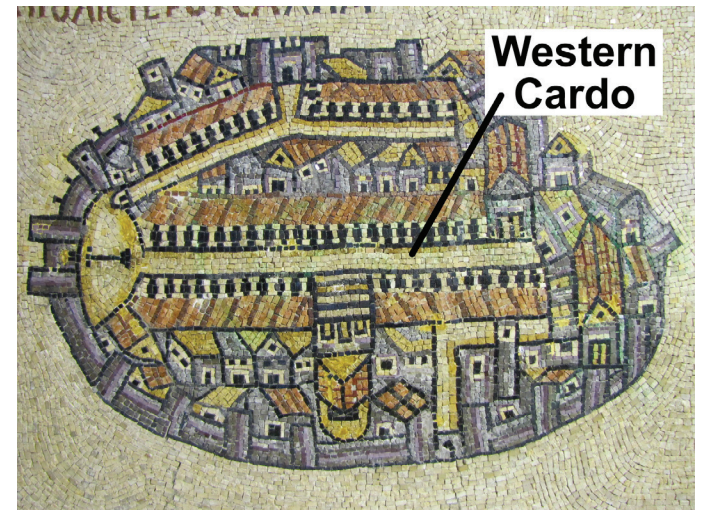
Cardo (Roman)

A *Cardo Maximus* was located in all Roman cities and military camps. It was the main north-south road that ran through the city and served as the center for the local economy. It was also the main branch for all other roads. The main east-west road was the secondary road and was called *Decumanus Maximus*. When Hadrian ended the Second Jewish Rebellion (Bar Kochba Revolt) in 135 AD, the Romans rebuilt Jerusalem as *Aelia Capitolina*, and a *Cardo Maximus* was added.

Beginning in 1967, major sections of this 1900-year-old street have been excavated, and are reused in today's Jewish Quarter in the Old City of Jerusalem. The entire roadway was originally 74 feet wide (the road itself was 40 feet wide with colonnaded and covered sidewalks on both sides to protect pedestrians from traffic and the heat of the sun). Shops were located all along both sides of the street. Hadrian began building the *Cardo* in the north of the city at the Damascus Gate in 135 AD. Later, around 527, the Christian Emperor Justinian completed the road so that the Church of the Holy Sepulcher was connected to the southern part of the city, past the Nea Church and the southern gate.



Shops were located behind the sidewalk. Two of the arched shop fronts can still be seen (top left quadrant). Notice again the street pavement (lower left corner), the square street curb, the columns that still remain from the colonnade, the pedestrian sidewalk protected by the columns, the place where the covering would have been, and the remains of five shops and their walls.



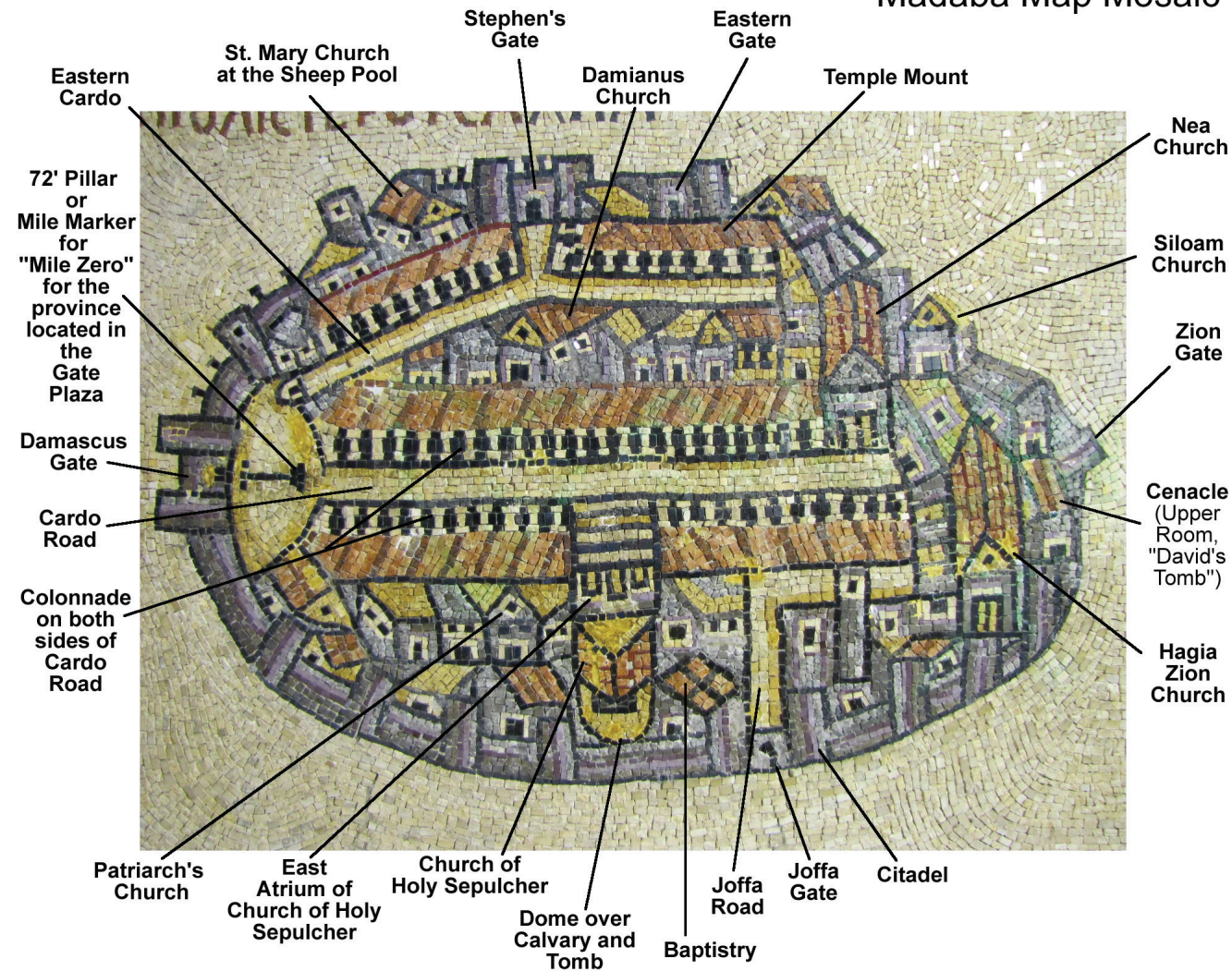
A map found on the floor of a Byzantine church from around 500 AD shows the *Cardo* as the main road of Jerusalem. The pillars in the photos below are detailed on this map from 1500 years ago. Also notice the so-called *Eastern Cardo*, which is just above the *Cardo Maximus* on this map. The *Eastern Cardo* only has one row of columns.



The *Cardo* built by the Romans (135-312) and used by the Byzantines. The road is in the middle of the photo and extends to the left past the edge. (Imagine it without the modern square pillars.) To the right are the original columns of the colonnaded street. To the right of the columns is the Roman sidewalk. Notice the square curb. Curb, columns and sidewalk were also on the other side of this street.

JERUSALEM in 500 AD

500 AD Byzantine Madaba Map Mosaic



The main Cardo Road ran down the center of the city of Jerusalem (renamed Aelia Capitolina in 135 AD by the Romans who rebuilt it) and continued to be used into the Byzantine Age of 326 AD. The image shown here is a 500 AD mosaic map found on a floor of a church in Madaba, Jordan. This map shows columns on both sides of the street, which would have formed a colonnade on each side. The Cardo Road ran north to south from the Damascus Gate past the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, to the Nea Church and then out the Zion Gate.



A nice view of the excavation revealing the street, the curb, the columns supporting the colonnade, the pedestrian sidewalk and the shops along the sidewalk under the colonnade.



Excavation of the Cardo.



Toni stands on the street by one of the columns of the 135 AD Roman Cardo. The children are playing on the sidewalk, which is under the colonnade.



The smaller rocks in the wall were placed to block an ancient shop entrance.



Ancient arched shop fronts and their vaulted rooms along the sidewalk of the Cardo in ancient Aelia Capitolina (the Roman name for Jerusalem).



The arches for two ancient shops of 135 AD still exist along the Cardo. They would have been covered with a colonnade to protect the pedestrians from the heat of the sun.



Notice the modern city street level is about 20 feet above the street level of 135 AD. See the modern street in the top left, with a stairway coming down to the Cardo. These columns would have supported one side of a roof that formed a colonnade over the sidewalk.



The columns of the *Cardo*. Notice the curb separating the main road from the pedestrian sidewalk and the shops in the back.



A nighttime view of the *Cardo*. The main road is to the left. The pavement to the right of the columns is the pedestrian sidewalk, and the shops were alongside the sidewalk. The remains of a few of the shops can be seen, including the arched opening of one shop at the top of the photo.



Part of the ancient *Cardo* that has been modernized. Notice the pavement and the ancient store fronts which are now home to modern shops. Toni is shopping under the Israeli flag on the right side. A very nice art shop that sells prints by local artists (at least one of whom also works in the shop) is on the right.

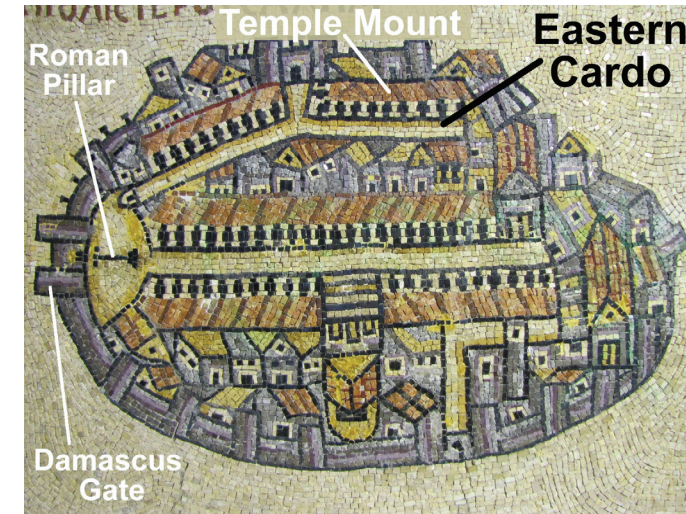


Ancient pavement stones from the *Cardo*.

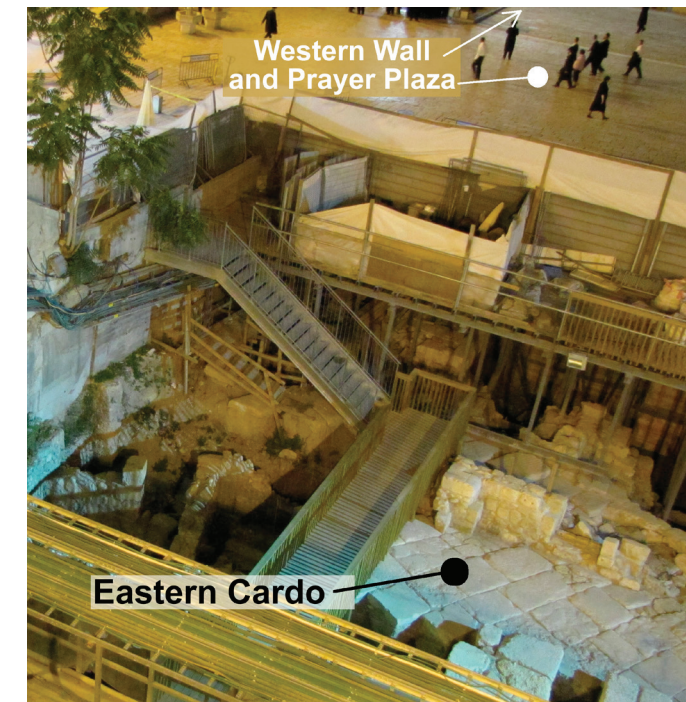
Chapter 67

Roman Road by Western Wall Plaza – Eastern *Cardo* (Roman)

The Madaba map, a detailed mosaic from 542-570 found on a Byzantine church floor in Jordan, shows the location of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the Nea Church, the *Cardo* Street and much more. One the details portrayed on the Madaba map is another Roman street to the east of the main *Cardo* street, which has thus been called the Eastern *Cardo* Street. In 2007 a major colonnaded street running under the west portion of the Western Wall Prayer Plaza was uncovered during the early construction stages of a public service building. It appears the Eastern *Cardo* Street has been discovered.



On the Madaba map this street runs northwest along the Tyropoean Valley to a place where it connects with the *Cardo* street in a large paved area with a large Roman pillar in front of the Damascus Gate (which was known as the New Gate - i.e., Nea Gate - in the year 333 AD) in the north.



This Roman road was just uncovered in 2007 near the Western Wall Plaza (top edge of this photo). The pavement and remains of walls from Aelia Capitolina, the Roman city rebuilt over Jerusalem (135-325 AD) can be seen here. The plans now are to continue with the excavation, and then build the public building over the area, with a museum of the Roman city and street in the lower level of the building. The pavement stones are set diagonally in typical Roman style, which may have helped prevent wagons from slipping. There is also a drainage system built under the pavement stones.



Pavement stones of the Eastern *Cardo*.



The Eastern *Cardo* with the SW corner of the Temple Mount in the background and the ramp that leads visitors up to the entrance on the west wall of the Temple Mount. The dome of the Al Aqsa Mosque can also be seen.

Chapter 68

Nea Church (Byzantine) and Arch of Titus in Rome

Emperor Justinian (527-565) had the Nea Church (“nea” is Greek for “new”) built on the east side of the Cardo Street in the southern part of Jerusalem. The Nea Church can be clearly seen on the Madaba Map. This 375 by 185 foot basilica, the largest church in Israel, was dedicated in 543. Justinian’s Roman court historian, Procopius, notes that this massive church was not built over a traditional holy site, so it was meant to serve some other purpose. It included a library, a monastery, a hospital and a hospice. Procopius says the structure was built with enormous cut stones on a huge platform, which was supported by large underground vaults. The roof was built of very tall cedars, and many large pillars filled the basilica.



The Arch of Titus, located in Rome southeast of the Roman Forum, commemorates Titus’ victory over the Jews and the end of the 66-70 AD Jewish revolt. This triumphal arch was built in 82 AD. The modern importance of this arch is in the engraving found on the inside which shows the Temple treasures being carried into Rome by Roman soldiers after their destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem in 70 AD. The image clearly shows the golden Table of Showbread, the golden Candle Stand, and the trumpets used by the priests. Many other items from the Temple can also be assumed to have made it to Rome. It seems these Temple treasures were taken from Rome by the Vandals but recaptured by the Romans of the Byzantine Empire and taken to Constantinople. The Temple treasures portrayed on the Arch of Titus may have ended up stored in the Nea Church by Justinian. (Photo by Bill Wallander)

For several reasons, it appears that Justinian believed he was building a new Temple to replace Solomon’s and Herod’s. It is highly probable that the Nea Church was built to hold the Temple treasures taken from Herod’s Temple by the Romans in 70 AD.



The inscription above the Arch of Titus reads:

SENATUS
POPULUSQUE-ROMANVS
DIVO-TITO-DIVI-VESPASIANI-F
VESPASIANO-AVGUSTO

This translates as:

The Senate
And People of Rome (dedicate this to)
The Divine Titus, Son of Divine Vespasian,
Vespasianus Augustus

Titus’ full name is Titus Vespasianus Augustus. This monument was credited to the Senate and People of Rome and was constructed shortly after Titus’ death at the hand of his brother Emperor Domitian. (Photo by Bill Wallander)

The Arch of Titus was built in Rome in 82 AD to commemorate the Roman victory over the Jews. It is clear from the images on the Arch that the Golden Candle Stand, the Table of Showbread, and trumpets from the Temple were carried into Rome. Josephus himself testifies to this fact in his book, Wars of the Jews, book 7, chapter 5:

After these triumphs were over, and after the affairs of the Romans were settled on the surest foundations, Vespasian resolved to build a Temple to Peace, which was finished in so short a time, and in so glorious a manner, as was beyond all human expectation and opinion: for he having now by Providence a vast quantity of wealth, besides what he had formerly gained in his other exploits, he had this temple adorned with pictures and statues; for in this temple were collected and deposited all such rarities as men aforesaid used to wander all over the habitable world to see, when they had a desire to see one of them after another; he also laid up therein those golden vessels and instruments that were taken out of the Jewish temple, as ensigns of his glory. But still he gave order that they should lay up their Law, and the purple veils of the holy place, in the royal palace itself, and keep them there.



Images from the inside of the Arch of Titus showing the Roman triumphal procession into Rome with the Temple Treasures. (Photo by Bill Wallander)



A close up of the triumphal procession. Notice the Candle Stand and the two trumpets which form an “X” over the Table of Showbread as the Romans carry them into Rome. (Photo by Bill Wallander). Josephus records seeing this procession of Jewish treasure from the Temple paraded through the streets of Rome on this very day in 71 AD. What Josephus documents in his historical account corroborates amazingly well with the details captured on this image on the Arch of Titus. Josephus records the following:

*“For the other spoils, they were carried in great plenty. But for those that were taken in the temple of Jerusalem, they made the greatest figure of them all; that is, **the golden table**, of the weight of many talents; **the candlestick also**, that was made of gold, though its construction were now changed from that which we made use of; **for its middle shaft was fixed upon a basis, and the small branches were produced out of it to a great length, having the likeness of a trident in their position, and had every one a socket made of brass for a lamp at the tops of them.** These lamps were in number seven, and represented the dignity of the number seven among the Jews; and **the last of all the spoils, was carried the Law of the Jews.** After these spoils passed by a great many men, carrying the images of Victory, whose structure was entirely either of ivory or of gold. After which Vespasian marched in the first place, and Titus followed him; Domitian also rode along with them, and made a glorious appearance, and rode on a horse that was worthy of admiration.”*

– Josephus, The Wars of the Jews, 7:148-152



The Golden Lampstand from Herod’s Temple of 70 AD. (Photo by Bill Wallander) The seven branches of the menorah (lampstand) were decorated with a floral design in accordance with Exodus 25:31-40. This base is unique, and is different from what some scholars would expect. It has two hexagonal tiers. Each panel of the hexagonal tier is decorated with images of eagles holding a garland, a sea lion, a sea monster with a fish tail, and a dragon. Digital reconstruction done in 2012 of the original brilliant colors on this arch indicate both the menorah and the base were the same yellow ochre pigment, giving them the appearance of gold, but also indicating they both came out of the Temple in Jerusalem (see article and side panel information by Steven Fine, Biblical Archaeology Review, May/June 2017, Vol 43, No 3, page 32, “The Unique Base on the Menorah of the Arch of Titus”). This unique base was not a Roman device designed to carry the menorah. Since the 1600’s, scholars have rejected the idea that this was a Jewish design, since they typically like the idea of a three-legged stand for the lampstands in the Temple. But, Rabbinic sources and excavations (including some mosaics I have seen myself in ancient synagogues in Israel) include these and other images.



Mosaics on the floor of a synagogue in Sepphoris, Israel from the 400's AD include a full Zodiac with the twelve signs of the Zodiac and Hebrew lettering. The photo above shows the Titan god of the sun, Helios, driving his chariot in the center of this synagogue mosaic.



Two of the signs of the Zodiac on the floor of the same Jewish synagogue in Sepphoris. This would provide some precedent for the use of similar images that might otherwise be considered strange when found on the base of the Jewish Menorah shown on the Arch of Titus.

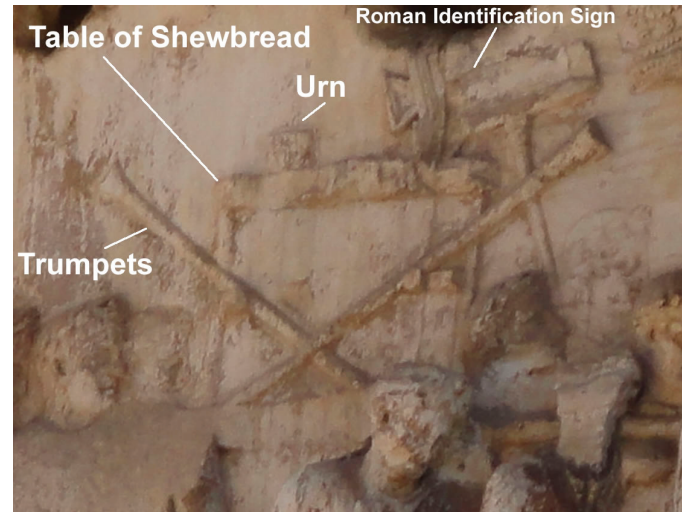


Photo by Bill Wallander

The Temple treasures were kept in Rome until Rome fell to the Vandals. The Vandals were in turn defeated by the Byzantine Empire, which recovered the Temple treasures and took them to Constantinople. During the triumphal procession through Constantinople with the captives and goods taken from the Vandals, the Jewish Temple treasures were seen among the booty. Procopius records these events of his own day in History of the Wars, book IV, chapter 9:6-9:

... among these **were the treasures of the Jews**, which **Titus**, the son of Vespasian, together with certain others, **had brought to Rome after the capture of Jerusalem**. And one of the Jews, seeing these things, approached one of those known to the emperor and said: "These treasures I think it inexpedient to carry into the palace in Byzantium. Indeed, it is not possible for them to be elsewhere than in the place where Solomon, the king of the Jews, formerly placed them. For it is because of these that Gizeric captured the palace of the Romans, and that now the Roman army has captured that the Vandals." When this had been brought to the ears of the Emperor (Justinian), he became afraid and **quickly sent everything to the sanctuaries of the Christians in Jerusalem**.

Forty-nine years after the death of Justinian and seventy years after the dedication of the Nea Church the Persians captured Jerusalem with help from their Jewish allies. The Nea Church was plundered in 614 by the Jews and Persians. History records that all churches in Israel at this time, with the exception of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, were burnt by the Persian invaders and their Jewish allies. The fact that these churches were plundered is confirmed by the fact that the Persians captured what the Christians thought was the "True Cross" from the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. It would appear then that the Temple treasures taken to Rome by Titus in 70 AD and returned to Jerusalem by Justinian in 534 were possibly taken back by the Jews in 614 from the Nea Church.

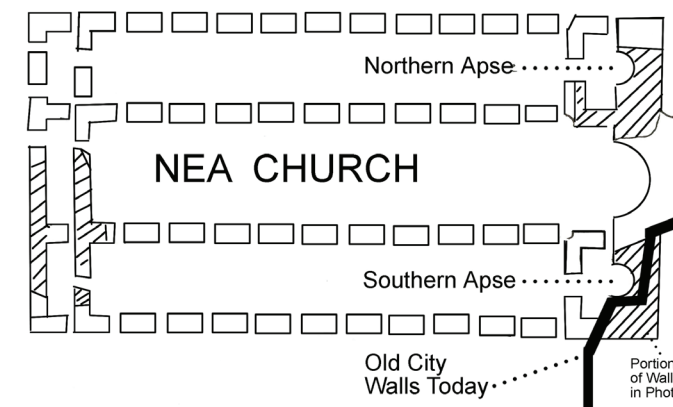
After the fall of Jerusalem to the Persians in 614 we lose track of the Temple treasures. What happened to them? Were the Jews silent about their re-discovered Temple treasure? Were the Temple treasures carried away by the Persians? Maybe melted down? Or, were they never located nor removed from their hidden compartments in the lower regions of the Nea Church? Are they still there today?

By 617, only three years after victory, the Persians betrayed their Jewish allies by expelling them from Jerusalem and returning Jerusalem to the Christian control of the Byzantine Empire. (Note that the Persian invasion of 614 was not associated with Islam, since it was not until 622 that Mohammed began to spread his new religion. By 626 Mohammed began slaughtering the Jews of Medina, and the Muslim "faith" began to spread. Muslim war and conquest would arrive in Jerusalem in 638, a mere 21 years after the Persians restored it to the Christians.)

Although plundered and burnt, we know that the remains of the Nea Church continued to stand for several centuries, since it was described by pilgrim writers as still in use in 634 and 808. In fact, in 870 a monk stayed in what was called Charlemagne's rebuilt Nea Church.



Photo of the outside the southeast corner of the Nea Church, which contains the southern apse of the church on the inside. The current city wall runs on top of the Nea Church, as can be seen in this photo.



A diagram of the Nea Church. The three or four portions of remains that are visible today are marked with angled, parallel lines.



The Nea church survives to a height of 26 feet, with walls that are over 20 feet thick. About 45 of the original 375 feet of wall still remain.

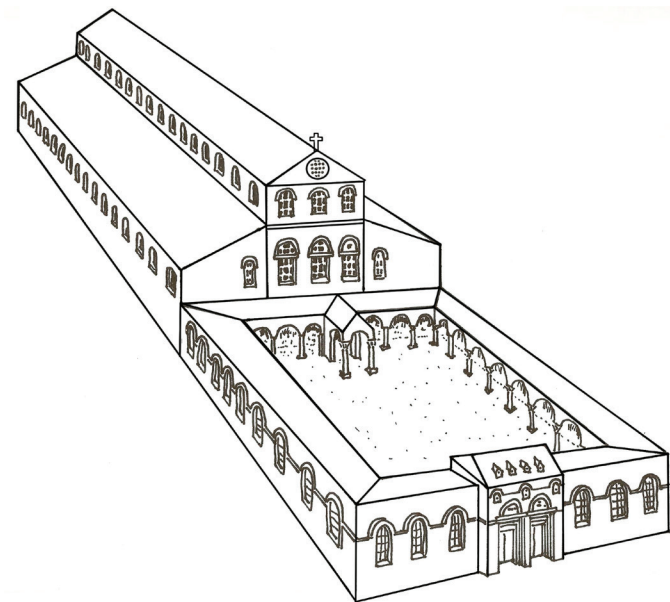




Looking northwest at the southeast corner of the Nea Church.

There are six huge vaulted halls over 30 feet high under the remains of this church. Charles Warren entered and drew these vaults in 1867. An inscription has been found that reads:

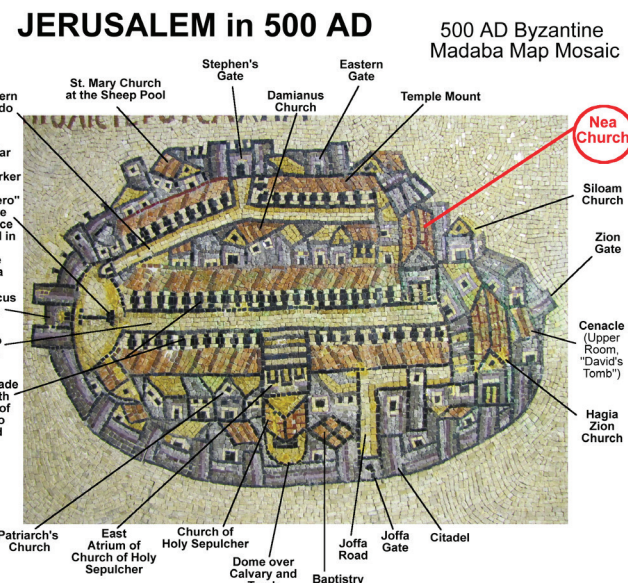
And this is the work which was carried out by the generosity of our most gracious Emperor Flavius Justinian, under the care and devotion of the most holy Constatinos, priest and in the year 534/35.



An idea of how the Nea Church would have looked.



Inside the Nea Church. This photo shows the southern apse in the southeast corner.



Chapter 69

Al Aqsa Mosque (Muslim)



The front of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The El Aqsa Mosque on the Temple Mount is the third most holy site in Islam.

Just like the Dome of the Rock was built to overshadow the rotunda of the Holy Sepulcher, the Al-Aqsa mosque was built to mimic the basilica over Calvary. The alignment of these two buildings completes the imitation of the Holy Sepulcher's layout.

Since the mosque stands on the south of the Temple Mount, the Crusaders considered it the remains of Solomon's palace. Because of this, it served as the palace of the Latin kings of Jerusalem during the days of Crusader occupation. It was also given to the Order of the Knights Templar for their headquarters.



The Al-Aqsa Mosque sits along the southern side of the Temple Mount on top of where Solomon's Porch stood. The tunnel and stairway leading to the Temple Mount surface from the Double Gate runs under the Al-Aqsa Mosque.



The Al-Aqsa Mosque with the entrance to the stairway and tunnel to the Double Gate in the bottom left corner. When Jesus cleared the Temple of the money changers it would have happened in this general area, which at that time was Solomon's Porch.



These stairs lead down to a tunnel that connects to the Double Gate. This would have been used in New Testament times for accessing and exiting the Temple Mount.



Chapter 70

Dome of the Rock (Muslim)



The Dome of the Rock is also called *Qubbat Al-Sakhra*. Caliph 'Abd al-Malik began construction on this building in 688 and finished it in 691 AD. 1300 years of tradition and recent archaeological evidence strongly suggests that the Dome of the Rock sets on the site of the destroyed Jewish Temple and Most Holy Place. This is the oldest existing Islamic building in the world. It is an imitation of a Byzantine martyrium, which was an octagonal-shaped structure for honoring or preserving the relics of saints/martyrs. On the right side of the photo, about half of the Dome of the Chain is also visible. This would be in the general area of the Altar of Burnt Offerings. (In this photo, east is toward the right.)

The construction of the Dome of the Rock was completed 1300 years ago in 691 by Caliph 'Abd al-Malik. It was designed to be a visual rival of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which was the religious focus of the city when the Arabs conquered Jerusalem in 638. The golden dome is 66 feet in diameter.



With the Dome of the Rock in the center, the two gray domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher can be seen slightly to the left of the Dome of the Rock in the Jerusalem skyline (in the upper right quadrant of this photo).

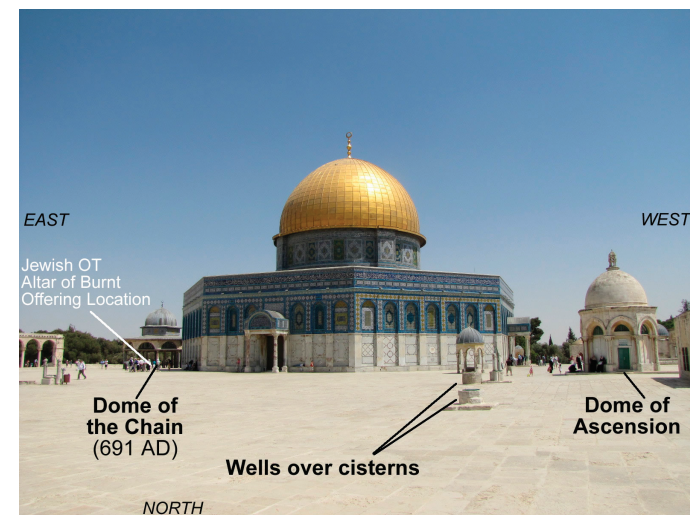
When the Muslims took the city of Jerusalem in 638 they realized the importance and impressiveness the Church of the Holy Sepulcher had inside the city. The Church had become the center of the city.

The Arab historian Muqaddasi wrote in 985: "is it not evident that 'Abd al-Malik, seeing the greatness of the martyrium of the Holy Sepulcher and its magnificence was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of the Muslims and hence erected above the Rock the dome which is now seen there?"

The grey domes of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher were copied by the builders of the Dome of the Rock, but were then covered in a golden color to show visitors the superiority of Islam.

The Dome was built over the site of the Jewish temple for the same reason. In fact, from the day the Dome of the Rock was built, it has been seen by Muslims as a replacement of the Jewish Temple on the very site of the temples built by Solomon, Zerubbabel and Herod.

The octagonal structure of the Dome of the Rock also mimics the shape that early Christians used to encircle and enshrine important holy sites. The remains of an ancient octagonal church built over the house of Peter in Capernaum are an example of this.



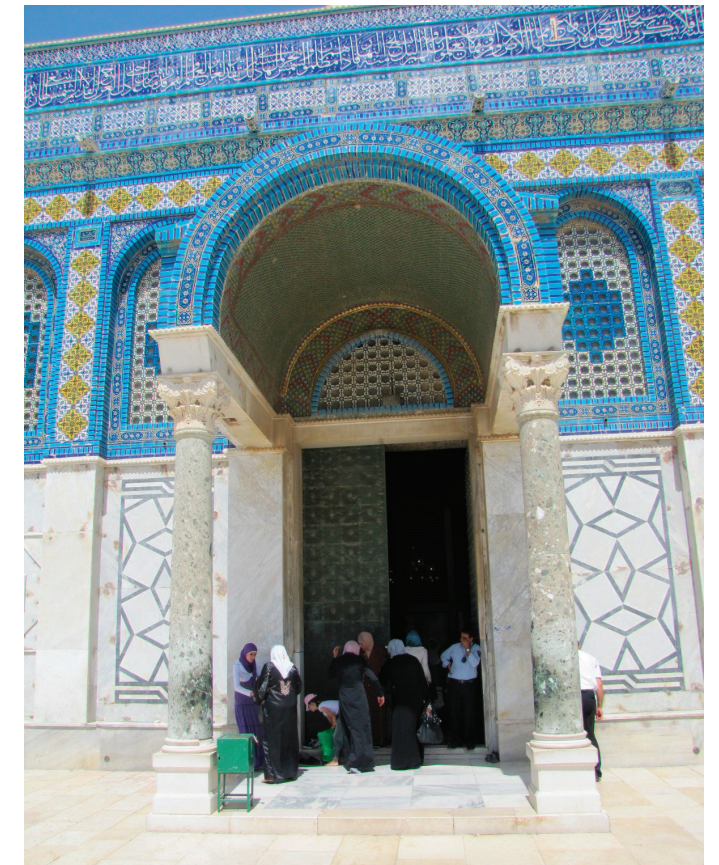
Looking southeast at the Dome of the Rock. The dome on the far right is the Dome of Ascension where early Muslim tradition says Muhammad ascended into heaven. Today the Muslim claim has changed to say he ascended from the rock under the Dome of the Rock. The dome on the left of the photo is the Dome of the Chain, which is where the Altar of Burnt Offering was located, in front of the Jewish Temple. The other smaller domes and small rock structures are wells leading down to some of the many cisterns under the Temple Mount.

Inside the Dome of the Rock is an inscription in Arabic script from 691-692 that runs almost 800 feet in a narrow path around the octagonal walls as a form of Islamic artwork. This inscription reads: "O you People of the Book, overstep not bounds in your religion, and of God speak only the truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God, and his Word which he conveyed unto Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from him. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, and say not Three. It will be better for you. God is only one God. Far be it from his glory that he should have a son."

Some say it was from this rock that Muhammad ascended to heaven on a horse with the angel Gabriel. But, this is a 12th century tradition developed from a dream that involved Muhammad's night journey, as described in the Koran in Sura 17:1:

Most glorified is the One who summoned His servant (Muhammad) during the night, from the Sacred Masjid (of Mecca) to the farthest place of prostration, whose surroundings we have blessed, in order to show him some of our signs. He is the Hearer, the Seer.

But, Jerusalem is not mentioned in this passage, nor is Jerusalem ever mentioned anywhere in the Koran. The Dome of the Rock was built 200 years before this tradition began to be told, so although this is the reason given for where it was built, that cannot be right.



The Dome of the Rock is octagonal and covered with black, red and cream colored marble inlays. Glazed tiles of royal blue, white, yellow and green cover the upper portion of the walls. There are long quotes from the Koran written all around the outside of the building.

The inside glimmers with polished marble, stained-glass windows, golden mosaics and woodwork. Two series of arches supported by columns, called arcades, enclose the rock mass that is the top of the original Mount Moriah in the center of the building.



Detail of the tile and Arabic script on the outside surface of the Dome of the Rock.



Detail of the glazed tiles of royal blue, white, yellow and green that cover the upper portion of the walls of the Dome of the Rock.



The dome on the Dome of the Rock was covered with an aluminum and bronze alloy in 1960. In 1998 it was covered with 176 pounds of gold (the value in 2010 dollars was \$3,043,087) that was donated by King Hussein of Jordan. The diameter of this dome is 66 feet compared to the 69.5 foot width of the dome on the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which the builders attempted to imitate. This dome is 67 feet high, and the dome of the Holy Sepulcher rises 69 feet.



A crescent moon whose tips touch, creating a full moon, sets atop the dome of the Dome of the Rock. The moon is a traditional symbol of the moon-gods throughout the ancient Middle East throughout history. The Sumerians worshiped the moon-god named Sin whose symbol was the crescent moon. The temple of Sin has been excavated in Abraham's old city of Ur. YHWH told Abraham to leave his culture, his land and his family who were worshippers of this pagan moon-god (Genesis 12:1; Joshua 24:2). Throughout the Old Testament worship of the moon-god and other heavenly hosts is forbidden and met with judgment:

When you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars – all the heavenly array – do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshipping things the Lord your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven. - Deuteronomy 4:19

In both courts of the temple of the Lord, Manasseh built altars to all the starry hosts. He sacrificed his own son in the fire, practiced sorcery and divination and consulted mediums and spiritists. - 2 Kings 21:5

Josiah did away with the pagan priests appointed by the kings of Judah to burn incense on the high places of the towns of Judah and on those around Jerusalem – those who burned incense to Baal, to the sun and moon, to the constellations and to all the starry hosts. - 2 Kings 23:5

It is interesting to speculate how and when the Lord will deal with and remove this 1300-year-old pagan shrine that is on the very spot where he put his name. The moon on the top of the Dome of the Rock is aligned so that if you look through it, you will look straight toward Mecca, the seat of the Black Stone.

The Black Stone is an irregular 10 by 12 inch oval that, according to Muslim tradition, fell from Heaven. Scientists at the University of Copenhagen, while differing on the meaning of it, agree that it came from the sky. In 1980 they hypothesized that the Black Stone is glass formed by the impact of a meteorite that fell 6,000 years ago. The meteorite would have been destroyed on impact, creating a crater of silica glass that was fused into the stone by the heat of impact.

Interestingly, a site in the desert 680 miles east of Mecca along an ancient caravan route is known for its craters and other blocks of silica glass just like the Black Stone.

The tradition of the Black Stone reaches far back into the ancient history of the Middle East. It is said to have fallen from Heaven to show Adam and Eve where to worship, but was lost during the Flood of Noah. It was later rediscovered when an angel revealed it to Abraham, who then ordered his son Ishmael to build a temple on the site where it had landed. The temple that Ishmael built was called Kaaba, and the Black Stone was embedded into one of its walls.

The Black Stone, fallen from the starry hosts of heaven, had already been worshipped for centuries before the days of Muhammad. Tradition says that during reconstruction of the Kaaba temple in 602 AD, Muhammad himself helped reset the Black Stone in place before he ever received any revelations from Allah and long before writing the Koran.

It should be noted that the Kaaba temple was not originally a Muslim site. Long before Islam even existed, a moon-god named Al-ilah (in Arabic, al means "the" and ilah, means "deity") was worshipped there by the pre-Islamic pagans of Arabia. This moon-god, Allah, was the chief god honored at this time in Mecca.

Worship of the Black Stone was part of the ancient Middle Eastern worship of starry hosts that is condemned in the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Yet strangely, according to Sura 22:26-37, Mohammed required that every Muslim make a pilgrimage to see the stone at least once in his lifetime. Even now, Muslims touch and kiss the Black Stone as part of their worship in Mecca.

In Judges 8:21, which took place around 1200 BC, Gideon is recorded as killing the leaders of the Midianites who had invaded the land of Israel from the eastern desert. Notice that the symbol of the moon-god, the crescent, was present even then:

*Then Zebah and Zalmunna said, 'Rise yourself and fall upon us, for as the man is, so is his strength.' And Gideon arose and killed **Zebah and Zalmunna**, and he took **the crescent ornaments** that were on the necks of their camels.* -Judges 8:21, ESV

Psalms 83 uses Zebah and Zalmunna as an example of God's judgment:

*O God, do not keep silent; be not quiet, O God, be not still. See how your enemies are astir, how your foes rear their heads. With cunning they conspire against your people; they plot against those you cherish. 'Come,' they say, '**let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more.**' With one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against you – the tents of Edom (**Jordan**), and the Ishmaelites (**Saudi Arabia**), of Moab (**Jordan**) and the Hagrites (**Saudi Arabia or Syria**), Gebal (**Lebanon**), Ammon (**Jordan**) and Amalek (**Saudi Arabia**), Philistia (**Gaza Strip**), with the people of Tyre (**Lebanon**). Even Assyria (**Syria, Iraq, part of Iran and Turkey**) has joined*

*them to lend strength to the descendants of Lot (**Jordan**). Do to them as you did to Midian, as you did to Sisera and Jabin at the river Kishon, who perished at Endor and became like refuse on the ground. Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb, all their princes **like Zebah and Zalmunna**, who said, '**Let us take possession of the pasturelands of God.**' . . . Let them know that you, whose name is the Lord (YHWH) – that **you alone are the Most High over all the earth.** - Psalm 83:1-12, 18*

In 445 BC (Nehemiah 2:19), one of Israel's enemies was Sanballat of Samaria. Sanballat's name itself attests to the fact that, 1) the moon-god was worshipped at that time, and 2) the moon-god was associated with the name "Allah." The name Sanballat comes from "San" or "Sin," which is the name of the moon-god combined with "Allat," the feminine form of Allah and the name of one of the moon-god's three daughters.

The worship of the moon-god, the crescent moon symbol, the city of Mecca, the Black Stone that fell from Heaven, and the name of Allah had all been part of pagan worship in the Middle East for at least 2,000 years before Muhammad arrived on the scene. The fact that there is a crescent moon forming a circle at the top of the Dome of the Rock drawing attention to Mecca where Muslims are required by Muhammad to visit the Black Stone of the ancient moon-god is no coincidence. Important questions remain as to how all this will be tied together for the Jews' return to the Temple Mount, for God's judgment of the nations, and for the ultimate restoration of the Jewish nation.



Looking east/northeast at the south side of the Dome of the Rock. The Mount of Olives is seen in the distance on the right side of the photo.

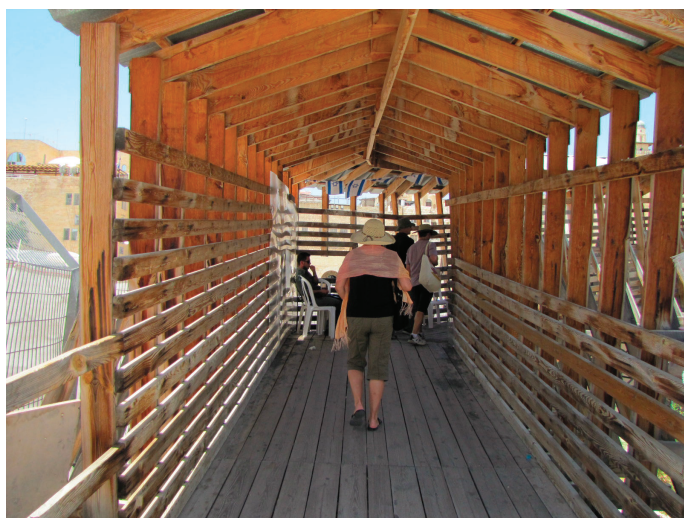
Chapter 71

Muslim Temple Mount : Al-Haram al-Sharif, or “The Nobel Sanctuary” (Muslim)

The Temple Mount is known in Jewish tradition as “Beth Yahweh” or “House of Yahweh” – God’s dwelling place on earth. Jews, Christians and Muslims traditionally believe that Solomon built his temple on the Temple Mount, and according to tradition (not scripture) that Adam is buried on the Temple Mount.



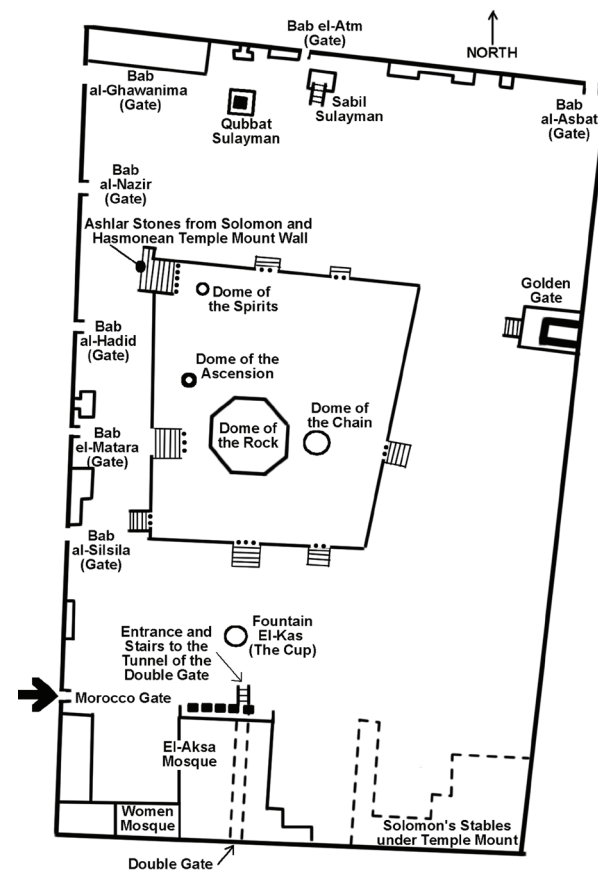
In 2007, after a landslide two years before made the earthen ramp leading to the Mugrabi Gate unsafe and in danger of collapse, the Israel Antiquities Authority started work on the construction of a temporary wooden pedestrian pathway to the Temple Mount. This ramp to the Mugrabi Gate (Morocco Gate) is seen here in this photo. Before the Jews excavated the Western Wall and removed the dirt built up over time, the gate was at ground level.



Toni ascends the wooden ramp over the Western Wall up to the Morocco Gate, which is the only entrance to the Temple Mount for non-Muslims.



The Arabic and English sign for the Morocco Gate is posted in painted tile.



This is the layout of the 35 acres on the Temple Mount today. The Muslims call this “The Noble Sanctuary,” or “Al-Haram al-Sharif.” Today the Dome of the Rock is where the Jewish Temple used to be, and the Dome of the Chain where the Altar of Burnt Offering was.

The Morocco Gate (also, Mugrabi Gate and Gate of the Moors – or in Arabic *Bab al-Magharbeh*, and in Hebrew: *Shaar HaMughrabim*) is located on the Western Wall. Barclay’s Gate was covered up over time as the ground outside the Temple Mount rose above the lintel of the gate. A new gate called Bab al-Magharbeh was installed in the Western Wall above the level of the Barclay Gate. The local residents of this part of Jerusalem at that time had come from Morocco, so the gate was named for them. This gate remains open today. It is the only entrance to the Temple Mount non-Muslims are allowed to use.



A view of the southern wall of the Temple Mount with the Cup fountain behind and the Al-Aqsa Mosque to the right. Notice the pavement stones. Herod’s Temple Mount stones are about 3 feet below these.

The Time Between 70 AD and 638 AD

When the Muslims conquered Jerusalem in 638 there were no buildings on the Temple Mount to destroy. The Christians had left the Temple Mount in ruins, and had even used it as a garbage dump. The temple was completely destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD, but they found it too difficult to dismantle the entire massive stone wall enclosing the Temple Mount.

In 132-135 AD, after their second revolt against Rome, the Jews may have attempted to rebuild the Temple.

In 135 Hadrian built a temple to Jupiter on the Temple Mount along with two statues of Roman emperors.

In 363 the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate gave the Jews permission to rebuild their temple. He did this to spite the Christians. However, the Jews did not get far, since Julian died in battle against the Persians that same year. Ammianus Marcellinus, a friend of Julian wrote:

Julian thought to rebuild at an extravagant expense the proud Temple once at Jerusalem, and committed this task to Alypius of Antioch. Alypius set vigorously to work, and was seconded by the governor of the province; when fearful balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, continued their attacks, till the workmen, after repeated scorching, could approach no more: and he gave up the attempt.

The earthquake in Galilee in 363, sabotage, an accidental fire, and a lack of Jewish commitment to the project may have been the real reasons it was abandoned. Of course, the death of Julian and the possibility of Divine intervention were also heavy factors leading to the end of the Temple building in 363.

From 363 until 638 there was no building activity on the Temple Mount under the Christian emperors of Rome or Byzantium.



This photo was taken standing against the southern wall of the Temple Mount between the Double Gate and the Triple Gate, looking north-northwest. The Al-Aqsa Mosque is on the left, and the Dome of the Rock is in front and to the right of center.

When the Muslims took the city of Jerusalem from the Christians in 638 AD, the Caliph Omar was given a tour of the city by the patriarch of Jerusalem, a Christian monk named Sophronius. Omar wanted to see the spot where the Jewish Temple had been. For six centuries the Christians had let the Temple Mount lie in ruins in order to fulfill Jesus’ words that “there will not be left here one stone upon another.” In fact, they used it as a garbage dump.

A simple wooden sanctuary was built south of the Jewish Temple, and around 660 a house of prayer was built on the Temple Mount “at the blessed site where the Temple stood.” According to the writings of Arculf, a Christian visitor to Jerusalem from 679-688, the Muslims had “built an oblong house of prayer, which they pieced together with upright planks and large beams over some ruins” at “that famous place where once there stood the magnificent Temple.”

In the minds of the early Muslims (and as recorded in their writings), the buildings they eventually built on the Temple Mount constituted the restoration of the Jewish site. The Dome of the Rock was the Muslim version of the Temple restored. It competed with the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and with the shrines in Mecca and Medina of internal Muslim political opponents.



Looking east at the southeast corner of the Temple Mount. The Mount of Olives is in the background. Solomon's Stables are directly below. The Triple Gate is to the right and down (on the other side of the wall).

Both Jewish and Muslim tradition says that Mount Moriah is Eden and that the rivers of Eden flow beneath the Temple Mount. The book of Jubilees, which was written in the 100's BC and was considered authoritative scripture by the Dead Sea community, says:

The Garden of Eden was the Holy of Holies and the dwelling of the Lord. - Jubilees 8:19

The inside of Solomon's Temple was filled with engraved trees:

Around all the walls of the house he carved engraved figures of cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, in the inner and outer rooms. - 1 Kings 6:29

The interior of the Dome of the Rock also includes mosaics with tree, foliage, bush, jewel and floral motifs.



This photo was taken from the southeast corner of the Temple Mount wall looking west. Toni is walking toward the southern wall. The Al-Aqsa Mosque with its dome is the building in the center of the photo. Notice the wide open space, but also the trees to the right. In certain places on the Temple Mount there are many trees, including both older trees and newly planted ones.



Standing to the north of the Dome of the Rock looking south through the trees.



Standing in the southeast corner of the Temple Mount looking northwest at the Dome of the Rock.



Looking west between the Dome of the Rock on the left and the northern wall on the right.

Hershel Shanks records in his book Jerusalem's Temple Mount:

Yassar Arafat told the American negotiator Dennis Ross, and others, that even if Herod's Temple did exist, it was not in Jerusalem, but in Nablus, a city about 30 miles north of Jerusalem. Arafat was referring to the Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerizim (in Nablus)." Arafat admitted to President Clinton at Camp David that his faith forbade him from recognizing the existence of the Jewish Temple saying, "I am a religious man and will not allow it to be written of me [in history] that I have . . . confirmed the existence of the so-called temple underneath the mountain."

But Arafat did admit the existence of Herod's Temple when he said: "The Jews have no claim to the whole area of the Haram al-Sharif. They [the Israelis] excavated everywhere and they didn't find a single stone from the Temple [of Solomon], just some stones from the Temple of Herod. (*Jerusalem's Temple Mount: From Solomon to the Golden Dome*, by Hershel Shanks, The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2007, page 3.)



Beginning in 1996 the Muslim Waqf (the Muslim group that is charged with overseeing the Temple Mount) began working on and under the Temple Mount to create this large stairway down into what the Crusaders called "Solomon's Stables". There was no archaeological oversight of this enormous project, although much ancient soil and all its archaeological remains were removed with bulldozers and other types of heavy equipment.



Muslims claim that there is an ancient mosque in Solomon's Stables on the other side (right/south) of the large arched doors at the bottom of the staircase. While it is not an ancient mosque, by the time the illegal and unauthorized construction was done, it did house the Marwani Musalla Mosque, which can hold up to 7,000 people. The excavated area that we see in this photo is 18,000 square feet large and 36 feet deep. In 2001, Israeli police watched bulldozers destroy ancient structures. The archaeological soil was removed in hundreds of truckloads and dumped into the Kidron Valley. There are reports that remains from the 700's BC and from Solomon's Temple, Hasmonean symbols, decorated Temple stones with ancient Hebrew inscriptions, and innumerable potsherds and pottery from both Herod's Temple and the Roman period were uncovered during these destructive digs on the Temple Mount.



A supply pile of construction material still lies outside the fence near the new staircase down into the new mosque.



This photo was taken on the Muslim platform where the Dome of the Rock stands. The Herodian pavement is about 3 feet below this pavement. This view is looking north toward where the eastern courtyard of the Temple would have been. The Mount of Olives is to the right (east). To the left on the edge of the photo, where the columns of the Dome of the Chain are seen, is where the activities of Israel's Altar of Burnt Offering would have occurred. The Temple, now the Dome of the Rock, is a little further to the left of this photo.



A view looking over the Kidron Valley at the Mount of Olives from the Temple Mount platform a few feet in front of the location of the Altar of Burnt Offering. The Red Heifer was sacrificed on the summit of the Mount of Olives, so the High Priest who offered that sacrifice could have looked directly into the Temple. The Temple would be directly behind me when I took this photo.



El Kas, or The Cup, used for Muslim purification. It is in front of Al-Aqsa (in the background) and the Dome of the Rock.



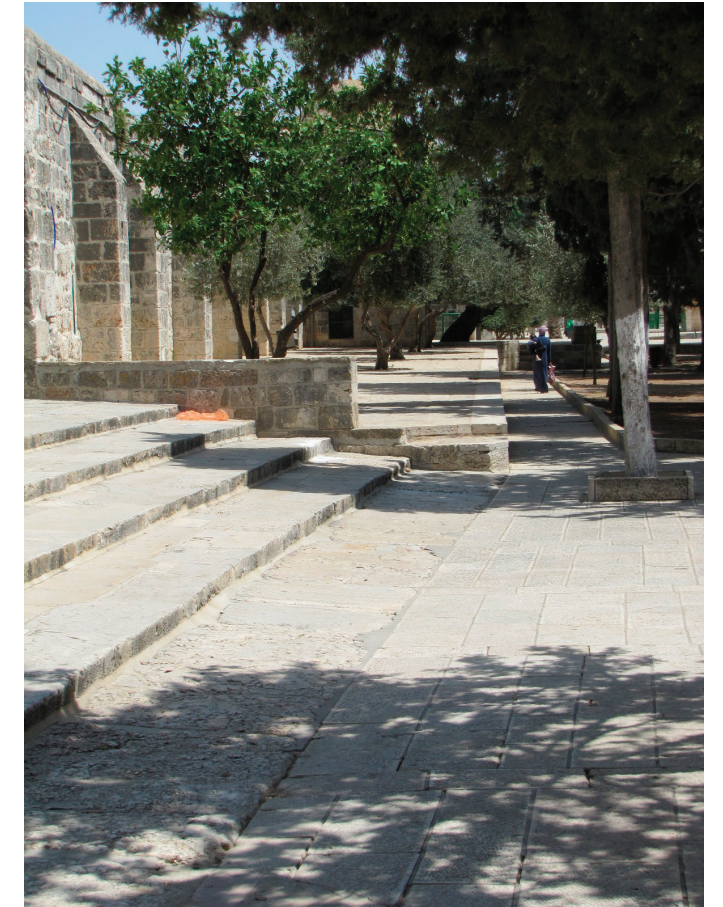
Looking north along the inside of the eastern wall of the Temple Mount.



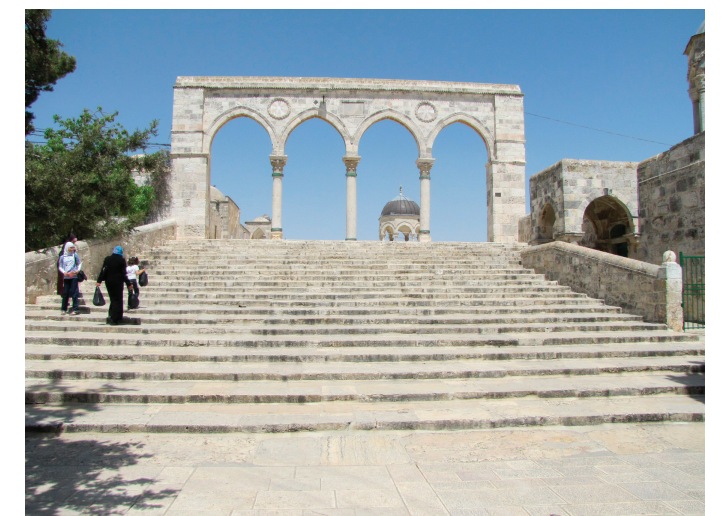
Inside the Golden Gate, or Eastern Gate. This photo is looking east. Notice that if the Gates were not blocked, a person entering would have to ascend a stairway to reach the ground level of the Temple Mount.



A close-up of the inside of the blocked Golden Gate on the east side of the Temple Mount.



The northwest stairs that take people up to the Muslim platform from the ground level of the Temple Mount. Notice, as mentioned earlier, the bottom row of steps that are the same level as the Temple Mount pavement stones. This is the outside of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount of the Old Testament and of the Hasmoneans. It is not running in a straight line with the Muslim platform seen in the background.



These are the northwest steps from the Temple Mount pavement up to the Muslim platform. The small dome at the top of the stairs is the Dome of the Spirits.

The Dome of Ascension (Qubbat al-Mi'raj) was built to the northwest of the Dome of Rock, on the same platform. It was built before the Crusaders arrived and is mentioned in documents dating from 903 AD. The current Dome of Ascension was rebuilt in 1200 AD using Crusader material. It is claimed to be the place from which Muhammad ascended to Heaven. Even early Muslim writings clearly indicate that the spot marked by the Dome of Ascension was believed to be the original spot of Muhammad's legendary ascent into heaven. In more recent times, however, the location of Muhammad's ascension to heaven has been moved inside in the Dome of the Rock in order to establish a Muslim claim of holiness to the location marked by the Dome of the Rock. Previously, the Muslim's had claimed the rock under the Dome was the location of the Ark of the Covenant kept inside the Most Holy Place of Solomon's Temple. The inscriptions above the columns inside the Dome of the Rock make no mention of Muhammad ascending from the rock beneath the Dome of the Rock, nor do they mention the night journey of Sura 17:1.

The Dome of the Rock was built over the rock that was the apex of Mount Moriah (Moriah means "Yahweh is seen [here]"). It is the place where Solomon built his temple, according to 2 Chronicles 3:1:

Solomon began to build the House of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah. - 2 Chronicles 3:1



The Dome of Spirits as viewed from west-northwest looking east-southeast. According to early Muslim tradition Muhammad ascended into heaven from here. The Mount of Olives is in the background, and the edge of the Dome of the Chain is in the middle of the right edge of this photo.



The bedrock of Mount Moriah can be seen under the Dome of the Spirits. This is what the bedrock covered by the Dome of the Rock looks like. Some theories regarding the location of the Temple of Solomon place the Holy of Holies right here. But according to tradition, scripture and archaeology, the Holy of Holies was most likely under the Dome of the Rock.



This is the Ablution Gate, or Bab al-Matarah, which is located on the west side of the Temple Mount and leads into the Muslim Quarter of the city. Directly behind me when I took this photo was the stairway seen in the next photo that leads up to the west side of the Dome of the Rock.

Several Temple Mount gates are currently open:

1. Gate of the Tribes (Bab al-Asbat) - northeast corner
2. Gate of Remission (Bab al-Huttah) - north side
3. Gate of Darkness (Bab al-Atim) - north side
4. Gate of Bani Ghanim (Bab al-Ghawanima) - northwest corner
5. Council Gate/Inspector's Gate (Bab al-Nazer) - west side
6. Iron Gate (Bab al-Hadid) - west side near the "Little Western Wall"
7. Cotton Merchant's Gate (Bab al-Qattanin) - the Dome of the Rock can be viewed through this gate on the west side
8. Ablution Gate (Bab al-Matarah) - west side
9. Tranquility Gate (Bab al-Salam) - west side
10. Chain Gate (Bab al-Silsileh) - west side and may be the Kiponos Gate from Herod's temple which is one of four gates on the west side of the Temple Mount mentioned by Josephus.
11. Mugrabi Gate (Bab al-Magharbeh) - west side; used by non-Muslims

These six gates of the Temple Mount are sealed closed:

- Golden Gate (Bab al-Zahabi) - east side; built around 520 by Justinian I on top of the ruins of the original Eastern Gate
- Single Gate - south side; once led under the Temple Mount
- Huldah Gates (Bab al-Thulathe) - south side; the Huldah Gates are two sets of gates (the Double Gate, which is partially blocked by a Crusader tower and used to lead to the Temple Mount, and the Triple Gate which also led to steps leading to the surface of the Temple Mount)
- Barclay's Gate - a gate from Herod's temple (aka, the Coponius' Gate) located under the Mugrabi Gate
- Warren's Gate - a gate from the time of Herod's temple that led to a stairway that led to the surface of the Temple Mount



A staircase leading up to the Dome of the Rock from the west side, with the Ablution Gate (Bab al-Matarah) behind.



Along the western wall of the Temple Mount on the inside looking south.



Chapter 72

St. Anne's Church (Crusader)

Saint Anne's Church was built by the Crusaders, the Roman Catholic Christian Europeans who came to deliver Jerusalem from the hands of the Muslims. The church of St. Anne was built between 1131 and 1138 over the traditional site of the home of Jesus' grandparents (Anne and Joachim, Mary's parents). According to Roman Catholic tradition, Mary was born on this site. Tradition also says that Anne and her husband had no children until Anne turned to God in prayer. Mary, Jesus' mother, was then conceived and came into existence without any stain of human sin. This is known as the Immaculate Conception.

The reason this church is particularly noteworthy does not have anything to do with the legends of Anne or Mary, but that it is one of the few remaining Crusader buildings still retaining the original construction. One of the main reasons this church exists yet today and was not destroyed when Muslims recaptured Jerusalem in 1189, is because in 1192 Saladin converted it into a Muslim theological school. The church, or school, continued to be used until about 1500 before it was abandoned. By 1856 it was falling apart. The Ottomans gave the church to France as a token of appreciation for the help the Ottoman Turks received during the Crimean War, and the church was restored to its original condition. Because of this, what we see today is basically what the Crusaders built. This fact is even more amazing when one compares it to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which is also a Crusader church but cluttered with 800 years worth of tradition, relics and paraphernalia.

The Crusaders designed the church's acoustics to compliment the singing of Gregorian chants, so that even today the sound of a group singing the simplest hymn is enchanting. This church is right beside the Pool of Bethesda, just inside the Lions Gate in the Muslim Quarter. Today, St. Anne's is a Greek Catholic Church.



The facade of the Crusader church dedicated to St. Anne. In front of the church is a potted plant on the opening of a cistern that gives access to water below.



This church dedicated to St. Anne preserves the original design and construction of a Crusader church built in 1138 AD. On the right corner of the church is the Bell tower.



The windows and arch on the front of the church. The arch reaching a point at the top makes it a typical Crusader-style arch. Note that Saladin's 1192 inscription is under the arch.



A close up of the altar of St. Anne's, the Crusader church.

The Arabic inscription of Saladin from July 25, 1192 is just above the door. It commemorates the conversion of this church into a Muslim theological school just 54 years after the Crusaders finished building it.



Looking at the altar at the front, on the inside of the church.



The Crusader-style domed ceiling inside St. Anne's Church.



A window covering in the church that is almost 900 years old.

Chapter 73

Sultan's Pool (Herodian, Roman, Muslim)

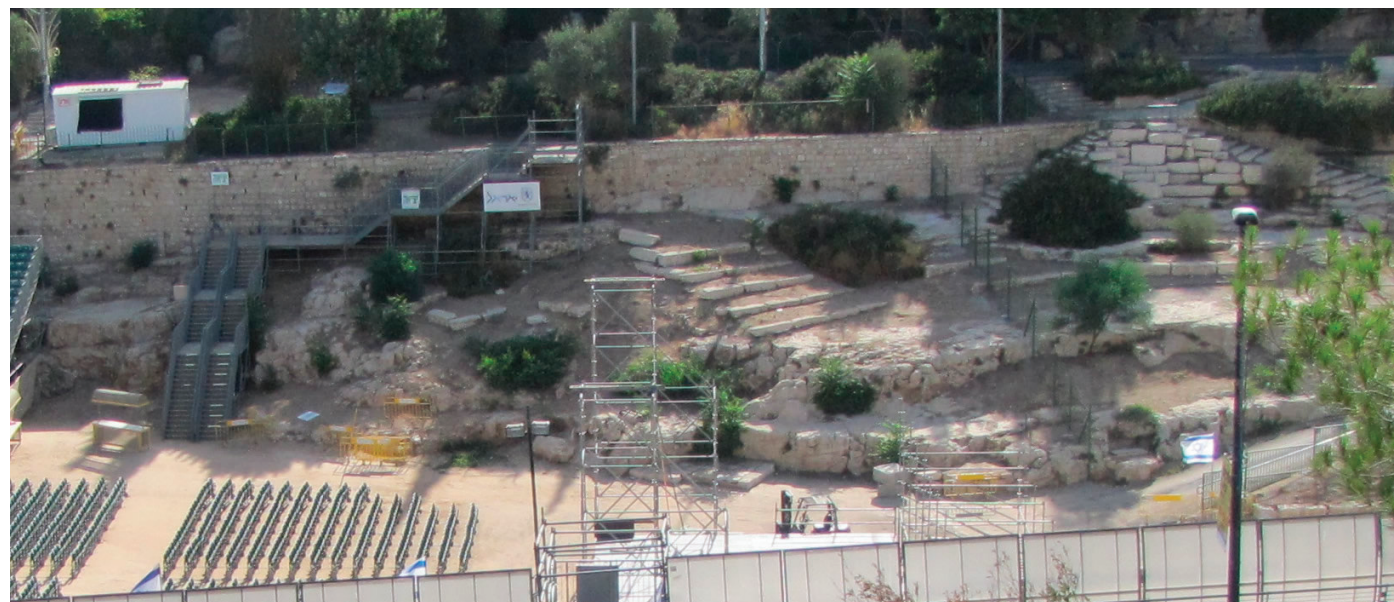
A flat area in the Hinnom Valley west of the Old City, which today is known as Sultan's Pool, was likely a hippodrome for racing chariots in Herod's day. It was later made into a water reservoir during the Roman and Byzantine periods, by means of a dam that was constructed in the Valley of Hinnom on the south side of the Hippodrome. The pool is about 220 feet wide and 550 feet long. It collected rainwater and overflow from the older Herodian aqueduct that approached the pool from the west and looped around the north side before it entered the city. The Ottoman sultans rebuilt the walls of the dam in the 1380's and again in 1536. Today, as seen in the photos below, Sultan's Pool is home to concerts and festivals.



Looking down from the west side of the Old City at Sultan's Pool. To the left (south) behind the bleachers is the ancient dam that held the water. Today this site that was used for sporting events in Herod's day is again a place for entertainment - concerts and other open air shows.



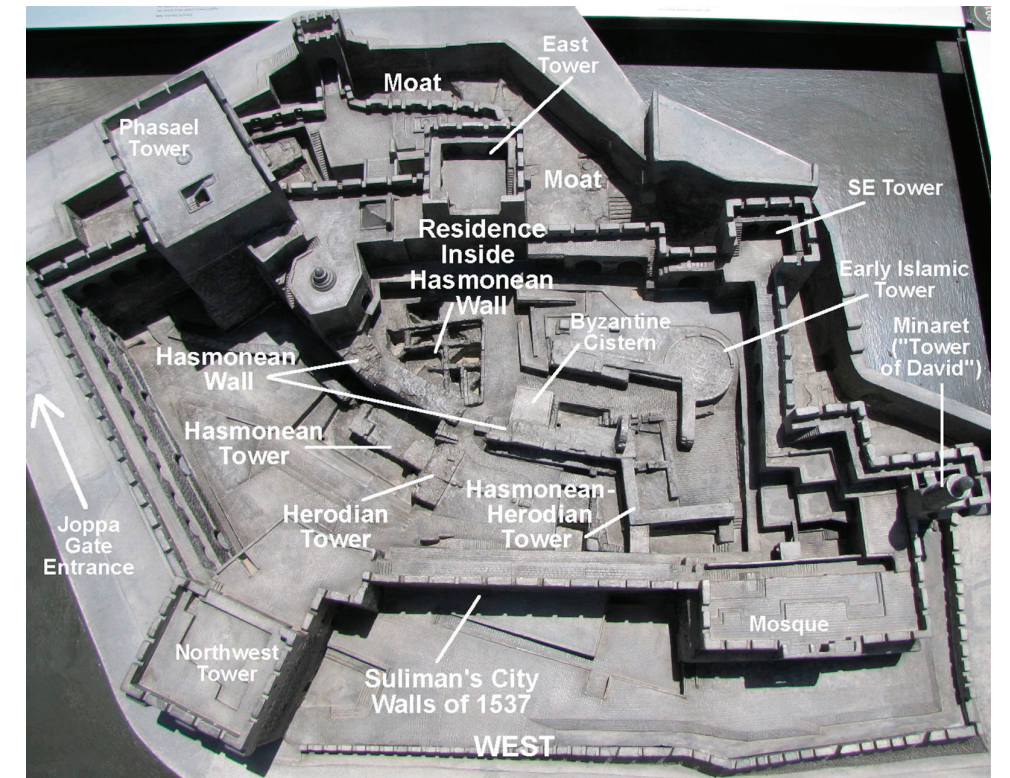
Looking west at Sultan's Pool. On the far side, the Herodian aqueduct from Bethlehem approaches the pool and turns right (north) before turning back west to enter the city. The pool in the bottom of the Hinnom Valley with a dam built across the south end (just off the left end of this photo). During the time of Herod this area may have been the hippodrome mentioned by Josephus (*Antiquities of the Jews*, 15:8:1) and used for entertainment such as chariot races and horse races.



Chapter 74

Citadel (Hasmonean, Herodian, Roman, Byzantine, Muslim, Crusader, Later Muslim)

On the west side of the Old City beside the Jaffa Gate are the remains of the Citadel, which served as a fortress to defend the northwest side of the ancient city of Jerusalem. The Hasmoneans were the first to defend this western portion of the city with a wall around 150 BC. Herod built his royal palace and three towers (Hippicus, Phasael and Mariamne) here. Jesus stood before Herod Antipas in this citadel on the night he was betrayed. The Jewish revolt began here in 66 AD when Jewish rebels attacked and burnt the palace, and it was also the headquarters of the Tenth Roman Legion for 200 years after that revolt. The Crusaders and the Muslims used this location as well, rebuilding the towers and walls, and adding more of their own.



This is a model of the Citadel today.



This is a view looking south at the wall line used by the Hasmoneans when they originally enclosed this area. Herod then reinforced the wall and its towers. This line of wall continues south and connects with the wall that we see today (Suleiman's Wall from 1535) that is just south of the tall Muslim minaret in the background.



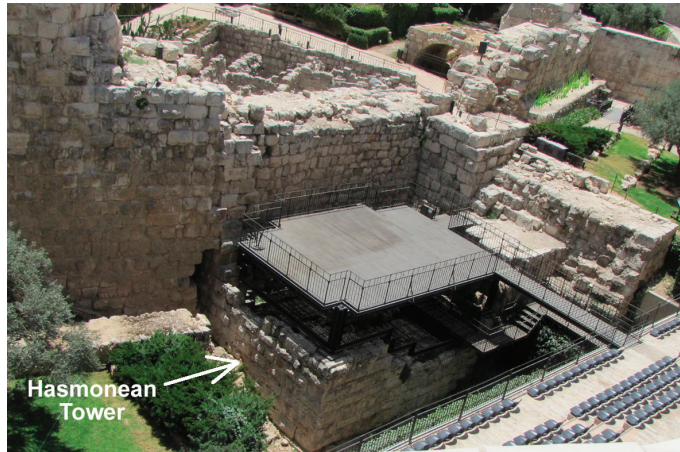
A close up of a section of the wall built by the Hasmoneans around 150 BC.



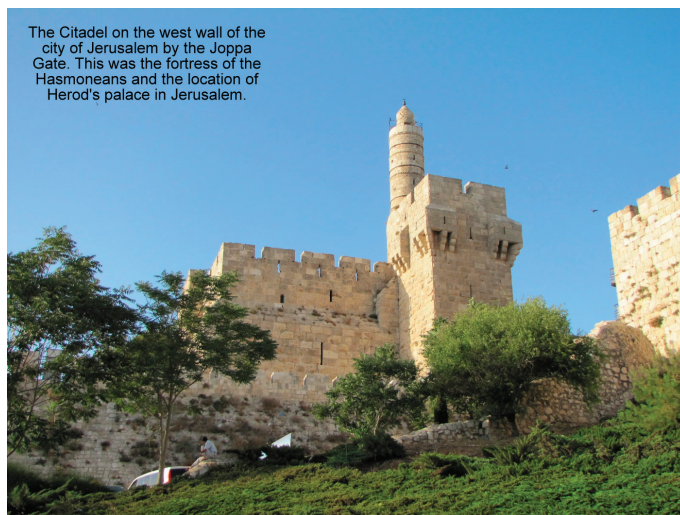
Looking down at some of the residences that were built inside the citadel wall.



A corridor that runs around the top of a tower in the Citadel next to the Jaffa Gate. It dates from the 1500's and held archers and other defenders.



A Hasmonean Tower that sat on the outside of the Hasmonean wall.



The Citadel on the west wall of the city of Jerusalem by the Joppa Gate. This was the fortress of the Hasmoneans and the location of Herod's palace in Jerusalem.

The so-called (and erroneously called) Tower of David is a Muslim minaret located in the Citadel. It is a familiar landmark and easily recognizable in Jerusalem.



The Citadel.



The moat at the base of a tower in the Citadel's wall.



The moat at the base of the citadel beside the Joppa Gate.

