

ROSE GUIDE TO THE TEMPLE



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THE MESSIAH IN THE TEMPLE



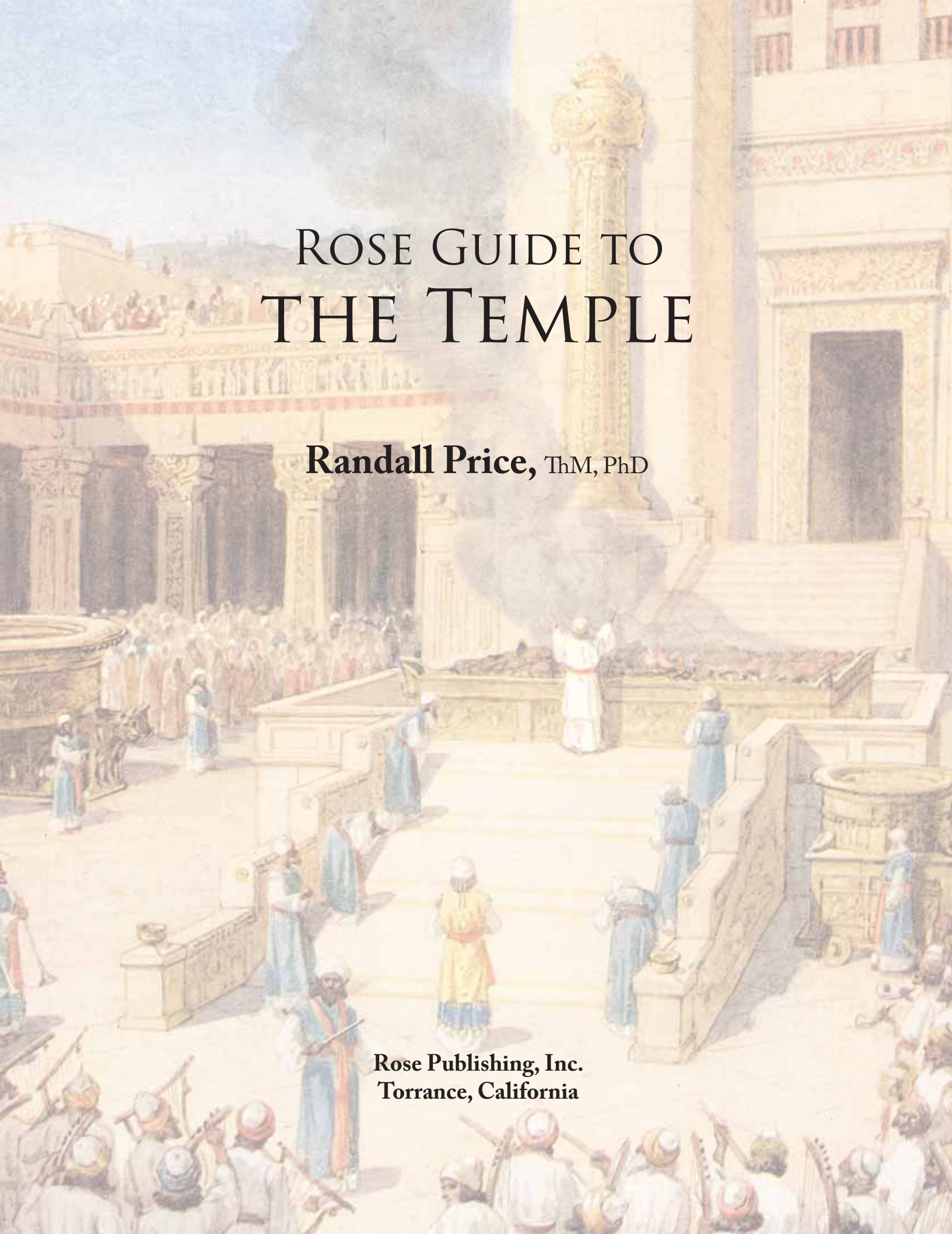
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THE MESSIAH
TEMPLE





ROSE GUIDE TO THE TEMPLE

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INTRODUCTION

The temple built in Jerusalem is the most important building in history. Perhaps greater and grander structures have been built, but what makes the temple the most important is that God designed this structure as the place where his glorious presence would dwell. Though many times in history religions and political leaders have sought to deny, destroy, or replace the significance of the temple with shrines or symbols of their own, the temple and its site of the Temple Mount have continued even to this day to be before the eyes of the world.

- Christianity remembers the temple in association with the teachings of Jesus and the last week of his life on earth.
- Islamic tradition claims that a stone at the Temple Mount is the place where Abraham brought his son Ishmael and from which the prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven.
- Judaism, at least its Orthodox sect, still believes the divine presence attends the site. Most Orthodox Jews believe that the temple must one day be rebuilt.

These different perspectives on the temple have produced both controversy and conflict throughout history, and therefore those who would seek to understand the cause of this conflict must understand the subject of the temple itself.

Modern Jews and Christians often have difficulty understanding the concept of the temple and its sacrificial system. Although the temple was a familiar and accepted institution in early Judaism and the early church, its absence for the past 2,000 years has contributed to a lack of understanding regarding the temple's nature and importance. However, both Jews and Christians still utilize buildings in their worship of God and believe that his presence is in some way with them as they meet. If houses of worship are important for believers today, how much more necessary was the existence of a physical sanctuary when the divine presence visibly manifested itself with his people! Though the physical temple does not stand today, the spiritual sense of the sanctuary that we experience now should help us appreciate what God provided in the past.

“One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.” —Psalm 27:4

It is therefore only fitting that this book presents the temple visually. God originally gave the temple to the people of Israel as a visual aid to comprehending God's glory in the heavenly temple and to show the way in which God in his holiness relates to people in their sinful condition. He provided its pattern by divine revelation and commanded that it be built according to his precise specifications. Every element in the design of the temple, like every garment and action of the priesthood, was intended for illustrating the divine ideal. From the beginning of creation, God communicated this divine ideal to humankind: He desires a relationship with his creatures, but on his terms, respecting his righteous standards.

Throughout the history of divine revelation, God has continued to express this divine ideal through the concept of a sanctuary, whether actual or symbolic. For this reason, we find the concept of sanctuary spanning the whole of written revelation—from the first book of the Old Testament to the last book of the New Testament. The more you are able to visualize this wonderful design, the greater you will enjoy this central teaching of the Word of God.

Although the Temple Mount today is the most *volatile* acreage on earth, for those who seek a relationship with the God of the universe, the study of the temple is one of the most *vital* activities for faith and worship. If you approach this study as one would approach the gates of the ancient temple with wonder and awe and then pass through with reverence, you will have the experience of the Israelites of old in gaining access to the knowledge of the Holy.





—○ SECTION 1 —○—

God's Sanctuary Before the Temple



—○— SECTION 1 —○—

God's Sanctuary Before the Temple

OVERVIEW OF THE TEMPLE IN GOD'S PLAN

Creation and the Fall

The Bible reveals that God created humans in his image and that he desired from the beginning of creation to have a relationship with them (Genesis 1:26; 3:8). But when sin entered the world through the tragic event known as the Fall in the garden of Eden, humankind became alienated from God and forced God to exile them from his presence (Genesis 3:8–19, 23). To prevent them in this fallen state from reentering the garden, which represented a sanctuary where God's holiness had dwelt, God stationed cherubim to guard the entrance (Genesis 3:24).



Expulsion from the garden of Eden after the Fall

Sacrifices and Atonement

Yet God also revealed a way in which human sin could be forgiven and the broken relationship restored. God himself provided a substitute (an animal) whose blood (life) would atone for sin (Genesis 3:21). This began the sacrificial system. God also revealed the way in which he would return his presence to humanity and restore

the earthly relationship once enjoyed in Eden; this was through the building of a sanctuary and maintaining a priesthood to serve God (Exodus 25:8; 27:21). First a tent-like structure called the tabernacle served as the sanctuary; it was later replaced by a permanent structure, the temple in Jerusalem. The sacrificial system was conducted within the tabernacle in the wilderness and later in the temple in Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 12:5–14).



David bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem

God commanded that an ark of the covenant be constructed and topped with figures of cherubim like those once stationed outside the entrance to Eden (Exodus 25:10; 25:18–20). This ark was placed in the holiest room of the tabernacle and later the temple. This revealed that once atonement had been made it was again possible for humankind to enter God's presence which was manifested at the ark. However, this was done only through a mediator, the high priest, who represented God's people (Exodus 28:12, 29). The sacrifices and the atonement conducted by the priests of Israel foreshadowed a coming sacrifice and a high priest who would make atonement once for all.

Jesus

When Jesus came to earth as Messiah, much of his teaching and ministry took place at the temple. He was dedicated at the temple as an infant (Luke 2:27); he brought sacrifices from his home in Galilee three times a year to the temple (Luke 2:41–42); he often taught in the temple precincts (John 18:20); he called the temple “my father’s house” (Luke 2:49; John 2:16); and he showed great zeal for it as a holy sanctuary (John 2:17; see also Psalm 69:9). At the moment Jesus died on the cross, the temple veil was torn in two from top to bottom (Mark 15:37). With his death on the cross, Christ who was sinless became the perfect sacrifice for sin (Ephesians 5:2). He laid down his life willingly and became not only the sacrifice, but also the one who offers the sacrifice—the ultimate high priest (Hebrews 5:6–10; 7:24). The author of Hebrews writes, “...we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way opened for us through the curtain, that is, his body, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near to God with a sincere heart” (Hebrews 10:19–22).

The Church

After Jesus’ resurrection and ascension into heaven, the apostles and the early church continued to worship at the temple (Luke 24:53; Acts 2:46; 3:1). The apostle Paul uses the sanctity of the temple to teach that the bodies of believers as the church itself is holy because God’s presence (as the Holy Spirit) dwells there, and therefore it must not be defiled by sinful acts (Ephesians 2:21–22; 1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19–20; 2 Corinthians 6:16–17). Paul likewise states that believers are “sanctified,” have a calling as “saints” and have a “spiritual service”—all language borrowed from the temple and its priesthood (1 Corinthians 1:2; Romans 12:2; 1 Peter 2:9).

The New Jerusalem

The book of Revelation points all believers to their hope in a future heavenly home of the saints—the New Jerusalem. This will be a place whose very structure mirrors the temple’s inner sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, where God’s presence dwells (Revelation 21). This final image reminds us that all of the things related to the temple on earth were but copies of the things already eternal in the heavens, and that God’s purpose in bringing the temple into existence was to bring a bit of heaven to earth. As we keep in mind these great truths, we will increasingly see the abounding riches of God manifested in the design and duties of the temple and its priesthood, and understand the lessons God intends for us.



Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross

THE TEMPLE BEFORE TIME

The Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, speaks of a heavenly temple which served as the abode of God and as the pattern for the construction of the earthly tabernacle and temples. The heavenly temple is the place where God dwells, where one can seek his counsel, and the place from where he sends divine revelation.

OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Moses, Aaron and his sons, and 70 of the elders of Israel saw a glimpse of the heavenly temple (Exodus 24:9–10).• David may have referred to the heavenly temple in the Psalms (Psalms 11:4; 23:6; 27:4–6; 138:2).• During the reign of the Israelite king, Ahab, a prophet named Micaiah saw the heavenly temple (1 Kings 22:19), as did the prophet Isaiah after entering the earthly temple to seek the Lord upon the death of the Judean king, Uzziah (Isaiah 6:1–5).• The prophet Ezekiel, while in exile in Babylon, saw a vision of the Lord enthroned in the heavenly temple (Ezekiel 1:1–28).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The book of Hebrews draws a distinction between the “earthly sanctuary” and a “greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation” (Hebrews 9:1, 11). This place is located in “heaven itself ... in the presence of God” (verse 24). It is the place where one can find holy, heavenly vessels and where Christ serves as High Priest (verses 21–25).• In the book of Revelation, the heavenly temple appears as the place where the apostle John receives revelation (Revelation 7:15; 14:17; 16:17). “After this I looked, and I saw in heaven the temple—that is, the tabernacle of the covenant law—and it was opened” (15:5).

Many scholars believe that the earthly sanctuaries, like the tabernacle and the temple, were constructed to bring a sense of the heavenly temple to the earthly realm in order for God to dwell among humankind. The earthly tabernacle and temples were constructed from a divine design given by divine revelation to Moses (Exodus 25:8–9, 40) and King David (1 Chronicles 28:11–19). The earthly sanctuaries became an institution which made it possible for humans to commune with God to a limited capacity.

The author of the book of Hebrews encourages believers to look forward to a time when they will dwell in a heavenly city (Hebrews 13:14). Abraham is described as one who was “looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God ... a better country, that is a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:10, 16). The book of Revelation identifies this city as the New Jerusalem—a city “laid out as a square” forming a cube 1,500 miles (2,414 kilometers) on each side. At first glance, it appears that the New Jerusalem doesn’t contain a temple because John doesn’t see one in his vision (Revelation 21:22). However, since the Holy of Holies bears a strong resemblance (in a much-condensed form) to the cube-shaped city, some scholars suggest that the New Jerusalem is actually the Holy of Holies—the throne room—of the heavenly temple. The New Jerusalem doesn’t *contain* a temple; the New Jerusalem *is* the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple.

With the descent of the New Jerusalem to earth (or just above the earth), Revelation 21:3 announces that the “tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them” (NASB). It is here, within this holy city, where the complete reconciliation between God and humankind will occur. Forever, humans and God will exist together in an unlimited relationship. The earthly temples were symbols of the presence of God with his people, but at the same time, they were mere copies of the heavenly temple, which is the presence of God.

PRE-TEMPLE SANCTUARIES

The Garden of Eden

A number of clues in the book of Genesis reveal that God created the garden of Eden as a pre-temple sanctuary for his presence.¹ The garden and the tabernacle/temple share a similar physical arrangement. In Genesis, God planted the garden “toward the east, in Eden” (Genesis 2:8 NASV). Later we read that God stationed cherubim at “the east of the garden of Eden” to prevent anyone from returning west to the Tree of Life (Genesis 3:24). In the book of Numbers, this east-west orientation is the basis for the tribal arrangement for Moses, Aaron, and his sons who perform the service of the tabernacle (Numbers 3:38).

Certain sacred objects also appear in the garden and the tabernacle/temple. The sacred Tree of Life in the center of the garden can be compared to the sacred candelabra (menorah) in the central section of the Holy Place. The two cherubim posted at the east entrance to Eden (Genesis 3:24) can be compared to the two cherubim overshadowing the mercy seat on the ark of the covenant (Exodus 25:18–22), embroidered on the veil of the tabernacle (Exodus 26:31), and carved into the walls, doors, and paneling of the first temple (1 Kings 6:27–35; 7:29, 36).

The duties of Adam in the garden also suggest a sanctuary existed because his responsibility was to “work” and “keep” (Genesis 2:15). These terms, used elsewhere only of the Levites who served in the tabernacle and temple, suggest that Adam had been commissioned to act as a “priest of God” preserving and protecting the holy ground of the garden-sanctuary.

When the tabernacle was constructed, God's presence there depended upon his peoples' obedience to the laws of the tabernacle (Leviticus 26:1–46). In the same way, God's presence in the garden depended upon obedience to the one law of respecting the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17; 3:1–3). In Genesis, this exile was from the garden sanctuary (Genesis 3:23–24). For Israel, disobedience meant exile from the presence of God, the destruction of the temple, and exile from the Promised Land.

The arrangement of the garden's landscape corresponds to the arrangement of the tabernacle and temple's

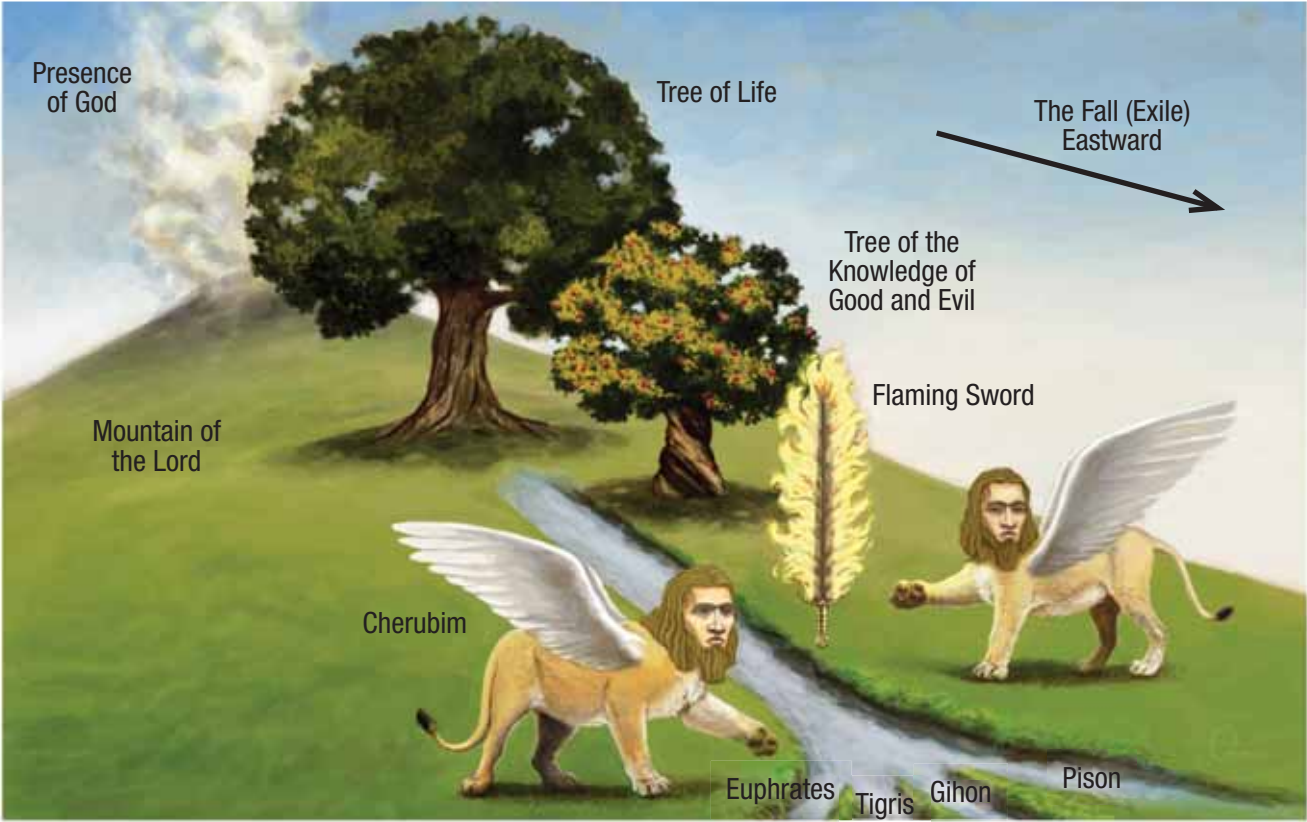


The Garden of Eden

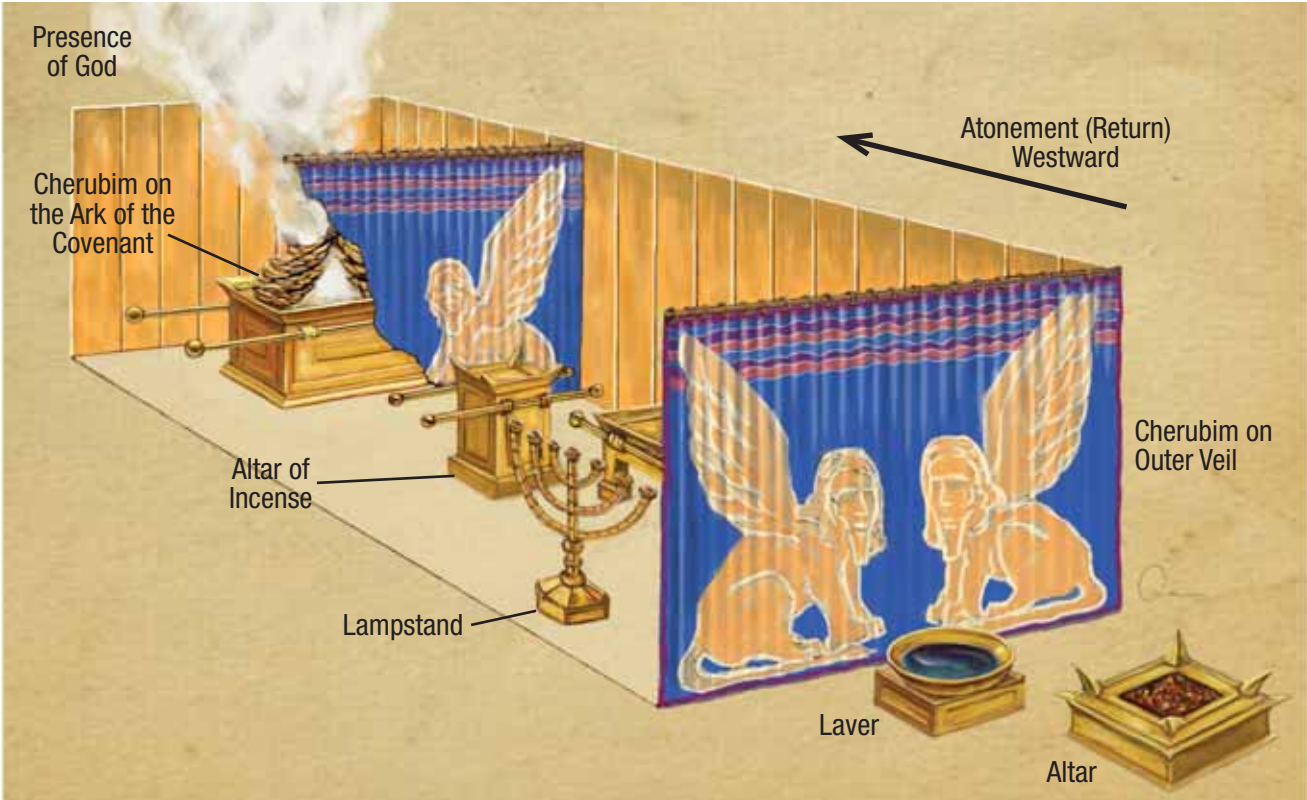
furniture. Eastward movement (out of the garden) is away from God's presence; westward movement (through the garden) is a return of God. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest moved through the sanctuary closer to the presence of God symbolizing the people's reversal of spiritual exile from God. For these reasons, it appears that God showed the divine design for the temple at the beginning of history and that later constructions of buildings followed this pattern.

When we compare the garden sanctuary to the tabernacle we discover an important difference.

Garden of Eden



Tabernacle



Illustrations by Cara Nilsen

TENT OF MEETING

During the time of the tabernacle's construction, Moses built a "tent of meeting" outside the camp so he could privately enter into the God's presence (the *shekinah*) and receive divine guidance and answers to the people's prayers (Exodus 33:7–11). This tent seems to have been a provisional structure that was later incorporated into the tabernacle, since the terms *tent of meeting* and *tabernacle* are used interchangeably after the tabernacle's completion (Lev. 1:3; Deut.31:14–15). God moved about "in a tent, even in a tabernacle" (2 Sam. 7:6). Years later when the first temple was dedicated by Solomon, the portable tent of meeting/tabernacle and its sacred vessels were incorporated into the temple (1 Kings 8:4).



The cherubim stationed at the entrance to God's presence in Eden faced *outward*, preventing people from re-entering the sacred site. However, in the Holy of Holies, the cherubim were positioned on top of the mercy seat of the ark with their faces turned *inward* toward God's presence. These cherubim, rather than turning people away from God's presence, made it possible for the high priest as a mediator to enter God's presence (Exodus 25:8, 22). The first man, Adam, served as a representative for humankind and caused exile from God's presence. The high priest served as a representative for Israel enabling God's people to reenter God's presence. God's command to build him a sanctuary was the gracious means by which he brought humanity back into a relationship with him (Exodus 25:8).

The Tabernacle: God's Sanctuary in Motion

After God brought his people out of slavery in Egypt, God revealed to Moses on Mt. Sinai the divine design for the tabernacle (Exodus 25:2, 8–9, 40; Hebrews 8:5; 9:24). The tabernacle was a collapsible building that the Israelites transported through the wilderness and later during the period of settlement in the Promised Land.

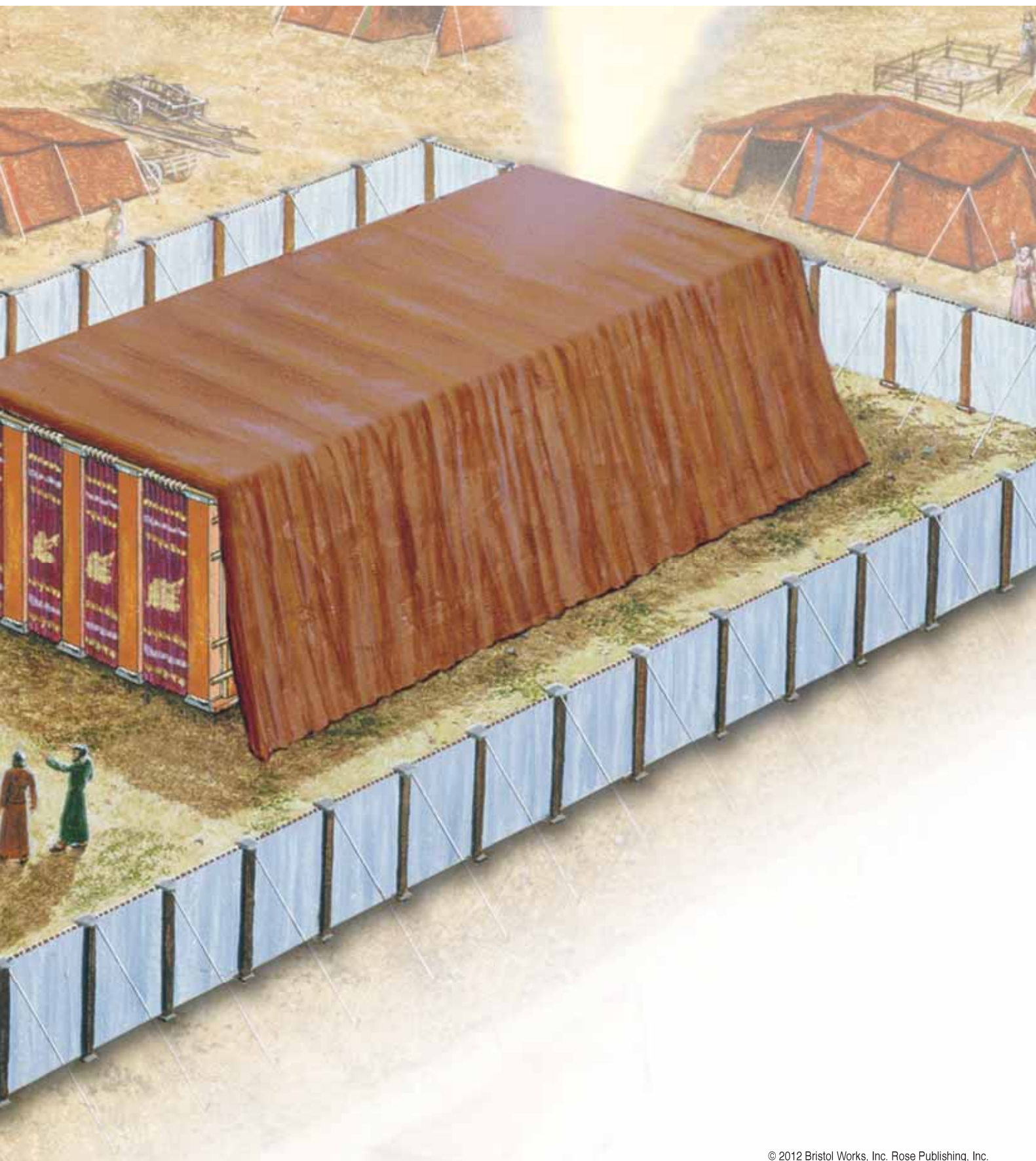
This tabernacle served God's purpose as a sanctuary for 485 years (from Moses to Solomon). Its purpose was to make possible God's dwelling with his people (Exodus 25:8). It was made to be an earthly copy of the heavenly sanctuary. Because of sin, God could not physically coexist with humans (Exodus 33:20; Isaiah 59:2). Dwelling with God was only possible if there was a proper separation (the curtains of the tabernacle), a sanctified place of meeting (the ark of the covenant within the Holy of Holies), and a qualified mediator (the high priest).

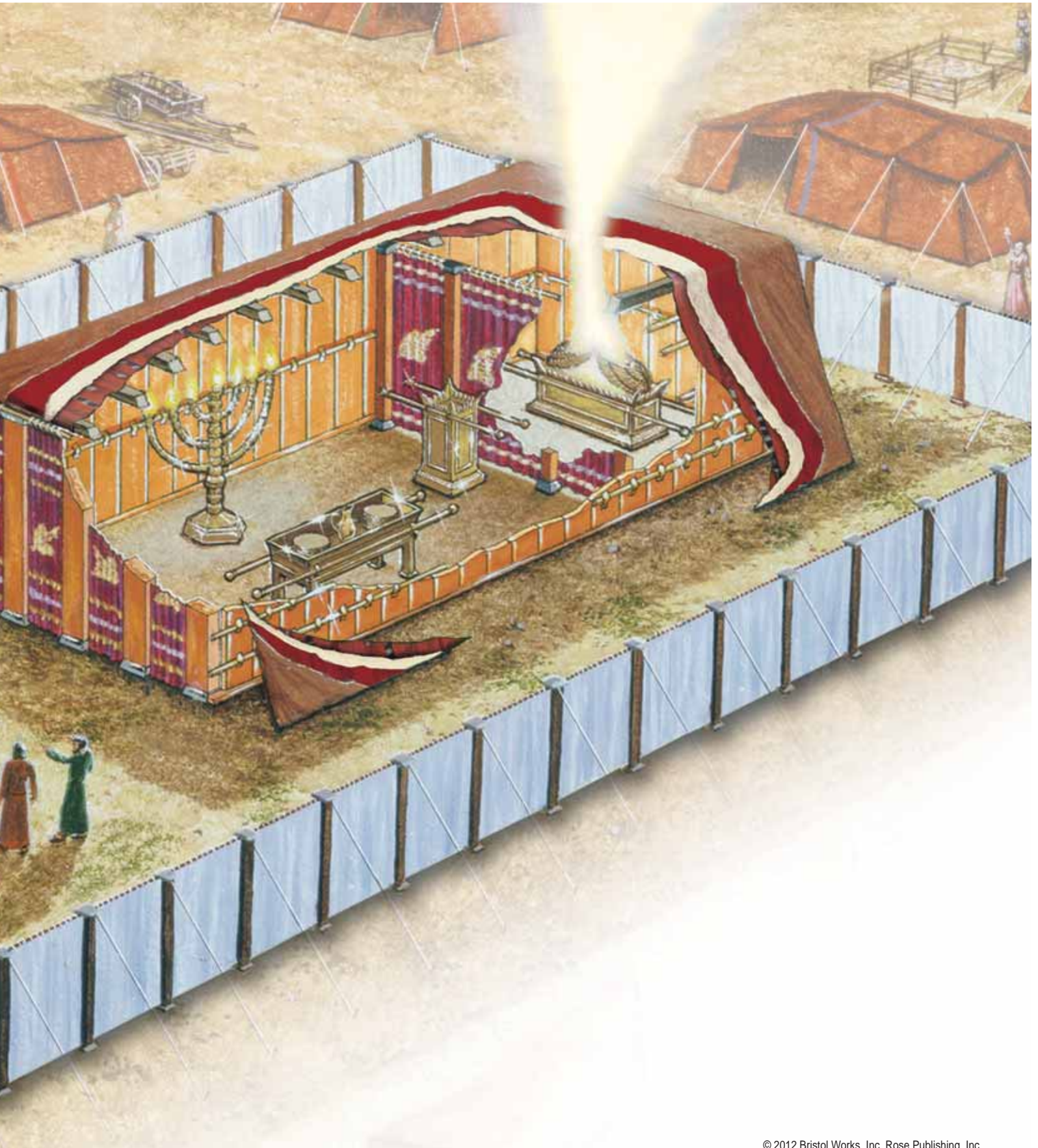
The details of this structure and the rules of ritual purification that maintained its sanctity were carefully described to Moses and two craftsmen: Bezalel and Oholiab. These men were divinely appointed to supervise skilled workers in making the structural framework, tent curtains, and ritual furniture of the tabernacle (Exodus 25:10–40:33). In addition, God instructed the priests how to conduct the divine service and how to prevent ritual desecration. Also, the people were told how to live godly lives that would sustain them collectively as a priestly nation (Exodus 20:24–25:9). The materials for the tabernacle's construction came from the voluntary contributions of the people who had received these costly items of metals, skins, and fabrics as part of the "plunder from the Egyptians" (Exodus 3:22; 12:35–36; 25:2–7).

The tabernacle was situated in the middle of the twelve tribes of Israel (Numbers 2:17; 10:14–28). This location for the tabernacle was necessary because it served as the focal point of Israel's daily life. In this way, God, whose presence was manifested at the tabernacle as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, was continually at the center of his people (Exodus 33:9–10; Numbers 14:14).

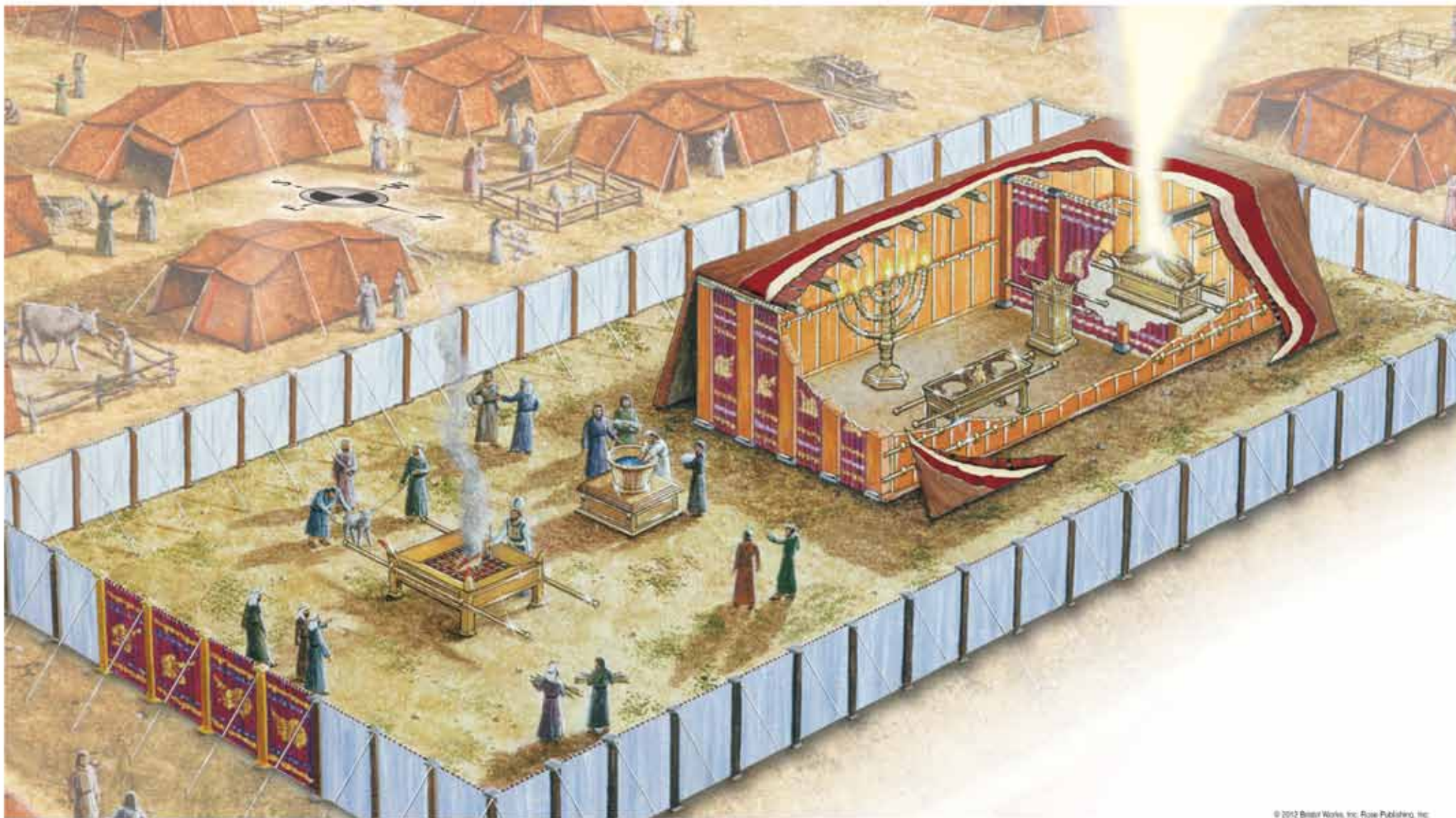
The Tabernacle Cutaway







The Tabernacle Cutaway



THREE PARTS OF THE TABERNACLE

The tabernacle had three main sections. Each section contained special, sacred objects. Each section was also the place of different sacred activities.

The Courtyard

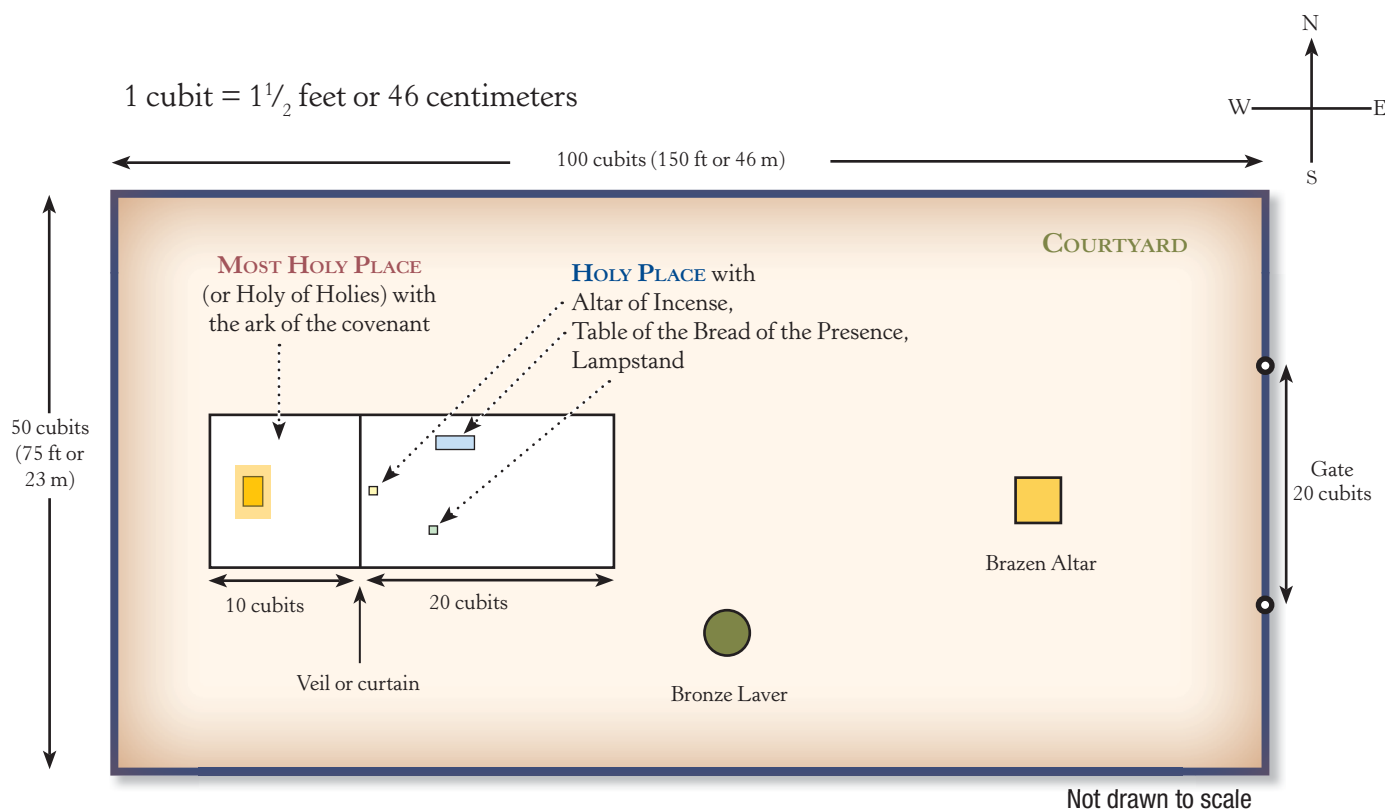
The Courtyard was the main access to the tabernacle. The wide gate was the place where ancient Israelites would bring their sacrifices and offerings. There, the priests would receive and bless people. Within the courtyard, the priests would offer sacrifices at the bronze altar. There was also a bronze laver, in which the priests could cleanse themselves to be ritually clean.

The Holy Place

The Holy Place housed three important objects for the service of the tabernacle: the golden lamp, the table of the bread of the presence, and the altar of incense. The priests performed daily tasks inside the Holy Place: they had to keep the lamps burning, offer incense twice a day, and bring fresh bread weekly to the table.

The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

The Holy of Holies was a unique place. The ark of the covenant was in this room. God's very presence dwelt in the Holy of Holies. Only the high priest could enter this room once a year, protected by a cloud of smoke from burnt incense. The most important celebration in the Jewish calendar, the Day of Atonement, had its climax in the Holy of Holies, where the high priest offered the blood of the sacrificed animal to God to atone for the people's sin.



WHAT DOES “TEMPLE” MEAN?

The English word “temple” comes from the Latin *templum*, following the Greek *temenos*, which refers to a raised platform often dedicated to a sacred purpose. However, the Greek and Hebrew words used to refer to the “temple” in Scripture provide a complete understanding of this term.



Old Testament

The earliest form of the sanctuary, the tabernacle, was called in Hebrew *mishkan* (“dwelling”). The Hebrew term *hekal* is probably derived from Sumerian *e-gal* meaning “big house.” The nonspecific sense of this term is of a “palace” or a “shrine,” and it may refer generally to any ancient Near Eastern center of worship. The more specific use was of God’s special “house,” the Jerusalem temple (2 Kings 18:16; Jeremiah 7:4). The Bible most often calls the temple *Beit YHWH* (the “house of the LORD”) or *Beit ‘Elohim* (the “house of God”) which refers to the temple as a place where God’s presence resides.

Another Hebrew word, *miqdash* (“holy place”), usually translated as “sanctuary,” was used to refer to the tent of meeting and the *sancta* (vessels and priestly personnel). Sometimes the word *miqdash* is used of the Holy of Holies (Leviticus 16:33), the tabernacle compound (Leviticus 19:30), and the temple precinct (Ezekiel 43:21). On occasion, it was used of rival Israelite temples both inside and outside the land (Amos 7:9, 13), but most often it referred to the one legitimate sanctuary—the temple in Jerusalem (Isaiah 63:18). Modern Hebrew uses this word when it refers to the ancient temples as *Beit Hamikdash*.

The Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Septuagint (LXX), followed the Hebrew use of *mishkan* with its term *naos*, a noun derived from the verb *naio* (“to dwell” or “inhabit”) and *miqdash* (“sanctuary”). In Classical Greek, *naos* referred to the “abode of the gods,” with specific reference to the innermost part of a shrine, which contained the image of a god. However, the Septuagint uses this word 55 out of 61 times to translate the Hebrew *hekal*. Had the Septuagint intended “a temple” in general, it might have used the Greek term *heiron* (“sacred edifice”), however, its exclusive reference to the “temple of God” in Jerusalem gives it a technical meaning.

New Testament

In the New Testament, the Greek word *naos* is used to refer to the inner part of the temple (the Holy of Holies) in distinction to the outer part of the temple (the temple precinct). This distinction is important for understanding Jesus’ pronouncement in Luke 21:6 about the buildings of the temple: “the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down” (NASB). Since the retaining walls of the temple precinct remain standing even today, how can it be said that “not one stone would be left that would not be torn down”? The answer is that Jesus was referring to the buildings of the *naos* (the temple proper) and not to those of the *heiron* (the outer precincts, which would include the retaining walls). All of the buildings in the temple proper were indeed completely destroyed.

Because *naos* had a particular reference to the part of the temple where the *shekinah* (God’s presence) dwelt, the apostle Paul used that word to refer to the spiritual indwelling of the Holy Spirit in believers. This special relationship made it possible to make a spiritual application to the believer’s body as a “temple” (1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 6:19) and to the church as a spiritual “temple” (Ephesians 2:21–22). It also allowed Christians to be called “saints” (*hagaoi*, literally “holy ones”) and to refer to their worship as a “priestly service” (Romans 12:2).

How Do We Know About The Temple?

Fortunately, the ancient world has left us with a wealth of information about the ancient temple. We would, of course, like to have had certain details reconciled and explained, but we are grateful that we have the details necessary to reconstruct the various designs of the temple through time and to understand how they were used. There has also been many legends and fanciful stories about the temple, therefore, it is important to know the best sources for reliable information. The three main sources are written documents, archaeological excavations, and architectural investigations. These sources have enabled scholars to reconstruct models of the first and second temples, as well as the temple envisioned by the prophet Ezekiel.

Written Documents

The written document we are most familiar with is the Bible which records details of God’s instruction for the temple’s construction and role in the covenants God made with Israel. Other major written documents are the works of the first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus and the writings of the rabbis. We also have important information provided by some Greek, Roman, and Christian sources.

RABBINIC WRITING	DESCRIPTION
Mishnah	This is the oldest comprehensive systematic-theological exposition of the Jewish Law which consists of a collection of 4,187 rules of dogma written down by Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Nasi in the second century AD.
Gemara	This is a collection of later rabbinical discussions about the Mishnah. <i>Gemara</i> means “completion.”
Talmud	This is the most significant theological work of post-biblical Judaism compiled between AD 200–600. It contains additional discussion on the temple and its priestly activities. It exists in two editions: one from Babylon and one from Jerusalem; these contain the same Mishnah, but different Gemara.

One problem in consulting these rabbinic writings is that they are often incomplete. For example, the rabbis who lived at the time of Jesus did not comment in their writings on the additions that King Herod—the hated puppet king set up by the Romans—made to the Temple Mount.

A second problem is that these sources seem to offer contradictory measurements of the second temple. For example, Josephus says that the east portico (covered porch) of the second temple was 400 cubits long,² but the Mishnah states that the Temple Mount was 500 cubits square.³



FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS (AD 37–101)

Josephus was from a priestly family and understood the form and function of the temple. He grew up during the last decades of the second temple and provides a firsthand account of its appearance at that time. He also witnessed or had firsthand acquaintance with both Jews and Romans who were part of its destruction in AD 70. His works that record the details of the temple are *Antiquities of the Jews* and *War of the Jews*. Josephus eventually became a Roman citizen commissioned to write Jewish history for a Roman audience. History and archaeology have proved the accuracy of his accounts regarding the temple in even the smallest details.

Archaeology

Archaeological excavation and architectural investigations have also contributed much to verifying the details in the literary sources and providing new information. However, due to religious and political sensitivity of the Temple Mount, only limited exploration directly on the site has been allowed since the nineteenth century. After the Israeli victory in the Six-Day War in 1967 in which Israel gained control of East Jerusalem, Israeli archaeologists have had access to some remains of the temple complex, but excavation has only taken place outside the great retaining walls of the Temple Mount.

Beginning in 1996, the Islamic authorities removed more than 20,000 tons of archaeologically rich debris from the southern and eastern portions of the Temple Mount in preparation for the construction of the Al-Marwani Mosque. This material was dumped into the Kidron Valley. The Temple Mount Sifting Project is a means of searching through this rubble and salvaging what evidence could be found of a Jewish presence on the Temple Mount. To date, tons of pottery have been salvaged, half of which is dated to the first and second temple periods.

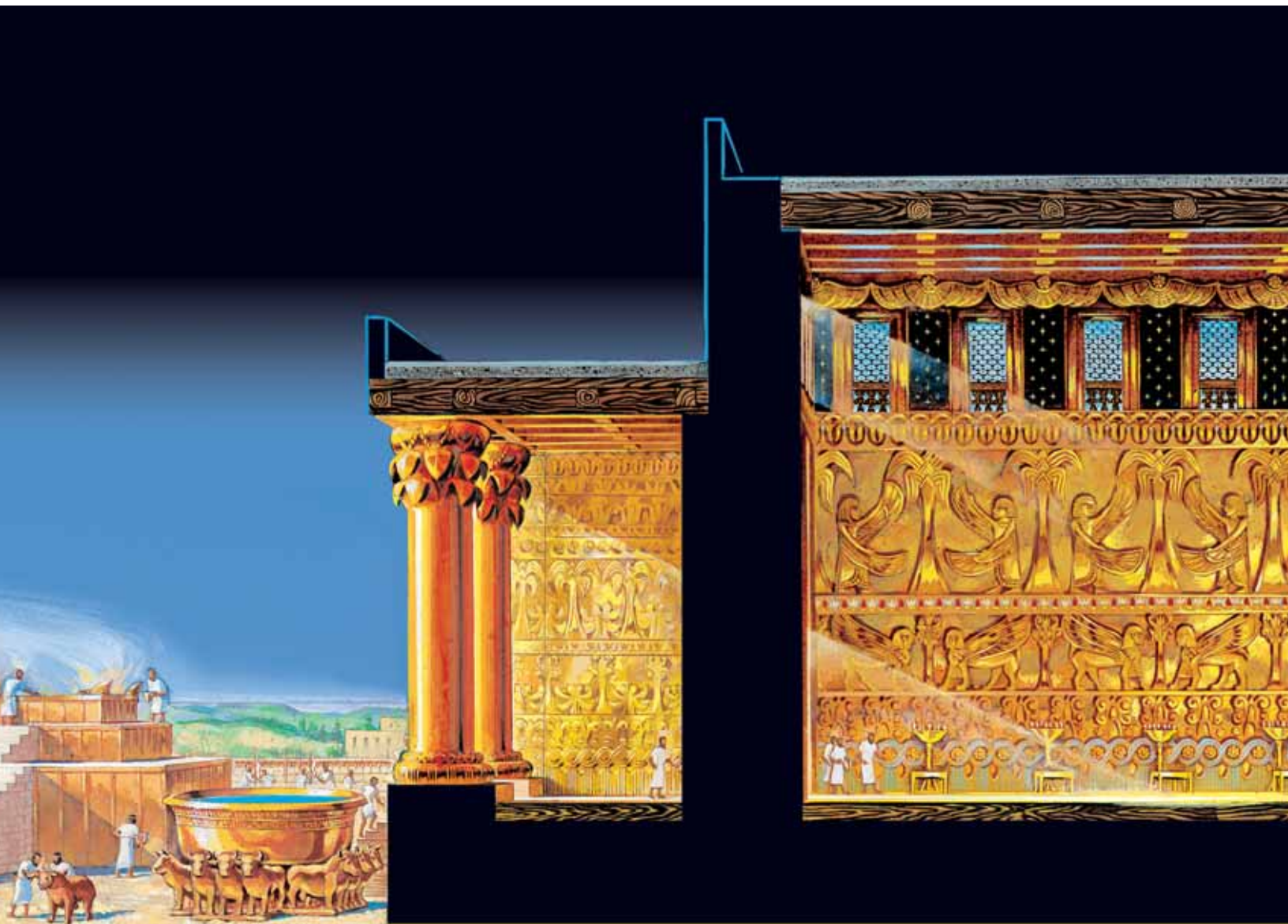
Excavated temples in the ancient Near East, particularly the temple of 'Ain Dara in Syria, contain many similarities to the temple in Jerusalem, making it possible for archaeologists to reconstruct a portrait of the temple built by Solomon. In recent years, the discovery and excavation of the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim (in modern-day West Bank) has provided unique insights into the structure of the earlier second temple and its complex. Other archaeological discoveries have provided information through inscriptions and artifacts related to the temple and its priesthood.

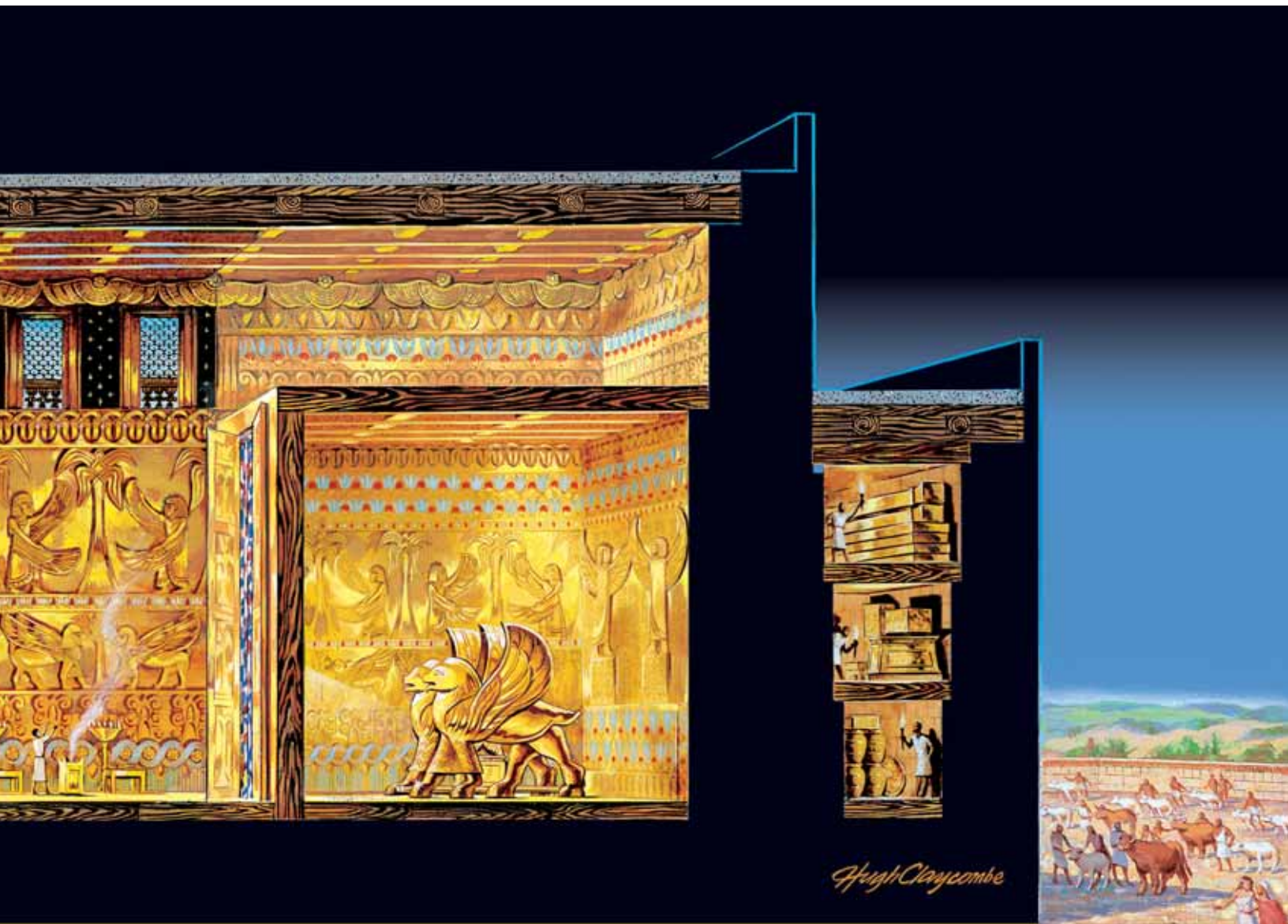


Temple Mount Sifting Project

(Above photo courtesy of Alexander Schick ©www.bibelausstellung.de)







—○ SECTION 2 —○—

*God's Permanent Sanctuary:
The First Temple*



— SECTION 2 —

*God's Permanent Sanctuary:
The First Temple*

BUILDING THE FIRST TEMPLE

It may seem odd that the building of the first temple waited so many centuries after God's people entered into the Promised Land, but God had a particular order of events that was necessary to prepare for this event. This preparation involved the boundaries of the Promised Land coming under Israelite control, the enemies of the people being subdued, and the proper individuals coming onto the stage of history to perform the work.

The Divine Source: Directions for the “House of the Lord”

After Moses had brought the children of Israel through the sea, his first statement about God's plans for the people was, “You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance—the place, LORD, you

made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, LORD, your hands established” (Exodus 15:17). God instructed Moses that once Israel crossed into the Promised Land they were to establish a central sanctuary in “the place that the LORD your God shall choose” (Deut. 12:10–18). However, they wouldn't set up God's permanent sanctuary until God had given them rest from their enemies so they would live in safety.

Many years later, a man from Bethlehem named David was crowned king of Israel and reigned in Hebron, a city about 20 miles (32 kilometers) southwest of Jerusalem. After reigning in Hebron for seven years and six months, David and his army attacked the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem. The Jebusites didn't think David's army would be successful, but to their dismay, David and his men captured Jerusalem. David set up residence in the fortress of Zion and called it the City of David. Hiram, the king of Tyre, built a magnificent palace for David and David became powerful because God was with him.

For 20 years the ark of the covenant had been kept in the house of a resident at Kiriath-Jerarim, a city about 10 miles (16 km) outside of Jerusalem. After David established himself in Jerusalem, he gathered up his army and moved the ark from Kiriath-Jerarim to Jerusalem. David pitched a tent in Jerusalem and placed the ark inside. Unfortunately, David continued to face conflicts with surrounding nations, especially the Philistines.



David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem. In this painting, King David wears an ephod and leads the Kohathite priests bearing the ark of the covenant from the house of Obed-edom (a gatekeeper for the ark) to Jerusalem (2 Samuel 6:12; 1 Chronicles 15:25). The artist has taken some liberties with the canopy over the ark as well as the cloth directly covering it, which was actually blue in color, as was the covering for all of the sacred vessels within the tabernacle (see Numbers 4:5–12). (Painting by William Brassey Hole)

“Then Solomon began to build the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David. It was on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, the place provided by David.”
—2 Chronicles 3:1

As David sat in his palace, he contemplated building a permanent sanctuary for the Lord. He felt guilty that he himself lived in “a house of cedar, while the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under a tent” (1 Chronicles 17:1). After consulting the Lord, the prophet Nathan told David that David’s son would build the temple. God promised David that he would expand his kingdom and remove all of David’s enemies. God also promised David that his descendants would always sit on the throne of Israel.

Later in his life, David sinned against God and God sent a plague upon Israel as judgment. David confessed and the prophet Gad instructed David to purchase a threshing floor that belonged to Araunah the Jebusite. David purchased the threshing floor, built an altar, and

sacrificed offerings to God. When God answered with fire from heaven, David was convinced that “the house of the Lord God” needed to be built upon that site (1 Chronicles 22:1).

In the time of Abraham and Isaac, God gave the general location for the sanctuary in the Promised Land with the altar Abraham built on Mt. Moriah and with God’s provision for a substitutionary sacrifice at that spot (Genesis 22:2, 13–14). Then, in David’s time, God identified the site even more specifically as the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite on Mt. Moriah in Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 21:18–20).

Although David was “a man after [God’s] own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14) and “David had it in his heart to build a temple for the Name of the Lord, the God of Israel” (2 Chronicles 6:7–8), God did not permit David to build the temple because of the warfare in his day (1 Kings 5:3; 8:18–19; 1 Chronicles 28:3–4). David knew that his son Solomon was young and inexperienced, so he wanted to provide Solomon with the wisdom and materials needed to build the temple (1 Chronicles 22:5). God revealed the design plans for the first temple in the same manner in which Moses had received the plan for the tabernacle on Mt. Sinai. King David then communicated the details of the plan for the temple and all its furnishings to his son Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:11–19).

David Buys the Threshing Floor. In this painting, King David purchases the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) the Jebusite on Mt. Moriah (2 Samuel 24:18–25). This was the site where the Angel of the Lord had stood to destroy Jerusalem, but was restrained by God’s command (2 Chronicles 21:15). In the sky (upper right), the artist has given us a glimpse of this angel who has lingered to observe this historic purchase. On this site David built an altar to the Lord, establishing it as the place for the first and second temples (2 Chronicles 3:1; Ezra 6:7).

(Painting by William Brassey Hole)

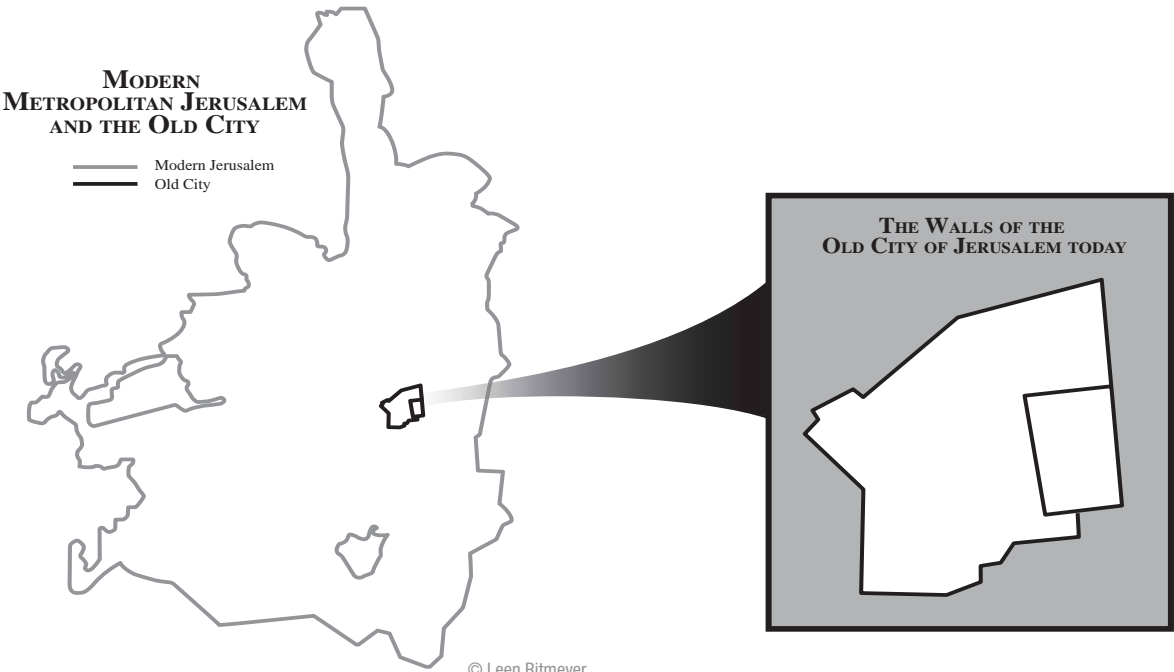
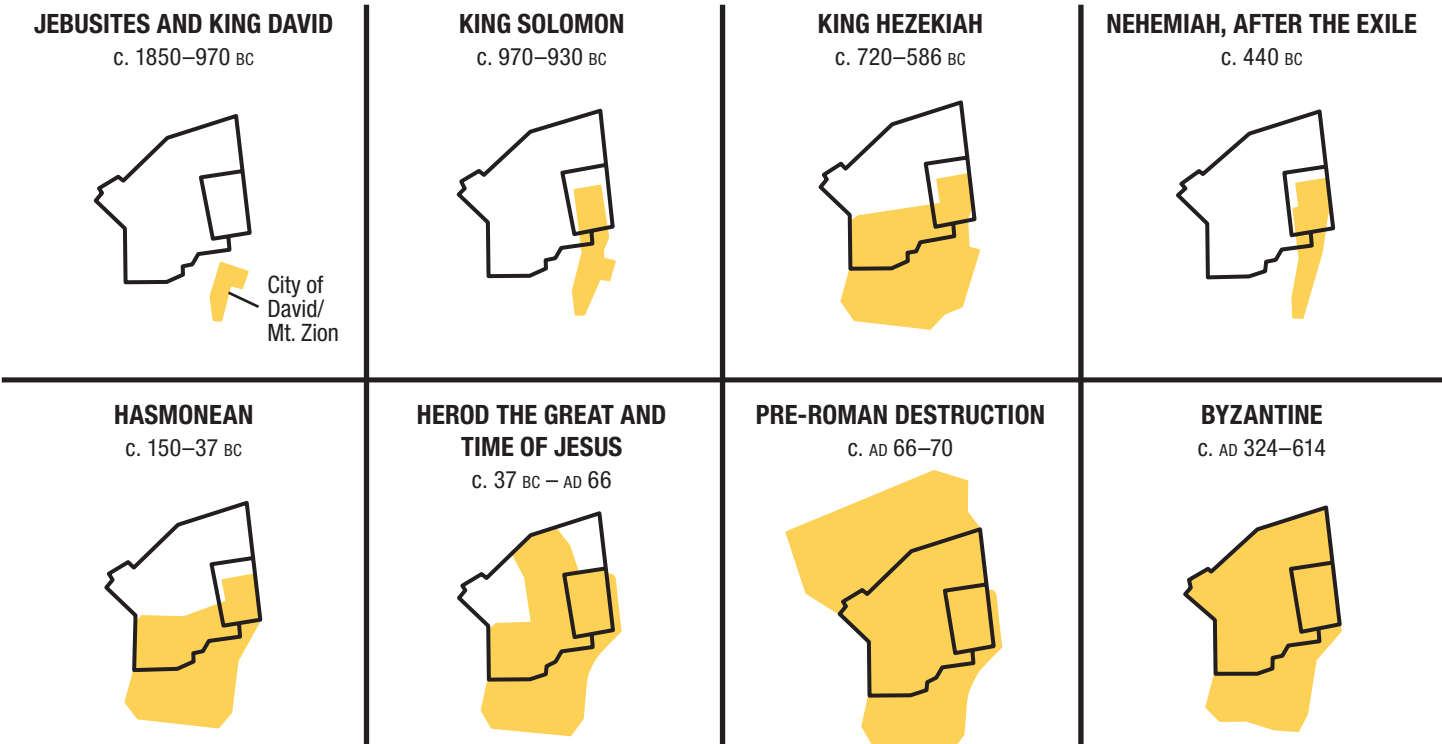


Jerusalem Through the Years

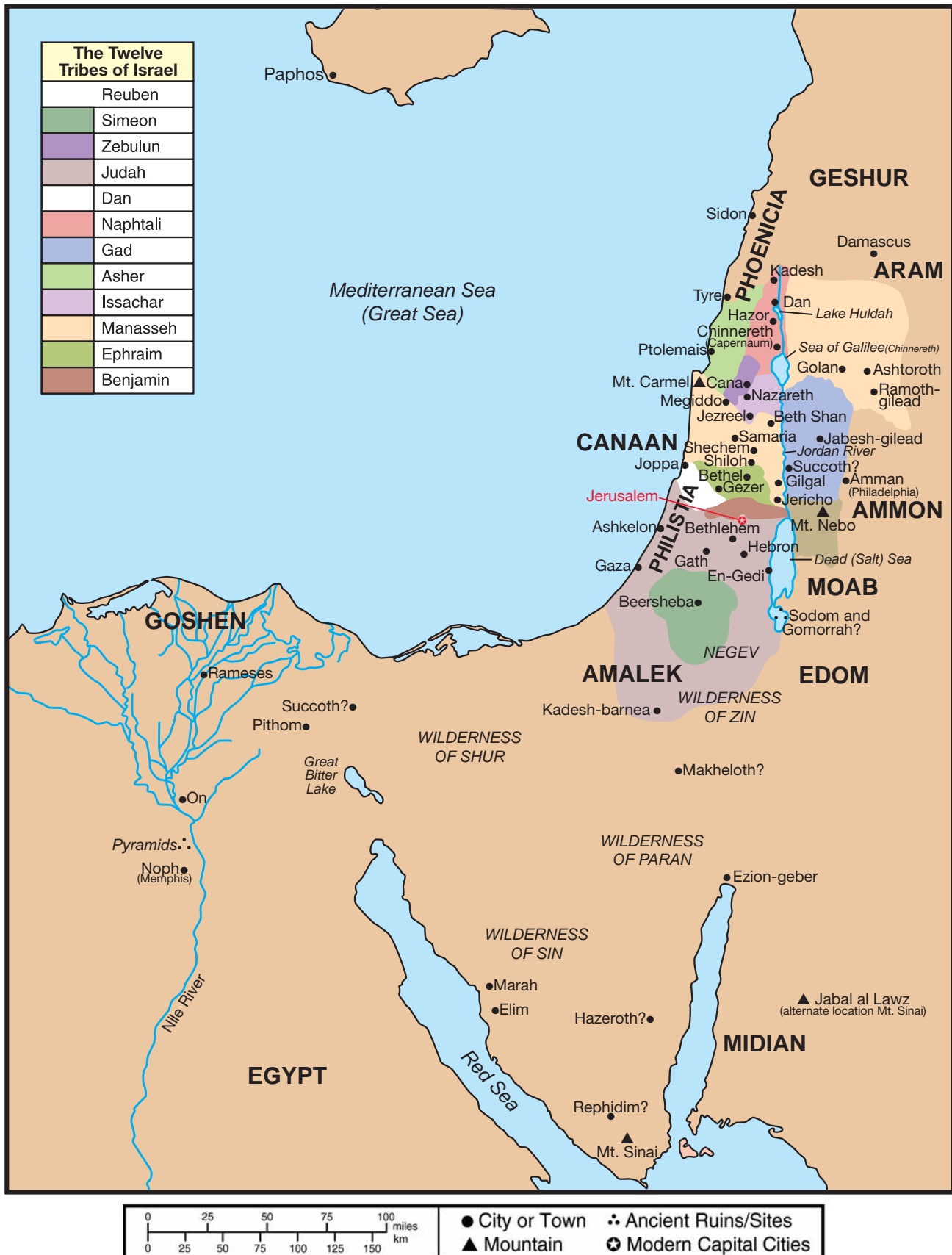
Modern-day Jerusalem is a sprawling metropolis, but back in David’s time, it was only a few acres in size. These diagrams show how Jerusalem grew. Notice the comparison between the Old City walls today and the size of Jerusalem at that time.

Black indicates the present walls of Old City Jerusalem.

Yellow indicates the size of Jerusalem at that time.



The Holy Land



The Human Source: The Construction Budget and Crew

The building of the temple was assigned to David’s son Solomon whose name means “his peace,” indicating that the temple was to be constructed in a time of peace by a man of peace. However, David was permitted to make preparations for his son. As with the preparations for the tabernacle, preparations for the temple were done through raising the necessary financial contributions from the people. The tribal leaders of Israel contributed generously, and David as well gave much from his own royal treasury. Together David and the people donated gold, refined silver, bronze, iron, and numerous precious stones (1 Chronicles 29:1–9).

	DAVID’S ROYAL TREASURY	LEADERS OF ISRAEL	TOTAL
Gold	100 tons	170 tons	270 tons
Silver	235 tons	340 tons	575 tons
Bronze	–	610 tons	610 tons
Iron	–	3,400 tons	3,400 tons

(Weights approximate; based on the metric ton)

When King Solomon assumed the task of construction, he knew a massive crew would be needed to fulfill his seven-year building plan.

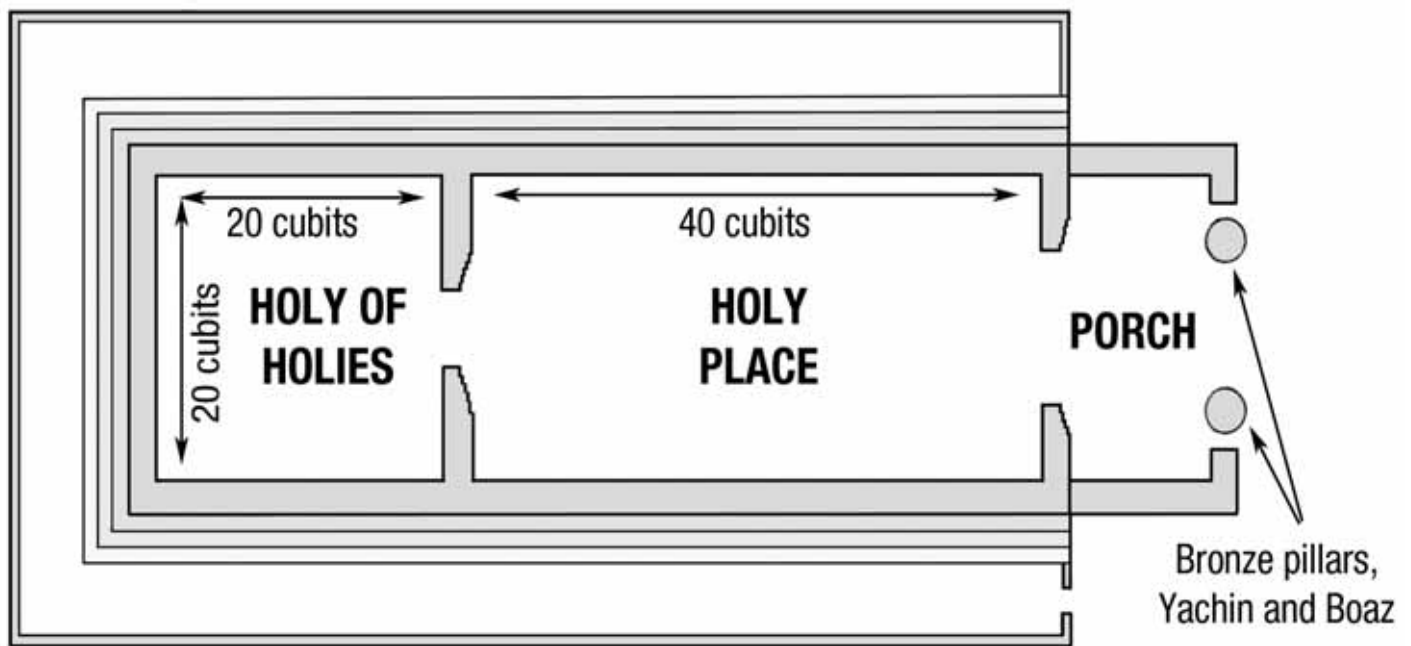
- Solomon contracted with King Hiram of Tyre to furnish the building materials and skilled craftsmen to complete the job. (Tyre was an ancient Phoenician port city in Lebanon.)
- Solomon bartered for Sidonian woodsmen to cut timber in Lebanon and transport the lumber to Joppa (1 Kings 5:6–9).
- Solomon employed 70,000 porters and 80,000 stonecutters who worked in the mountains under 3,600 supervisors (2 Chronicles 2:18).
- Phoenician and Gebalite stonemasons quarried the large stones for the foundation of the temple as well as the dressed stones for the building (1 Kings 5:18).
- Solomon acquired a skilled craftsman named Hiram-Abi. Hiram was skilled in bronze, gold, silver, iron, wood, and stone—as well as yarn and fine linen.
- Solomon also drafted forced laborers from among the 12 tribes of Israel totalling about 30,000 (1 Kings 5:13; 2 Chronicles 2:2).

If sold on the market today, the 575 tons of silver would go for about \$755 million US dollars. The 270 tons of gold would be worth an astounding \$15.3 billion dollars!



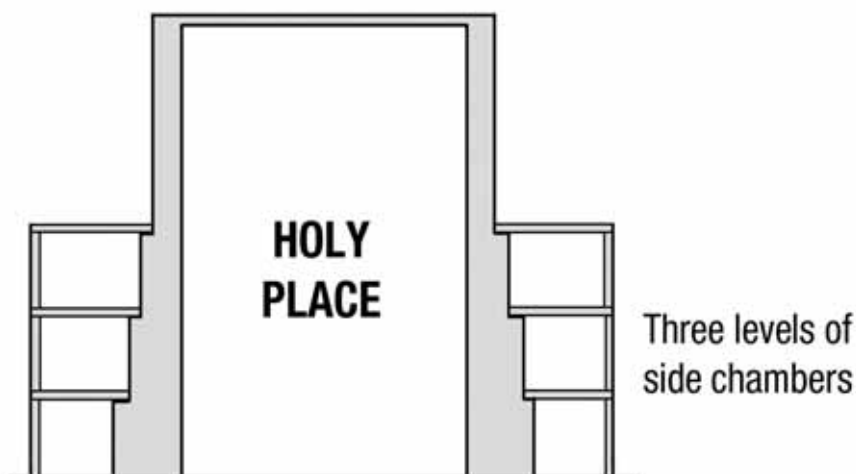
Plan and Section of Solomon's Temple

Solomon's temple faced east. In front of the temple was the porch, supported by two bronze pillars, Yachin ("He [God] will establish") and Boaz ("In him [God] is strength"). The sanctuary itself consisted of the Holy Place, which measured 40 cubits (60 ft; 18 m) by 20 cubits (30 ft; 9 m), while the Holy of Holies was a cube of 20 cubits (30 ft; 9 m). There were three levels of side chambers built around the sanctuary, which had ledges in the outer wall to support the floors. These chambers were used for storing the temple treasures.



0 25 cubits

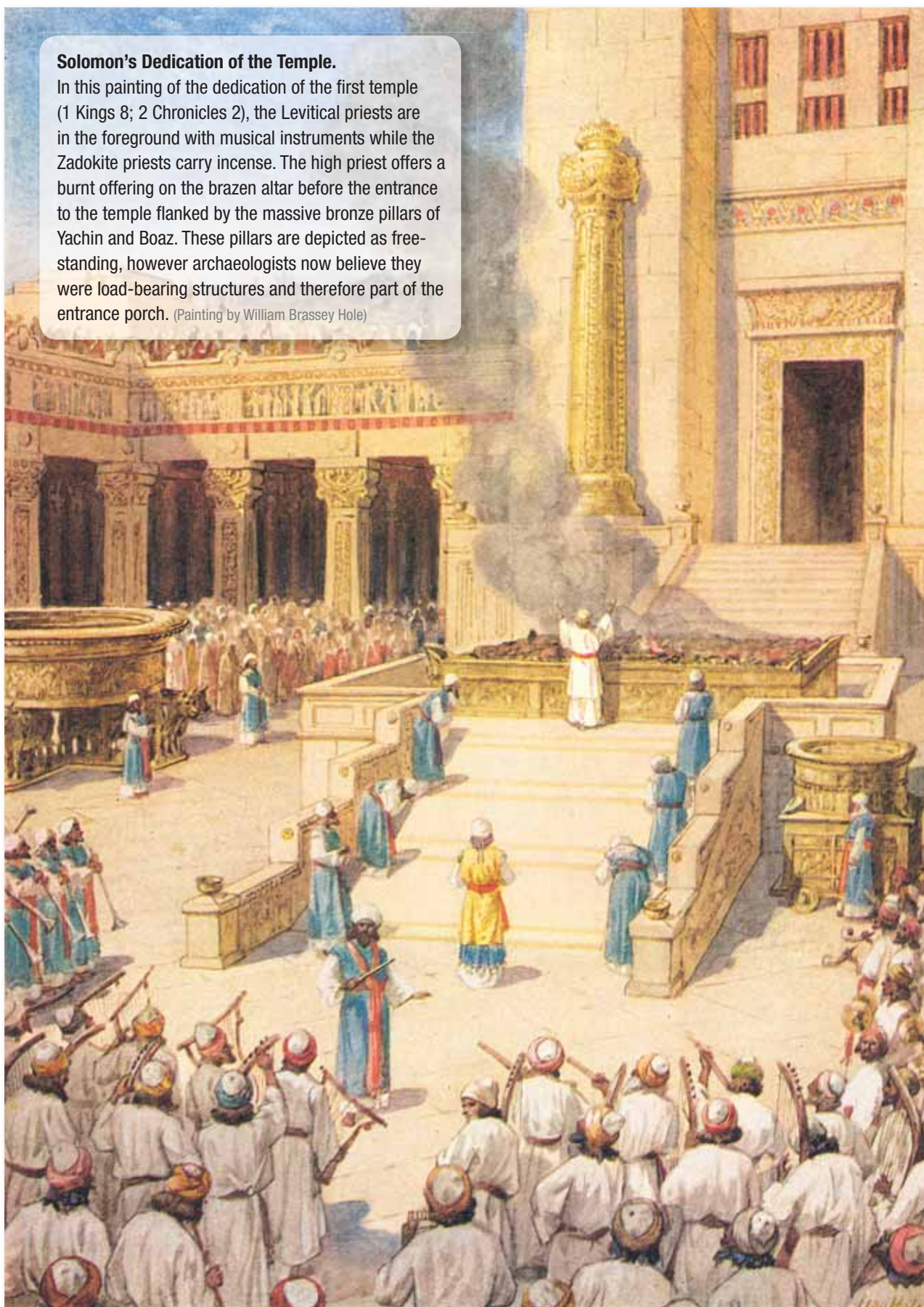
A scale bar indicating a length of 25 cubits, with markings at 0 and 25 cubits.



© Leen Ritmeyer

Solomon's Dedication of the Temple.

In this painting of the dedication of the first temple (1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles 2), the Levitical priests are in the foreground with musical instruments while the Zadokite priests carry incense. The high priest offers a burnt offering on the brazen altar before the entrance to the temple flanked by the massive bronze pillars of Yachin and Boaz. These pillars are depicted as free-standing, however archaeologists now believe they were load-bearing structures and therefore part of the entrance porch. (Painting by William Brassey Hole)



SOLOMON'S PRAYER OF DEDICATION

"But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. May your eyes be open toward this temple night and day, this place of which you said, 'My Name shall be there,' so that you will hear the prayer your servant prays toward this place. Hear the supplication of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven, your dwelling place, and when you hear, forgive."
—1 Kings 8:27–30

Solomon's Dedication of the Temple

The temple was completed in 960 BC after seven years of construction. "When all the work King Solomon had done for the temple of the LORD was finished, he brought in the things his father David had dedicated—the silver and gold and the furnishings—and he placed them in the treasuries of the LORD's temple" (1 Kings 7:51). The priests brought the ark of the covenant into the Holy of Holies and set it under the wings of the cherubim. Then the Lord's presence filled the temple and Solomon blessed everyone watching. He announced that God would dwell in this magnificent temple forever. He told the people that even though his father David wanted to build the temple, God ordained him, Solomon, to complete the task.

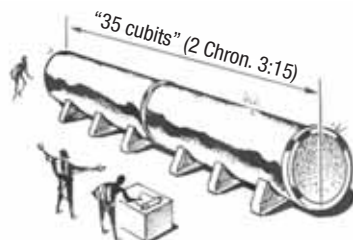
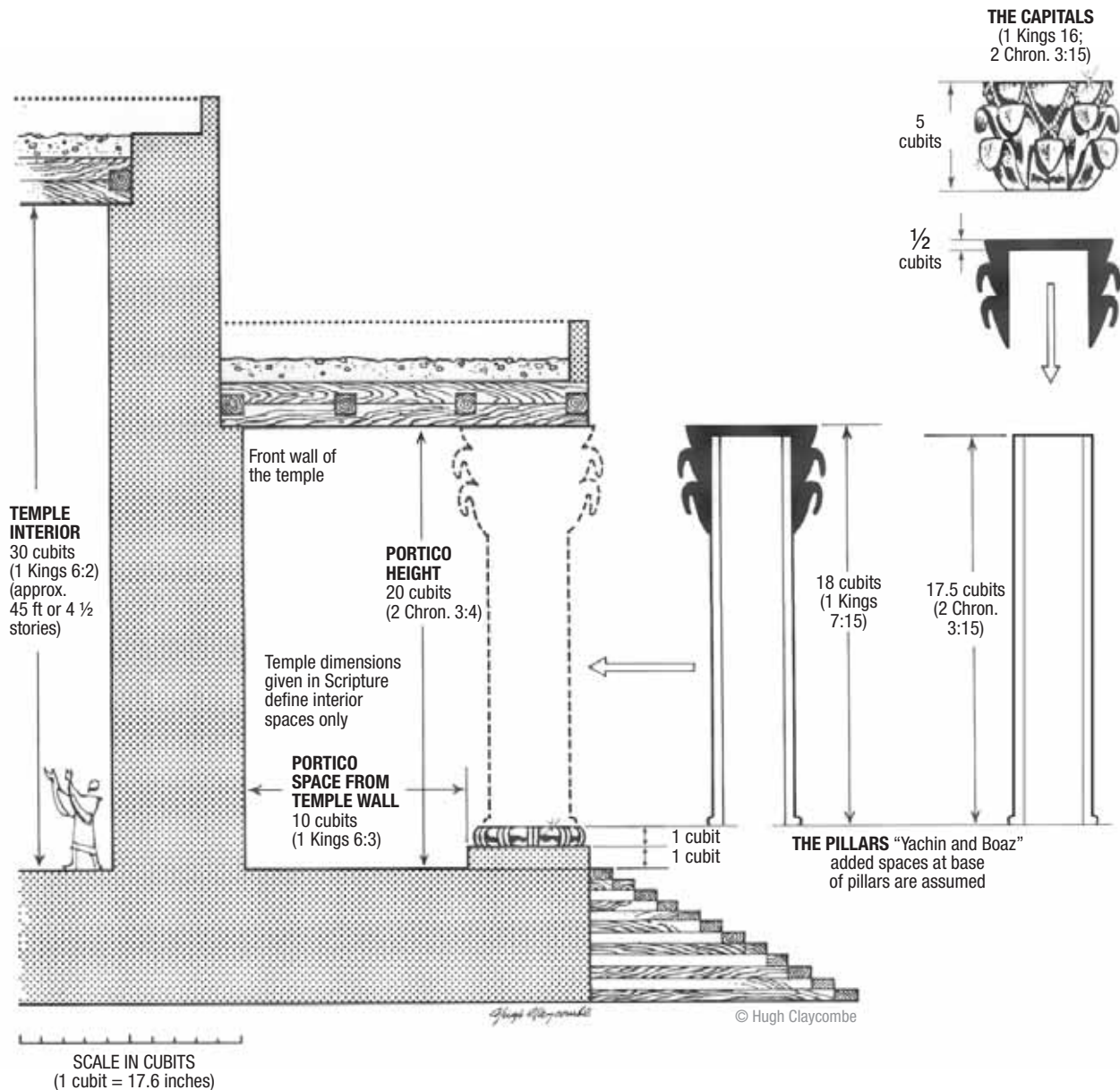
Standing before the altar, Solomon said a prayer to God. He praised God for keeping his promises and asked God to keep the promise he made to David to always have one of David's descendants upon the throne of Israel. In his prayer, Solomon recognized that God far exceeded anything human hands could make when he said, "But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!" (1 Kings 8:27). Solomon asked God to act justly and to have mercy when the people of Israel stood before the altar requesting forgiveness or to receive fair judgment. He asked God to adhere to the requests of foreigners and to support in Israel's military campaigns.

Following his prayer to the Lord, he faced the people again, blessed them and offered sacrifices before the Lord. The Lord sent fire from heaven to consume the offerings and the people worshiped and praised God. After the dedication, the people observed the festival of that time and then returned home with joyful hearts.

Soon thereafter, the Lord appeared to Solomon and told him that he heard his prayer and consecrated the temple. God promised Solomon that God's name, eyes, and heart would dwell there forever. He also promised Solomon that he would establish Solomon's royal throne over Israel forever. However, if anyone in Israel failed to observe God's commands or worshiped other gods, God would cut off Israel from the land and reject his temple. If Israel disobeyed, they would become an object of ridicule and the temple would become a heap of rubble.

HARMONIZING 1 KINGS 7:15-16 WITH 2 CHRONICLES 3:15

The two bronze pillars were 18 cubits (27 ft; 9 m) high and topped with decorative capitals. The decorative 5-cubit (7.5 ft; 2.29 m) capital “in the shape of lilies” is shown fitting down over the 17.5 cubit “pillar” described in 2 Chronicles 3:15. The hollow pillar, with a 9-inch (22.9 cm) weight-bearing surface at the top, creates a total pillar/capital unit of 18 cubits as recorded in 1 Kings 7:15.⁴



“In the front of the temple he [Solomon] made two pillars, which together were 35 cubits long” (2 Chronicles 3:15). This unusual way of expressing the 17.5 cubit length of each pillar may have occurred during the construction phase when the pillars were laying end to end.

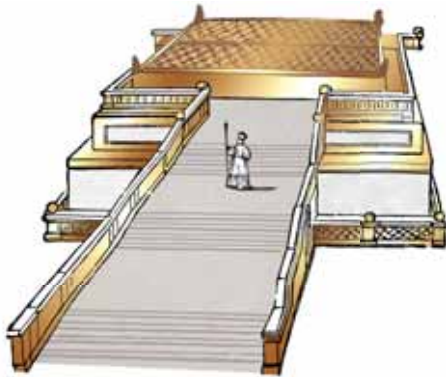
THREE PARTS OF THE TEMPLE COMPLEX

The Courtyard

The temple complex consisted of three parts: the Courtyard, which was the outer area surrounding the temple, the Holy Place and Holy of Holies within the temple. The sacred items within the Courtyard enabled the priests to maintain proper ritual purity in order to gain access to the inner area (the temple itself).

THE OUTER DESIGN OF THE TEMPLE

The basic dimensions of the temple (based on the standard cubit of 18 inches) were 90 feet long (27.4 m) by 30 feet wide (9 m) by 45 feet high (14 m), totaling about 3,500 square feet (1,067 square meters) (1 Kings 6:2–3; 2 Chronicles 3:3–4). The temple would have fit inside a professional basketball court. A standard soccer field would be six times the size of Solomon's temple. The porch, at the front extending across the width of the temple, was 30 feet wide and 30 feet high (9 m x 9 m) (2 Chronicles 3:4). The temple had windows with decorated frames (1 Kings 6:4). The outer design included side chambers that consisted of three-storied rooms with a winding staircase that reached these rooms (1 Kings 6:5–8). The temple structure stood on a platform about 10 feet high (3 m). Ten steps, bordered on each side by cast bronze pillars, led upward to the entrance porch. The pillars were topped with molten bronze capitals each 7.5 feet (2.3 m) in height. Each capital was ornate, decorated with a lily network motif and twisted threads of chainwork into which were fastened 100 engraved pomegranates (1 Kings 7:17–20).



THE BRAZEN ALTAR

The brazen altar lay on the east side of the temple directly in front of the temple (2 Chronicles 4:1). The altar was made of fieldstones (Ex. 20:25) and measured 30 feet long by 30 feet wide (9 m x 9 m) and 15 feet high (4.6 m). The altar for the tabernacle was only 4.5 feet high (1.37 m) and didn't have steps, but since the altar at the temple was 15 feet high (4.6 m), it most likely had steps for the priests to climb in order to burn offerings and sacrifices. It is unclear exactly how much of this altar was polished bronze. But since the priests ministered barefoot in the temple complex, it is unlikely that the entire structure was covered in bronze,

particularly the steps which the priests would have had to climb barefoot in the hot sun. There were also polished bronze pots, shovels, meat forks, and other articles necessary for making sacrifices and offerings upon the altar.

THE MOLTEN SEA (BRAZEN SEA/LAVER)

Near the altar, on the southeast corner of the temple, stood an immense cast metal water-basin or laver called the "brazen sea" or the "molten sea." This reservoir, 45 feet in circumference (14 m), 7.5 feet high (2.3 m), 3 inches thick (7.6 cm), and 15 feet (4.6 m) from brim to brim, held 11,000 gallons (41,640 liters) of water. It rested on the backs of 12 bronze oxen three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east (2 Chronicles 4:2–3). Two rows of 300 gourds encircled the sea below the rim. The purpose of the laver was to provide a source of water for the ritual cleansing of the priests who would officiate and the cleansing of vessels used in the sacrificial system.



TEN BRONZE BASINS

Near the molten sea were 10 bronze basins sitting in 10 bronze stands. Each stand was 6 feet long (1.8 m), 6 feet wide (1.8 m), and 4.5 feet high (1.4 m). Each basin was 18 feet (5.5 m) in circumference and held 240 gallons (908 liters) of water. The basins and stands were ornamented with figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim and decorated with wreaths of hanging work. The basins were stationed five on the north and five on the south sides of the Courtyard. The basins were used to transport water to various places around the temple, and much smaller sprinkling bowls were used to administer the water for ritual purification and cleansing of the priests.



The Holy Place

The largest room in the temple was called the Holy Place. Its walls were covered with cedar panels with elaborately carved cherubim overlaid with fine gold and decorated with palm trees and chains (2 Chronicles 3:5, 7). The floors were covered with boards of pine so that no stonework remained visible. This room was adorned with beautiful precious stones and its beams, thresholds, and doors were overlaid with gold (2 Chronicles 3:7–8).



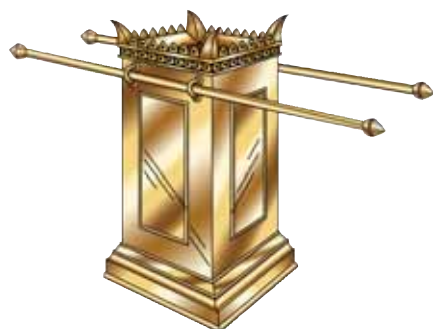
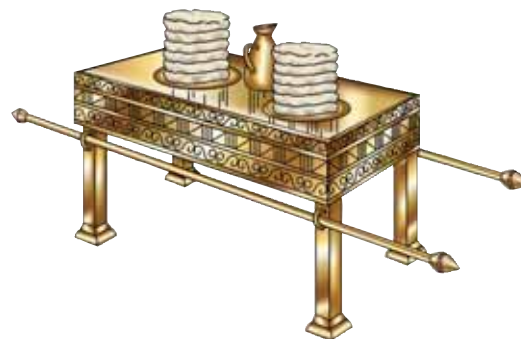
Objects inside this room included the lampstands, table(s) of the bread of the presence, the altar of incense as well as numerous tools and instruments used in priestly service.

THE GOLDEN LAMPSTAND (MENORAH)

Transferred from the tabernacle was the golden lampstand which had been beaten from a single piece of gold (Exodus 25:31–40). It is unclear exactly where the tabernacle menorah was placed in Solomon's temple, but it may have been hidden and stored in one of the temple chambers. Solomon had 10 new golden lampstands made and positioned them five on the north side and five on the south side of the Holy Place (2 Chronicles 4:7). There were also golden wick trimmers, tongs, and basins used in the priestly service.

THE TABLE(S) OF THE BREAD OF THE PRESENCE

The table of the bread of the presence held the 12 loaves of bread (showbread) made from fine flour (1 Kings 7:48). It was called the "bread of presence" because it was to be always before the Lord in his presence (Exodus 25:30). While there was one table in the tabernacle, Scripture indicates that there was as many as 10 tables for the bread of the presence at different times in the first temple period (1 Chronicles 28:16; 2 Chronicles 4:8). There were also 100 golden sprinkling bowls and pure gold dishes to be used in the priestly service (2 Chronicles 4).



THE ALTAR OF INCENSE

The altar of incense was used to offer a special kind of incense to the Lord (Exodus 30:1–34; 1 Chronicles 28:18). The altar was cedar overlaid with pure gold. As with the altar in the tabernacle, on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) the high priest took incense from this altar and brought it into the Holy of Holies. To accompany the altar were pure gold censers used in the priestly service.

The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

The innermost room was separated from the Holy Place by a double veil of fabric and by a wall whose only door was kept closed, except on rare occasions. Access to this room, called the Holy of Holies, was forbidden to all except the high priest, and to him only once a year on the Day of Atonement. This room was constructed as a perfect cube about 30 feet (9 m) square and was gilded throughout with more than a ton of gold (2 Chron. 3:8). In the middle of this windowless room stood a raised platform, the covered top of Mt. Moriah that protruded within the Holy of Holies. Jewish tradition called it the “Foundation Stone” and believed it to be the center of the world and the point from which God created Adam. On this platform sat the most important of the holy furnishings—the ark of the covenant.



THE VEIL

The veil of the temple is mentioned only in 2 Chronicles 3:14: “He made the curtain of blue, purple and crimson yarn and fine linen, with cherubim worked into it.” This design followed that of the tabernacle before it (Exodus 26:31–33; Hebrews 9:3) and was also followed in the second temple that came after it (Matthew 27:51). First Kings 8:8 says that the poles of the ark of the covenant were so long that they could be seen from the Holy Place. This means the poles protruded into the Holy Place and only a veil would have allowed this.

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

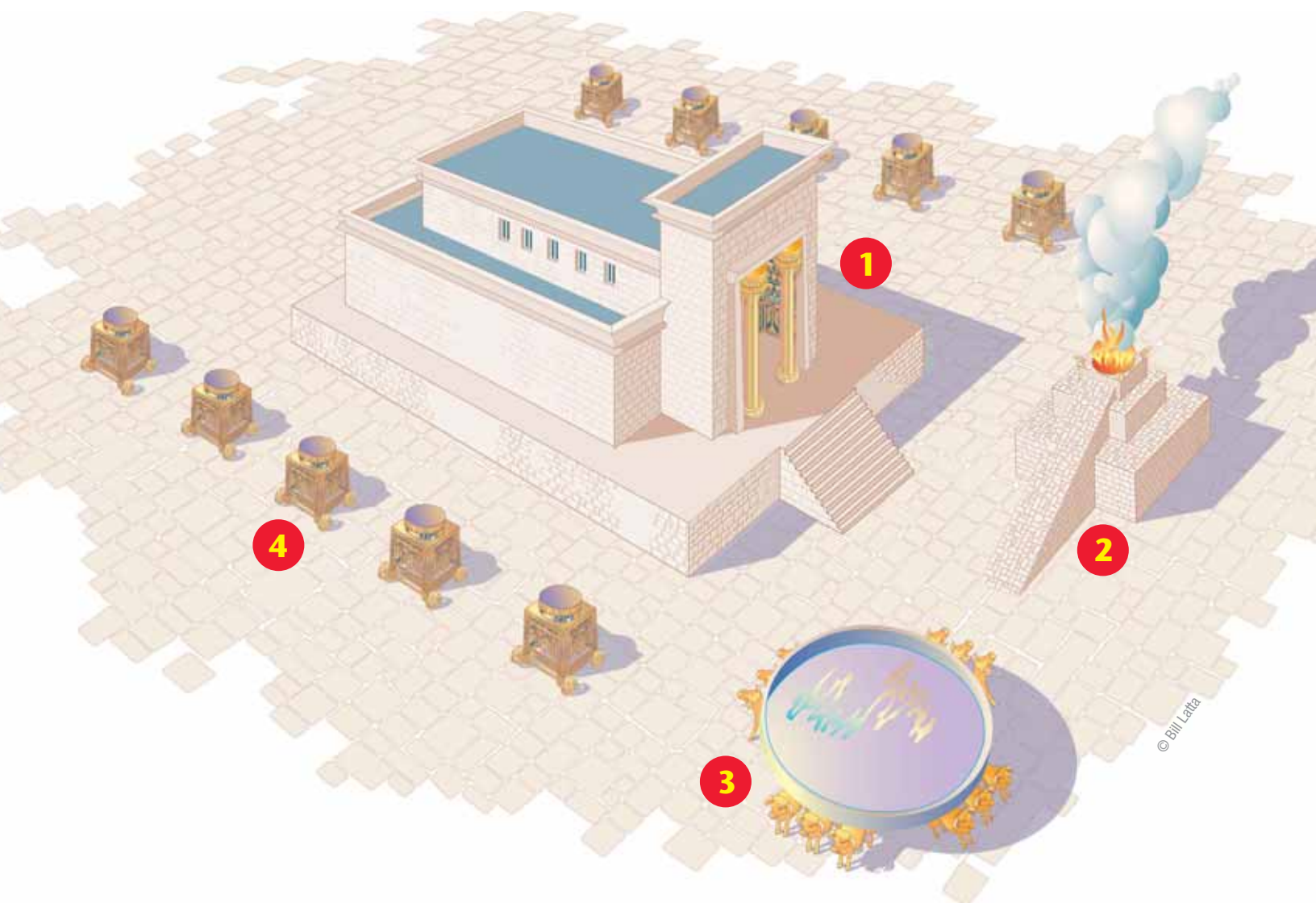
Made out of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold, the ark was the central focus of the temple. When Solomon brought the ark into the temple, there was “nothing in the ark except the two stone tablets that Moses had placed in it at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the Israelites” (1 Kings 8:9). On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would sacrifice and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat—the top of the ark of the covenant where the winged cherubim faced each other—to atone for the sins of the people. The ark possibly rested within an incised base to prevent it from being unsteady when the high priest used its long carrying poles to guide himself to the mercy seat. Solomon also made two 15-foot-high (4.6 m) olive wood cherubim overlaid with gold to overshadow the ark (1 Kings 6:23–28; 8:6–7).



THE MYSTERY OF THE LOST ARK

The ark of the covenant has always been shrouded in mystery. From the beginning, it was hidden from public view and approachable by only a select few. Once it was placed within the Holy of Holies, a specially constructed curtain was hung to prevent direct access to the ark. The Bible says that the ark was made of “acacia wood” (Exodus 25:10; *qiv* “shittim”). Acacia wood was considered so durable that the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament) translated the Hebrew “acacia wood” as “incorruptible wood.” Magnifying this imperishable quality was the pure gold which overlaid the wood (Exodus 25:11). The ark disappeared with the destruction of the first temple in 586 BC. Therefore, in the second temple during the Day of Atonement the high priest could only pour the blood on the barren stone within the Holy of Holies where the ark would have been. Jewish tradition held that the ark was deposited before the first temple’s destruction in a secret chamber beneath the Holy of Holies. Today in the news from time to time people will claim to know the whereabouts of the ark, but no conclusive proof has ever been offered.

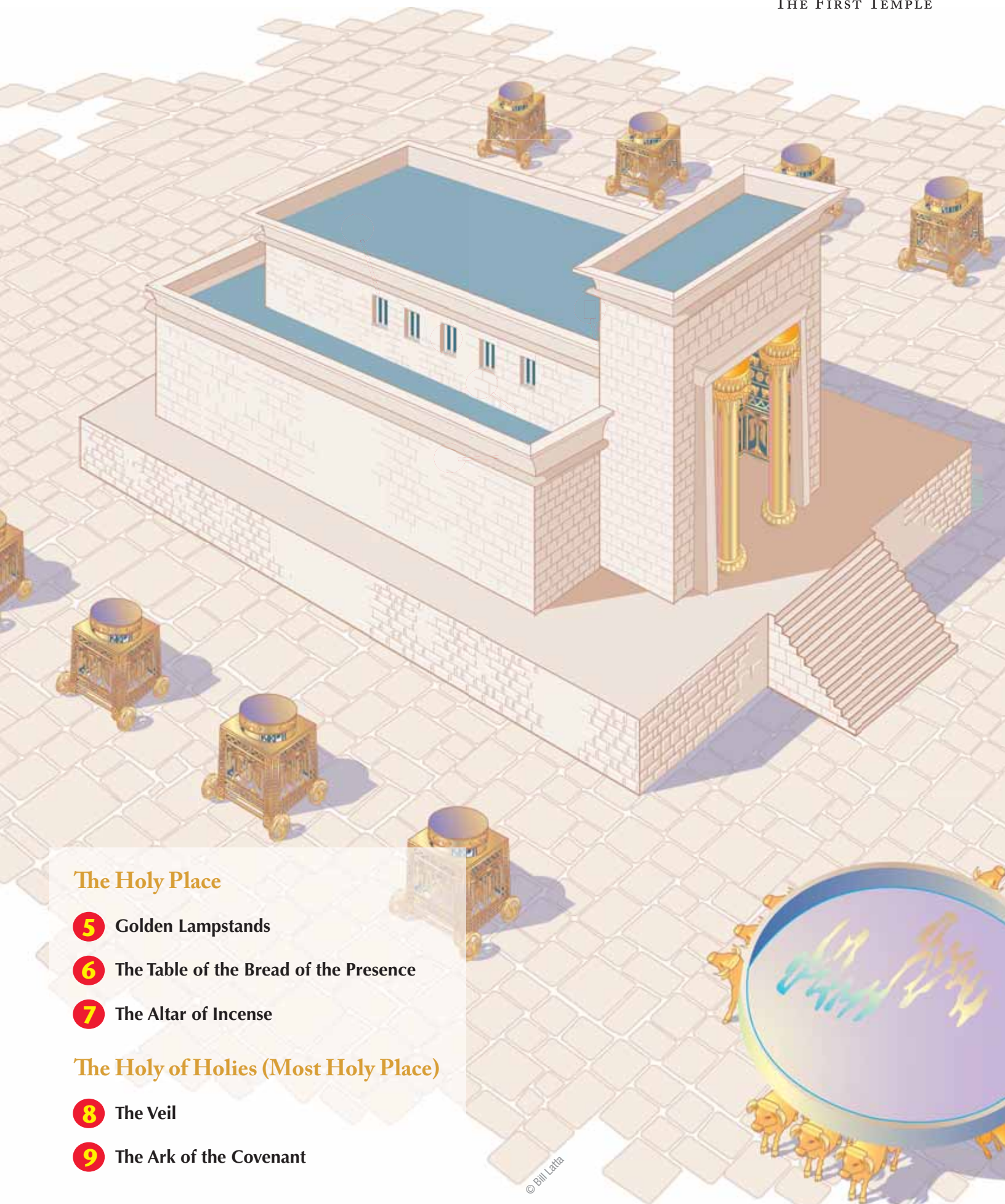
Solomon's Temple Cutaway



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The Courtyard

- 1** The Temple
- 2** The Brazen Altar
- 3** The Molten Sea (Brazen Sea/Laver)
- 4** Ten Bronze Basins



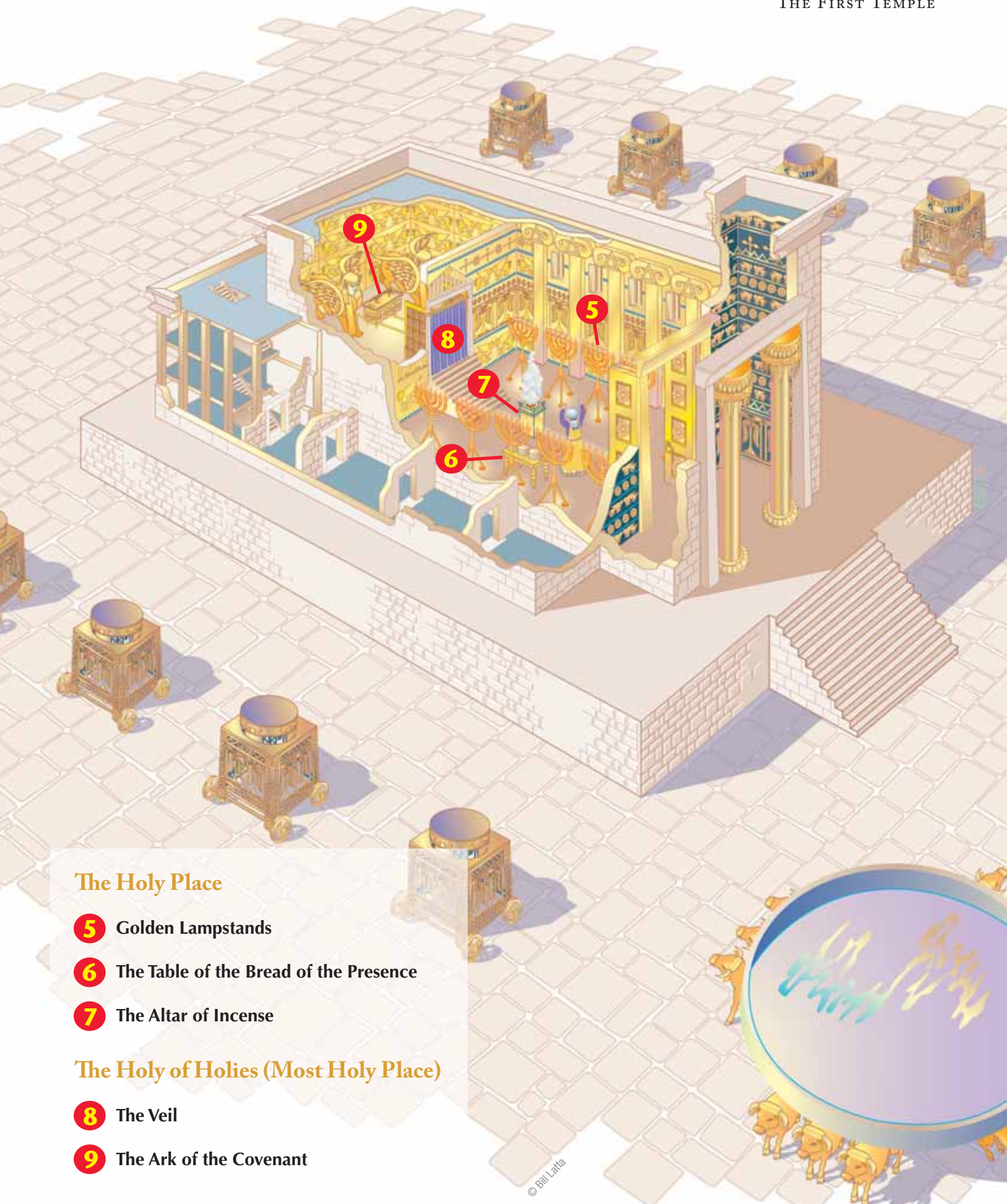
The Holy Place

- 5** Golden Lampstands
- 6** The Table of the Bread of the Presence
- 7** The Altar of Incense

The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

- 8** The Veil
- 9** The Ark of the Covenant

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The Holy Place

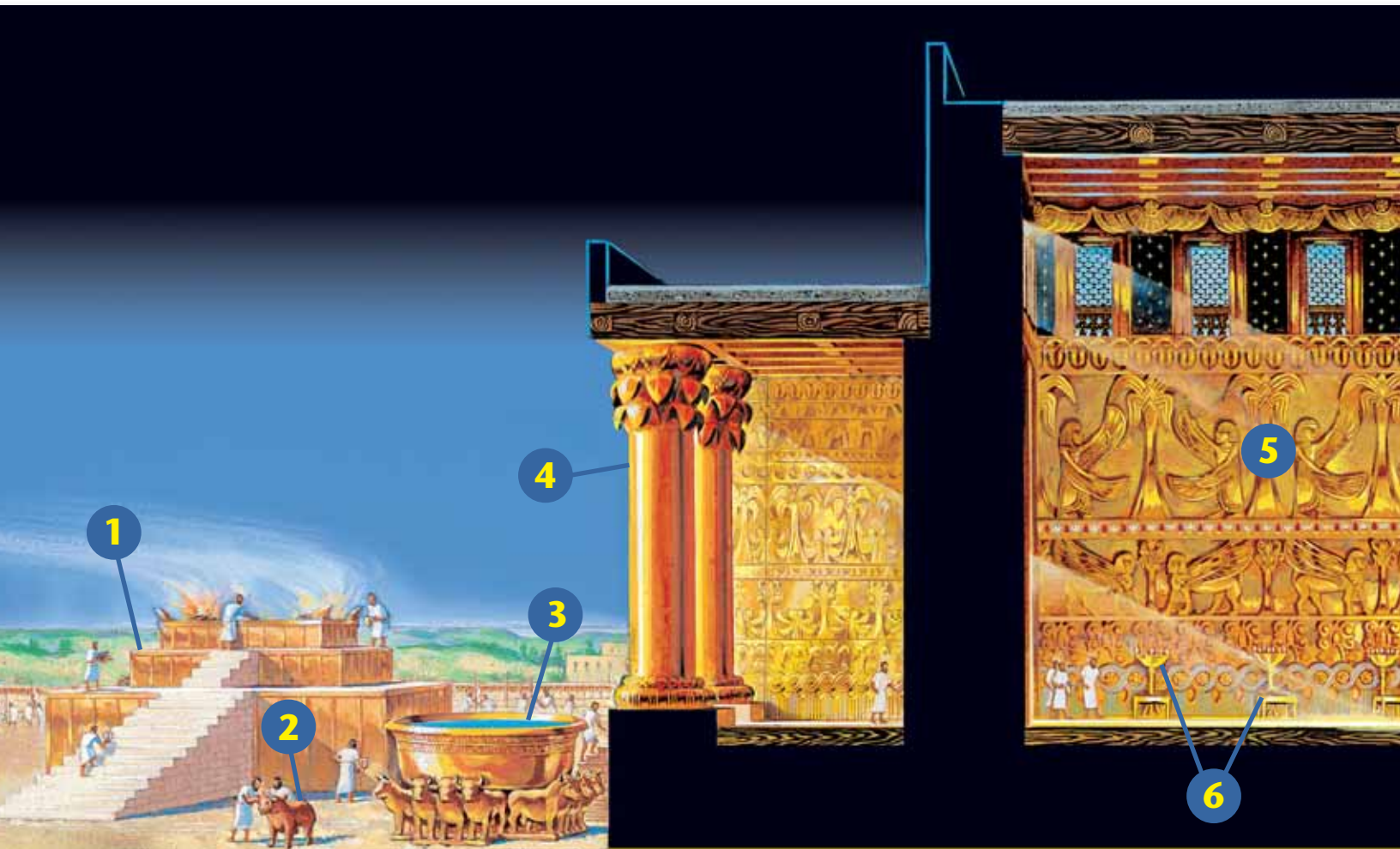
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The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

- 8** The Veil
- 9** The Ark of the Covenant

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Solomon's Temple Side View



1 BRAZEN ALTAR. Sacrifices took place upon this altar.

2 ANIMALS FOR SACRIFICE. Their blood would bear away the sin of a repenting and praying people. The animal was killed and its blood (life) drained away into vessels; the blood was placed on the horns and base of the altar. Other portions of the animal were eaten or burned.

3 MOLTEN SEA (LAVER). Held water used for ceremonial washing (1 Kings 7:23).

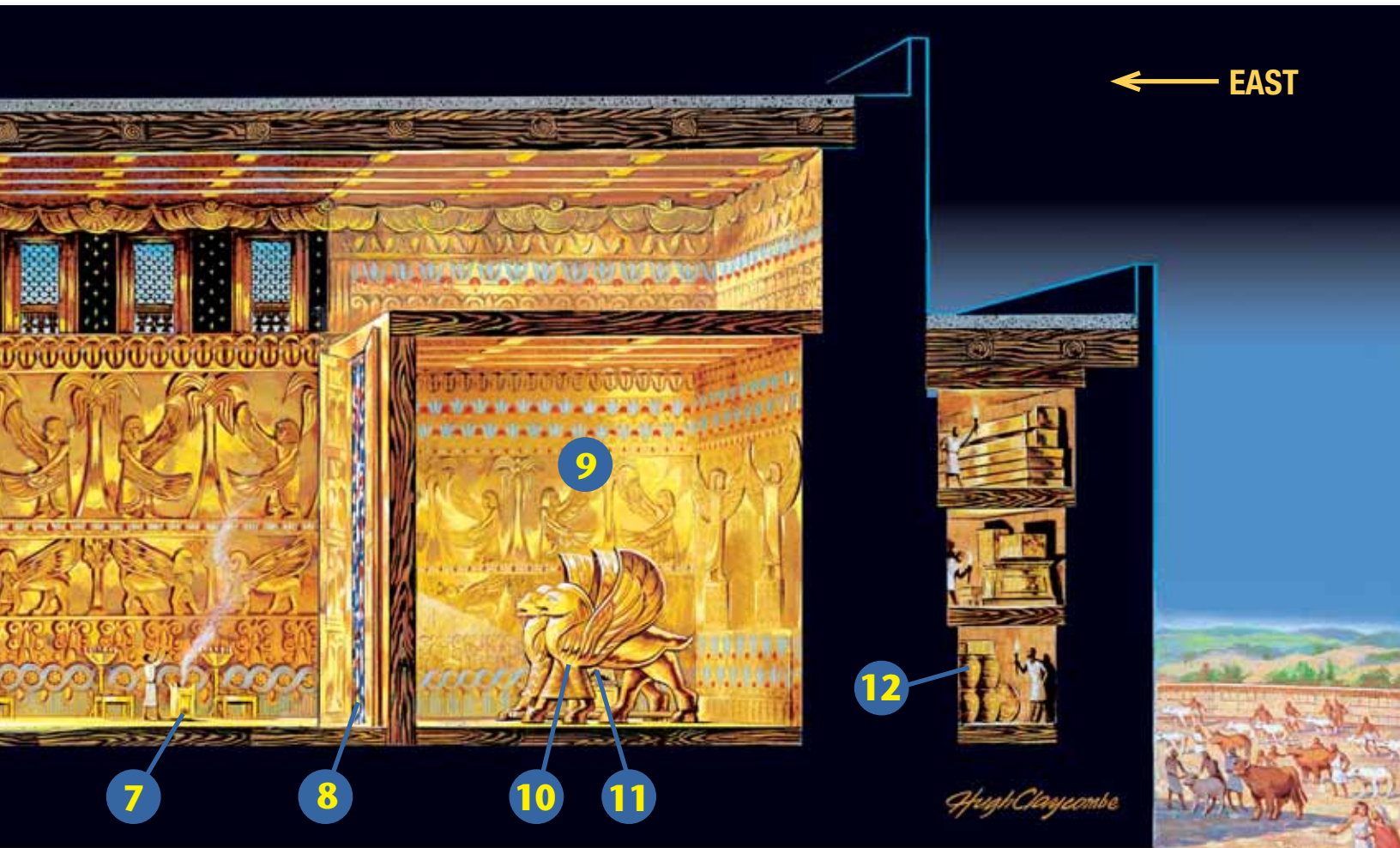
4 BRONZE PILLARS. “Yachin” and “Boaz” supported the roof of the Porch.

5 HOLY PLACE

6 LAMPSTANDS AND TABLES. The tables held the bread of the presence.

BEDROCK. The bedrock upon which the temple rested was once a threshing floor honorably purchased by Solomon’s father, David (2 Samuel 24:24).

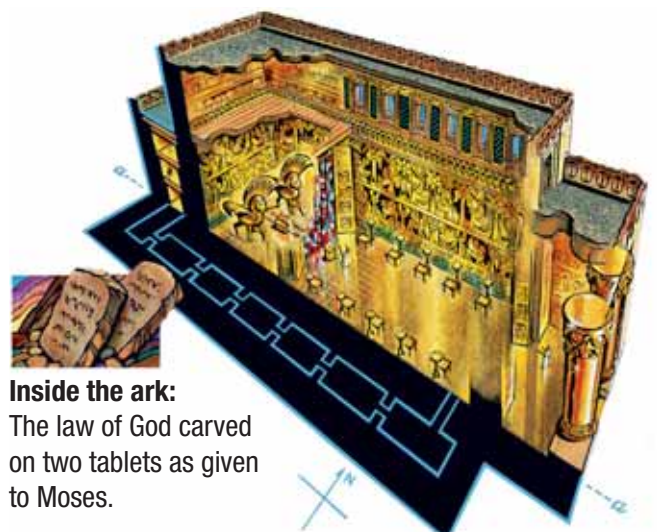
ART FORMS. Solomon carved cherubim and palm trees on the walls and “overlaid the whole interior with gold” (1 Kings 6). These were not objects of worship but only for God. Cherubim were winged spiritual beings guarding sacred objects. Scripture says the temple was decorated with various colors, turquoise, and marble, inlaid and painted possibly similar to other ancient temples.



- 7 ALTAR OF INCENSE.** Used for times of prayer.
- 8 VEIL OR CURTAIN.** Made of blue, purple, crimson linen.
- 9 HOLY OF HOLIES**
- 10 CHERUBIM.** Massive sculptures touched each other wingtip to wingtip and wall to wall.
- 11 ARK OF THE COVENANT.** Beneath the wings of guarding cherubim was this gold-covered chest carried from the wilderness of Sinai. Its lid was the place the high priest placed life (blood), and from this “mercy seat” God poured forth his mercy.
- 12 STORE ROOMS (TREASURIES).** Three stories high, these rooms surrounded the temple on sides and rear, and contained the king’s wealth.

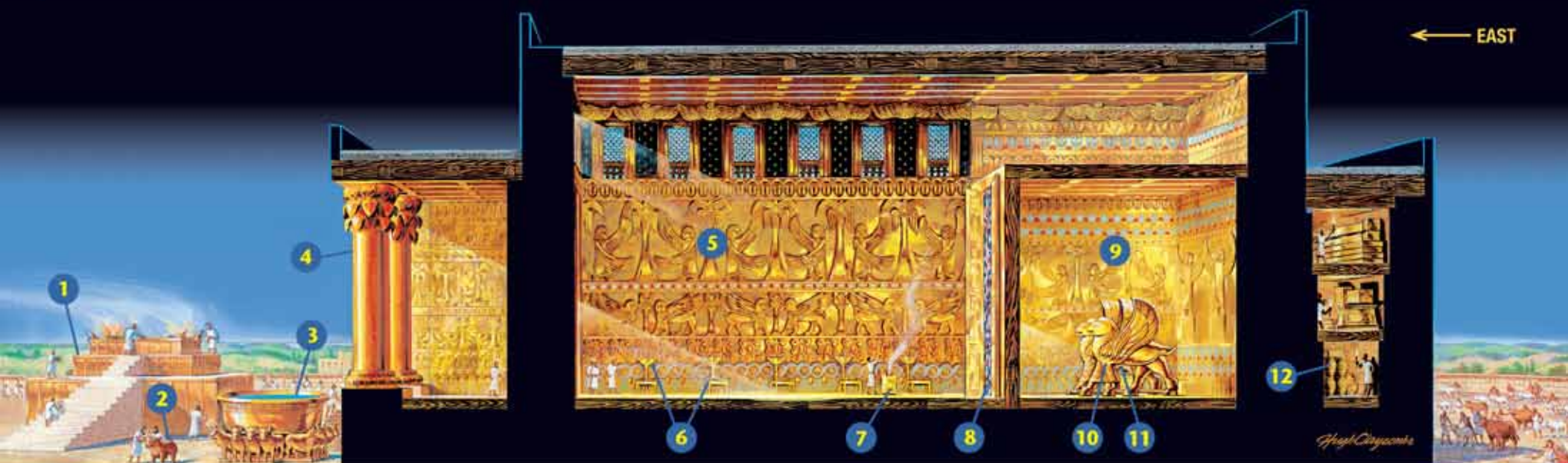


Written descriptions of Solomon’s temple appear in Scripture but must be interpreted by each artist. No two illustrations look exactly alike. ©Hugh Claycombe



Inside the ark:
The law of God carved on two tablets as given to Moses.

Solomon's Temple Side View



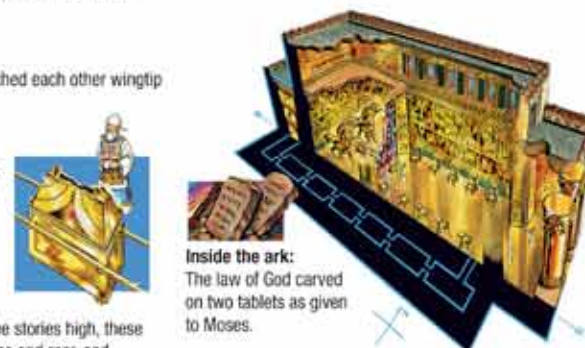
- 1 **BRAZEN ALTAR.** Sacrifices took place upon this altar.
- 2 **ANIMALS FOR SACRIFICE.** Their blood would bear away the sin of a repenting and praying people. The animal was killed and its blood (life) drained away into vessels; the blood was placed on the horns and base of the altar. Other portions of the animal were eaten or burned.
- 3 **MOLTEN SEA (LAVER).** Held water used for ceremonial washing (1 Kings 7:23).
- 4 **BRONZE PILLARS.** "Yachin" and "Boaz" supported the roof of the Porch.
- 5 **HOLY PLACE**
- 6 **LAMPSTANDS AND TABLES.** The tables held the bread of the presence.

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Written descriptions of Solomon's temple appear in Scripture but must be interpreted by each artist. No two illustrations look exactly alike. (Hugh Clayborne)



THE TEMPLE IN THE LIFE OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Eight Purposes of the Temple

When King David charged the people of Israel about the preparations for the first temple, he declared, “the work is great; for the temple is not for man, but for the Lord God” (1 Chronicles 29:1 NASB). In keeping with David’s charge, the temple served eight basic purposes.

“For the LORD has chosen Zion, he has desired it for his dwelling, saying, ‘This is my resting place for ever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it.’”—Psalm 132:13–14

1. STATION OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE

After the Israelites had been brought safely through the Red Sea, Moses declared, “You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance—the place, LORD, you made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, Lord, your hands established” (Exodus 15:17). Even though God’s glory temporarily appeared at the tabernacle, Moses’ words pointed to the permanent manifestation of the Lord among his people in the temple in Jerusalem. In this way, while the transcendent God did not physically dwell in the temple, it was nevertheless a place where God’s presence was accessible to humankind (1 Kings 8:27).

2. SIGN OF THE COVENANT

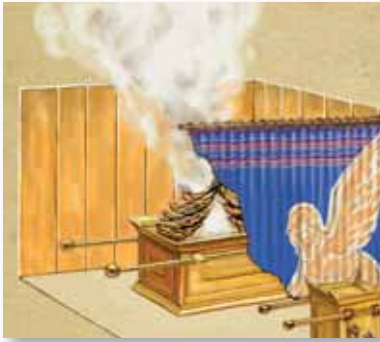
The presence of God in the temple was a witness to his covenant relationship with Israel:

- The construction of the temple on “the mount of the Lord” in Jerusalem (the land of Moriah) confirmed God’s covenant with Abraham (Genesis 22:14) and his covenant with David (1 Kings 8:23–26; 2 Chronicles 3:1).
- The temple housed the ark of the covenant which contained the engraved stone tablets received by Moses on Mt. Sinai (1 Kings 8:3–9). The covenant with Moses promised God’s protection and blessing to Israel if the people obeyed the terms of the covenant, but warned of God’s judgment if the nation acted in disobedience (Leviticus 26).

3. SIGNAL OF THE END OF EXILE

God told the children of Israel while in the wilderness that their experience of exile would end and rest begin only after they had settled in the Promised Land and established a central sanctuary (Deut. 12:9–14). This relationship to the temple was confirmed in Solomon’s dedication prayer in which he praised God for giving rest to his people as he had promised to Moses (1 Kings 8:56).





THE SHEKINAH

In the Exodus wilderness experience, God's presence was represented with the cloud during the day and the column of fire during the night. God's glory—seen as a cloud—descended on the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and the temple (1 Kings 8:10) indwelling the buildings and demonstrating his presence.

The Jewish sages came to call this manifestation the *shekinah* from the Hebrew word *shakan*, meaning “to dwell.” Biblical writers also expressed this concept of God's presence by saying that God caused his “name” to dwell there.

(See also 1 Kings 8:29; Jeremiah 7:12; Deuteronomy 12:11; 2 Chronicles 7:16; Ezra 6:12; Nehemiah 1:9.)

4. SOCIO-POLITICAL INSTITUTION

The temple served a significant role in the social and political life of the people by defining the patterns of:

- Legal matters
- Jewish daily life
- The cycle of festivals
- The annual pilgrimages
- The sacrificial rites
- The reading and study of the Torah

It also stood as a place of refuge for people accused of crimes such as treason (1 Kings 1:50–51; 2:28).

5. SYMBOL OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

The construction of the temple was a demonstration of national independence. It served as a national rallying point in times of repentance and disaster, such as a famine (1 Kings 8:33–38). When Israel was under the power of foreign nations, these nations punished political disloyalty through the destruction of the temple. Likewise, when the Jews returned from exile the rebuilding of the temple confirmed the return of a functioning state.

6. SECURED NATIONAL BLESSINGS

At the time of the dedication of the temple, King Solomon declared the temple to be the place of national blessing (2 Chronicles 7:14). Since God was the source of all blessing and his presence was in the temple, it became the means of securing the covenantal promises (blessings).

7. SOURCE OF WORLDWIDE BLESSING

Solomon's prayer also indicated that the temple was to be a source of universal blessing. If foreigners came specifically to pray to the God of Israel at the temple, the Lord would hear their prayers (1 Kings 8:41–43).

8. SERVICE AS THE FOCAL POINT OF PRAYER

Because God's *shekinah* dwelt at the temple, those who prayed in the direction of the temple (that is, to God) would have his promise of protection (1 Kings 8:33, 42–43, 48–49). Focusing prayer on the temple recognized that God was the God of Israel and that he maintained his covenant with them. He was not to be found in any other place or in any other nation, for only the God at the temple in Jerusalem was the true God (Psalm 132:13–14; Zechariah 2:8; 8:2–3).

Priestly Duties

The daily duties laid out by the Lord for the priests in the temple were almost identical to the duties performed in the tabernacle. The priests served as the individuals who were the go-betweens of the people of Israel. They represented the people to God and God to the people, and they guarded the temple. Their basic duties within the temple were to make sacrifices and offerings, and maintain the presence of the Lord.

- Priests were responsible for blessing the people who brought the sacrifices and offerings. The priests would approve the sacrifices and offerings and burn them upon the brazen altar.
- Priests would then ritualistically purify themselves by bathing their hands and feet in the molten sea (laver) before entering the Holy Place.
- Inside the Holy Place, the priests were responsible for maintaining the bread of the presence on the tables. The priests would eat the bread weekly and replace it with fresh bread on the Sabbath, the seventh day of the week (1 Chronicles 9:32).
- The priests were also responsible for trimming the lamp wicks and making sure the oil did not burn out.
- The priests regularly made offerings of incense before the Lord on the golden altar.



A priest keeping the wicks of the lampstand burning. (Painting by Jerry Allison)

PRIESTS AND LEVITES: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

All priests are Levites, but not all Levites are priests. While priests (Hebrew *kohanim*) and Levites (Hebrew *levi'yim*) both belong to the same tribe of Levi, they come from different descendants within the tribe. Priests were male descendants of Aaron, Moses' brother, the first high priest. Levites (who served the temple) were any male descendants of the tribe of Levi, including the descendants of Moses and Miriam his sister. Priests and Levites shared the responsibility of serving in the tabernacle, and later, the temple. However, priests alone were responsible for conducting the sacrifices while the Levites assisted them in various duties such as construction and the maintenance of the temple.

The priests were divided into 24 groups with each member responsible for maintaining the schedule of offerings at the temple (1 Chronicles 24:3–5). Each of the 24 divisions consisted of six priestly families, with each of the six serving one day of the week except on the Sabbath when all six worked one after the other. The high priest was selected from among the priests and would serve for a generation.

The Levites were divided into three groups (Numbers 26:57): the descendants of Gershon (Gershonites), the descendants of Merari (Merarites), and the descendants of Kohath (Kohathites). The Levites functioned as the Levitical choir which played musical instruments and sang psalms during temple services. They also ministered to the priests, handled and stored the temple vessels, served as temple guards, functioned as teachers by translating and explaining the biblical text, and served as judges which included overseeing more than six cities of refuge (Numbers 18:2–6; 35:6).

THE HIGH PRIEST

The high priest was the ultimate mediator between God and the nation of Israel (Hebrews 5:1). The high priest needed to be a direct descendant of Aaron, Moses' brother. The current high priest would anoint one of his sons to succeed him as high priest.

The main duties of the high priest included:

- Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement
- Prayers of intercession before the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant on the Day of Atonement
- Management and supervision of the other priests

The high priest wore the following garments:

- **White linen tunic** (woven, one piece, close fitting).
- **Dark blue woven robe** (reached to knees and had blue, purple, and scarlet pomegranates upon the hem with bells of gold between each pomegranate).
- **Ephod** of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet entwined in linen (apron-like, shoulder piece coupled together by two edges).
- **Onyx stones** enclosed in pouches of gold with names of the 12 tribes engraved on them (six on each). One on each shoulder of the ephod.
- **Girdle** of the ephod (bound around waist).
- **Breastplate** of gold blue, purple, scarlet, and fine-twined linen doubled, four-square (about 8–10 in.; 20–26 cm):
 - Contained four rows of three stones (jewels). Each jewel contained the name of one of the 12 tribes set in gold.
 - Two rings of gold were in the top ends of the breastplate and two chains fastened to these rings, extending up to where they fastened at the shoulder pieces.
 - Two rings of gold were at the bottom ends and two rings in the ephod above the girdle at the waist laced together with blue lacing; the breastplate contained the Urim and Thummim.
- **The Miter or Turban** (crown of gold inscribed with “Holy to the Lord”).



SACRIFICES

The sacrificial system was the means by which atonement was made for people's sins. In obeying God's command to offer sacrifices, the people demonstrated their submission to God, their need for forgiveness, and their trust that he would provide the means of atonement. But why was there a need for *blood* sacrifices? Leviticus 17:11 explains: "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar." Human sin separates people from a holy God, and the cost of sin is the ultimate price. The apostle Paul in the New Testament echoes this truth: "For the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The sacrificial system was God's merciful provision for Israel so that the people could dwell with a holy God.

However, this sacrificial system for Israel was not a permanent institution in God's plan for humanity. God provided a perfect and ultimate sacrifice in his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus' death on the cross was a voluntary sacrifice to atone for sin. Like the ancient Israelites who trusted in God's provision for animal sacrifices to atone for their sin, so too all those who trust in God's provision of his Son as the perfect sacrifice receive forgiveness of their sins. As the apostle Paul wrote, "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him [Jesus], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross" (Colossians 1:19–20).



Presenting Offerings at the Temple of Solomon. First temple priests prepare for the daily burnt-offering on the brazen altar. The Court of the Priest was in fact a slaughterhouse where animals were tethered to poles and ritually butchered on large blocks or tables.

(Artist: Balage Balogh, Archaeology Illustrated.com)

SACRIFICE	SIGNIFICANCE
<p>Sin Offering and Guilt Offering Leviticus 4–6; Numbers 15:1–12</p> <p>Sin offerings and guilt offerings focused on paying for sin. The sin offerings atoned for sins against God. The guilt offerings addressed sins against others, and included paying damages with interest. Various animals were offered, depending on the person's position and income. Priests and leaders, as examples to others, had to offer larger sacrifices for sin, while the poor offered what they could afford. Blood was sprinkled on the altar, the parts of the animals were burned, often with wine poured on them (drink offering). Other parts were roasted for the priests. Since the priests were full-time temple workers, sacrificed animals were their main source of food.</p>	<p>Christ's Offering: Isaiah 53:10; Matthew 20:28; 2 Corinthians 5:21</p> <p>Paying for Damages: Matthew 5:23–24; Luke 19:1–10</p> <p>Poor: Luke 2:2–24; 21:1–4</p> <p>Leaders as Examples: 1 Timothy 3:1–7; 5:19–20</p> <p>Providing for Christian Workers: Philippians 4:18; 1 Cor. 9:13–14; 1 Timothy 5:17–18</p>
<p>Burnt Offering Leviticus 1</p> <p>This sacrifice represented complete dedication and surrender to God. The animal, usually an unblemished male, bore the worshiper's sins, and died in his/her place. After the blood was sprinkled on the altar, the animal was completely burned up. None of it was roasted for eating.</p>	<p>Surrender: Psalm 51:16, 17; Matthew 26:39; Romans 12:1</p> <p>Dedication: Philippians 2:17; 2 Timothy 4:6–7</p>
<p>Grain (Meal) Offering Leviticus 2</p> <p>This offering was given to God in thankfulness. The people brought fine flour, unleavened cakes, or roasted grain to the priests. The priests burned a symbolic handful at the altar, and could partake of the rest. There was very little ceremony involved.</p>	<p>Giving: Matthew 26:6–10; 2 Corinthians 9:7–11</p> <p>Praise: Psalm 100; Hebrews 13:15–16</p> <p>Thankfulness: Psalm 147; Philippians 4:6</p>
<p>Fellowship (Peace) Offering Leviticus 2; 7:11–21</p> <p>This offering symbolized fellowship and peace with God through shed blood. After some meat was ceremonially waved and given to the priests, worshipers and their guests could share in the feast as a meal with God.</p>	<p>God's Peace: Colossians 1:20; Acts 10:36; Ephesians 2:14</p> <p>God's Feast: Luke 14:15–24; 1 Corinthians 11:17–26; Jude 1:12; Revelation 3:20</p>

The Feasts of Israel

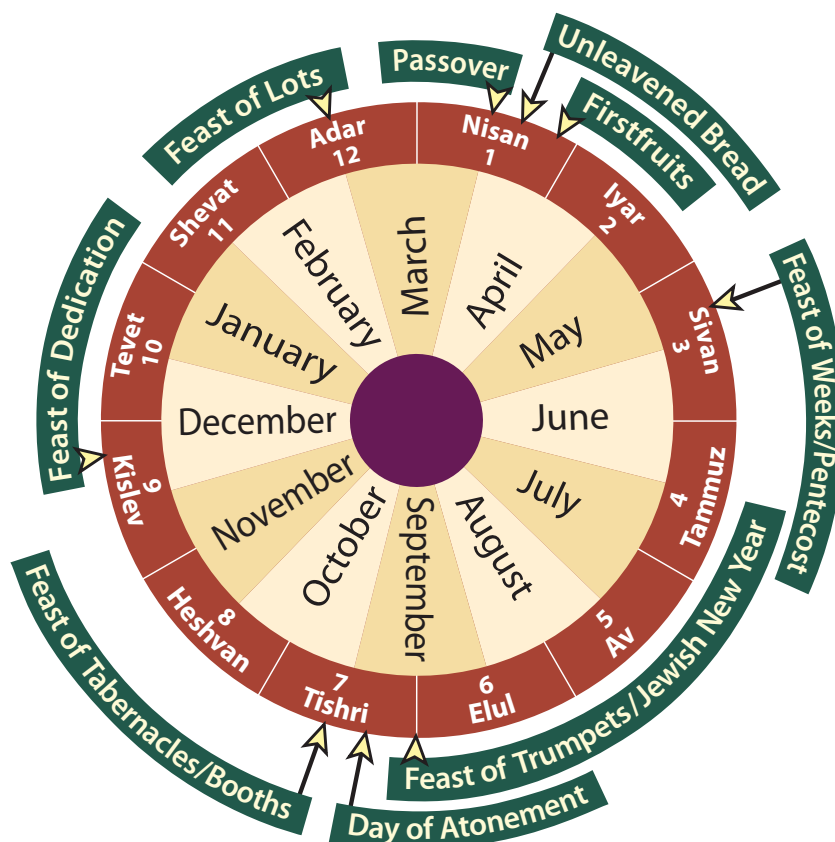
The seven annual feasts of Israel served as sacred time that God set apart for his people to worship him in celebration and sacrifice. The feasts were times to:

- Remember what God had done in the past, such as his protection in the wilderness and his faithfulness to his promise to bring his people out of Egypt.
- Present grain offerings to thank God for his provision of the harvest.
- Conduct animal sacrifices for the atonement of the sins of the people.
- Have a day of rest unto the Lord when “no regular work” would be done.

These festivals originated in the wilderness during the time of the tabernacle. After God brought his people out of slavery in Egypt he revealed to Moses the seven annual holidays that he appointed as times to meet with him: “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: These are my appointed feasts, the appointed feasts of the LORD, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies” (Leviticus 23:1–2). When the first temple was built, the festival sacrifices that had taken place at the tabernacle were then done at the temple in Jerusalem. In this way the temple and Jerusalem became the central location for the celebrations.

Three of the seven biblical holidays were pilgrimage feasts when all Jewish males in the land were required to travel to Jerusalem to “appear before the Lord” (Deuteronomy 16:16). These were the Feast of Unleavened Bread (or Passover), the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. Appearing “before the Lord” at his temple was of utmost importance for Israel, and all males who were physically able to make the journey were obligated to attend.

Other Jewish festivals, such as the Feast of Lots (Purim as recorded in the Book of Esther) and the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) developed after the time of the first temple. (See *Hanukkah* on page 64.)



PASSOVER

Passover commemorated the Israelites' deliverance from slavery in Egypt. The tenth plague that the Lord sent to Egypt was the death of the firstborn males in every house. The only way to escape this judgment was if the doorframe of the house was covered with the blood of an unblemished lamb. The Lord "passed over" the homes with blood on the doorframes and spared the firstborns of that house. After that horrific plague, Pharaoh let the Israelites leave Egypt. The Passover celebration was to be a lasting ordinance for generations to come. It was observed in the first month of the biblical year (Exodus 12:2, 14).



New Testament: John the Baptizer declared Jesus as the "Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, 35) and the apostle Paul calls Jesus "our Passover lamb" (1 Corinthians 5:7). Jesus was crucified in Jerusalem during Passover week, and the Last Supper is believed to have been a Passover meal. As the lamb in Old Testament times was a means of redemption of God's people, Jesus is the unblemished Lamb whose death on the cross provides redemption for all who believe in him.

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD

This feast was observed for seven days immediately following Passover. It is the first of the pilgrimage feasts. During this feast the Israelites ate unleavened bread. This bread, made in a hurry without yeast, represented how the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt in haste. In the Old Testament this feast is mentioned as a separate feast, however over the centuries the feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits became incorporated into the week-long festival of Passover, and reference to Passover usually includes all three feasts.



New Testament: At age 12, Jesus traveled with his parents to Jerusalem to celebrate Passover (or Unleavened Bread). After the festival, his parents found him "in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions" (Luke 2:41–50).

FEAST OF FIRSTFRUITS

Firstfruits was celebrated two days after Passover. On this day, the Israelites offered the first ripe sheaf (firstfruits) of barley to the Lord as an act of dedicating the harvest to him. On Passover, a marked sheaf of grain was bundled and left standing in the field. On the next day, the first day of Unleavened Bread, the sheaf was cut and prepared for the offering on the third day. On this third day (the day of Firstfruits), the priest waved the sheaf before the Lord. Firstfruits were the first and best grain of the harvest. In this way, the Israelites gave thanks to God by bringing him their very best.

New Testament: It was on this third day after Passover that Jesus rose from the dead. The apostle Paul calls Jesus "the firstfruits" among the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20–23). Paul also says in Romans 8:23: "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies." The Holy Spirit indwelling believers is their guarantee that, like Jesus, our earthly bodies will be redeemed and resurrected to eternal life.



FEAST OF WEEKS

Fifty days after Passover the Israelites celebrated the Feast of Weeks. This feast was also known as Shavuot, Pentecost, the Feast of Harvest, and the Latter Firstfruits because it was the time to present an offering of new grain of the summer wheat harvest to the Lord, showing joy and thankfulness for the Lord's blessing of the harvest. It is the second of the three pilgrimage feasts.

New Testament: It was on Pentecost that the disciples of Jesus were in Jerusalem in the upper room when the Holy Spirit descended upon them as tongues of fire (Acts 2).



FEAST OF TRUMPETS

This feast, the first of the three fall feasts, was observed on the first day of the seventh month of the biblical calendar. It was a day of rest commemorated with trumpet blasts and a food offering to the Lord. When the temple stood, silver trumpets were primarily used during this festival. However, after the temple was destroyed in AD 70 along with most of the temple items including the silver trumpets, the shofar (ram's horn) trumpet became the most common trumpet used for this festival. Today, this holiday is celebrated as Rosh HaShanah, the Jewish New Year according to the civil calendar.



New Testament: The apostle Paul explains how a trumpet will one day sound the transformation of our earthly bodies: "Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed" (1 Corinthians 15:51–52).

DAY OF ATONEMENT

The Holy of Holies in the temple was entered only once a year on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) when the high priest offered the blood sacrifice of atonement on behalf of the people. On this day the high priest sacrificed an animal to pay for his sins and the sins of the people. Carrying a censer of incense from the golden altar in the Holy Place, he entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat of the ark. When he was finished with the atonement sacrifice, a goat was released into the wilderness. This "scapegoat" symbolized the carrying away of Israel's sins (Leviticus 16:8–10, 20–22, 29–34).



New Testament: The author of the book of Hebrews calls Jesus our high priest saying, "When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here ... he did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:11–12).

FEAST OF TABERNACLES (BOOTHS)

This third pilgrimage feast was a week-long celebration of the fall harvest and a time to build booths (temporary shelters of branches) to remember how the people lived under God's care during their 40 years in the wilderness (Nehemiah 8:14–17). People covered their booths with citron, myrtle, palm, and willow (Leviticus 23:39–40).

New Testament: John 7 says that Jesus taught in the temple courts while pilgrims were gathered there for the Feast of Booths. By the time of Jesus, two additional ceremonies had become part of this celebration: the lighting of the great lights and the water-drawing ceremony. In the lighting ceremony, enormous lampstands were lit in the temple in the Court of the Women and people carrying torches marched around the temple. After this ceremony, but while the torches would still have been burning, Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). In the water-drawing ceremony, a priest would carry water from the Pool of Siloam to the temple as a prayer for rain for the harvest. The Gospel of John says, "On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them'" (John 7:37–38).



Sinai Wilderness

DESTRUCTION OF THE FIRST TEMPLE

God warned Solomon about the future destruction of the temple shortly after its completion. Solomon and his descendants had to remain loyal to God and keep God’s commandments. If they didn’t, God would cut off Israel from the land and he would destroy the temple. Even before his death, Solomon failed to remain loyal to God.

A preliminary judgment came shortly after Solomon’s death when his son Rehoboam divided the kingdom. Jeroboam, who was not a descendent of King David, ruled the ten northern tribes (the “Northern Kingdom” or “Israel”) and Rehoboam ruled the two southern tribes including the area of Jerusalem (the “Southern Kingdom” or “Judah”).

	NORTHERN KINGDOM	SOUTHERN KINGDOM
Biblical Name	Israel	Judah (Includes Jerusalem)
Number of Tribes	10	2
Ruler after Solomon	Jeroboam, son of Nebat	Rehoboam, son of King Solomon, grandson of King David
Falls	722 BC, falls to Assyria	586 BC, falls to Babylon

During Rehoboam’s reign, Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt attacked the Southern Kingdom targeting Jerusalem and the temple. The treasures of Solomon’s palace, which housed 300 shields of beaten gold, were carried back to Egypt (1 Kings 14:25–26; 2 Chronicles 12:2, 9). Only because the royal court “humbled” itself at the instigation of God’s prophet was the temple and Jerusalem spared further plunder (2 Chronicles 12:5–8).

However, in the Northern Kingdom, the Israelite king, Jeroboam, built alternate worship sites to keep the people from returning to the temple and coming back under the southern administration of Judah. Throughout the history of the Northern Kingdom, Israelite kings continued to set up pagan altars and “high places” (alternate worship sites) in the land. These actions brought about the exile of the Northern Kingdom under the Assyrians in 722 BC.

The presence of the temple in Judah, and of reforming kings from King David’s line like Josiah, delayed divine judgment on the Southern Kingdom for 135 years. During this period, many prophets, such as Isaiah and Jeremiah, warned the people of Judah that God would punish their disobedience by destroying the temple. In order to form treaties and alliances with other countries, Judah had to pay money to the more powerful nations. That money came largely from the temple treasury and the gold, silver, and precious materials adorning the temple. The people dismantled the temple piece by piece in order to make these payments. The prophets continued to warn Judah that God’s judgment against their disobedience would eventually come.

“I will remove Judah also from my sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I have said: ‘My name shall be there.’”—2 Kings 23:27

The worst offense came with King Manasseh who committed acts of idolatry against the temple, even putting an idol in the Holy of Holies (2 Kings 21:4–8, 11–15). Judgment came under King Jehoiakim's reign in 605 BC, when Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar invaded Jerusalem and carried away the king and thousands of his nobles and skilled laborers to Babylon (including Daniel and his friends).

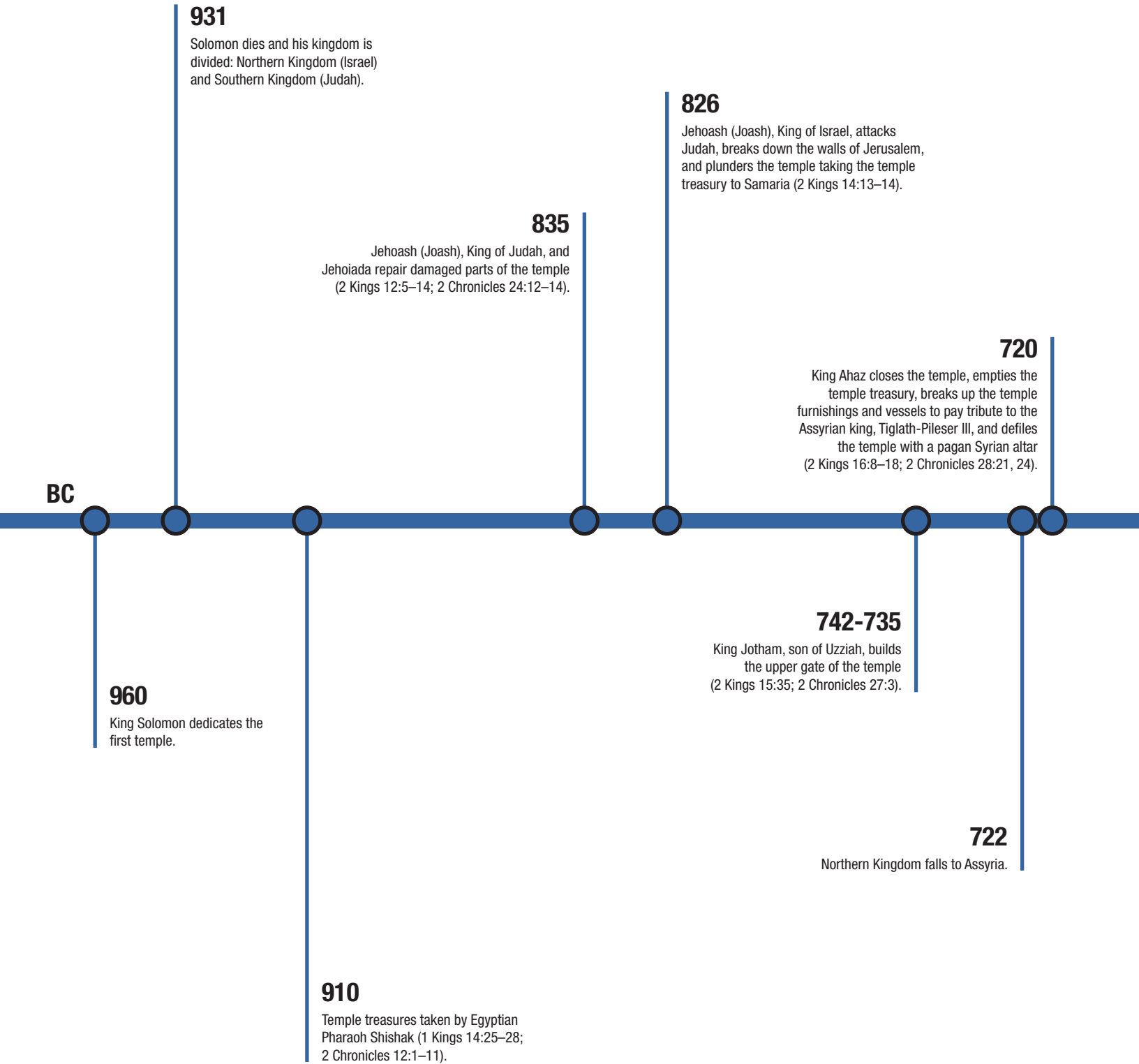
A second invasion came in 597 BC and more people were deported. This invasion removed all of the remaining temple treasures to Babylon (2 Kings 24:13). The prophet Ezekiel may have been taken captive in this deportation (Ezekiel 9:1–8). Ezekiel saw a vision of the *shekinah* departing from the temple (Ezekiel 10:18–19). With the departure of God's presence, the temple was set apart for destruction. The prophets warned of this oncoming doom, and God's punishment for Judah's disobedience was about to reach its peak.

In 588 BC, King Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army surrounded Jerusalem and kept the city under siege for 18 months leaving the city in famine. When the army breached the walls, the Judean army fled to the hills. One month later, Nebuzaradan, the commander of the Babylonian imperial guard, arrived at Jerusalem. He burned the temple, the palace, and all the buildings in Jerusalem. The two bronze pillars that had stood in front of the temple, the molten sea, and the ten bronze stands, were broken up and taken away (2 Kings 25:13; Jeremiah 52:17). The Babylonians destroyed the wall of the city and carried the people into exile.



Jerusalem Destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. This painting depicts the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the first temple in 586 BC. As the city burns in the background, captive Judeans are being herded toward Babylon where, according to God's judicial sentence, they remained for 70 years (Jeremiah 25:9–11). (Painting by William Brassey Hole)

TIME LINE: FIRST TEMPLE (960 BC–538 BC)



715

King Hezekiah opens the temple doors, cleanses the temple, returns temple vessels, restores ritual and Passover, and builds storehouses for temple contributions (2 Chronicles 29:3–19; 30:1–27; 31:11–12).

711

Hezekiah is forced to give up the temple treasures and strip gold off the temple doors to pay tribute to the Assyrian King Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:15–16).

622

King Josiah of Judah, grandson of Manasseh, in restoring the temple, recovers one of the temple treasures, the *Torat Moshe* (autograph of the Pentateuch) that once was placed beside the ark and was apparently hidden in the temple during the time of Manasseh (2 Kings 22:8; 2 Chronicles 34:14–18). He commands the Levites to return the ark to the restored temple (2 Chronicles 35:3).

695–642

King Manasseh of Judah places idols within the temple, including the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The ark and the other temple treasures were probably removed by the faithful Levites whom Manasseh deposed, to prevent their defilement. Manasseh later repents, but does not restore these treasures to the temple (2 Kings 21:4–7; 2 Chronicles 7–9, 15).

700

Hezekiah foolishly shows the treasures of the temple treasury and of the king's house to Berodach-baladan, a prince of Babylon and his envoys, an act the prophet Isaiah predicted would lead to the eventual plunder of the temple by the Babylonians (2 Kings 20:12–21; 2 Chronicles 32:31).

597

Nebuchadnezzar returns and further plunders the treasures of the temple (2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chronicles 36:7).

605

Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar pillages the temple, taking articles and depositing them in the Babylonian temple at Shinar (2 Chronicles 36:7).

586

Nebuchadnezzar invades Jerusalem a third time and destroys the temple. Southern Kingdom of Judah falls to Babylon and Jews taken into captivity.

573

The prophet Ezekiel, in Babylonian exile, has a vision of a magnificent temple (Ezekiel 40–48). Some Bible scholars believe this vision is of the future temple in the millennial (1,000-year) kingdom.

538

The prophet Daniel prays concerning Jerusalem's and the temple's restoration and receives the prophecy of the 70 weeks concerning the Messiah's death in Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and its rebuilding and desecration (Daniel 9:1–27). Daniel also receives a vision of the defiling of the temple (Daniel 11:31). Some Bible scholars conclude that this vision is of the second temple (Zerubbabel's temple) defiled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes who placed a statue of the Greek god Zeus in the Holy Place.

BC

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

While the kingdoms of David and Solomon in the tenth century BC were once disputed, archaeological discoveries have affirmed the historicity of the biblical accounts.

1. CITY OF DAVID

Archaeology has uncovered the ancient “City of David” built upon and utilizing the remains of earlier Canaanite and Jebusite fortifications and water systems. Located in southern Jerusalem on a narrow ridge bordering the Kidron Valley, excavations have revealed a massive twelve-story high stepped-stone structure from the thirteenth century BC that is believed to be the place upon which David began to build his city (2 Samuel 5:9). This foundational structure may have served as a retaining wall buttressing King David’s Fortress Of Zion, as the recent discovery of monumental buildings just above have been interpreted as the remains of David’s palace.

It was on the elevated extension of a ridge above this palace (the Ophel) that Mt. Moriah was situated and the first temple built by Solomon. In 2010 a city wall with a gatehouse dating to the late tenth century BC was discovered in the Ophel. A partial inscription in ancient Hebrew found on one of several large storage jars unearthed in the complex indicated it belonged to a high-level government official. Seal impressions discovered in the site also argue for a royal context. This fits well with the biblical record of royal construction that employed skilled Phoenician architects and engineers to construct the first temple (1 Kings 7:13–14), and may even specifically mention these structures: “...until he [Solomon] had completed building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem” (1 Kings 3:1).

According to some archaeologists, this wall probably connected with the City of David and fits with the biblical description that King Solomon built a fortification line around his new constructions of the temple and the king’s palace.

Also, scores of clay *bullae* (small seals stamped with the sender’s name and attached to documents) were discovered in a room in David’s City that had been burned in the Babylonian destruction of



Stepped-stone structure which served as part of the foundation for the City of David. (Photo courtesy of Kim Walton)

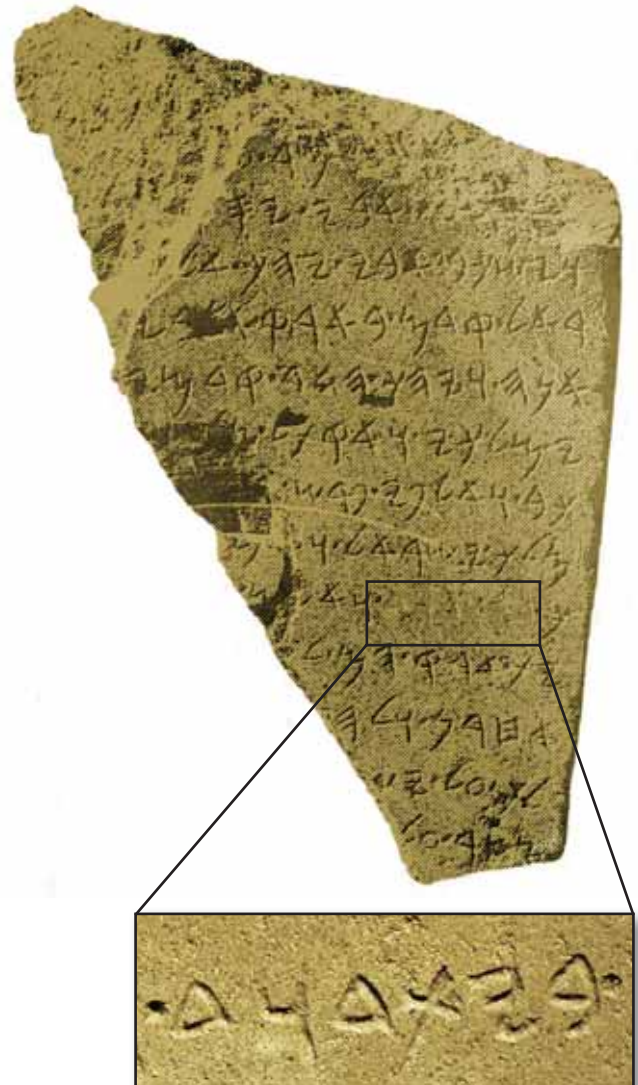
the first temple. Many personal names mentioned in Jeremiah and Chronicles were found including that of “Azaryahu son of Hilkiyahu,” who was a member of the family of high priests who served at the end of the first temple period (1 Chronicles 9:10).

2. TEL DAN INSCRIPTION

Two fragments of a monumental stele were discovered at Tel Dan (Golan Heights) built by Hazael, King of Damascus (or one of his sons) in tribute of a victory over local enemies, which included the Israelites. (A stele is stone or wooden slab used for commemorating important people and events.) The significance of the Aramaic inscription is its mention of “the house of David.” It provides archaeological evidence for the existence of the biblical King David and his royal dynasty.

3. KHIRBET QEYAF

At the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, a provincial town in Judea in the Elah Valley region, archaeologists uncovered impressive fortifications that date from the tenth century BC, the time of King David. They also discovered an ostrakon (inscription on a potsherd) of a legal document from this same period. Some archaeologists believe this inscription to be the earliest known Hebrew writing. The content of the inscription—which mentions social obligations to widows, slaves, and the poor—reflects elements found in the Old Testament.



“House of David” (Epigraphic Hebrew)

4. “SON OF IMMER” BULLA

Among the many finds of the Temple Mount Sifting Project is a clay bulla (a small seal stamped with the sender’s name and attached to documents) with an ancient Hebrew inscription, “Belonging to Gaalyahu son of Immer.” This man was probably associated with the temple precincts and the priestly family of Immer mentioned in Jeremiah 20:1.



“Son of Immer” bulla

(Zachi Zweig/Temple Mount Sifting Project)

Temples in the Ancient Near East

The description of the temple in the Bible was written in Ancient Hebrew, a language last used 500 years before Jesus. Language changes so much over time that some of the technical words for the ancient construction industry are difficult to translate.

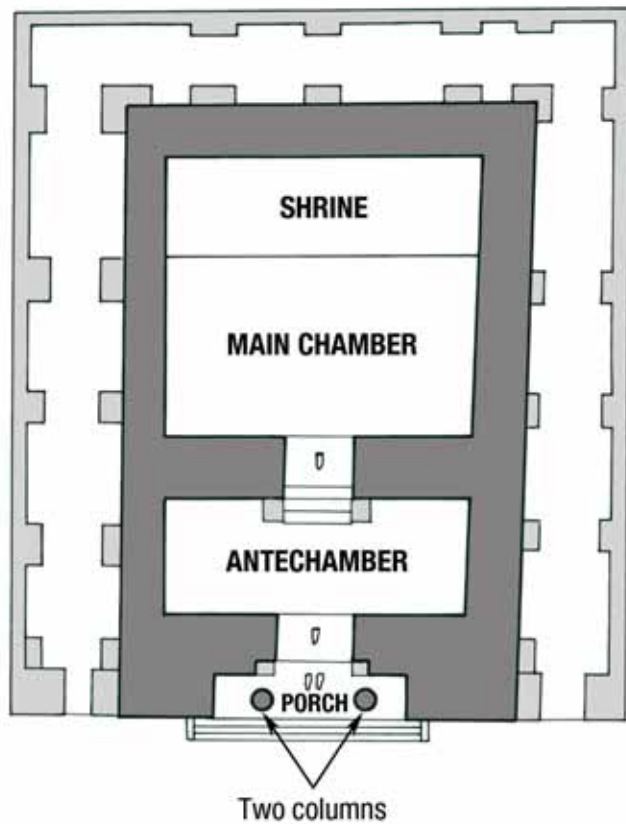
However, scholars have noted that the temple in Jerusalem had similar features to other temples of its time and region. The basic temple design in Semitic religions was a courtyard surrounding a sacred space that was divided into two or three sections (called a tripartite). Many Phoenician (Sidonian) architects and craftsmen advised and designed the first temple's construction (1 Kings 7:13–14) patterning it after foreign temples. There was a divinely revealed plan for God's temple, but this accommodated the local culture and architecture. The construction of the second temple under Zerubbabel also involved Phoenician workmen (Ezra 3:7–10). Excavated Phoenician temples contain many similarities to the temple in Jerusalem. Such archaeological information concerning comparative temples makes it possible to reconstruct a reasonably accurate portrait of the temple built by Solomon.

The temple of 'Ain Dara in Syria is one of the best examples of the Solomon-style temple. Because no remains of Solomon's temple exist and the biblical descriptions contain many unclear architectural terms, the 'Ain Dara temple may offer the best means of reconstructing what the first temple may have looked like. The 'Ain Dara temple shares 33 of the 65 architectural elements with Solomon's temple. They both share the same three-division, long room plan. Solomon's temple was slightly wider than the 'Ain Dara temple, but much longer. Each was built on a platform stationed within a courtyard, and each had similar reliefs that decorated their walls. The elevated podium at the back of the 'Ain Dara temple, separated from the forepart by a screen, was almost identical to the Holy of Holies. The only major difference between Solomon's temple and 'Ain Dara is that 'Ain Dara had an antechamber.⁵

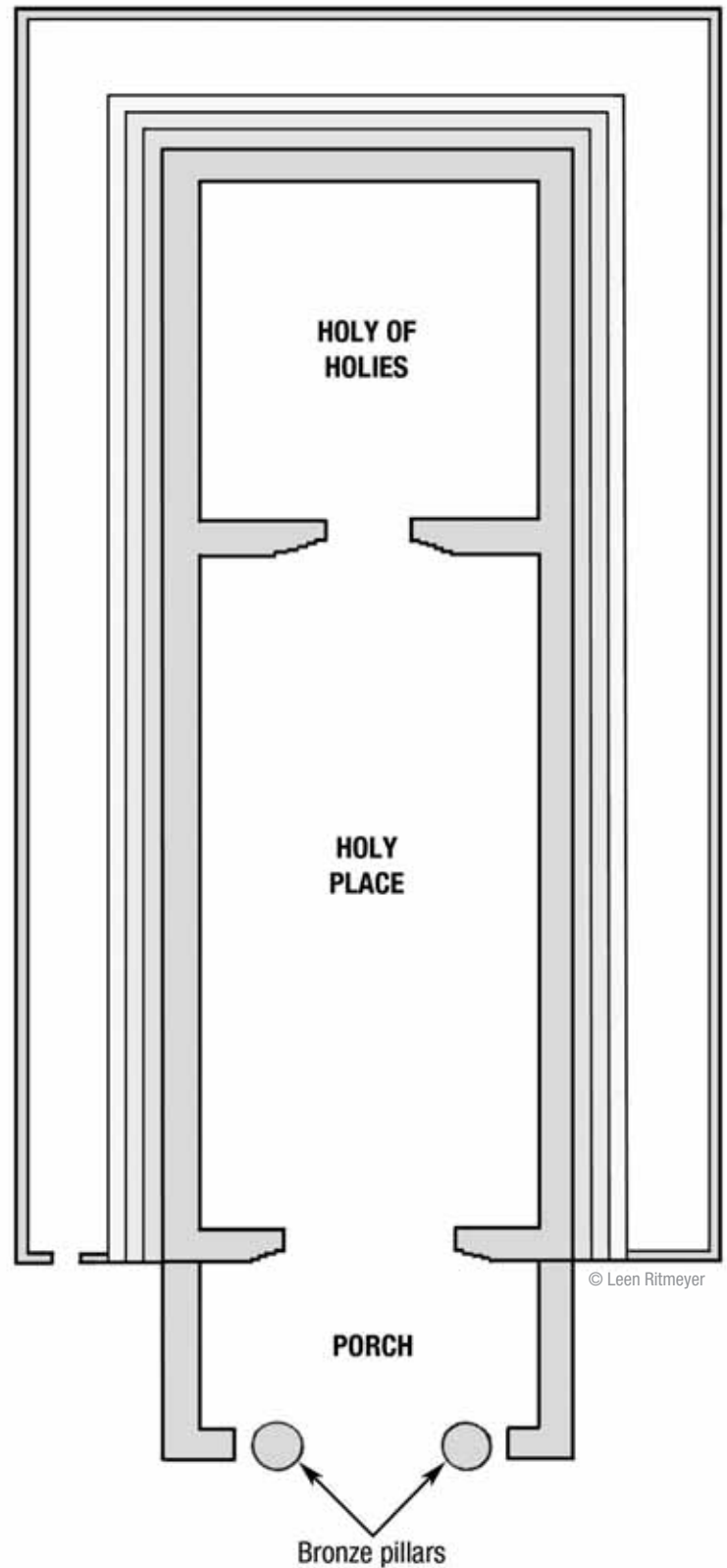


Ruins of the temple at 'Ain Dara in modern day Syria. (Photo courtesy of John Monson)

The 'Ain Dara temple may help resolve a long-standing debate over whether the huge pillars that flanked the entrance to Solomon's temple were load-bearing or free-standing. While only the basalt bases remain of the two massive columns (about 3 ft in diameter; 0.91 m) at the entryway of the 'Ain Dara temple's porch, these seem to have certainly supported a roof protecting the porch. This provides evidence that Solomon's pillars (Yachin and Boaz) were indeed load-bearing.



'Ain Dara Temple



Solomon's Temple



Messiah in the Temple Foundation



—○ SECTION 3 —○—

*God's Permanent Sanctuary Rebuilt:
The Second Temple*



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— SECTION 3 —

*God's Permanent Sanctuary Rebuilt:
The Second Temple*

ZERUBBABEL'S TEMPLE

Return from Exile

When the Babylonians burned Jerusalem and destroyed the temple, the people's worst nightmare came true. King Nebuchadnezzar's armies dragged the best and brightest into exile more than 700 miles (1,127 km) from home. But God's plan was greater. The Lord promised to look after his people as they lived in Babylon. According to the biblical prophets, God would restore the temple after a 70-year period of divine discipline (Jeremiah 25:10–12; Daniel 9:2–19).

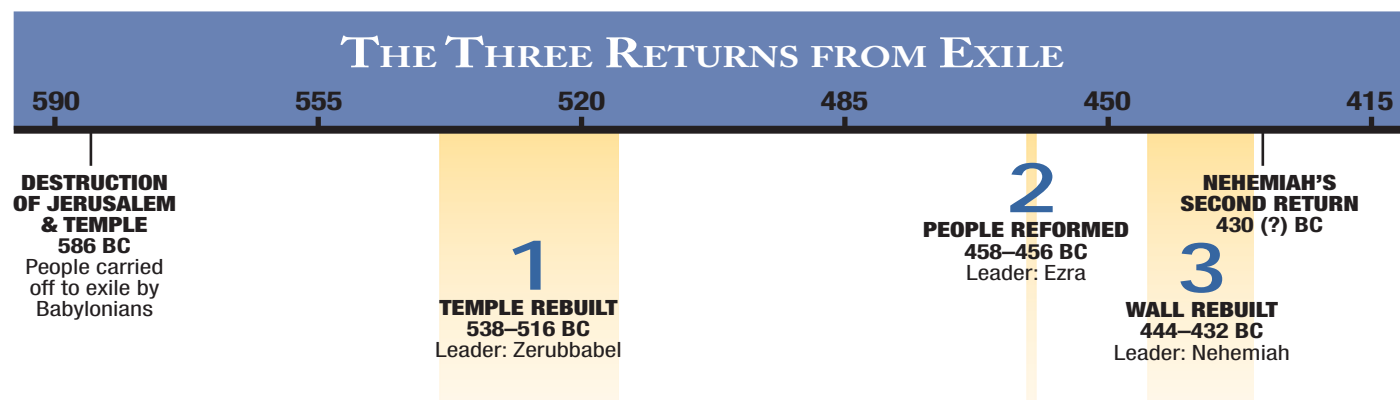
The time of restoration was set in motion by the overthrow of Babylon by the Medes and the Persians (2 Chronicles 36:20–21; Daniel 5:30–31). The prophet Isaiah even revealed the name of the Persian monarch, Cyrus, who would return the exiles and provide for the rebuilding of the temple (Isaiah 44:28; Ezra 1:1–3). Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, recorded the tradition that Cyrus the Great's actions were prompted by this prophecy of Isaiah. Josephus wrote, "...by reading the book which Isaiah left behind of his prophecies; for this prophet had spoken thus to him in a secret vision: 'My will is, that Cyrus ... send back My people to their own land, and build My Temple.' Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so written."⁶

In 538 BC, Cyrus issued an official edict allowing the Jews to return and rebuild the temple (2 Chron. 36:22–23). This edict was recorded on a clay cylinder and appears twice in the Bible in two languages: Ezra 1:1–4 in Hebrew and Ezra 6:1–5 in Aramaic. Once this word was given, Zerubbabel led about 50,000 Jews back to Jerusalem, carrying with them 5,400 of the temple vessels that had been taken to Babylon and stored in the Babylonian temple at Shinar (Ezra 1:7–11; 2:1–68; Daniel 1:2; 5:2; Isaiah 52:11–12; Jeremiah 27:18–22).



Captivity of the Jews in Babylon

(Painting by William Brassey Hole)



The Site and Construction

God designated the site of Mt. Moriah and the divine presence once dwelt there and promised to return to the same site (Exodus 15:17; 1 Kings 8:10–13; 1 Chronicles 21:18–28; Ezekiel 43:1–7). The location for rebuilding the temple was confirmed at its original site and on its original foundation.

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua the high priest, the people laid the foundation for the first phase of the second temple (Haggai 2:2). Following the precedent set in preparation for the first temple, the people gave generously to the sacred treasury for this second temple (Ezra 2:68–69). The first act of restoration was building the altar of burnt offering, which allowed the people to reinstate the sacrificial system and observe the biblical festivals (Ezra 3:1–5). With the expertise of Phoenician workmen, the foundations for the second temple were laid in 535 BC (Ezra 3:7). It appears that the design of the second temple followed closely that of the first, but without an adjacent royal compound (Haggai 2:3). (The royal compound had included the palace and the administrative buildings of Solomon such as the House of the Forest of Lebanon.)



Cyrus Cylinder (sixth century BC). Written in Babylonian cuneiform, it describes King Cyrus's victory over Babylon and his permission of free worship. It reads, "I returned to sacred cities on the other side of the Tigris, the sanctuaries of which have been in ruins for a long time, the images which to live therein and established for... them permanent sanctuaries. I gathered all their inhabitants and returned them to their habitations."



Due to Samaritan resistance, construction was put on hold for 15 years. However, through the exhortation of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the work was resumed in 520 BC. Furthermore, a decree from Persia's King Darius I provided official sanction and support from local taxes to finance the completion of the structure (Ezra 6:1–15). This new temple was dedicated on March 12, 515 about 20 years after the return from exile, ending the 70-year desolation of Jerusalem.

Compared to the first temple, the second was regarded as inferior by those who had seen the first temple. It lacked a royal compound, the two entrance pillars, the two olive wood cherubim, and the most sacred furnishing—the ark of the covenant. The second temple also lacked the

Rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah.

The workers, conscripted from among the 42,360 Jews that returned to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel to rebuild the second temple (Ezra 2), labored with construction tools in one hand and a weapon at the ready. This was because of the constant threat to the builders from neighboring enemies (Nehemiah 4:11–22). At the time Jerusalem's walls were being rebuilt, the construction of the second temple had already been completed (Ezra 3:1–13; 5:1–17; 6:1–18).

(Painting by William Brassey Hole)

shekinah glory that had signified the presence of God at the temple. For these reasons, the Bible notes that at the time this temple's foundations were laid many of the priests and Levites who were old enough to have seen the first temple wept (Ezra 3:12–13).

Who's Who in the Second Temple

NAME	DESCRIPTION
Zerubbabel	The first governor of Judah and descendant of David. In 538 BC, he led 42,360 Jews back from exile to Jerusalem and the Persian province of Judah. He was charged by King Cyrus the Great to supervise the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem.
Joshua the High Priest	The first high priest in the second temple. Joshua returned from exile with Zerubbabel and assisted in the rebuilding of the temple.
Haggai	A Hebrew prophet during the building of the second temple in Jerusalem. Haggai arrived on the scene 16 years after the Jews returned from exile. After experiencing resistance from local Samaritans, the rebuilding of the temple was put on hold. Through Haggai's efforts, the work on the temple was resumed.
Zechariah	A Hebrew prophet and contemporary with Haggai. He also urged the people to resume building the temple in 520 BC after 18 years on hiatus. Additionally, a decree from Persia's King Darius I provided official sanction and support from local taxes to finance the completion of the structure (Ezra 6:1–15).
Ezra	A descendant of Aaron who was sent to Jerusalem by King Artaxerxes of Persia to teach the Law of Moses to the people in Judah. Once in Jerusalem, Ezra recognized several impurities in the land and strove to purify and cleanse the community.
Nehemiah	The cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia who, in 458 BC after recognizing the desperate need to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, asked his king if he could return to head up the task. Thirteen years after sending Ezra to Jerusalem, King Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem as the governor of Judah with a mission to rebuild the walls. Once in Jerusalem, Nehemiah faced much opposition from Judah's enemies. Nehemiah also helped Ezra purify the community.

The Temple Mount

Josephus implies that Solomon's temple was built on a square Temple Mount and that over time the people increased the size of the Temple Mount.⁷ Therefore, the later size of the Temple Mount was greater than that of Solomon's. At some point the Temple Mount became a 500-cubit square (861 ft, 262 m, or 17.2 acres, based on the Royal cubit of 20.67 in.).⁸ Sources imply that the second temple builders also followed the lines of the 500-cubit-square Temple Mount.⁹

Through examining structures around and on the Temple Mount, archaeologists have discovered extensions added to the original Temple Mount. The evidence for locating the sides of the original Temple Mount are:

- The Western Wall: A now-covered wall preserved as the lowest step of the staircase at the northwest corner of the platform.
- The Northern Wall: Remains of a quarried rockscarp (a rock that protrudes like a cliff), found in the nineteenth century by Charles Warren, and whose lines form right angles with the step/wall and the Eastern Wall.
- The Eastern Wall: The unchanged line of the Eastern Wall between the sixth century BC offset in the north and the bend in the south equals 500 cubits.
- The Southern Wall: Measuring from the southeast corner (indicated by the bend) parallel to the northern wall to the intersection with continuation of the step/wall.

Nehemiah Petitions King Artaxerxes. “Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, ‘If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it’” (Nehemiah 2:4–5). (Painting by William Brassey Hole)



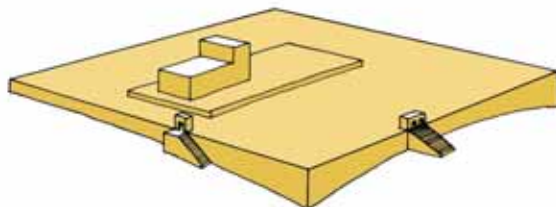
THE TEMPLE IN SAMARIA

According to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, the northern dwellers of the land opposed the recently arrived Jews. Having come from Persia and Babylon, after decades of exile, the Jews desired to rebuild Jerusalem and, most importantly, rebuild the temple. However, they faced opposition from a group of people identified as “the people of the land.” In later times, these people came to be identified as the Samaritans.

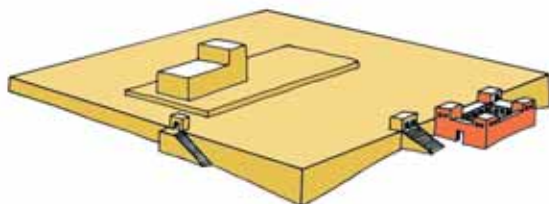
Because of strong disagreement with the Jews, the Samaritans built their own temple on Mt. Gerizim in Samaria which became their sanctuary. Archaeological excavations suggest that this temple was built in the fifth century BC. Many years later, the Samaritan temple was destroyed by the Maccabean leader John Hyrcanus around 129 BC. The discovery of the remains of the Samaritan temple have allowed archaeologists to confirm the design of the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. The temple on Mt. Gerizim included gates, altars, and six-foot thick walls.

The New Testament account of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman in John 4 shows how the Jews and Samaritans continued to disagree about the legitimate place of worship, Samaria or Jerusalem.

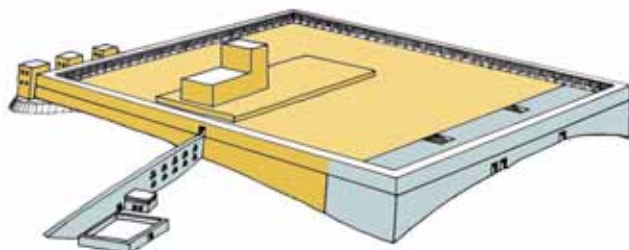
Expansion of the Temple Mount



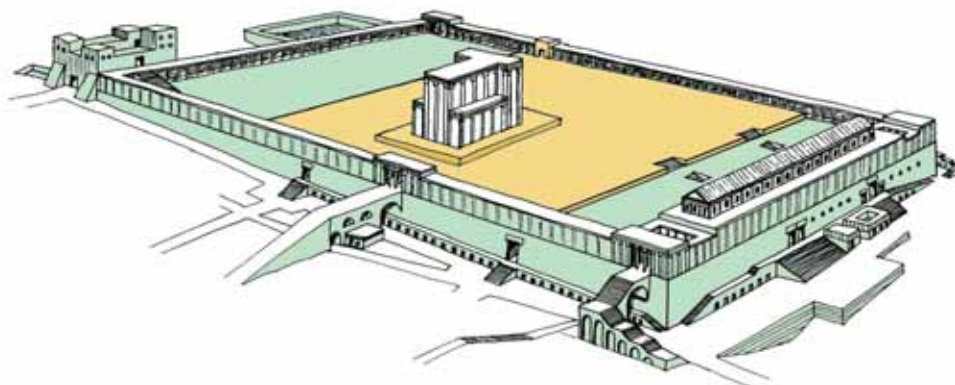
(716–687 BC)
The 500-cubits-square Temple Mount built by King Hezekiah



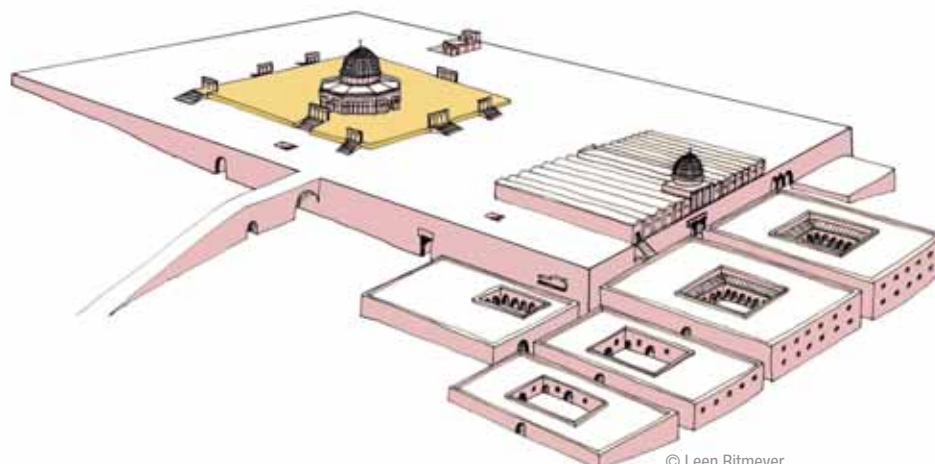
(168 BC)
The Akra Fortress built by the Seleucid King Antiochus IV Epiphanes.



(c. 140–116 BC)
The Hasmonean extension to the south of the Temple Mount



(20 BC–AD 64)
The Temple Mount extended by King Herod the Great



(AD 661–750)
The Temple Mount and adjacent public buildings during the Umayyad (first Islamic) period

© Leen Ritmeyer

DANIEL'S PROPHECY

In the book of Daniel, chapters 10–12, the prophet Daniel who lived during the exile in Babylon (sixth century BC) receives a series of revelations regarding the fate of the Jewish people. Some Bible scholars interpret these visions as representing the history from Daniel's time to the destruction of the second temple, with the bulk of the prophecy concerning Antiochus IV Epiphanes. In Daniel 11:21, Antiochus is called a "contemptible person" who "will invade the kingdom when its people feel secure, and he will seize it through intrigue." The "prince of the covenant" who will be "broken" in Daniel 11:22 is understood to be Onias III the high priest who opposed Antiochus's Hellenization of the Jews and was stripped of his office. (See also Daniel 8:23–25.)

Peace, Politics, and Pollution

The temple built by Zerubbabel stood for 350 years without suffering invasion or desecration from the surrounding nations. However, in the second century BC, Jerusalem came under the control of the Seleucids (an empire founded by Seleucid, one of Alexander the Great's generals). Early in this period, Simon, the son of the high priest Onias II, made extensive repairs to the temple.¹⁰

Initially the Seleucid ruler, Antiochus III, granted the inhabitants of Jerusalem the right to live according to their customs as long as they did not interfere with his foreign policy. However in 175 BC, under the reign of the Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 BC), two Jewish factions—one conservative (strict Jewish culture) and the other Hellenist (pro-Greek culture)—contended for the high priesthood. As a promoter of the Greek culture, Antiochus sided with the Hellenistic party and for a sum of money appointed Jason as high priest in place of Onias III. Jason and his followers aimed to transform Jerusalem into a Greek city and incorporate Greek elements into Jewish practice. He went so far as to construct a gymnasium (which was a place that trained young men to become Greek citizens) near the temple itself.

As the bidding wars for the priesthood continued, Antiochus invaded Jerusalem in 170 BC, killed many Jews, and plundered the temple. At the southern end of the square Temple Mount, he constructed the Akra fortress, which was a tower from which he could secure control over the Temple Mount. On December 6, 167 BC, Antiochus polluted the sanctuary's altar by sacrificing unclean animals such as a pig and by placing in the temple an idolatrous statute of the Greek god Zeus Olympias that bore an image of Antiochus's own face. This was in keeping with the coinage he issued which showed Antiochus enthroned with the words, "King Antiochus, god manifest."



Antiochus IV Epiphanes coin which reads, "King Antiochus, god manifest."

The Jewish priest Judas Maccabaeus led his family and followers in a successful revolt against the Seleucids that liberated Jerusalem. On the 25th of the Hebrew month of Chislev (that year it fell on December 4) 164 BC, the temple was purified and rededicated and the daily offerings (*tamid*) were restored. This celebration of dedication became a festival known as the

Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). As a result, the independent rule of the Maccabean (or Hasmonean) dynasty was established over all Judea. These rulers made renovations to the deteriorating temple structure, and because of the growing threats they added constructions to the temple complex.

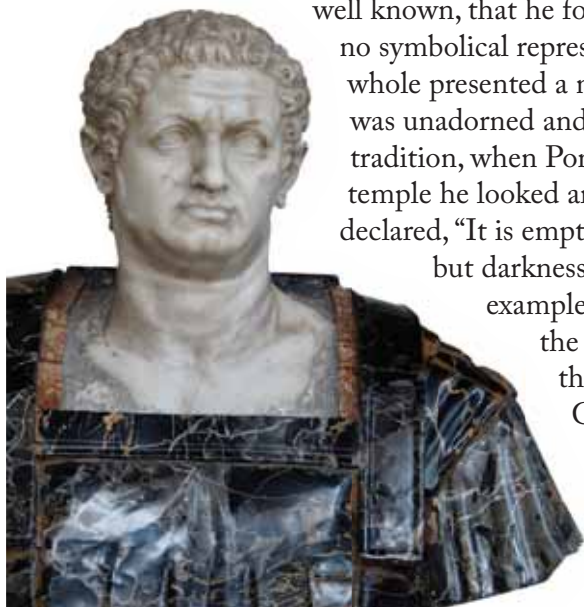
The Romans Conquer Jerusalem and Enter the Temple

Following the victory of the Maccabees over the Seleucids, the last of the Maccabean brothers, Simon, was declared to be high priest and leader of the nation. Thus the Hasmoneans (the family name of the Maccabees) became the established high priestly family, and they also assumed the kingship and other royal titles. Under the Hasmonean dynasty, Jewish conquests continued and they conquered both Samaria and Idumea (a region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba).

Power struggles within the dynasty and disputes about the Hasmoneans holding both priestly and kingly offices, led to skirmishes and eventually civil war. Two brothers, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, vied for the position of high priest. Their feud paved the way for the Roman general Pompey to exploit the situation and gain control of Jerusalem. Both brothers appealed to Pompey to support their cause, but in 63 BC Pompey invaded the city and stormed the Temple Mount.¹¹

When Pompey tried to enter the temple, thousands of Jews threw themselves to the ground before the general and begged him not to desecrate the Holy Place. Such a display convinced Pompey that the temple must contain great riches or some hidden secret, so he marched into the Holy Place, tore away the veil of separation and marched into the Holy of Holies. The Roman historian Tacitus (AD 56–117) described what happened next: “By right of conquest he [Pompey] entered their temple. It is a fact

well known, that he found no image, no statue, no symbolical representation of the Deity: the whole presented a naked dome; the sanctuary was unadorned and simple.”¹² According to tradition, when Pompey emerged from the temple he looked around at the Jews and declared, “It is empty; there is nothing there but darkness!” Pompey’s confusion is an example of the misunderstanding the Gentile rulers had about the temple and its invisible God. However, when Pompey ordered his soldiers to tear down the walls of the city, he kept the temple intact.



Roman General Pompey

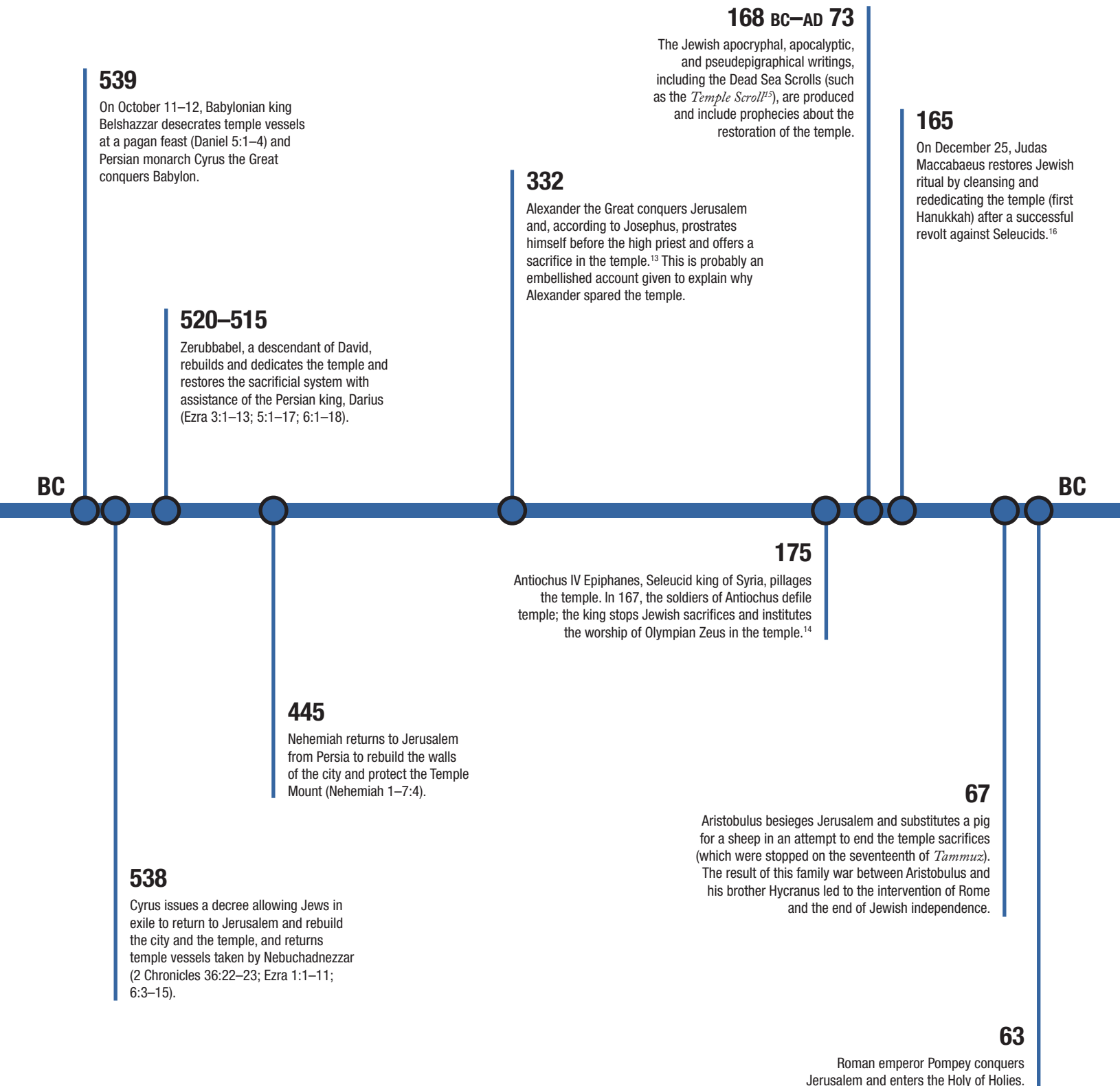


HANUKKAH

Hanukkah, which means “dedication” or “consecration,” is a festival that celebrates the rededication of the temple in Jerusalem in 164 BC. Hanukkah is a joyful celebration reminding people of God’s faithfulness and gracious provision. It is also called the Feast of Dedication, and the Gospel of John records Jesus celebrating this festival in Solomon’s Porch at the temple.

According to the traditional story of Hanukkah, after cleansing the temple, the pious Jews desired to rededicate the temple to the Lord. To do this, the lights in the temple, which symbolized the presence of God, had to be permanently alight. The priests only had enough lamp oil for one day, and the process to purify new oil would take eight days. So the priests prayed to God and set the lamps alight with the oil they had for one day. However, God performed a great miracle and the lamp flames burned for the eight additional days needed to purify new oil, so the flame never went out. For this reason, the Hanukkah candelabra used in the celebration has nine candles, one for each day the flame continued to burn.

TIME LINE: SECOND TEMPLE (539 BC–63 BC)



HEROD'S TEMPLE

Herod's Plan for a Bigger, Better Temple

The Romans appointed over Judea a man named Antipater the Idumean or Edomite. (Idumeans were a non-Jewish Semitic group from the region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba.) Following Antipater's death, the Romans commissioned his son Herod to end further resistance from the Hasmonean rulers.

In 37 or 36 BC, Herod laid siege to Jerusalem and captured the Temple Mount, destroying a portion of the structure that stood in the way of his advance. Josephus' description says that the latest form of the Hasmonean Temple Mount had been adorned with porticoes (covered porches), an area that may be identified with "Solomon's Porch" (or "Colonnade") mentioned in the New Testament (John 10:23; Acts 3:11).¹⁷ Josephus' reference to Herod's burning of Solomon's Porch relates to a colonnaded structure built on the eastern side of the Hasmonean Temple Mount. The name "Solomon's Porch" was apparently attached to the site because Solomon had originally built on the east side of the step rocky hill, however, the portico that existed at the time of Herod's attack may have been a later addition, most likely from the Hellenistic period. Herod does not seem to have destroyed the entire structure, but only the front row of porticos, although it was not rebuilt until the reign of Herod Agrippa II (AD 48–93).

Herod secured his position as the proxy Jewish ruler under Roman occupation, dubbing himself "King Herod." Herod knew that in order to rule the Jewish people he would have to conform to traditional Jewish practices, so he converted to Judaism to appease the priests, and in 20 BC he proposed a renovation of the existing temple of Zerubbabel on a more magnificent scale.

By the time of Herod, the second temple had suffered centuries of assault, repairs, and the general ravages of time. In making plans to reconstruct the temple, Herod had to follow the biblical design and legal requirements that governed the size of the building he could construct. However, Herod had other parties to please, and most important of these were the Roman authorities upon whom his right to rule depended. If his architectural projects could make Jerusalem a modern metropolis rivaling other Roman cities with a magnificent building that highlighted the classical tastes of the West, he could hope to retain Roman favor.

Because many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and other cities under Herod's rule were Hellenistic Jews, they were accustomed to classical culture that boasted temples and shrines on a massive scale. Therefore, Herod's motives in remodeling the temple were mixed at best, and history judges them as bittersweet. On one hand, rebuilding and enlarging the temple complex is considered one of Herod's major architectural accomplishments. On the other hand, Herod's intentions were to transform Jerusalem from a provincial Jewish community to a model of Hellenistic culture and to



THE HERODIAN DYNASTY

King Herod (73–4 BC) appears in the account of the Magi in Matthew 2, a time when the aged king was executing members of his family whom he feared might be plotting against him.

Upon King Herod's death, his son Archelaus inherited Judea. Herod Archelaus ruled Judea with an iron fist, quelling any disorder that broke out in Jerusalem. The Gospel of Matthew indicates that Archelaus's rule was the reason why, after leaving Egypt, Joseph and Mary settled in Nazareth in Galilee, and not Judea (Matthew 2:22).

King Herod's other son Antipas (shown above) was appointed ruler of Galilee. Herod Antipas is most often referred to in the Gospels simply as "Herod." He was responsible for John the Baptizer's execution (John 6:14–26) and Jesus was sent to him to stand trial because Jesus was from Galilee (Luke 23:6–12).

impress the Romans while appeasing the Jews. While the temple itself conformed to the divine design, other elements of the temple complex were clearly Greco-Roman in style, such as the Royal Stoa (Porch).

Even though Herod's rebuilding of the temple may have appeared to be an act of devotion to God, at this same time he also built a temple to the goddess Roma at Caesarea. His appointments to office of the high priest were also to suit his political aims. In 36 BC he named his 17-year-old son-in-law Aristobulus III as high priest (although murdering him the very next year), and in 23 BC he married the high priest Simon's daughter (his third wife, whom he also murdered).

When Roman custom and laws of Jewish sanctity came into conflict, Herod was quick to side with his Roman overlords. In one instance, he confiscated the high priest's vestments as a demonstration of superior (Roman) authority. In another show of loyalty to Rome, he installed a golden image of an eagle over the eastern entrance to the temple.¹⁸ As a bird of prey, the eagle symbolized the character of Rome, and it corrupted the character of the temple as a place of peace. Because of this desecration, a riot occurred in 4 BC led by High Priest Matthias. A group of about 40 Jews tore down the hated image and hacked it to pieces. This defiant act on the Temple Mount resulted in the high priest's removal and his coactivists being burned alive.

Herod's son Archelaus, the year after his father's death in 4 BC, slaughtered about 3,000 Jewish nationalists in the temple at Passover. In the same year Jewish nationalists rioted and burned the temple cloisters (covered walkways). In AD 28, Pontius Pilate, the Roman-appointed governor over Judea, also engaged in an attack on and in the temple, taking money from the temple treasuries to construct an aqueduct, and then in the temple courts during a protest he massacred a number of Galilean zealots (Jewish rebels who wanted to oust the Romans; see Luke 13:1–2).

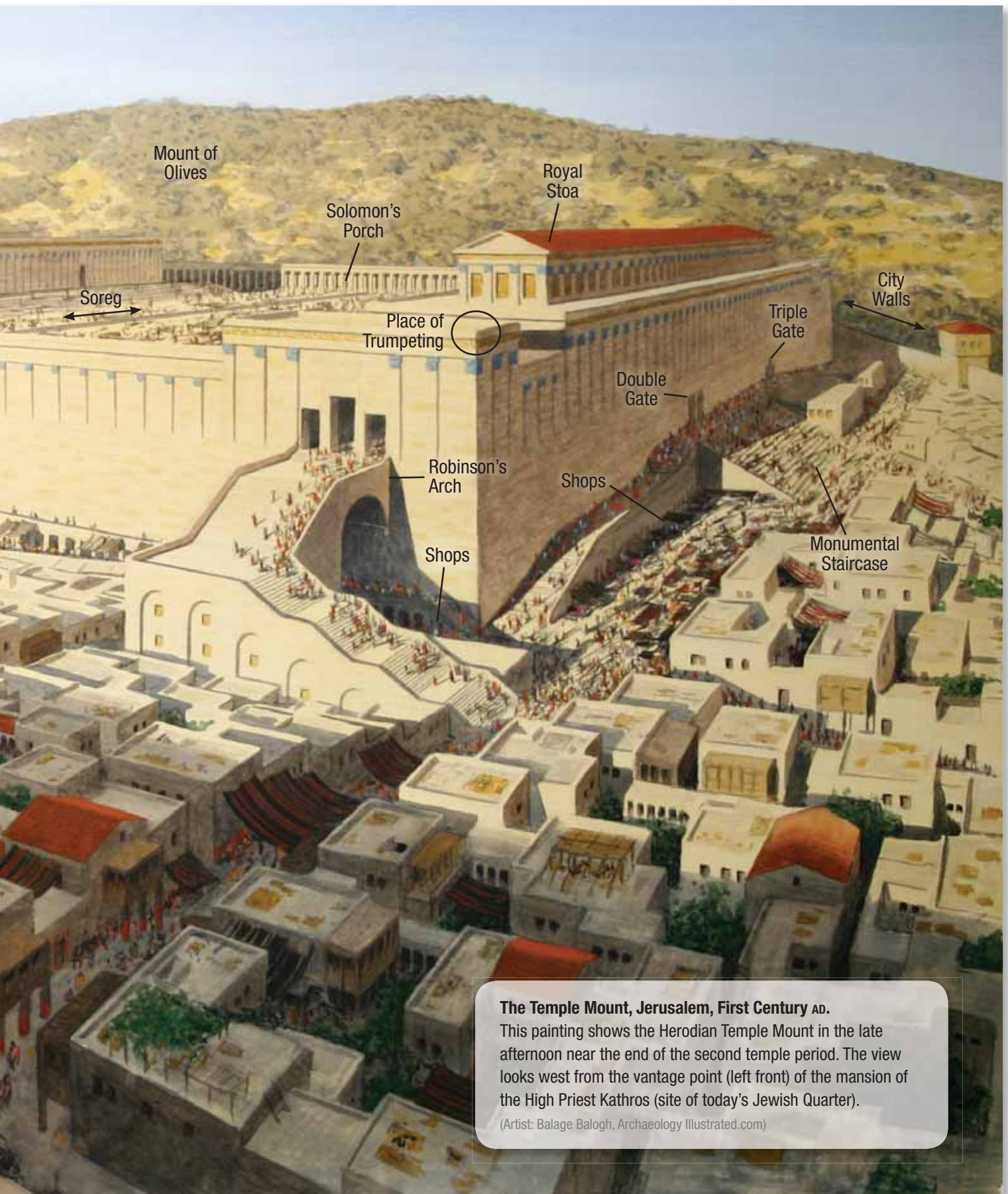
HELLENISM

Toward the end of the fourth century BC Alexander the Great spread Greek civilization to the lands he conquered in an attempt to create a universal Greek culture. The land of Israel came under Greek rule and the influence of Hellenism (from *hellas*, the Greek word for Greece). Jews who adopted Greek culture or who mixed it with the religion and traditions of Judaism were called Hellenistic Jews. On the positive side this movement produced the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible known as the Septuagint, as well as Jewish apocryphal and apocalyptic literature which sought to develop Jewish



hopes and aspirations. However, orthodox Jewish sects opposed Hellenistic Jews, believing that the practice of Greek culture violated the Mosaic Law. This led in the second century BC to a revolt against Greek rule in Israel and to the formation of the Hasmonean Dynasty. Eventually, corruption in this rule coupled with a continued opposition to Hellenism led to Roman control of the country. Hellenistic Jews remained a part of the Jewish community, but were often ostracized by or disputed with by other Jewish groups, a problem faced by the early Jewish-Christian church (Acts 6:1; 9:29).

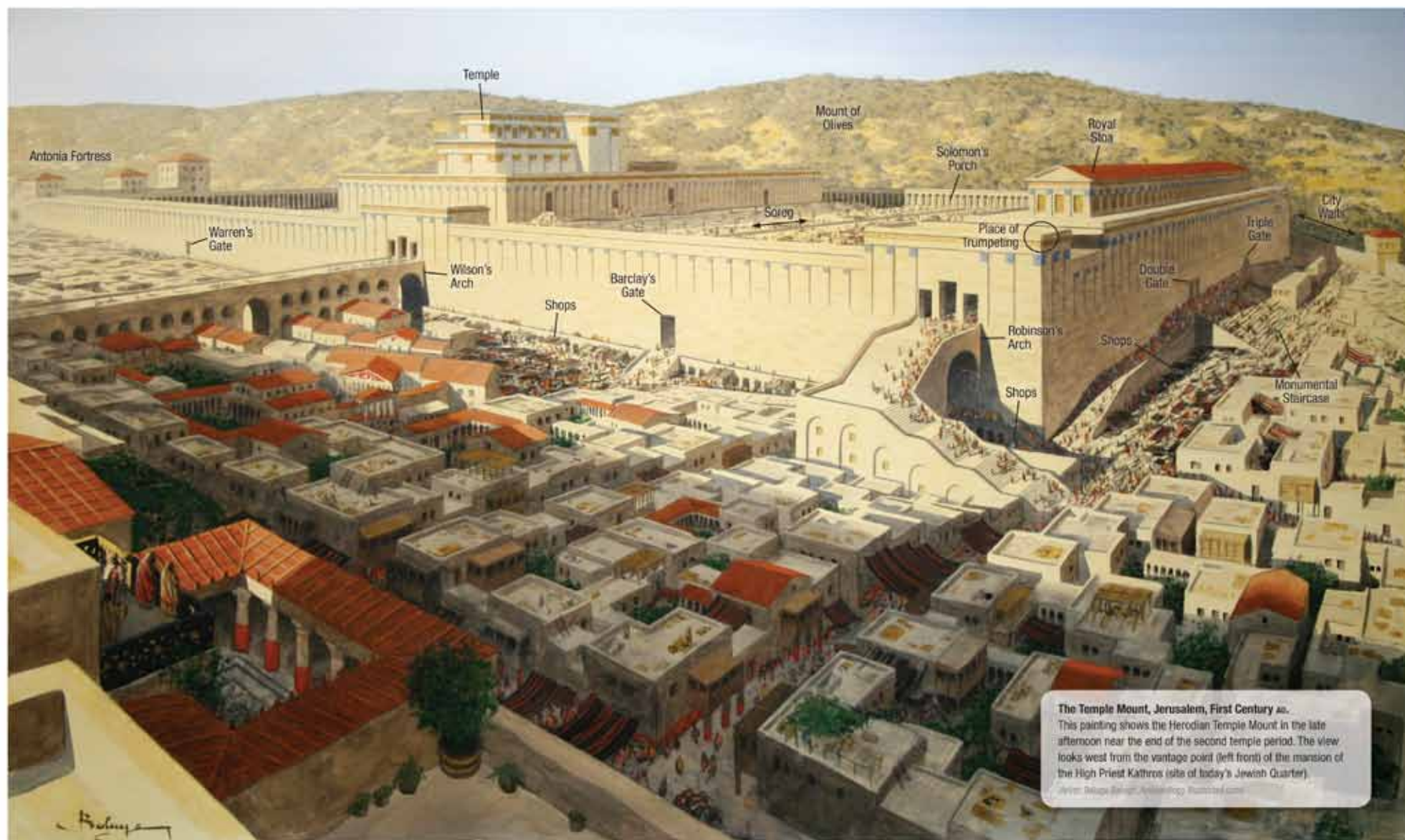




The Temple Mount, Jerusalem, First Century AD.

This painting shows the Herodian Temple Mount in the late afternoon near the end of the second temple period. The view looks west from the vantage point (left front) of the mansion of the High Priest Kathros (site of today's Jewish Quarter).

(Artist: Balage Balogh, Archaeology Illustrated.com)



The Temple Mount, Jerusalem, First Century AD.

This painting shows the Herodian Temple Mount in the late afternoon near the end of the second temple period. The view looks west from the vantage point (left front) of the mansion of the High Priest Kāthros (site of today's Jewish Quarter).

Artist: Deluge Springs, Artwork: Deluge Springs.com

Herod's Construction

The condition of the second temple and Herod's plans for a much larger structure included the complete dismantling of the old temple.¹⁹ However, the priests did not trust Herod and feared that his call for a destruction of the existing structure was a ruse and that he was secretly staging an attack on the temple.²⁰ Therefore, Herod was required to prepare and transport all of the building stones for the new temple to the Temple Mount in the sight of the people before permission was given to touch a single stone of the previous structure.

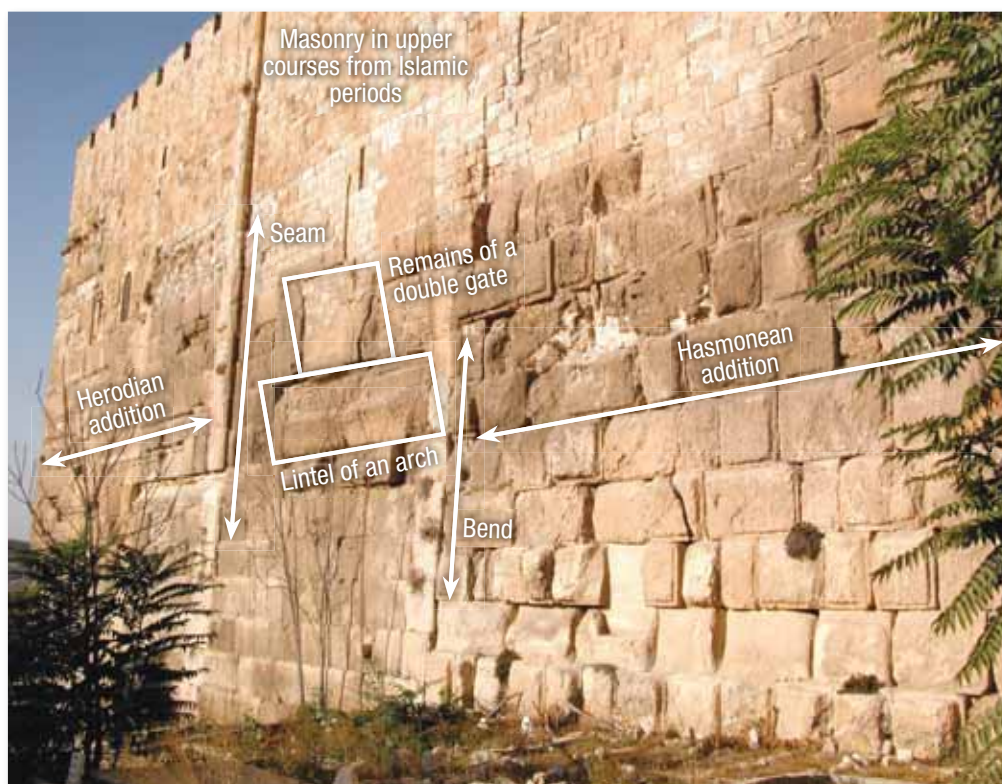
It is unclear exactly how long the construction of the temple and sacrificial area took. Josephus says that the temple took a year and a half to complete and the stoa and the outer courts took eight years.²¹ But also, according to the biblical record (John 2:20) and Josephus,²² the temple complex was a continual work-in-progress until the Jewish Revolt broke out in AD 66.

THE TEMPLE

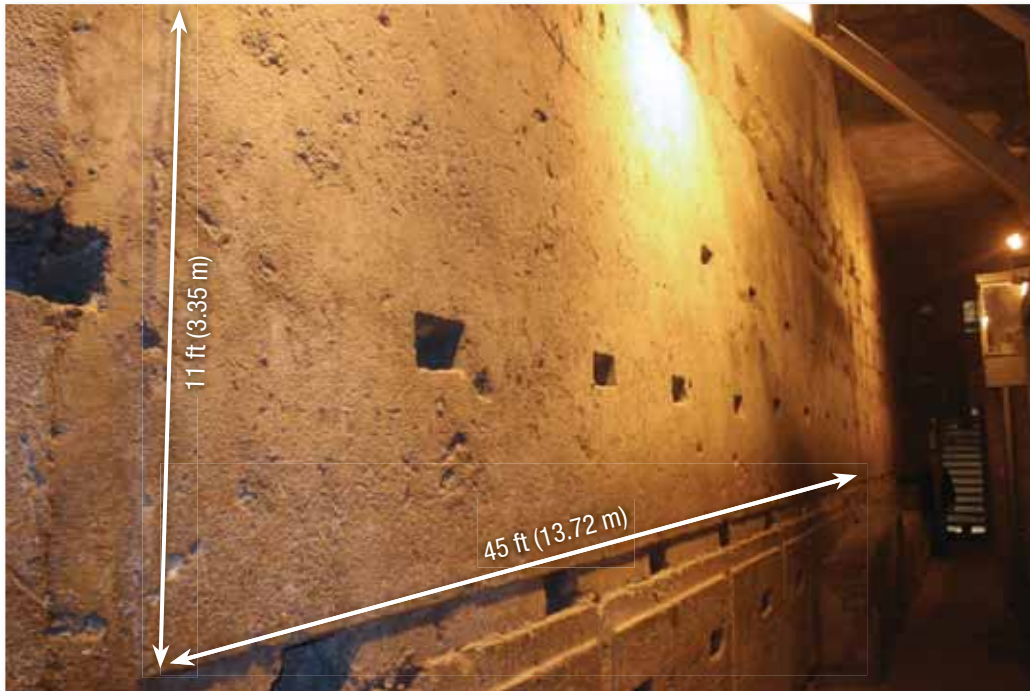
Herod added new compartments and a second story above the innermost chambers of the temple. These additions doubled the temple building in height and width. However, the size of the Holy of Holies itself may not have been changed because these dimensions were given by divine command and because it may have had to conform to the rock that protruded within the building, which restricted any alteration by Herod.

THE TEMPLE MOUNT

Herod also doubled the size of the Temple Mount and added massive new structures: the Antonia Fortress to the north of the Temple Mount and the Royal Stoa to the south. The Antonia Fortress served as military barracks for Roman soldiers. The Royal Stoa, the largest structure on the Temple Mount, was a common meeting place for those entering the temple complex. The Temple Mount, an extensive platform with huge retaining walls to



When Herod removed the old foundations of the second temple, he left the old eastern wall with its portico intact. This can be seen today on the outside of the eastern wall where a “seam” is visible near the southern corner. This seam (straight joint) separates the Hasmonean extension (53 ft; 16 m; stones to right of the seam) from the Herodian extension (105 ft; 32 m; stones to the left of the seam). The bend is the end of the eastern wall and the 500-cubit-square Temple Mount. In the middle is a long horizontal stone which is the remains of an arch. Just above it is a smaller stone which is the remains of an ancient double gate that led to Temple Mount storage vaults.



In the 1990s a tunnel was opened alongside the underground course of stones so that visitors could see the full extent of the Herodian construction. In the course exposed in this tunnel is one of the most massive of the foundation stones yet discovered. Its measurements are 45 feet (13.72 m) by 11 feet (3.35 m) by 14–16 feet (4.27–4.88 m) and it weighs nearly 600 tons.

(Baker Photo Archive)

bear the weight of the fill and of the structures to be built above, was trapezoidal in shape.²³ The total area of this sacred precinct was 172,000 square yards (144,000 square meters; approximately 35 acres). This made the Temple Mount the largest site of its kind in the ancient world. Its sacred area was twice as large as the monumental Forum Romanum built by Trajan, and three and a half times larger than the combined temples of Jupiter and Astarte-Venus at Baalbek.

To accomplish this feat, Herod's engineers had to construct enormous retaining (supporting) walls, many 15 feet (4.57 m) thick, with some towering more than 150 feet (45.72 m) from their bedrock foundation that sloped upward from the south to the north. The most famous remnant of these retaining walls standing today is known as the Western Wall (Wailing Wall; Hebrew, *Kotel*). The exposed walls are more than 1,500 feet (457 m) in length (north to south) and 900 feet (274 m) in width (east to west). Their height is about 50 feet (15 m) above the modern plaza, yet the course of stones in the southern end continues down another 50 feet (15 m). (See *Western Wall* on page 101.)

THE WORKFORCE

The massive construction project required an equally massive workforce. For this Herod brought in 10,000 skilled workers. Since Jewish law required that only priests could construct the temple,²⁴ Herod employed 1,000 priests to serve as masons and carpenters. Herod also used the local population as workers; as they were under the supervision of the priests, they were made to conform to ritual regulations.



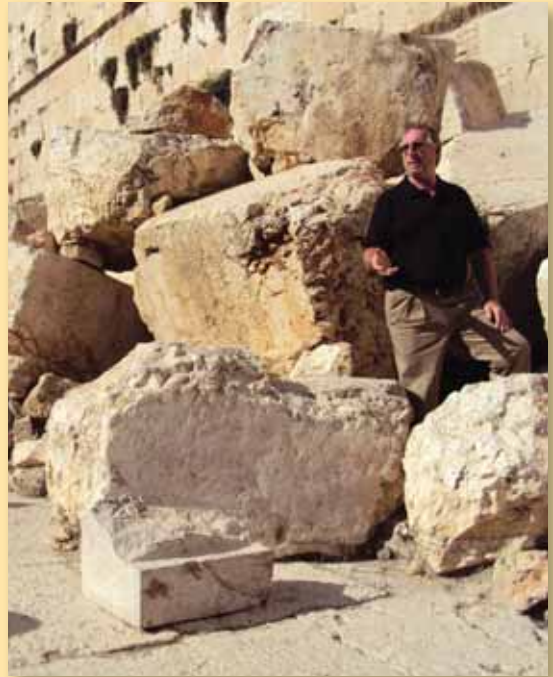
The Western Wall. The exposed portion of the Western Wall shown here is also called the “Wailing Wall” from the tradition that Jews came to this site to mourn the destruction of the temple. Today it is a special place of prayer for Jews and visitors to the Temple Mount.

STONES FOR THE TEMPLE COMPLEX

In 2007 the rock quarry from which the priests got the stones used for the temple and its complex was discovered. Located in Jerusalem's ultra-orthodox neighborhood of Ramat Shlomo, the quarried stones each weighed about 20 tons. Stones this size had never been found in an archaeological excavation anywhere in the country, except in the walls of the Temple Mount. The use of such immense stones allowed construction without the need for cement or plaster, and maintained the stability of the structure of the walls of the Temple Mount for thousands of years.

The remains of this quarry also revealed how Herod's stonecutters had done the quarrying. Each stone block was prepared in the following stages:

- A deep, narrow channel was chiseled around all four sides of the block, isolating it from the surrounding bedrock surface.
- A row of cleaving stakes was inserted in the bottom part of the block until a fissure was created and the stone was detached. This was accomplished by driving logs of wood into the channels and pouring water on the wood to make it swell, exerting lateral pressure on the block and splitting it from the bedrock.
- Stonemasons dressed the rough blocks with margins on their outer faces to produce an ashlar (a finished stone block), but left projections on opposite sides of the blocks so ropes could be lashed around the projections.
- A crane would hoist one end of the ashlar block off the ground and lower it onto a wooden roller. The construction area was 125 feet (38.1 m) lower than the quarry in the north, so the ashlar blocks could be easily hauled down to the site area where the wall was to be built. Getting the ashlars in place was accomplished by use of a treadmill-powered crane.



Ashlars of the Temple Complex (Author in photo)



Winch device for raising ashlars

The New Temple Mount: Porches, Gates, and Courts

THE PORCHES (STOAS)

The Royal Stoa

At the southern end of his extended platform, Herod built a monumental multi-storied basilica called the Royal Stoa or Royal Portico (Porch). This was the largest structure on the Temple Mount, stretching across almost the entire length of the southern wall from east to west, and was praised by Josephus as one “more deserving of mention than any other under the sun.”²⁵ This magnificent roofed pavilion had 162 pillars, each 50 feet (15 m) high and 16 feet (4.87 m) in circumference topped with four rows of Corinthian-style capitals each 27 feet high (8 m).²⁶ People would enter the Stoa by a long set of monumental steps that ascended from the lowest point in the Kidron Valley near the Pool of Siloam and led worshipers up to the Huldah gates and through two underground passageways up onto the Temple Mount.

The Royal Stoa served as a common meeting place and led to the large open Court of the Gentiles, one of Herod’s additions on the southern side. It was said that the scribes held their schools in the colonnades and that rabbis, such as Rabbi Gamaliel, taught near the Royal Stoa. At the eastern end the Stoa, the Sanhedrin (the supreme court of Israel) convened their daily meetings.



Passover in Herod’s Temple, First Century AD. This painting shows a view from inside the Royal Stoa looking north toward the temple. Note the colorful appearance of the columns and roof of the Royal Stoa. The use of such colors on all of the buildings of the temple complex has been verified by both documentary and archaeological evidence. (Artist: Balage Balogh, Archaeology Illustrated.com)

The Stoa of Solomon (Solomon's Porch)

The eastern portion of the wall with its single-story roofed colonnades was called the Stoa of Solomon or Solomon's Porch. Its pre-Herodian status can be confirmed archaeologically since the Herodian additions on the north and south of the wall were built to conform to this structure. For some reason, it was believed that Solomon had originally built this porch, and Herod himself may have also believed this (or at least accepted the popular notion) because he did not alter it in his architectural expansion.

Solomon's Porch in the New Testament:

- John 10:22–23 states that Jesus walked in Solomon's Porch and had a confrontation with a Jewish crowd there during the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah).
- Acts 3:11 refers to this area as the place to which the crowd ran to see the lame man healed through Peter and John. This may imply that this was the particular place where the early church assembled (Acts 2:46–47).



Robinson's Arch, First Century AD. This painting depicts a street level view from the southwestern corner below the Herodian Temple Mount. The vaulted walkway, known today as Robinson's Arch, frames the paved open-air pedestrian street lined with shops that ran the full length along the western side of the Temple Mount.

(Artist: Balage Balogh, Archaeology Illustrated.com)

Remains of Robinson's Arch



THE RED HEIFER



The red heifer ceremony (Numbers 19) was conducted on the Mount of Olives where a heifer of three years of age was burnt and its ashes transported along a wooden bridge over the Kidron ravine to a repository near the East Gate of the Temple Mount. After the destruction of the second temple in AD 70, this repository of red heifer ashes disappeared, as did red heifers themselves.

The red heifer ceremony was done for ritual cleansing (restoration from corpse impurity). The 113th of the 613 mandatory commandments in Judaism states, “the ashes of the Red Heifer are to be used in the process of ritual purification.” Without a purified priesthood the work of consecrating the site and rebuilding the temple cannot begin. This explains why Jewish organizations desiring to rebuild the temple today have sought to reinstitute the red heifer ceremony. Orthodox Jewish Rabbi Chaim Richman explains, “In truth, the fate of the entire world depends on the Red Heifer. For God has ordained that its ashes alone is the single missing ingredient for the reinstatement of Biblical purity—and thereafter, the rebuilding of the Holy Temple.”³⁰

GATES

There were both exterior entrances that led from the city to the Temple Mount as well as interior entrances that led into the temple precincts. These gates were not simply openings in a wall, but were large two- and three-story structures having a central passageway with rooms on either side.

The Outer Gates²⁷

Four gates on the western side:

- Robinson’s Arch
- Barclay’s Gate
- Wilson’s Arch
- Warren’s Gate

One gate on the northern side:

- The Tadi Gate

Three gates on the eastern side:

- A southeastern bridge (like Robinson’s Arch)
- The Miphkad Gate
- The Eastern or Shushan Gate (near the present-day Golden Gate)

Two gates on the southern side:

- The Double Gate and Triple Gate (The Huldah Gates)

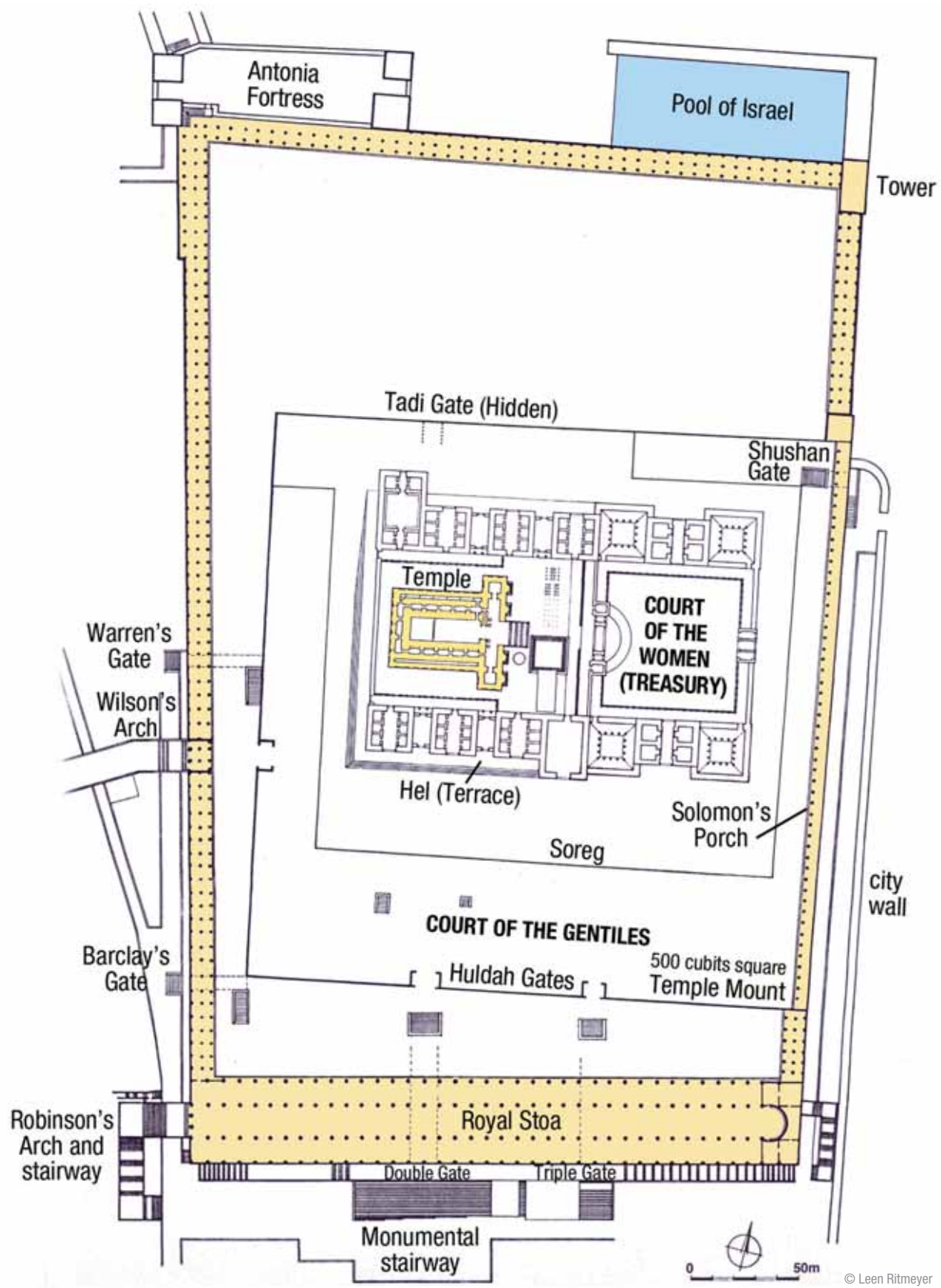
The Eastern (Shushan) Gate

The eastern and southern gates were the most prominent. The Eastern Gate was called the Shushan (or Susa) Gate because it bore a relief of the Shushan Palace in Babylon.²⁸ Contrary to popular opinion, the Shushan Gate was not a public entrance or exit, but was used on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) for leading the scapegoat into the wilderness. The Miphkad Gate was used exclusively for the red heifer ceremony, but the Eastern Gate was used by the priests going in and out of the temple to perform this ceremony that took place on the Mt. of Olives, opposite this gate across the Kidron Valley. The Mishnah says that a wooden causeway was built from the Mt. of Olives to this gate especially for this unique ceremony (Num. 19).²⁹



The Eastern Gate. (Messiah in the Temple Foundation)

Herod's Temple: Outer Gates and Porches



The Double and Triple Gates

The most popular entrance to the temple was from the south through the Double and Triple Gates which led onto the Temple Mount and in through the Huldah Gates. The Huldah Gates were likely named after the first temple period prophetess who held court in this area. The Double Gate was situated on the west side of the southern wall and was for the people. Some scholars suggest that this is the gate the New Testament refers to as the “Beautiful Gate” (Acts 3:2, 10). The Triple Gate, on the east side of the southern wall and located 215 feet (65.5 m) from the Double Gate, was for the priests.



The Monumental Staircase

One of the impressive sights to those visiting the Temple Mount was a grand staircase that gave access from the southern side of the city leading to the Double and Triple Gate entrances. These steps began at the Pool of Siloam located far to the south deep within the Kidron Valley. The steps alternate between long and short steps. The steps ended once worshipers reached the southern entrance to the Temple Mount and entered through the Double and Triple Gates. The width of the steps leading to the Double Gate was 213 feet (65 m) and the width of the steps leading to the Triple Gate was 51 feet (15.5 m).

The Inner Gates

The interior entrances to the temple precincts were massive gates 52 feet (15.8 m) high and 26 feet (8 m) wide with two doors, and overlaid with silver and gold:

- The Nicanor Gate (from the Court of Women to the Court of the Israelites)
- The Southern Gate (to the Court of the Women)
- The Water Gate (leading to the area of the laver)
- The Gate of the Firstborn (leading to the altar of burnt offering)
- The Kindling/Fuel Gate (leading to rear of the temple)
- The Northern Gate (leading to the Court of the Women)
- The Gate of the Flame/Song (leading to the Court of the Priests)
- The Gate of the Offering (leading to the Temple Court)
- The Gate of Jeconiah (the gate furthest west near the Chamber of the Hearth)

STREET SHOPS

In the archaeological excavations at the southern wall, a fragment of a ritual vessel inscribed with the Hebrew word *qorban* (“[dedicated] offering”) and a drawing of two pigeons was found on the paved Herodian street. This provides evidence that in the time of Jesus, the commerce of the street shops had found its way into the Royal Stoa where Jesus encountered the moneychangers and those selling animals (John 2:14–16).

THE COURTS

Josephus provides a description of the temple's four courts with guidelines based on ritual restrictions about who was allowed to enter.³¹ These courts from east to west increased in degree of sanctity. The outer Court of the Gentiles, as the name implies, was open to all—men or women, Jew or non-Jew—except the ceremonially unclean. The next court, the Court of the Women, was open to Jewish men and all ritually clean Jewish women. The next court, the Court of the Israelites, was restricted to Jewish men. The closest court to the temple was the Court of the Priests which was the most sacred court³² and only priests on duty could enter it. According to Josephus, an extremely high and thick wall surrounded the outer courts.³³ (See *Ritually Clean* on page 81.)

The Court of the Gentiles

The expansive Court of the Gentiles sported a popular bazaar underneath the protective roof of the Royal Stoa. Here moneychangers exchanged local coinage for the pure silver Tyrian shekel so that a proper offering could be made to the temple. (The Tyrian shekel was required because Roman currency was defiling and the Romans forbid the Jews to coin their own money.) Here, too, vendors sold animals for use as burnt offerings.

This market was still considered *inside* the temple complex, even though it was removed from the actual temple precincts. For example, John 7:28 says that Jesus “cried out in the temple,” although the text locates him in the area of the temple treasury within the Court of the Women (John 8:20). Although the next court after the Court of the Gentiles, this court was still outside the area of greater sanctity (since lepers could enter here). This helps us understand Jesus’ concern over the sanctity of the temple at his entrance to the Royal Stoa situated on the threshold of the Temple Court (Matthew 21:13). It also explains why his clash with the temple vendors was a fairly modest incident, permitting his daily return to the temple precincts to address the crowds (Luke 19:47). If it had occurred in the more public open area of the Court of the Gentiles, it would have been considered not just a religious demonstration, but also a political threat, and he would have been arrested.

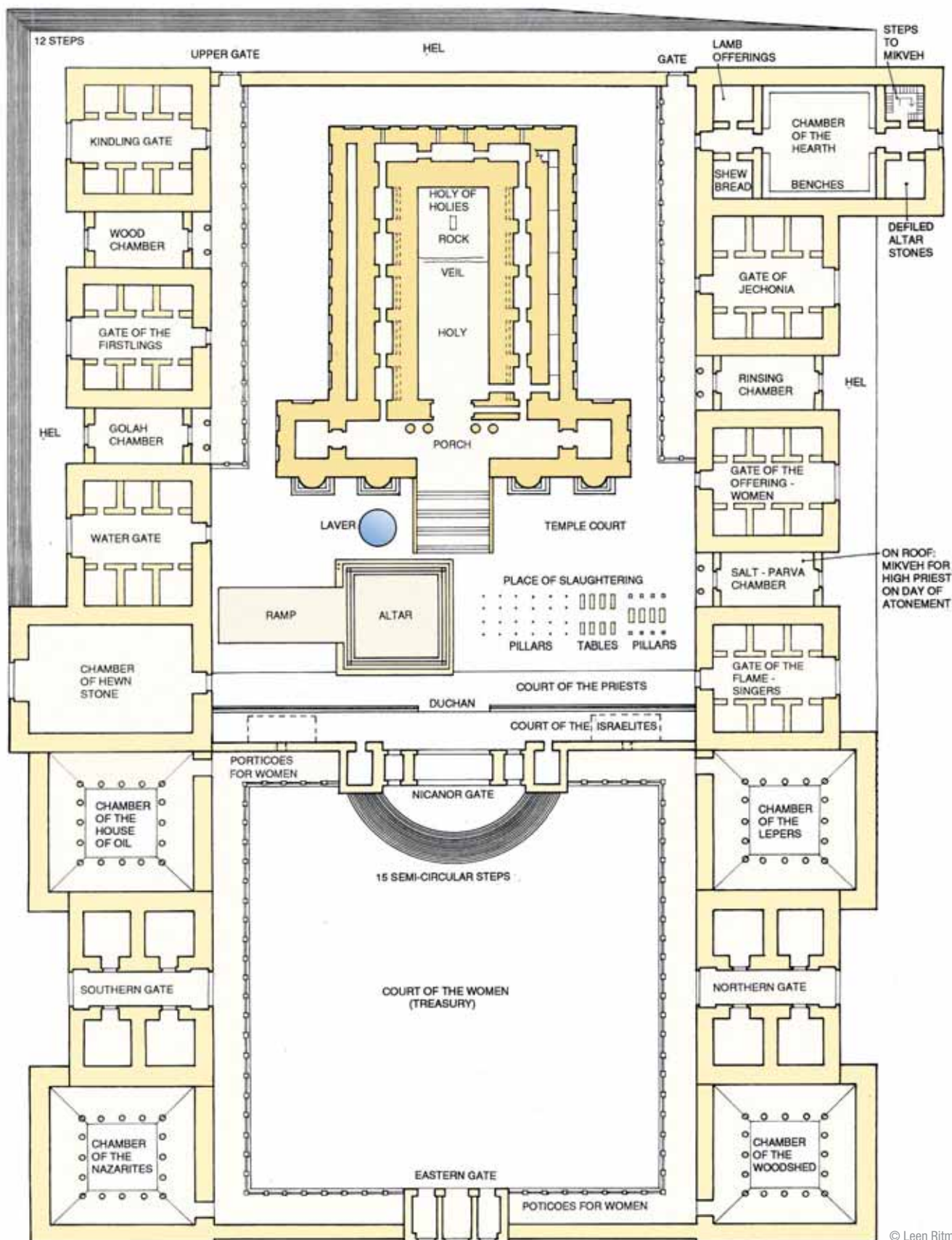
The Court of the Gentiles was the only non-Jewish access to the Temple Mount. To prevent unauthorized trespass into the sacred courts, the area on the far south and west was bounded by a paved terrace on top of a stairway. A stone fence, the *soreg*, served as the main barrier which Gentiles and the ceremonially unclean were forbidden to pass.³⁴ According to Josephus, it stood 5 feet 2 inches (1.57 m) high. To insure this boundary was not improperly breached, large stone inscriptions in Greek and Latin that threatened death to violators were posted at each entrance to the courts.



Soreg Inscription. First-century warning in Greek to Gentiles to avoid areas of the temple that were off limits under penalty of death. It reads, “No foreigner shall enter within the balustrade of the temple and whoever shall be caught shall be responsible for his own death that will follow in consequence [of] his trespassing.”

Archaeological excavations uncovered numerous ritual immersion pools (*miqva'ot*) as part of a public bathhouse located between the steps leading up to the Court of the Gentiles. These were probably the pools used to baptize the 3,000 converts on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Crowds of pilgrims coming to the temple for the Feast of Pentecost would have entered by the southern entrance through the Double Gate into the Royal Stoa and congregated in the Court of the Gentiles. Apparently, the disciples of Jesus (as many as 120) had gathered with this crowd (Acts 2:1). When the Holy Spirit descended and filled these disciples, the rest of the crowd took notice, heard the preaching of Peter, and those who believed were baptized, likely at this nearby bathhouse. Numerous immersion pools were located within this bathhouse and this structure was the most convenient for baptizing, being located between the Huldah Gates on the southern steps.

Herod's Temple: Inner Gates and Courts



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The Court of the Women

The Court of the Women, the largest of the courts, was a square courtyard measuring 233 feet (71 m) on each side (a football field is 360 feet long). Some scholars estimate that at the time of the feasts it could have held 6,000 worshipers at one time. It was not only open to ceremonially purified Jewish women, but also to ritually impure priests, Nazirites, and even lepers.

The walls of this court were lined with porticoes that formed a corridor from east to west and held four unroofed chambers (smaller rooms attached to and within the main structure).

- **The Chamber of the Nazirites** in the southeast corner was the place where those under the Nazirite vow cut their hair and cooked their peace offerings.
- **The Chamber of the Lepers** in the northwest corner was where lepers ritually immersed themselves before presenting themselves to the priest for inspection (Leviticus 14:1–7). In Matthew 8:4, after healing a leper, Jesus told him to go show himself to the priest and to make the prescribed thank offering.
- **The Chamber of the House of Oil** in the southwest corner stored the wine and oil for drink offerings and grain offerings along with the menorah (lampstands).³⁵
- **The Chamber of the Woodshed** in the northeast corner was the place where unclean priests were employed inspecting firewood to be used on the altar of burnt offering.

It was said that this court was often filled with singing and dancing. One occasion when such a celebration occurred in this court was the annual water-drawing ceremony when a priest drew spring water from the Pool of Siloam and carried it to the temple to pour on the altar. This ceremony took place during the conclusion of the annual celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), and its purpose in this act was to ask God to send rain which was necessary for a successful harvest. It was on this last day of the Feast of Tabernacles that Jesus taught in the Court of the Women saying, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink” and “rivers of living water will flow from within them” (John 7:37–39). Jesus was speaking about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit—the promise associated with the Messiah’s coming—which like the rain, depended on the proper response from Israel.

In each of the four corners of the Court of the Women stood two immense *menorot* (lampstands). These were lit day and night, especially at festival occasions such as the Feast of Tabernacles. During this festival, Jesus took the opportunity, while these majestic lampstands were still lit, to point to his own messianic purpose to be “the light of the world” (John 8:12).

The Roman historian Tacitus declared that the temple “possessed enormous riches.”³⁶ These riches were stored in the temple treasury, which held everything designated for or donated to the temple.³⁷ The temple treasury was located in the Court of the Women. According to the Mishnah, somewhere in the Court of the Women were 13 wooden boxes for collecting contributions that would be deposited through bronze trumpet-shaped receptacles.³⁸

The Gospel of Luke says that when Jesus and his disciples



The Widow's Offering. (Painting by James Tissot)

RITUALLY CLEAN

Ritual cleanliness was an important concept in Bible times. In the Old Testament, God chose Israel to be separate (“holy”) from the other nations. As such, his people had to maintain a level of sanctity. Israel’s cleanliness laws reflected the necessity of respecting the holiness of God who had chosen them.

People could become unclean in a number of ways: for example, having a skin disease, eating certain foods, or touching a carcass. Some of these things were associated with death (the consequence of sin), but the association of others (such as the dietary laws) are less clear. Nevertheless, they were violations of sanctity because God revealed them as such. In the temple complex, the closer a person got to the location of God’s presence, the higher the requirements for holiness or cleanliness. People who had become unclean could be restored by undergoing various rituals and waiting for a set period of time.

The cleanliness laws pictured how human fallenness separates humanity from a holy God. Respecting the cleanliness laws showed respect for God’s holiness and his commands. These laws impressed on the mind of every Israelite the sacredness of God and his high standards. (See Mark 7:1–23 for Jesus’ discussion on cleanliness.)

were in the area of the “temple treasury,” Jesus watched both the rich and poor depositing their contributions (Luke 21:1). He drew to the disciples’ attention a widow who had deposited two copper coins into one of the trumpets. Jesus used her example to teach that when the poor give they give more than the rich because they give out of their poverty, while the rich give from their abundance (Luke 21:2–4).

When Judas threw “into the temple” the 30 pieces of silver (Tyrian half-shekels) paid to him by the Sanhedrin for betraying Jesus, he created a dilemma for the chief priest. Even though this money had been deposited in the temple it was considered the price of a life (“blood money”), so the chief priest stated it could not be deposited into the temple treasury (Matthew 27:3–6).

The Court of the Israelites

The Court of the Israelites was limited to ritually pure Jewish men. It was entered by the curved staircase leading up to the Nicanor Gate. This court consisted of a narrow hall 233 feet (71 m) wide and 19 feet (5.8 m) deep. Beneath this court were rooms that opened into the lower Court of the Women. These were used for storing musical instruments and equipment used by the Levites.³⁹

The Temple Court (Court of the Priests)

Some scholars understand the Court of the Priests as including the temple, its installations, and the buildings and storerooms associated with the priestly duties. Others see it as having the same dimensions as the Court of the Israelites—actually one long hall, which is why it is referred to in the Mishnah as the “Hall of Priests”⁴⁰—and that there was a separate Temple Court (Hebrew *Azarah*). If there was indeed a separate Temple Court, this Court of Priests seems to have been a sacred space separating the Court of the Israelites from the Temple Court, which only priests could enter.

The Temple Court was the court of greatest sanctity and importance because it included the temple itself. In the Temple Court stood the altar of burnt offering, the place of slaughtering, the laver, and the temple.⁴¹

Three Chambers on the South Side of the Temple Court:

- **The Pen of Wood** (also called the “Wood Chamber”). In this chamber, the good wood used for the altar was separated from the moldy wood.
- **The Golah Chamber.** This chamber served as an office for the exile⁴² and had a water wheel to draw water from the Golah Cistern.⁴³ This chamber’s name reveals that it had some relationship to those Jews who had returned from exile (Hebrew *golah*) in Babylon.
- **The Water Gate:** This is the chamber where the temple’s vast underground water supply was controlled.

Chambers on the North Side of the Temple Court: (east to west)

- **The Salt-Parvah Chamber(s):** This chamber is where salt used in the sacrificial offerings was kept and where the skins from the sacrifices were salted down. It is uncertain if there was one or several salt-parvah chambers.
- **The Rinsing Chamber:** This chamber is where the slaughtered animal parts for the sacrifice were washed (probably the entrails).
- **The Chamber of the Hearth:** This chamber contained a large fire where off-duty priests could warm themselves. It had a domed roof and functioned as sleeping quarters for the priests. It also contained the Chamber of the Lambs where animals being readied for sacrifice were housed and could be inspected for disqualifying blemishes. It also contained a chamber associated with the offering of the showbread (bread of the presence).

The Laver

The biblical instructions in Exodus 30:17–21 required that the laver (Hebrew *kiyyor*) in the Temple Court be made of copper or brass (this included its base). The function of this washbasin was for the ritual purification of the priests who would serve in the daily sacrificial service. According to the biblical command, it was to be placed between the altar and the sanctuary and be filled with water. The priests were to wash their hands and feet in it to prepare for presenting burnt offerings on the altar or entering the temple. This was done by allowing water from faucets set into the laver to run over their hands and feet while holding their feet with their hands. Thus, this vessel was the first of the service vessels to be used each morning by the priests. The Mishnah speaks about a wooden device designed by a priest named Ben Katin which seems to have been a waterwheel mechanism that drew water for filling the laver from a large underground cistern.⁴⁵ According to these sources, the sound of this device in operation could be heard as far as the city of Jericho (located some 20 miles away; 32 km). The use of this waterwheel in the early morning officially began the priestly service in the Temple Court.

The Altar of Burnt Offering

After purification, the priest would walk up the altar of burnt offering by a ramp. On each corner of the altar were four projections called “horns.” In the water-drawing ceremony during the Feast of Tabernacles, priests would pour water on these horns. There was a ledge called the “circuit,” that defined the area in which the priests had to walk when offering the sacrifices. In the southwest corner of the circuit were two holes that served as a drainage system for removing the blood from the court.⁴⁶ Both Jesus and Paul referred to this altar of burnt offering and recognized its sanctity (Matthew 23:18–20; 1 Corinthians 9:13; 10:18).

The Place of Slaughtering

On the north side of the Temple Court were rows of 24 rings affixed to four rows of six short pillars set in the ground.⁴⁷ This was the site for the ritual slaughtering of animals used for the sacrifices. The rings were used to hold the animal in place. Slaughtering was a humane process that followed strict guidelines, including the catching of the animal’s blood in a gold vessel.

THE PEN OF WOOD AND THE ARK

According to a story from the second temple, a priest serving in the “wood store” noticed some stones in the floor were different and surmised that a stone had once been removed and then replaced in order to hide the ark. When he went to announce that he had discovered the secret chamber of the ark, he was struck dead “lest he revealed the hiding place of the ark.” On the basis of this account, Jewish tradition has held that the ark and other artifacts have all been hidden within a secret compartment beneath the Pen of Wood.⁴⁴



Pictured at the bottom center is the Court of the Women with the great lampstands that burned day and night and the bronze Nicanor Gate opened and looking into the Court of the Priests. Rising beyond and above this court is the front of the holy temple with its golden façade and marble columns. (Messiah in the Temple Foundation)

The Temple

THE OUTER DESIGN

The magnificent sanctuary built by Herod faced east according to the biblical precedent. To pilgrims approaching from the Mt. of Olives, the temple's white-polished limestone and imported marble gave it the appearance of a great snow-clad mountain. The sight of the temple for anyone waking in the city was of a golden mountain as its limestone absorbed the morning rays of the sun. Once the sun had fully risen, the temple glowed with brilliance because the upper exterior of the building was covered with gold, which would reflect the sun. Josephus observed, that Herod adorned the outside of the temple with so much gold that when the sun shined on it, it blinded those who looked at it.⁴⁸

Set on a 10-foot (3.05 m) thick foundation, the temple was 172 feet (52.43 m) in height. Josephus says it was wider in front and narrower behind.⁴⁹ This structure bore golden spikes each 21 inches (53.3 cm) in height whose

purpose was to keep birds from congregating on the edge of the roof and despoiling the temple's beautiful facade.⁵⁰



Decorated Limestone from the Second Temple

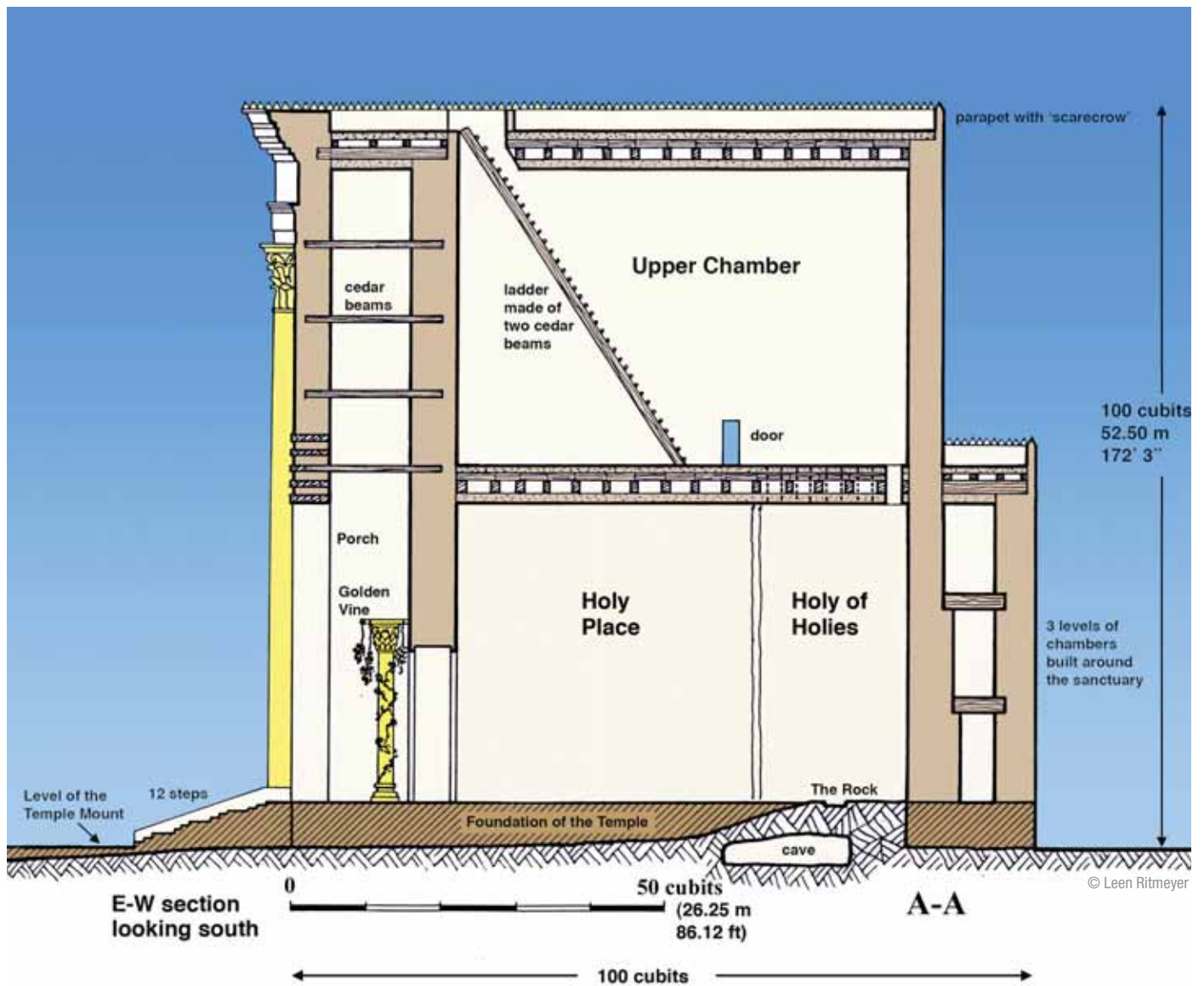
Approaching the temple from the west of the altar, a staircase of 12 steps ascended upward 10 feet from the floor of the Temple Court to the outer porch (Hebrew *ulam*) of the temple.⁵¹ The porch was well known in the ancient world and was mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus.⁵² The porch was 15.6 feet (4.75 m) high and had to support the weight of the 88 feet (26.82 m) of courses of stone above it. (A “course” is the line of stones in a part of the wall, one above the other.) It had a decorated door with an inlaid shell motif over it; above this were four ornamented windows. Free standing posts (or pillars) and their lintel framing the door were adorned with an exquisite golden vine at least 34 feet (10.36 m) in length with leaves and hanging grape clusters “as tall as a man.”⁵³ However, Josephus’ description of the doorways and veils has been interpreted by scholars in two ways: the golden vine adorned the temple pillars, or the golden vine was woven into the veil itself.

Around the outside of the inner sanctuary (Holy Place and Holy of Holies) were 38 small chambers built in three stories.⁵⁴ These chambers formed a honeycomb structure and may have contributed to structural support in the architecture. These chambers were probably for storing temple vessels, utensils, vestments, and other supplies.

THE HOLY PLACE

Moving westward through the porch one entered the Holy Place (Hebrew *Heikal*), the sacred space exclusive to priestly service before the Holy of Holies. It was said that Queen Helena of Adiabene donated a golden lamp that hung over the entrance whose inner walls were overlaid with gold.⁵⁵ Separating the porch and the Holy Place was a set of double folding doors (one on the outside and one on the inside) that folded back on themselves so that one side fit neatly into a recess in the wall.⁵⁶ These massive doors were covered by an equally massive curtain (the outer veil) which Josephus describes as a Babylonian tapestry 60 feet (18.29 m) high and 30 feet (9.14 m) wide and a “handbreadth” thick (3–4 in.; 8–10 cm).⁵⁷ The curtain was so heavy that it was said to have taken 300 priests to immerse it when it became unclean.⁵⁸ (However, this description might not have been intended to be taken literally, but was rather an exaggerated way of speaking to emphasize how massive the curtain was.)

Cross Section of Herod's Temple



The Holy Place itself was 68.8 feet (21 m) in length and 34.4 feet (10.5 m) in width and all of its walls were overlaid with gold. It contained the sacred vessels (furniture) for the priestly service, the golden lampstand (Hebrew *menorah*), the table of the bread of the presence (Hebrew *shulchan hama'reket*) and the golden altar of incense (Hebrew *mizbach haketoret*).⁵⁹ Josephus describes the lampstand as “made of gold but constructed on a different pattern from those we use in ordinary life. Affixed to a pedestal was a central shaft, from which there extended slender branches, arranged trident-fashion, a wrought lamp being attached to the extremity of each branch; of these there were seven, indicating the honor paid to the number among the Jews.”⁶⁰ The New Testament records that Zechariah, the father of John the Baptizer, was chosen by lot to perform the service at the altar of incense within the temple (Luke 1:11).



Ancient Assyrian depiction of a cherubim

THE HOLY OF HOLIES (MOST HOLY PLACE)

The Holy of Holies (Hebrew *qodesh haqqodashim*) was technically known as the *Devir*. No part of the sanctuary had greater sanctity than this small square room 34.4 feet (10.5 m) in length and breadth and 69 feet (21 m) in height. While the priests served within the Holy Place, no one but the high priest, and only on one day—the Day of Atonement—was allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies. Following the biblical precedent (Ezra 5:15), the priestly workmen had built the temple with the Holy of Holies in the exact same location as the previous two structures: over the bedrock platform (an exposed portion of Mt. Moriah) known as the “Foundation Stone.”

The Inner Veil

A veil (Hebrew *paroket*) separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place.⁶¹ According to the Mishnah, 82 young girls made the veil. Seventy-two individual sections were joined together. Its overall dimensions were 69 feet (21 m) high and 34 feet (10.36 m) wide and one handbreadth thick (3–4 in.; 8–10 cm).⁶² However, the Mishnah also describes this veil as a double construction with more than 1.5 feet (half a meter) between the two curtains.⁶³ The first-century philosopher Philo called the outer curtain the “covering” and the inner curtain the “veil.”⁶⁴ Hebrews 9:3 mentions a “second veil,” but this probably refers only to the veil before the Holy of Holies and not the curtain before the Holy Place. From the Mishnah account, the high priest who entered the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place on the Day of Atonement passed between these two curtains. Once he reached the north side, he then turned around and went south with the curtain on his right hand until he came to the place of the ark where he was to place the fire pan and sprinkle the atoning blood.

THE “EMPTY” TEMPLE

Jewish tradition held that the ark of the covenant was hidden in one of the underground chambers beneath the Holy of Holies, but within the actual building itself, there was nothing.⁷⁰ The absence of any representation of the deity or an image of any kind in the temple was thought incredible throughout the ancient world. Its absence also set the Jewish temple apart from all others. In fact, this single detail was most mentioned in foreign accounts concerning the Jewish people and their sanctuary. This fact also explains the conflict encountered with the Jews when Roman emperor worship became popular and emperors sought to place statues in the temple as a sign of local devotion. Josephus tells of a compromise in which the Jews would offer a sacrifice in honor of the emperor instead of his image being placed in the Holy of Holies.⁷¹

THE ROCK

Inside the present-day Muslim Dome of the Rock shrine is a large stone (*as-Sakhra*). Archaeological architect Leen Ritmeyer believes that a square incised indentation in the surface of that stone may be the exact place where the ark of the covenant was once set. The indentation was there in order to prevent the ark from movement when the high priest used its poles to direct his approach to the mercy seat in the time of the first temple. The photograph here is from a view looking directly down upon the large rock in the center of the Dome of the Rock.



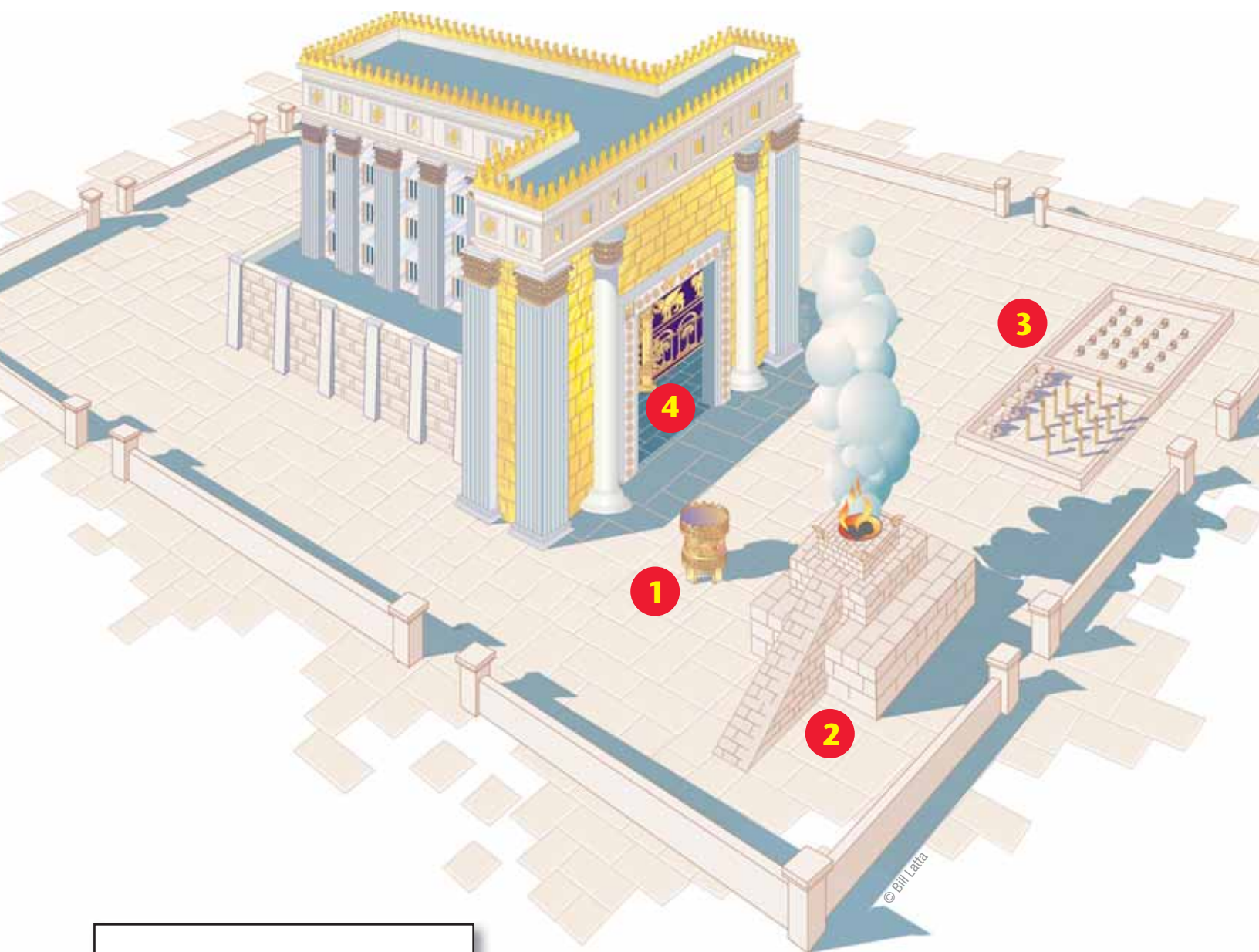
To understand why the Holy of Holies was so protected, it is necessary to consider that the room was not designed for humans, but for the invisible God. For that reason, the Holy of Holies was a windowless room so no one could see in. This, however, does not mean the room was not ornamented. Gold plates one cubit square (and thought to have been engraved with images of the cherubim) were hung on the walls of the room so that the entire room was overlaid with gold.⁶⁵ To emphasize further that this room was unapproachable, the high priest carried a fire pan with burning incense, which produced a thick smoke that completely filled the room (Leviticus 16:12–14). This was to be done before the high priest could approach the place of the ark. This act further enforced the separation from the Holy One, whose divine presence was localized in the innermost part of the Holy of Holies at the place of the ark. According to some traditions, it was said that the priests outside in the Holy Place held the ends of a rope attached to the high priest's ankle. The rope was attached in order to remove the priest's body from the Holy of Holies should he die or be slain while performing his duty on the Day of Atonement.⁶⁶

The Foundation Stone

Like the first temple, the second temple was built so that the Holy of Holies enclosed an exposed protrusion of Mt. Moriah. Abraham had brought Isaac to this mountain according to God's command to offer him as a burnt offering (Genesis 22:1–24). Also, King David built an altar to the Lord on this mountain on the threshing floor of Araunah in gratitude for the preservation of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 24:21–25; 1 Chronicles 21:18–28). At the time of the first temple's dedication, the ark of the covenant had been installed on a stone platform built over this bedrock three fingerbreadths high.⁶⁷ Because the *shekinah* had descended to the ark upon this place, even though it later departed, this site acquired a special sanctity unlike any other spot on earth (1 Kings 8:6–11; Ezekiel 8:4; 11:23).

However, the ark had been removed before the destruction of the first temple and was never returned to its place. Therefore, Josephus states that in the Herodian second temple “nothing whatsoever” stood in the Holy of Holies.⁶⁸ The Talmud explains that “after the ark was taken away a stone remained there from the time of the early Prophets, and it was called *shetiyah*. It was higher than the ground by three fingerbreadths. On this he [the high priest] used to put (the fire-pan).”⁶⁹ The Hebrew term used today for this barren stone is *Even Ha-Shetiyah* (“the Foundation Stone”), on which Jewish tradition says, during the Day of Atonement the high priest would sprinkle the sacrificial blood at the place where the ark with its mercy seat had stood.

Herod's Temple Cutaway



Temple Court

- 1** The Brazen Laver
- 2** The Altar of Burnt Offering
- 3** The Place Slaughtering
- 4** The Porch of the Temple



The Holy Place

- 5** Double-Folding Doors and Outer Veil
- 6** The Golden Lampstand (Menorah)
- 7** The Table of Showbread
- 8** The Golden Altar of Incense

The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

- 9** The Inner Veil
- 10** The Foundation Stone
- 11** Chambers of the Inner Sanctuary



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The Holy Place

- 5** Double-Folding Doors and Outer Veil
- 6** The Golden Lampstand (Menorah)
- 7** The Table of Showbread
- 8** The Golden Altar of Incense

The Holy of Holies (Most Holy Place)

- 9** The Inner Veil
- 10** The Foundation Stone
- 11** Chambers of the Inner Sanctuary

The Temple's Importance in the Time of Jesus

THE JEWISH PEOPLE

Despite the fact that the second temple had been constructed by Herod the Great, the Jewish people looked to the Jerusalem temple as the legitimate, central sanctuary of the God of Israel and the only place to which prayers could be directed and sacrifices offered. Even Jews in the Diaspora (Jewish communities in lands outside Israel) sent tithes to support the temple service. Positive references to the temple are found even in Hellenistic writings such as Ben Sirach, *Letter of Aristeas* and Philo of Alexandria.⁷²

However, there were also rival sects of Judaism (both in the Hasmonean and Roman periods) that came into conflict over the qualifications of priests, how the priests should perform their duties, and how to respond to offenses made against the temple by Roman officials. For this reason some Jews believed that the second temple had been defiled⁷³ and was doomed to be destroyed and replaced by a purer third temple that conformed to the restoration ideal of the prophets.⁷⁴ Some even drew up blueprints for a replacement temple. (See *Temple Scroll* on page 136.)



PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The Pharisees and the Sadducees were religious groups during the second temple period.

- The Pharisees “separated” (Hebrew *parush* from which the term “Pharisee” is derived) from other groups who had accepted the Hasmonean control of the offices of king and high priest and those groups who assimilated with Hellenism (pro-Greek culture). They were religious conservatives who promoted Oral Law and were regarded as experts in legal interpretation. For this reason they were often called *rabbi* (“my teacher”). They also held that all Jews should observe the laws of ritual purity (associated with the temple service) outside the temple and even in times where foreign rule forced assimilation to pagan practices.
- The Sadducees (Hebrew *seduqim* “just/right ones”) were a priestly group that arose from the Judean aristocracy and had a dominant role in society, politics, and religion. As the temple was the center of society, their primary status as priests connected them with the temple and gave them control over its various institutions and services.

Pharisees and Sadducees differed from one another socially and politically. This often brought them into conflict. Sadducees, as priests with power, were supported by the wealthy aristocrats, whereas the Pharisees were favored by the common people. The Sadducees tolerated Hellenism while the Pharisees opposed it. The Sadducees emphasized the importance of the temple, whereas the Pharisees emphasized the importance of other Mosaic laws. The Sadducees recognized only the Written Torah and rejected supernatural activity, angelic beings, and the concept of resurrection, while the Pharisees accepted all of these, adopting the Oral Law in addition to the biblical texts. The Sadducees disappeared after the destruction of the temple in AD 70, but the Pharisees came through it and emerged in the form of the rabbinical authorities.

THE LIFE AND MINISTRY OF JESUS

Most of the events in Jesus' earthly ministry occurred largely within a Jewish context and during a time when Herod's temple was functioning. It is interesting to consider how much of Jesus' ministry and teaching involved the temple.

Jesus and the Temple

EVENT	SCRIPTURE
As an infant, Jesus was circumcised and presented at the temple.	Luke 2:22–27, 39
Simeon and Anna, stationed in the temple, identified the infant Jesus as the promised Messiah.	Luke 2:25–38
At the age of 12, Jesus went with his family to the temple for Passover.	Luke 2:41–49
After his baptism in the Jordan, one of the Devil's temptations of Jesus centered on the temple.	Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9
Jesus and his disciples went regularly to Jerusalem and to the temple.	Matthew 24:1–2; Mark 11:11; 13:1–2; Luke 21:5
Jesus often taught at the temple.	Mark 12:35; Luke 22:52–53; 23:5; John 8:20
Jesus healed people who came to the temple to worship.	Matthew 12:4–5; 21:14–15
The subject of Jesus' teaching often related to the temple.	Matthew 12:3–8; 23:16–22, 37–39; 24:2–31; Mark 13:2–27; Luke 18:10; 21:6–36
During Jesus' last week, he was found daily in the temple precincts.	Matthew 26:55; Luke 19:28–23:56, especially 20:1; 21:37–38
Jesus' referred to the temple as "my father's house."	Luke 2:49; John 2:16
Jesus confronted the Jewish officials and moneychangers at the entrance to the temple.	Matthew 12:12; Mark 11:15–16; John 2:15
At his Jewish trial, Jesus was falsely accused of planning to destroy the temple.	Matthew 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58
At the moment of Jesus' death on the cross, the veil within the temple was torn from top to bottom.	Mark 15:38
After his resurrection, Jesus spoke concerning Israel's future restoration (which would include the temple) and commanded his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Holy Spirit.	Acts 1:6–8

JESUS' LAST WEEK

Sunday

The Triumphal Entry

Jesus entered Jerusalem on a donkey and was greeted by crowds waving palm branches and shouting “Hosanna!” (which means “save us now,” from Psalm 118:25). These crowds probably included many pilgrims who had come up to Jerusalem for the annual Passover celebration. Coming on the road from the city of Bethany to Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple Mount through the Eastern Gate.

*Matthew 21:1–11; Mark 11:1–11;
Luke 19:28–44; John 12:12–19*

Monday

Cleansing the Temple

In the Royal Stoa at the temple, Jesus confronted the moneychangers and drove them out saying, “It is written ... My house will be called a house of prayer, but you are making it a den of robbers.”

Jesus then healed the blind and the lame at the temple. Children in the temple courts shouted to him, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”—enraging the chief priests and teachers of the law.

Matthew 21:10–17; Mark 11:15–18; Luke 19:45–48

Tuesday

Teaching at the Temple

As Jesus was teaching in the temple courts, the chief priests and teachers of the law tried but failed to trap him in his own words. Jesus then taught the crowds a series of parables about the kingdom of God.

Jesus observed a poor widow placing what few coins she had in the temple treasury in the Court of the Women. He upheld her act as an example of true giving.

As Jesus and his disciples were leaving the temple, one of his disciples said to him, “Look, Teacher! What massive stones! What magnificent buildings!” Jesus responded by predicting the destruction of the temple: “Do you see all these great buildings? Not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down.”

Matthew 21:23–24:2; Mark 11:27–13:2; Luke 20:1–21:6



Cleansing of the Temple. “On reaching Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple courts and began driving out those who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves, and would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple courts” (Mark 11:15–16). (Painting by Carl Bloch)

Olivet Discourse

After leaving the temple, on the Mt. of Olives east of Jerusalem, Jesus' disciples asked him about the sign of his coming and the end of the age. Jesus revealed to his disciples the signs of the end times.

Matthew 24:3–25:46; Mark 13:3–13:37; Luke 21:7–36

Wednesday

This day is not mentioned in the Gospels.

Thursday

The Last Supper

On Passover in an upper room in Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples shared a Passover meal together. Jesus gave new meaning to the meal by identifying the bread as his body which will be broken and the wine as his blood which will be shed for the forgiveness of sins. After the supper, Jesus went to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mt. of Olives to pray. There he was betrayed by Judas who had received 30 pieces of silver from the chief priests for handing over Jesus to them.

Matthew 26:17–56; Mark 14:12–26; Luke 22:7–23; John 13:1–30

Friday

Crucifixion

Jesus was arrested and taken to the high priests, first to Annas and then to Caiaphas. The Sanhedrin (the highest Jewish tribunal) accused Jesus of blasphemy, saying that Jesus claimed that he could destroy and raise the temple in three days. When Judas saw that Jesus was condemned, he threw his “blood money” into the temple, and went away and hung himself, overwhelmed by guilt. The priests decided that the money could not be deposited into the temple treasury because it was considered the price of a life.



Christ Before Pilate. “The chief priests accused him of many things. So again Pilate asked him, ‘Aren’t you going to answer? See how many things they are accusing you of.’ But Jesus still made no reply, and Pilate was amazed” (Mark 15:3–5). (Painting by Mihály Munkácsy)

Jesus was taken to the Roman governor Pilate who, according to custom, was in Jerusalem to keep order during Passover when Jerusalem was filled with Jewish pilgrims. Pilate, when learning that Jesus was from Galilee, sent Jesus to the ruler of Galilee, Herod Antipas, who was also in Jerusalem. Herod was at first intrigued to meet

Jesus, a miracle-worker he had heard about. But when Jesus refused to answer Herod's questions, Herod ridiculed and mocked him, and sent him back to Pilate.

Though Pilate found no fault with Jesus, the crowds demanded that Jesus be crucified. Jesus was crucified on the cross at the "place of the skull" just outside Jerusalem's city walls. Even while on the cross, Jesus' accusers walked by mocking him about his words of raising the temple in three days. Yet Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." At the moment of Jesus' death, the outer veil of the Holy of Holies was torn in two from top to bottom.

Matthew 26:57–27:56; Mark 15:1–41; Luke 22:66–23:49; John 18:28–19:30

Friday Afternoon, Saturday, Sunday Morning

In the Tomb

Jesus' body was laid in a tomb on Friday just before the Sabbath, the day of rest. The chief priests and Pharisees persuaded Pilate to place soldiers to guard the tomb because they remembered Jesus' words that he would rise in three days.

Matthew 27:57–65; Mark 15:42–47; Luke 23:50–56; John 19:31–42

Resurrection

Early in the morning on Sunday, after the Sabbath, Jesus' followers went to the tomb only to find that he was not there—he had risen! Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene, Peter, two men on the road to Emmaus, and eventually to all his disciples and many others as well. The apostle Paul wrote of this saying, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas [Peter], and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time..." (1 Corinthians 15:3–6a).

Matthew 28:1–13; Mark 16:1–20; Luke 24:1–49; John 20:1–31

THE EARLY CHURCH

Immediately after the account of Jesus ascending into heaven, the closing words of the Gospel of Luke say that the disciples were "continually in the temple, praising God" (Luke 24:53). The Book of Acts says that the greater company of disciples was daily assembled in the temple precincts (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:21), and especially in the Stoa of Solomon (Acts 2:46; 5:12–16), which was apparently their preferred place of meeting (Acts 3:11). The fact that Jerusalem became the hub of early Jewish-Christianity shows the respect these early Christians held for the sanctity of the temple (Galatians 1:18–2:2).

The temple was not only central for the disciples and the early church, but also for the apostle Paul. When praising the historical advantages of the nation of Israel, he included in his list "the temple service" (Romans 9:4). Even though Paul was commissioned as the "Apostle to the Gentiles" (Romans 1:5; Galatians 2:7–9), his faithfulness as a Jew to the temple service appears frequently in the Book of Acts.



Christ Appears to Mary Magdalene. "Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned toward him and cried out in Aramaic, 'Rabboni!' (which means 'Teacher'). Jesus said to her, 'Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God'" (John 20:16–17). (Painting by Alexander Ivanov)

Paul and the Temple

EVENT	SCRIPTURE
Paul observed the feasts according to the temple calendar.	Acts 20:6
He made religious vows (a Nazirite vow).	Acts 18:18
He participated in ritual purification rites—in one case involving four other proselytes.	Acts 21:23–26; 24:18
He made payment of ceremonial expenses, which accounted as a <i>mitzvah</i> , “a legally obligated good deed.”	Acts 21:24
He offered sacrifices at the temple.	Acts 21:26; 24:17
He prayed and worshiped at the temple.	Acts 22:17; 24:11
He had regard for the priesthood.	Acts 23:5
He paid the temple tax.	Acts 24:17
He sought to prove to the elders in the Jerusalem church that he was as devout as any Jew toward the temple; he assisted others in performing their temple obligations.	Acts 21:23–26
He insisted on regulating his life by the temple calendar (the feast days), even interrupting his own missionary work.	Acts 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8
When he was tried before the Jewish authorities, he defended himself by affirming his ceremonial purity in relation to the temple.	Acts 25:8; 28:17
When he uses the analogy of the temple in his letters, he does so on the basis of the temple’s sanctity, relating it with the sanctification of the individual believer’s body, and the collective body of believers.	1 Corinthians 3:16–17; 2 Corinthians 6:16–17; Ephesians 2:21–22

Destruction of the Second Temple

Throughout the life of Jesus, the temple was the center of nationalist demonstrations and the Roman authorities feared a large-scale uprising led by a messianic figure. In this heightened atmosphere of conflict, it is understandable how Jesus worried the Jewish leaders (John 11:48–50).

- Jesus disrupted the moneychangers in the temple precincts (John 2:14–16; Matthew 21:12–13; Mark 11:15–18; Luke 19:45–48).
- Jesus made messianic claims (Matthew 21:14–16; John 10:22–39).
- Jesus predicted the temple's destruction (Matt. 24:1–2; Mark 13:1–2; Luke 19:41–44; John 2:19–20).

This fearful attitude increased as Jewish nationalistic ambitions intensified after the time of Jesus:

AD 40: When the Roman emperor, Caligula, commanded his statue be placed and worshiped in the Jerusalem temple, the Judean king, Herod Agrippa I, appealed to him to rescind his order to prevent a major Jewish uprising.

AD 44: When Agrippa died the whole of the country was placed under direct Roman rule.

AD 53: The Roman procurator of Judea bribed Jews to murder High Priest Jonathan in the temple, leading to a succession of murders during feast days at the temple.⁷⁵

AD 66: When the Roman governor confiscated 17 talents from the temple treasury, Jewish nationalists staged a revolt, seizing the temple, stopping the daily sacrifices in tribute of the Roman emperor, and capturing the stronghold of Masada. This led to the First Jewish Revolt that ended in the destruction of the temple in AD 70.



The Triumph of Titus. Titus' victory procession after his destruction of Jerusalem. Note the temple menorah depicted in the background. (Painting by Alma Tadema)



Relief on the Arch of Titus, Rome

The First Jewish Revolt (the Great War) was unique in the history of the region since the Jews were the only people in the ancient Near East to launch a revolution on such a scale against the Roman Empire. This conflict began and ended with the Jewish temple. In response to the uprising, Rome's leading commander Vespasian was dispatched with four legions totalling about 50,000 soldiers. By the summer of AD 70, Vespasian's Tenth Legion arrived in Jerusalem and placed the city under siege. Jerusalem was one of the largest cities in the ancient world and had a reputation as being impossible to overtake. Even though the Roman soldiers were weary,

they intended to make an example out of this revolt. The Jewish militant factions (the Zealots and the Sicarii) intended to crush the Roman occupation of Israel and drive the Romans from the land.

Vespasian returned to Rome to assume his duties as emperor, giving his son Titus command of the Tenth Legion in charge of completing Jerusalem's submission. The Jews celebrated a last Passover with their temple and prepared for the Roman attack. It came days later with a catapult barrage that continued for two months until the Romans finally breached the walls. They set fire to the city, slaughtering every Jew in their wake.

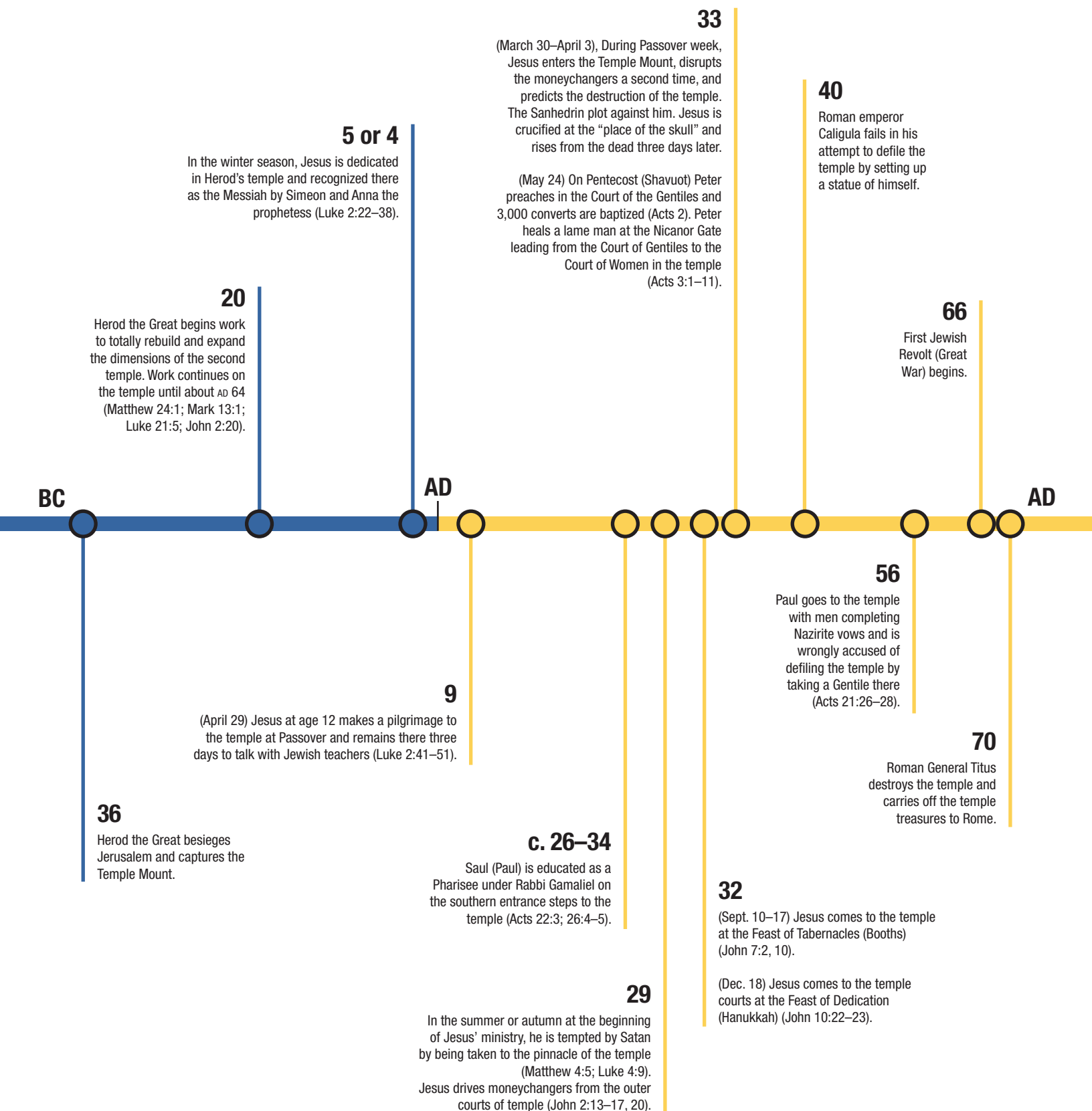
The Jewish defenders held back the Roman assault from the Temple Mount for three weeks. Then, on the ninth of the Jewish month of Av (August), the Romans invaded the temple compound and set fire to it and slaughtered the priests. The Romans chopped down the trees in the area to form a huge bonfire around the temple. This caused the moisture in the temple's limestone blocks to expand and blow the stones apart, collapsing the temple in a single day. Josephus records that the Romans pillaged the temple treasury⁷⁶ and storehouses of ritual vessels. The temple lay completely in ruins, with much of its rubble pushed into the Kidron Valley on the eastern side over the remains of the eastern retaining wall.

The following year, Titus was given a victory procession through the Roman Forum, and the temple vessels were displayed, carried by some of the 700 Jewish slaves paraded before the Emperor Vespasian. The depiction of this event can be seen today in the remains of the Roman Forum etched in one of the reliefs inside the Arch of Titus' Triumph.



Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. This painting shows the climatic events of the ninth of Av, AD 70, when the Roman Tenth Legion stormed the Temple Mount and set fire to the temple. The focus is upon the Great Altar from where, as Josephus records, Jewish priests flung themselves into the fire in vain hope that God would, at this last moment, be moved to deliver the temple which they had believed was immune from destruction. Also in view (lower left) is the plunder of the temple treasures (note the menorah) carried off by the Roman soldiers, a scene later sculpted on the Arch of Titus' Triumph in the Roman Forum. (Painting by Francesco Hayez)

TIME LINE: SECOND TEMPLE (62 BC–AD 70)



ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

Although religious and political concerns have prevented excavation of the temple site, there have been extensive excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount's massive retaining walls and western and southern enclosure walls and gates. These archaeological digs have confirmed the historical testimonies of Josephus and the rabbinical writings about the temple and its destruction.

1. *MIQVA'OT* (RITUAL IMMERSION POOLS)

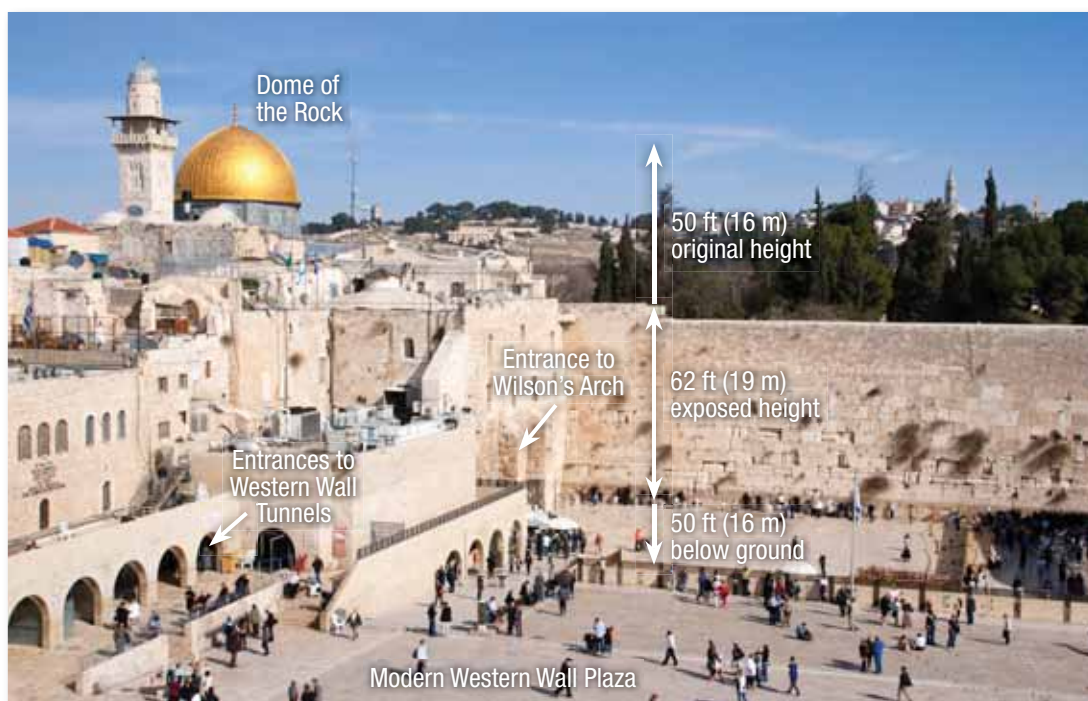
Jews coming to the temple were required to ritually immerse themselves before entering the sacred precincts. To meet this need for purification according to the Law of Moses (Leviticus 11:40; 12:2-6; 15:11), ritual immersion pools or baths (Hebrew *miqva'ot*) were installed around the outside of the Temple Mount. Dozens of these have been uncovered on both the western side of the Temple Mount and particularly the southern entrance to the Temple Mount. (See *Court of the Gentiles* on page 78.)



Small ritual immersion pool located on the south side of the Temple Mount. (Photo courtesy of Kim Walton)

2. THE WESTERN (OR WAILING) WALL

This is one of three existing sections of the vast retaining wall of Herod's temple that has remained intact since the time of the temple's destruction in AD 70. This remnant of wall on the western side of the Temple Mount has gained a special sanctity in Judaism because of its proximity to the site of the ancient Holy of Holies, from which Jewish tradition teaches the divine presence of God never departed. As such, it has been a focal point of prayer for Jews from around the world. Here during the annual commemoration of the temple's destruction known as *Tisha B'Av*, Jews have offered prayers in mourning for national redemption. This practice led to the wall being identified as the "Wailing Wall." Today only 62 feet (19 m) remains exposed above ground. Due to the archaeological work from 1968 to 1998 that gradually exposed the ancient underground street, visitors can now walk along 1,000 feet (305 m) of this wall through what is known as the Western Wall Tunnels.



3. “BEN HACOHEN HAGADOL” SARCOPHAGUS

In 2008 a discovery was made north of Jerusalem of the lid of a stone sarcophagus (coffin) made of hard limestone and engraved with the words in Hebrew: *Ben HaCohen HaGadol* (“son of the high priest”). The lid had been plundered from a nearby Herodian estate where presumably the high priest had resided, and it was used in later Muslim construction that sat on top of houses from the second temple period. This sarcophagus may be identified with one of the high priests who officiated in the temple between the years AD 30–70 (such as Caiaphas, Theophilus Ben Hanan, Simon Ben Boethus, and Hanan Ben Hanan).



Inscription with the name of the son of the high priest

4. ROBINSON’S ARCH

Named after the American scholar Edward Robinson who identified it in 1838, remains were discovered of the monumental arch that supported an immense staircase on the southwestern side of the Temple Mount. This arch was primarily used by the priests to gain private access to the Royal Stoa from the main street that ran alongside the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount. A large assemblage of Herodian period pottery was discovered in the rubble beneath the arch, giving evidence that the area under the arch was part of the marketplace that lined the public street. (See *Robinson’s Arch* on page 74.)

5. PLASTER FRAGMENTS

In the excavations in the Jewish Quarter after 1967, Israeli archaeologists discovered inscribed plaster fragments in a Herodian fill. On these were partial depictions of all three vessels within the Holy Place—the table of the bread of presence, the lampstand, and the altar of incense—as well as the stepping-stone used daily by the priests to reach the lampstand for trimming its wicks.

6. THE ANCIENT STREET LINED WITH SHOPS

The remains of shops lining the Herodian street on the southwestern side of the Temple Mount were revealed in the late 1990s. Archaeologists found scores of coins and other items that gave evidence of commerce. These shops sold sacrificial animals and exchanged coinage (the silver Tyrian shekel) for the temple rituals.



Street Shops at the Southern Western Wall

The remains of the walls that form these shops, which were constructed of dressed stone, were actually openings created by the difference in height between vaulted rooms (that served as the substructure for the street) and a paved plaza parallel to the southern side of the street. Therefore, a street ran above these openings and the spaces below were used as shops, rather than shops being constructed as separate structures. Shops (with their entrances facing south) were also located on the Southern Wall under the staircase that ran alongside this wall and butted into the side of the monumental staircase. It is likely that merchants from these shops had spread their wares up into the Double Gate entrance and were those encountered by Jesus in the “cleansing of the temple” accounts in the Gospels.

7. STONES ON THE TEMPLE MOUNT

In the 1990s when archaeologists uncovered the remains of the public thoroughfare and market alongside the Western Wall, they found hundreds of large shaped stones lying in piles on the ancient street. These were the very building stones of the upper wall that had been thrown down by the Roman soldiers in their assault on the temple on the ninth of the Hebrew month of Av in AD 70. Most of the stones weighed 2 to 4 tons each, but some were in excess of 15 tons, and the force of impact in some places had caved in the large flagstones that formed the street. The stones remain today as a vivid testimony of the temple's destruction as well as the existence of the temple itself. (See *Stones* on page 72.)

8. MONUMENTAL STAIRCASE

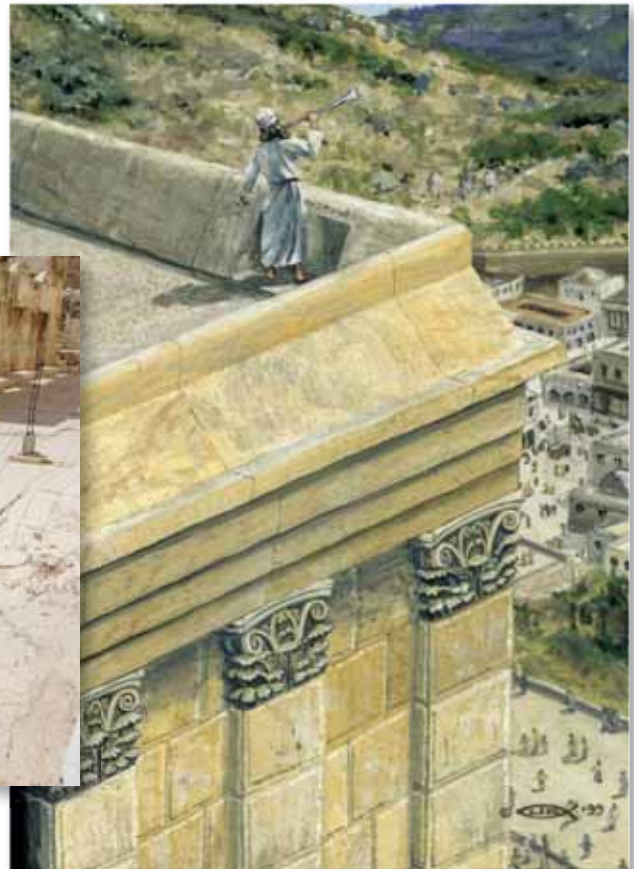
The remains of this grand staircase were uncovered near the Double and Triple Gates. The southern access to this staircase was uncovered deep in the Kidron Valley near the entrance to the second temple-period Pool of Siloam (a Byzantine-period pool was previously identified as this pool until excavations in 2004 uncovered the original lower pool). It is now apparent that this was the main public thoroughfare for worshipers coming to the temple from the pool and from other parts of the city. (See *Monumental Staircase* on page 77.)

9. "PLACE OF TRUMPETING"

In 1969, near Robinson's Arch, there was discovered an ashlar stone about 8 feet long that bore the inscription: "To the place of trumpeting to an[nounce]..." Although the rest of the inscription is missing, it is understood that it described the custom of alerting the Jewish population of the beginning and ending of the Sabbath, a holy day in which no work was to be done. This stone was once the cornerstone of a parapet located on the edge of the portico that ran along top of the wall. The inscription designated the place where the priest was to stand in order to blow the trumpet that signaled those in the marketplace and lower city to prepare for the Sabbath.



Replica of the trumpeting stone. The inscription is shown above in the rectangle. (Photo courtesy of Kim Walton)



The Place of Trumpeting. (Artist: Uwe Beer; Courtesy of Alexander Schick
©www.bibelausstellung.de)





—○— SECTION 4 —○—

*The Modern Temple Mount
and Future Temple*



—○ SECTION 4 —○—

*The Modern Temple Mount
and Future Temple*

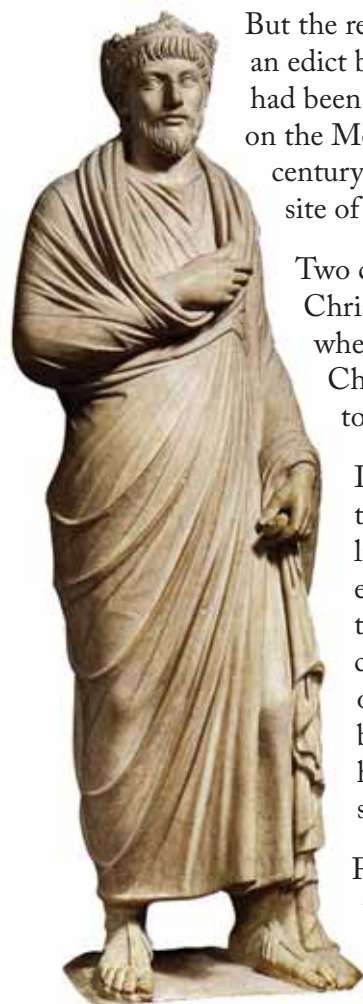
THE TEMPLE MOUNT *AFTER* THE TEMPLE

Early Roman and Byzantine Period

After the Roman destruction of the temple in AD 70, the Jewish people continued to hold onto the hope for the restoration of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple. Initially, the Jewish population in Judea believed that the Roman emperor Hadrian had promised to rebuild the temple. However, in AD 130 Hadrian began building a Roman colony right on top of the ruins of the Jewish city! Two years later, a man named Shimon ben Kosiba led a Jewish Revolt against Rome. He was renamed Bar Kokhba, meaning “son of a star” from the messianic prophecy of Numbers 24:17. He successfully liberated Jerusalem in AD 132 and ruled as king in Jerusalem for the next three years—and he began rebuilding the temple.⁷⁷ It is unclear as to how much restoration of the temple site he was able to achieve, but from coins that he minted depicting the front of the temple and bearing the name of High Priest Elezar, it is believed that he at least rebuilt the altar of burnt offering and reinstituted the sacrificial system.



Bar Kokhba coin showing the facade of the temple.



But the rebuilding effort was short lived. Hadrian recaptured Jerusalem in AD 135 and issued an edict banishing all Jews from Jerusalem on pain of death. Hadrian also destroyed whatever had been rebuilt on the Temple Mount. To make the destruction complete, he built a temple on the Mount to the Roman trinity: Juno, Jupiter, and Minerva. According to the fourth-century Christian scholar Jerome, Hadrian also placed a statue of himself directly over the site of the Holy of Holies.

Two centuries later, in AD 312, the Roman Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity and made Christianity the religion of the empire. However this changed when his nephew Julian succeeded him as emperor. Julian—who had been raised as a Christian but had embraced the former Roman religion—decided to promote a return to paganism.

In an effort to gain Jewish support against Christianity, Julian returned Jerusalem to its former status as a Jewish city and made plans to rebuild the temple. Julian lifted Hadrian's ban, allowing Jews to resettle in the holy city, while his construction engineer drew up plans for the temple. Christians prayed for the reconstruction to stop, and on May 27, 363, the day the work was to begin, an explosion at the construction site killed the workmen and stopped the work. According to historians of the period, an earthquake was responsible for igniting reservoirs of gases trapped below ground or volatile materials that were being used in the building. Christians, however, interpreted it as a sign of divine disfavor toward Julian's plan. Julian died shortly thereafter and the rebuilding project was abandoned.

For the next few centuries, the Temple Mount remained desolate. It is believed that the Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem turned the site into a garbage dump, piling tons of refuse particularly upon the spot where the ancient temple had stood. The gate on the western side that led to the dumping spot was called the Dung Gate, a name it still bears today. However, due to the Temple Mount Sifting Project, recent discoveries of coins, ornamental crucifixes, and fragments of columns found from Jerusalem's Byzantine era (AD 380–638) suggest that Christian worship activities also occurred on the Temple Mount.

Emperor Julian (reigned AD 355–363), known as Julian the Apostate because of his rejection of Christianity.

A final effort to re-establish the temple came near the end of the Byzantine period. In the year 614, the Persians (Sasanian Parthians) invaded Jerusalem and massacred much of its Christian population. Favoring the Jews who had sided with them against the Christians, the Persians gave the Jews control over Jerusalem and plans were made to rebuild the temple. However, the Persians were unable to ignore the Christian majority in the land and Jerusalem was soon returned to Byzantine Christian control, a status secured for the rest of the country by the Emperor Heraclius in AD 629.

Islamic Period and the Dome of the Rock

While Jerusalem was in a period of strife between Jews and Christians, a man named Muhammad was unifying the Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula under the banner of Islam. Shortly after Muhammad's death, one of his successors, the Umayyad Caliph Omar, led his army of Muslim nomadic warriors in the conquest of Jerusalem. With strategic areas around Jerusalem conquered by Muslims, the Byzantine Patriarch Sophronius reluctantly negotiated the city's surrender in AD 638. According to Islamic tradition, Omar requested Sophronius to show him the temple site. When Omar saw the garbage dump on the site, he was appalled that such desecration had taken place on a site so revered by figures mentioned in the Qur'an (such as Abraham, David, and Solomon). It is said that Omar ordered the site to be cleared of garbage, performing an unprecedented act of removing a handful of the refuse himself. Beneath this pile of garbage lay the rock protrusion of Mt. Moriah, upon which he allegedly ordered the building of a "house of prayer."

However no actual structure was built at this site for nearly 60 years until AD 691 when Omar's son built a large wooden building known as the Dome of the Rock (Arabic *Qubbat al-Sakhra*). Omar had demonstrated his conquest of Christianity by praying inside the Christian basilica of Saint Mary built a century earlier by the Emperor Justinian and located at the southern end of the Temple Mount. This act obligated the church to be converted to a mosque. In AD 715 the Al-Aqsa Mosque was built in place of the church. Old photos of mosaics in the foundation of the mosque taken during a renovation in the early twentieth century reveal that it was once the site of the church.

To rival the local Christian architecture, the design of the Dome of the Rock was strikingly similar to Byzantine buildings. The Dome of the Rock was intended to be an architectural expression of the superiority of Islam. Over time the drum and dome inside the shrine were covered with ornate Qur'anic inscriptions stating—in contrast to Christian theology—that God is one and not three, and that Jesus was an apostle of God and not his son.



Entrance to the Temple Mount. The Dome of the Rock is shown in the background. In the mid-twentieth century, the lead roof was replaced with gold anodized aluminum, the gold-colored dome seen today.

(Painting by Gustav Bauernfeind)

From the Crusades to the Modern Era

In the late eleventh century, Europe was faced with a growing threat. Muslim Turks had attacked strategic locations in eastern Europe and controlled much of the Middle East, including Jerusalem. They banned Christian pilgrimages to their sacred sites in Jerusalem and the Holy Land. In response, Pope Urban II in 1095 urged the warring kings of Europe to unite together to defeat the Turks and conquer the Holy Land in what was known as the Crusades.

In 1099, the First Crusade succeeded in establishing Christian control of Jerusalem. The Dome of the Rock was turned into a place of Christian

worship and renamed *Templum Domini*, meaning “the temple of the Lord,” and the Al-Aqsa Mosque became initially a palace for the Crusader kings and later the headquarters for the Knights Templar. Muslims and Jews were permitted to visit the holy sites and pray in certain areas, but access was largely limited to Christians.

After almost a century of Christian rule, the Kurdish Muslim Sultan Saladin laid siege to Jerusalem and defeated the Crusaders in 1187. He expelled them from Jerusalem and tore down a large cross that had been placed on the *Templum Domini* and replaced it with an Islamic Crescent marking the beginning of the conversion of Christian property.

Shortly thereafter, the Third Crusade was launched to regain Jerusalem and was led by Richard the Lionheart. Though successful in defeating Saladin in several key battles, Richard did not ultimately capture Jerusalem. This Crusade ended with a truce allowing Jerusalem to remain under Muslim control, with the provision that Christian pilgrims be allowed to travel to the Holy Land, though not to the Temple Mount. Richard’s decision not to attack Jerusalem eventually led to the Fourth Crusade six years later to recapture Jerusalem, but this Crusade also failed, not even making it to Jerusalem. During this period, Jews were allowed access to an exposed outer remnant of the temple compound’s retaining wall known as the Western Wall. They also found access to a secret passageway beneath this area for prayer that was closer to the place of the Holy of Holies.

In 1516 the Ottoman Turks assumed control of Jerusalem. Four years later, the Ottoman Turk Suleiman, known as “Suleiman the Magnificent,” became Caliph. He rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem which had suffered years of assault and dismantling during the Crusades. He made improvements to the Al-Aqsa Mosque and to the Dome of the Rock. Restrictions of non-Muslim access to the Temple Mount were strengthened under Ottoman rule. Several court cases from this period record the punishment of Jews who violated these boundaries. The Ottoman Empire remained in control of Jerusalem for the next 400 years, up to the end of World War I in the early twentieth century.



Richard the Lionheart on his way to Jerusalem in 1190 on the Third Crusade.

(Painting by James William Glass)

MUHAMMAD'S "DISTANT SHRINE"

Over the centuries Islam has come to claim the Temple Mount—which they refer to as *Al-Haram al-Sharif* ("Noble Sanctuary")—as one of their holiest sites. This is done on the basis of the account of Muhammad's Night Journey in the Qur'an.⁷⁸ In the Night Journey, which according to tradition occurred in approximately AD 620, the angel Gabriel takes Muhammad on a celestial horse to visit a "distant shrine."

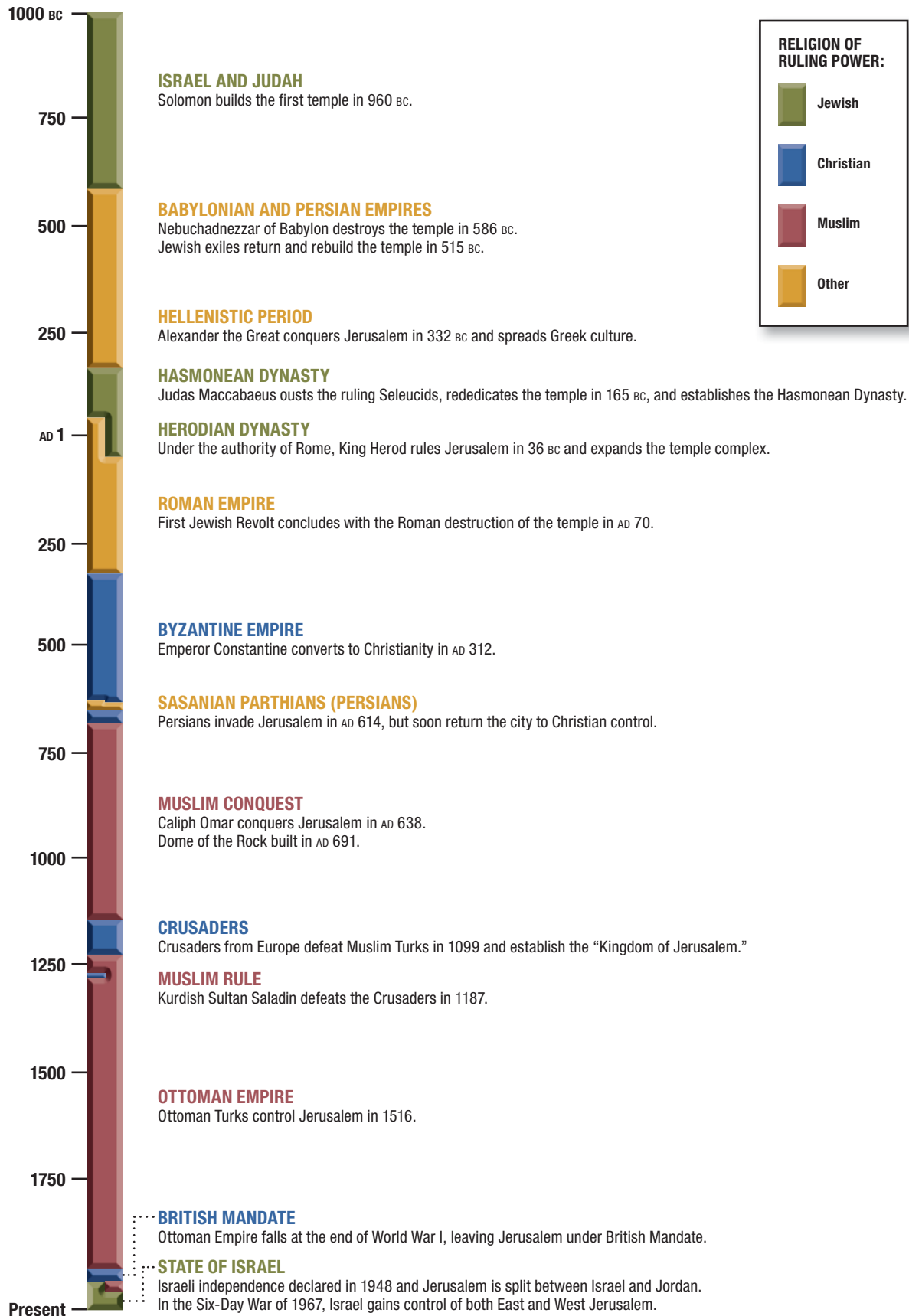
Through the early Islamic period neither Jerusalem nor its Temple Mount were ever regarded as a place of Islamic pilgrimage, a fact not surprising since Jerusalem is not mentioned by name once in the Qur'an. However in the twelfth century, the Kurdish warlord Saladin mounted a large propaganda campaign claiming that the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem was indeed the "distant shrine" to where Muhammad had flown in his Night Journey. The fact that there was also a mosque at the site called *Al-Aqsa* (meaning "distant" or "farthest") was used to make this claim certain and to justify an attack on the Christian crusaders who then controlled Jerusalem. Saladin's goal was to provoke a *jihadic* (holy war) fervor in the separate Muslim tribes to get them to unify in the siege of the city.

In this way, the Night Journey eventually came to be associated with Jerusalem. The large stone that lies in the center of the Dome of the Rock is believed by Muslims to be the spot where Muhammad ascended to heaven with Gabriel at the end of the Night Journey account. Every site connected with the *Al-Haram al-Sharif* (the Temple Mount) was deemed sacred Islamic property that had to be administered by an Islamic trust (*Waqf*). This includes, even today, the traditional Jewish site of prayer, the Western Wall, which Muslims call *Al-Buraq* wall after the tradition that Muhammad tied his celestial horse *Al-Buraq* at this spot.

Sixteenth-century painting of Muhammad's Night Journey. The prophet is depicted riding *Al-Buraq*, his celestial steed. In this painting Muhammad's face is veiled in keeping with Islamic tradition of forbidding depictions of the prophet.



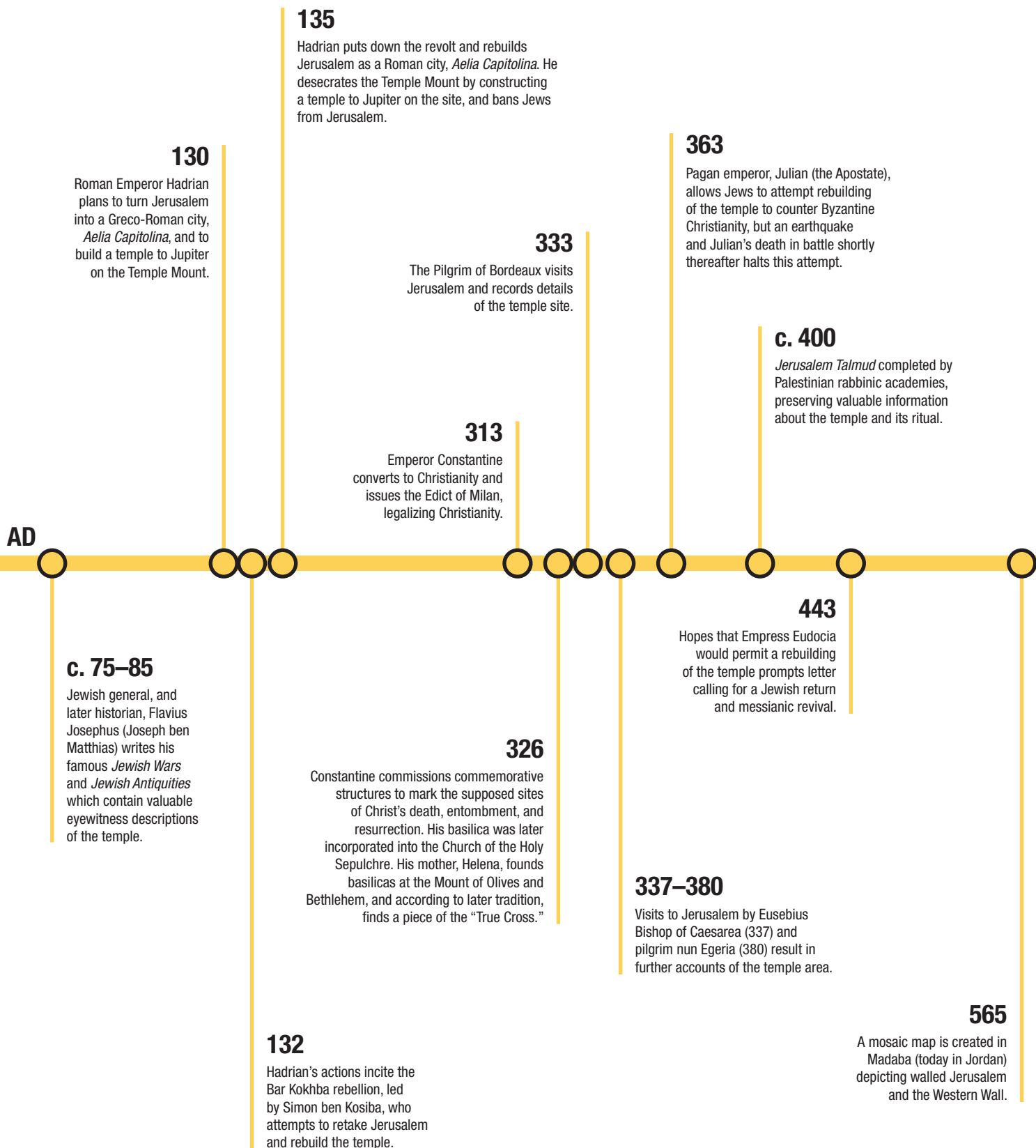
Jerusalem Time Line





Jews praying at the Western Wall. (Painting by Gustav Bauernfeind)

TIME LINE: THE TEMPLE MOUNT (AD 71–1034)



614

Persian conquest of Jerusalem, with the Jews as their allies, leads to Jewish hopes to regain Jerusalem from the Persians and to rebuild the temple.

617

Persia restores Jerusalem to the Christians.

638

Muslims conquer Jerusalem and Caliph Omar Ibn el-Khattab is shown the Temple Mount and the site of the temple (Rock) by Jerusalem Patriarch Sophronios, and finds it covered in centuries of dung and debris.

640

Caliph Omar Ibn el-Khattab cleans the Temple Mount and builds a mosque.

628

Emperor Heraclius conquers Persians and retakes Jerusalem.

622

Muhammad's flight "hijrah" from Mecca to Medina. This is Year 1 of the Islamic calendar.

c. 620

The Islamic prophet Muhammad is believed to have made his Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and to have ascended to the seventh heaven from the site of the holy rock (*al-Sakhra*).

715

The Muslim Caliph al-Walid completed the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the southern portion of Temple Mount. This is the Al-Aqsa *al-Qadimeh* ("eastward") underneath the present structure.

691

Muslim Caliph Abd al-Malik Ibn-Marwan completes the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount nearly 70 years after Muhammad's *Hijrah* (flight from Mecca to Medina).

c. 921

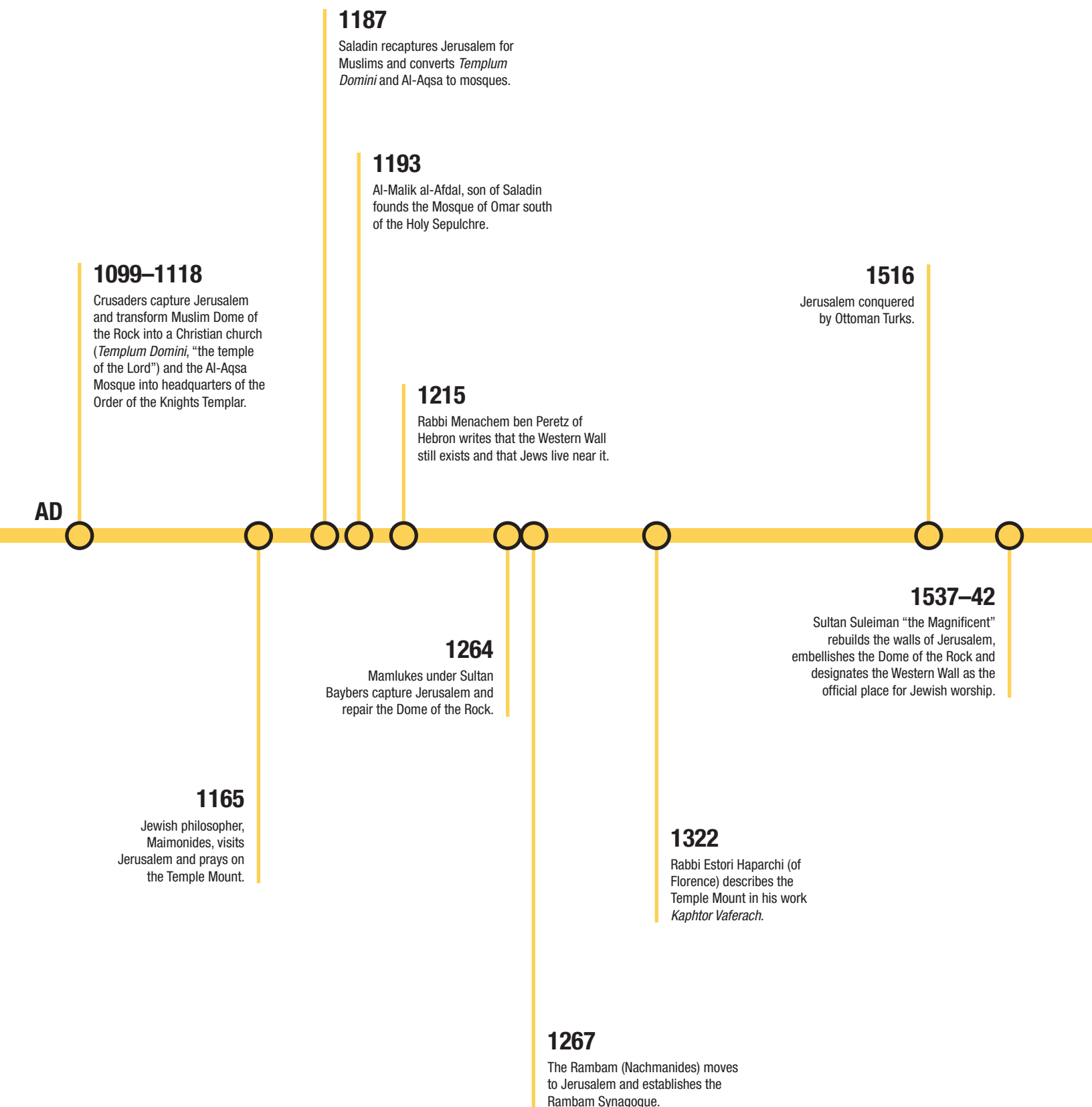
Rabbi Aharon ben Meir (Gaon of Israel) writes that Jews, whose worship is usually limited to synagogue buildings, are permitted a yearly procession through Jerusalem to the Mt. of Olives.

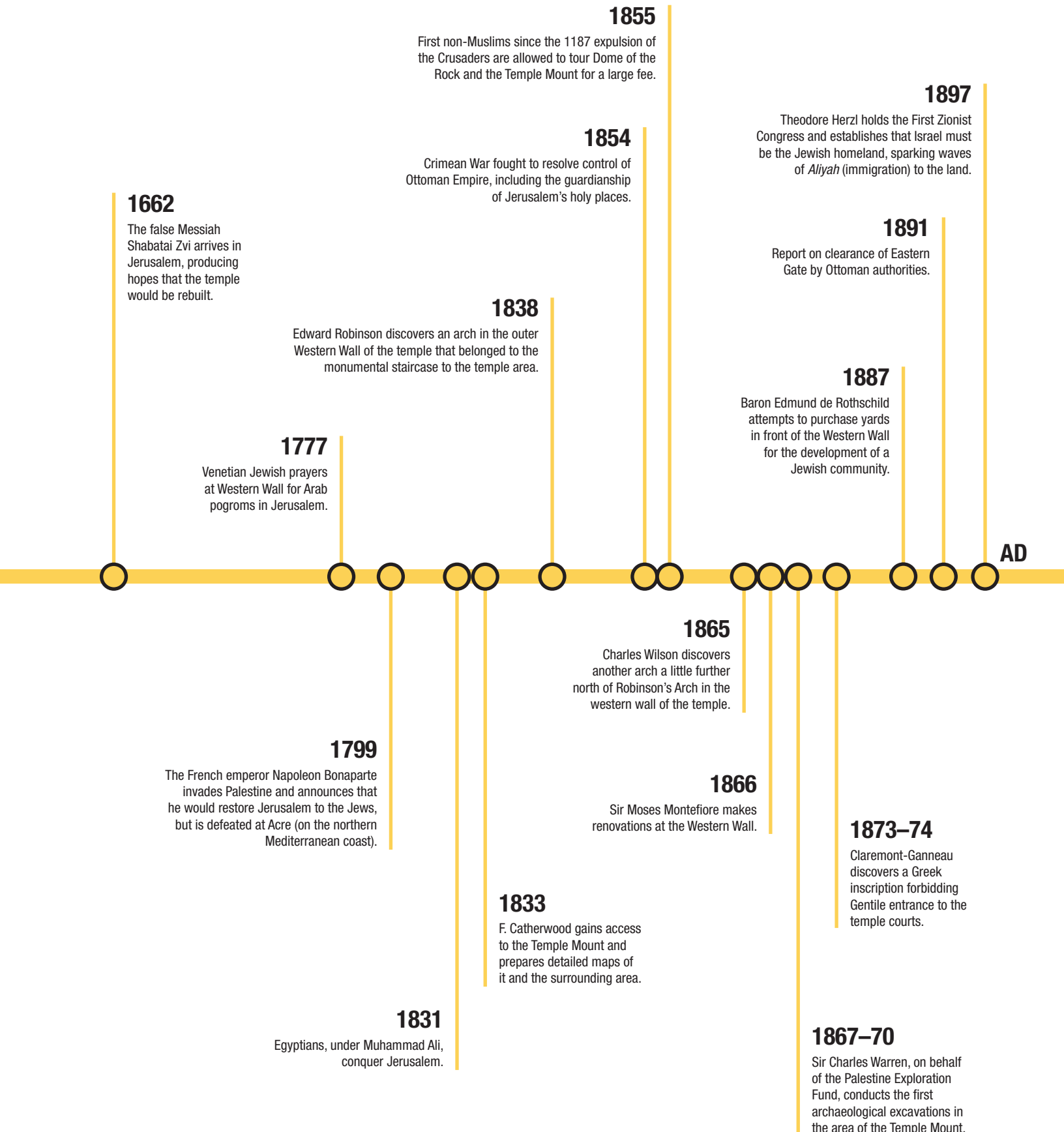
1034

After earthquakes damage the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Fatimid Imam 'Ali al-Zahir rebuilds it.

AD

TIME LINE: THE TEMPLE MOUNT (1035–1897)





THE TEMPLE MOUNT TODAY

Following World War I, the Ottoman Empire collapsed, leaving the British Empire in control of the Holy Land. Jerusalem came under British Mandate although the Temple Mount remained under Islamic jurisdiction and Jews were allowed limited access to the Western Wall. In 1948 the British Mandate ended, the State of Israel was declared, and war separated Jerusalem into a western section under Israeli control and an eastern section (containing the Temple Mount) under Jordanian control. This separation continued until the Six-Day War of 1967 in which Israel gained control of the eastern section of Jerusalem and reunited the city under Jewish sovereignty. However, the State of Israel returned jurisdiction for the administration of the religious sites

on the Temple Mount to the Islamic Trust (*Waqf*). Today, Israel controls the Temple Mount and opens it to all tourists, and the Islamic Trust controls the religious sites—such as the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa Mosque—and limits access to these sites to Muslims only.



Dome of the Rock

Islamic Denial of the Temple's Existence

Following the Six-Day War in 1967, Muslims lost control of Jerusalem and its Islamic holy sites to the Israelis. This land, held by Islam for 1,300 years, came under the jurisdiction of a non-Islamic entity. This loss of sacred

Muslim property was viewed as a crime against the Muslim world that needed to be avenged through the prescribed means of *jihad* (holy war). Even though Israel returned jurisdiction to the Islamic Trust, the Temple Mount still remained under the sovereignty of the independent State of Israel. Since then, there has been a demand for a return to full Islamic control, not only of the Temple Mount, but also of the city of Jerusalem. This has given rise to political organizations like the Palestine Liberation Organization (which became the Palestine National Authority).



Interior of the Dome of the Rock

The propaganda that accompanied the Palestinian *Intifada* (“uprising”) beginning in 1987 included an official Islamic denial that a Jewish temple existed and that Jerusalem was ever a Jewish city. Even though Jewish archaeological remains have been uncovered all around the Temple Mount and throughout the city, those who deny the temple interpret the finds as “pre-Islamic,” being either Roman or Christian, but not Jewish. They claim that interpreting these remains as Jewish is simply to justify occupation of Islamic holy sites and is part of a deliberate attempt by the State of Israel to destroy the Muslim holy places and rebuild the Jewish temple.

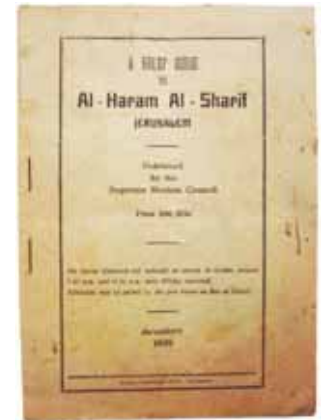
However, this denial of the Jewish temple is a recent phenomenon. In the English edition of a guidebook to the Temple Mount written by the Islamic authorities in Jerusalem entitled *A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif Jerusalem* published in 1924 (and unchanged in all later editions through the 1950s), the following declarations are made concerning the Haram (“holy site”):

“The site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest (perhaps from pre-historic) times. Its identity with the site of Solomon’s Temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to the universal belief, on which ‘David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings’.”⁷⁹

“In the west wall of the chamber [beneath the south-east corner of the Haram], a door opens into a staircase descending to Solomon’s Stables. This is a vast subterranean chamber.... It dates probably as far back as the construction of Solomon’s Temple. According to Josephus, it was in existence and was used as a place of refuge by the Jews at the time of the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 A.D.”⁸⁰

Even though the location of Hadrian’s temple is still debated, the guidebook goes on to state that the late Greco-Roman marble columns inside the Dome of the Rock were taken from Hadrian’s temple of Jupiter.⁸¹ This statement affirms that the Roman emperor—who ended the Second Jewish Revolt and punished the Jewish people by renaming Jerusalem and plowing the Temple Mount with salt—had indeed built a pagan temple, which history records was on the site of the Jewish temple. This official Muslim publication reveals that the Haram was clearly understood to have been the site of a Byzantine Christian Church honoring Jesus’ infancy (at the temple). It states: “the two rows of massive columns with capitals inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque were taken from Justinian’s basilica⁸²... (probably on the present site of al-Aqsa)⁸³... under the Haram is a chamber with a niche believed in early times to have been the *Cradle of Christ*.”⁸⁴

This document provides evidence to show that despite the present public denial of the historicity of the Haram as the Jewish Temple Mount, Islam did not hold this opinion for most of its existence.



A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif Jerusalem, 1935 edition



Interior of the Al-Aqsa Mosque. The white marble columns are believed to be from the sixth-century basilica built by Emperor Justinian at this site. The basilica had been built to honor Jesus’ infancy at the Jewish temple.

The Temple Mount Gates

There are 11 open gates that service the Temple Mount and 9 sealed gates. Of the 11 open gates, only one, the Moors Gate, is allowed to be used by non-Muslims. Most of the open gates have historical significance only within Islam, but the sealed gates all have some historical connection to the ancient Jewish Temple Mount.

THE OPEN GATES

- **Tribe's Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Asbat*), located at the north-eastern corner of the Temple Mount.
- **Gate of Forgiveness** (Arabic *Bab al-Huttab*), located on the north side.
- **Dark Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Atim*), located on the north side.
- **Ghawanima Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Ghawanima*), located on the north-western corner.
- **Inspector's Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Majlis; Bab al-Nazer*), also known as the Council Gate, located on the western side.
- **Iron Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Hadid*), located on the western side, near the "Little Western Wall," a small extension within a residential area of the Western Wall.
- **Cotton Merchant's Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Qattanin*), the closest of the open gates on the Western Wall to the temple site. During the nineteenth century this gate served as a place of prayer for Jews of Jerusalem. This gate is used at times for non-Muslim exit from the Temple Mount.
- **Ablution Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Matarah*), located on the Western Wall.
- **Tranquility Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Salam*), located on the western side.
- **Gate of the Chain** (Arabic *Bab al-Silsileh*), located on the western side. Some scholars have thought this gate to be the location of the second temple period Coponius Gate.
- **Moors Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Magharbeh*), also known as the Mugrabi Gate or Moroccans' Gate, located on the western side. This gate was built over part of the second temple period gate known as Barclay's Gate. During the Islamic period, the external facade of Barclay's Gate was covered and the ground outside the Temple Mount was raised above the lintel of the gate. Around the time of Saladin (twelfth century), but perhaps earlier, this gate was built in the western wall above the level of the ancient Barclay's Gate. This is the only entrance to the Temple Mount permitted to non-Muslims.



Gate of Forgiveness (also called Gate of Remission) guarded by police officers.



Moors Gate, the only gate open to non-Muslims.

THE SEALED GATES

- Golden Gate** (Arabic *Bab al-Zahabi*) is located near the northern end of the eastern wall of the Temple Mount. It may have been built in the sixth century AD as part of Justinian I's building program or by the first Muslims to repair the wall in the seventh century, the Umayyad Caliphs, but the present gate owes its form to the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman who sealed it in 1541. However, within the interior of the gate is a vaulted ceiling, arches, and columns that date to the Byzantine period, and some Herodian remains have been identified in pilasters on the outside of the inner section of the gate. Remains of a section of an Herodian column was observed by Charles Warren in the mid-nineteenth century, and an early double-arched structure was discovered in 1978 below ground, but it is uncertain whether it is the top of a gate or part of an arch supporting another structure. The outside face of the sixteenth century Golden Gate has a sealed double entrance that leads to the two vaulted halls. These two gates are known as the Gate of Mercy (Arabic *Bab al-Rahma*) and the Gate of Repentance (Arabic *Bab al-Taubah*).
- Gate of the Funerals** is located on the eastern wall just south of the Golden Gate. Some rabbis have claimed that it is built over the site of the ancient Eastern (Shushan Gate) since it is almost directly opposite the Dome of the Rock which they consider the site of the temple.
- Bridge Gate** is located toward the south end of the eastern wall. This gate formerly led to the Temple Mount by a flight of steps. The portal of the gate is visible from inside the Muslim Haram.
- Horse Gate** is located on the eastern wall to the south of the Bridge Gate. This once was the entrance into the underground areas of Solomon's Stables (part of the passageway from the Triple Gate) from the east side. Solomon's Stables today is the site of the underground Al-Marwani Mosque.
- Single Gate** is located along the southern wall. It once led to the area of the Temple Mount known as Solomon's Stables from the south side.
- Double Gate and Triple Gate (Huldah Gates)** (Arabic *Bab al-Thulathe*) are located in the southern wall. They are now sealed, being bricked-up in the Islamic period. The Double Gate can only partially be seen, having a visible part of the Herodian lintel, but not in its original position. When the temple stood, the Double Gate was used by the public, while the Triple Gate was used by the priests for access to the Temple Mount and for storage. Although the ancient Huldah Gates were located inside the Temple Mount, the two sets of outer gates that led to them, the Double and Triple Gates, are sometimes referred to as the Huldah Gates.
- Royal Gate**, located on the southwestern end of the western wall. Its name is a reminder of the Royal Stoa that was at this location.



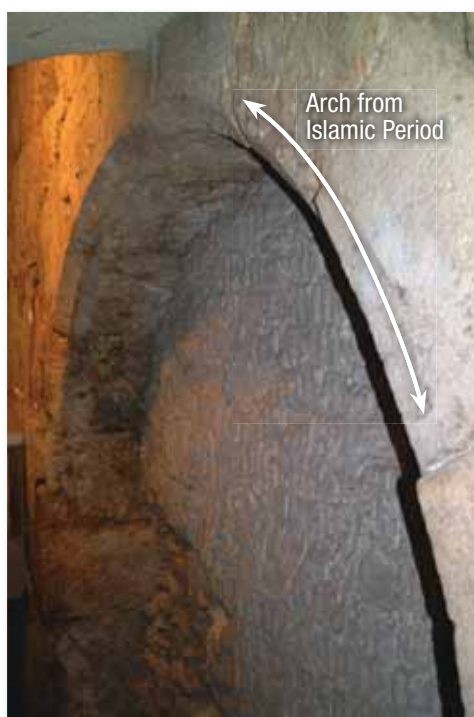
Golden Gate on the eastern side of the Temple Mount. The northern archway (right) is called the Gate of Repentance and the southern archway (left) is the Gate of Mercy.

- Barclay's Gate** is located in the Western Wall under the left side of the Moors (Mugrabi) Gate. Part of the doorposts and lintel of the Herodian gate is visible from the within the women's prayer area. This gate received its name from James Barclay, the American Consul in Jerusalem in the mid-nineteenth century who discovered it from within the Temple Mount. In the Islamic period, the gate was dedicated to Muhammad's celestial horse Al-Buraq, and the gate was blocked with stones at the end of the tenth century. The interior gate room is used as a seminary for Islamic students. Some scholars have identified this gate as the Coponius Gate from the second temple period.



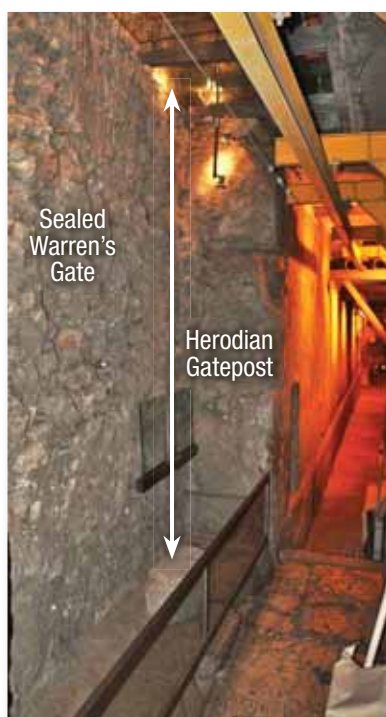
Barclay's Gate. The large square stone shown here is part of the lintel of Barclay's Gate. A lintel is a horizontal support across the top of a gateway. (Baker Photo Archive)

- Warren's Gate**, located about 120 feet (40 m) north of Wilson's Arch and inside the lower preserved portion of the Western Wall (underground access today is through the Western Wall tunnel). This gate was one of the four gates mentioned by Josephus that were entrances from the western retaining wall. It received its name from the nineteenth-century British explorer Charles Warren whose team first discovered it, but its location was lost and only rediscovered in the early 1980s. The arch of the lintel



Upper arch portion of Warren's Gate.

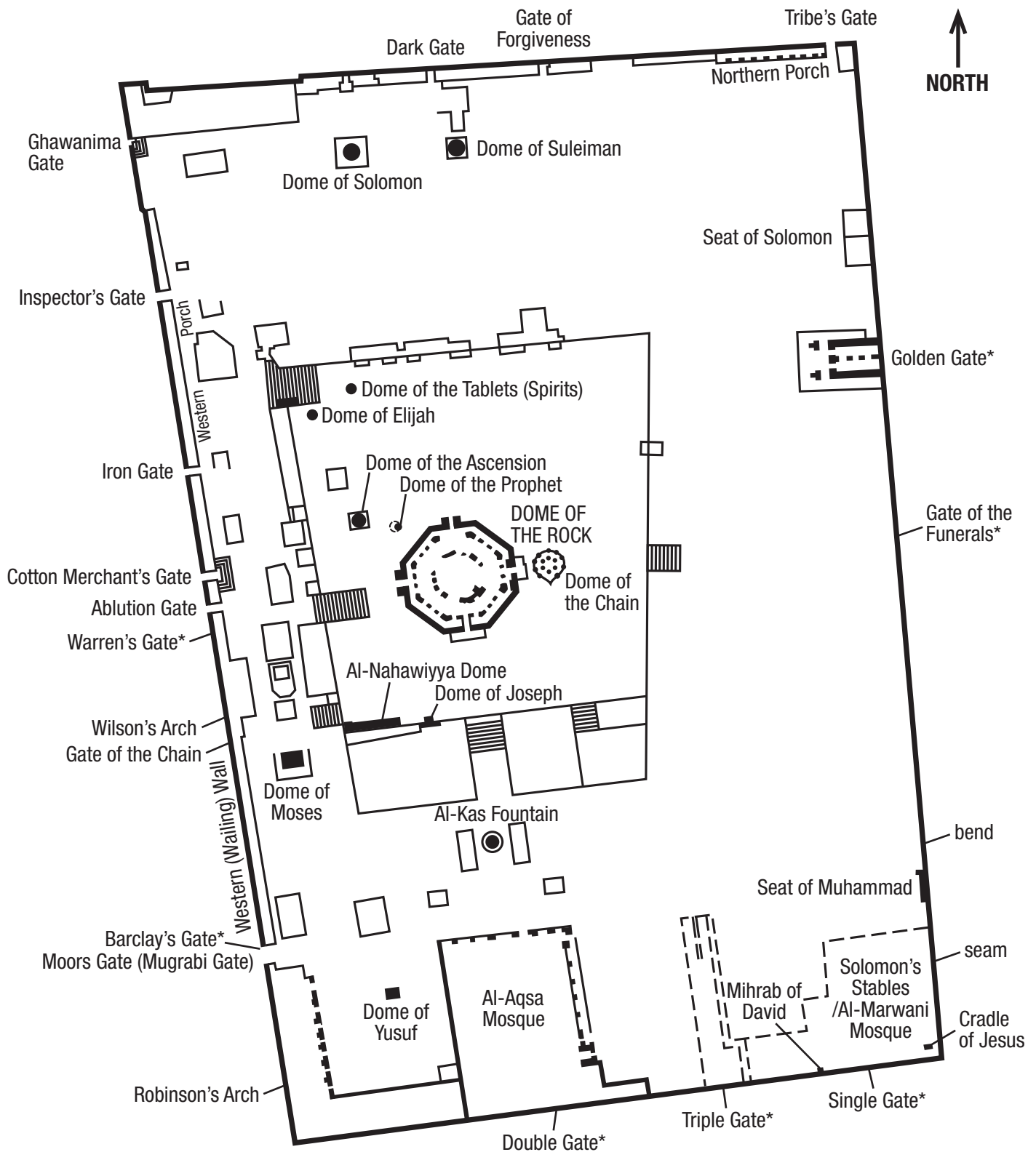
(Baker Photo Archive)



Lower portion of Warren's Gate

of this gate is Islamic, but its gatepost as well as the interior is all Herodian. This was the entrance nearest to the Court of the Priests and the Temple Court and therefore probably served the priests in bringing wood, sacrifices, and other materials to the temple. This gate was opened shortly after it was rediscovered by Jewish rabbis who were searching for the ark of the covenant, but because the gate was near the underground area beneath the Dome of the Rock, Muslim riots forced the Israeli government to close its access.

Plan of the Temple Mount Today



The Tranquility Gate is located on the western side. The Bridge Gate, Horse Gate, and Royal Gate are ancient gates whose location is uncertain.

Old City of Jerusalem Today



The Old City of Jerusalem is located in East Jerusalem. Ottoman Suleiman the Magnificent built the existing Old City walls in the sixteenth century. The State of Israel captured East Jerusalem (including the Old City) in the Six-Day War of 1967, unifying all of Jerusalem. The Old City is separated into four neighborhoods: Christian, Armenian, Muslim, and Jewish. (Armenians settled in Jerusalem in the fourth century.)

Locating the Site of the Temple

Ever since the Roman destruction of the second temple in AD 70, Orthodox Jews have prayed three times daily the words: "May it be Thy will that the temple be speedily rebuilt in our own time." With the return of the Temple Mount to Jewish control in 1967, many Jews believed it was a sign that the time was near. Some rabbis made plans to locate the site of the ancient temple and design a new temple.

Orthodox Jews have different opinions about when and how the third temple should be built.

- One school of thought believes that the temple cannot be rebuilt in a secular state, but will descend in fire from heaven completely constructed after a religious government is established with the coming of the Messiah and the Age of Redemption.
- A second school of thought holds that the Torah (particularly in Exodus 25:8) obligates the Jewish people to rebuild the temple whenever it becomes possible to do so.

In order to build the temple, the exact location of the former two temples must be correctly identified, because the space itself has remained sacred for Judaism.

The question of entering the Temple Mount also presents issues regarding ritual purity. Since a Jew cannot enter the place where the Temple previously stood in a state of defilement, the entire Temple Mount is considered off limits for many groups of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox Jews. This defilement will continue, according to these groups, until the ceremony of the red heifer can be performed. Thus several attempts have been made to locate this heifer so that the necessary ritual purification can take place. Until that time, the risk of unknowingly entering a sacred space makes the entire Temple Mount off-limits. (See *Red Heifer* on page 75.)

The issue of rebuilding the temple has been at the forefront of the Middle East conflict. Many violent riots have taken place on and around the Temple Mount and spread throughout the country. Despite repeated attempts by Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate terms for the site, all efforts have failed and rigid demands have further polarized both parties. The Temple Mount remains the most volatile acreage on earth.

A man waves the Palestinian flag while thousands of activists march in Jerusalem for Palestinian independence and control of East Jerusalem (July 15, 2011).

(©Ryan Rodrick Beiler/Shutterstock.com)



Orthodox Jewish man prays at the Western Wall.
(©Mikhail Levit/Shutterstock.com)



While other parts of ancient Jerusalem have been buried under many layers of debris and buildings, the Temple Mount platform has been preserved down through the centuries. But where exactly on the present 35-acre Temple Mount stood the temple itself?

The political reality is that the Islamic authorities forbid any access to the site for archaeological investigation and confirmation. Nevertheless, enough evidence has been gathered to come to a reliable idea of the location of the temple based on: (1) survey reports from nineteenth-century British explorers; (2) Israeli excavations below the Temple Mount since 1967; (3) occasional penetrations on the Temple Mount by the Islamic authorities for repairs; and (4) the recovery of archaeological debris from the Islamic construction of a mosque in the area of Solomon's Stables.



The large rock inside the Dome of the Rock. (Photo by Paul Streber)

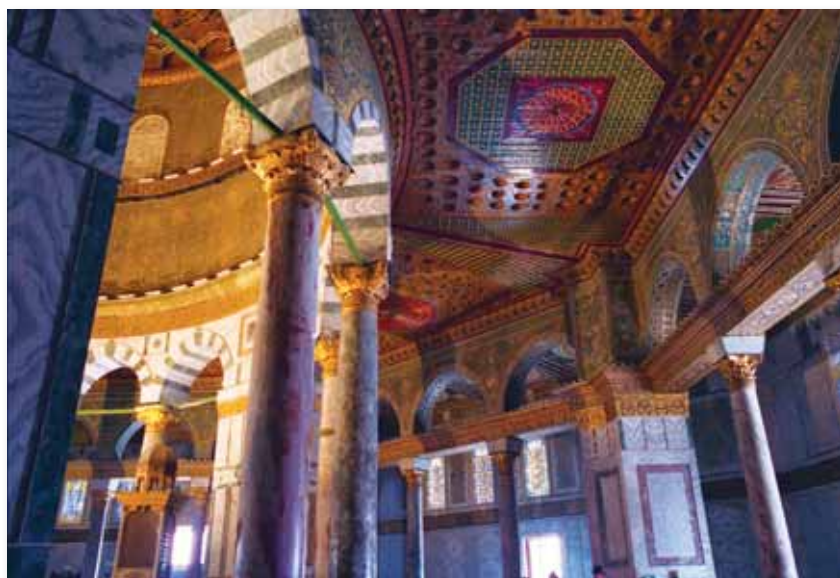
There are three main theories about the exact location of the temple. One theory put forth by Tel-Aviv architect Tuvia Sagiv, says that the temple was situated at the southwestern corner of the platform near where the Al-Aqsa Mosque is today. He also suggests from surveys of this southern area based on ground-penetrating radar probes and infrared thermographic scans, that traces of underground structures indicate the presence of vaults, such as would be expected beneath the temple.

A second theory is from Hebrew University physicist Asher Kaufmann who concludes that the temple was built on the northwestern corner of the platform about 330 feet (100 m) from the Muslim Dome of the Rock. He believes that bedrock identifiable within a small cupola at this site was the Foundation Stone within the Holy of Holies.

A third theory says that the temple stood exactly where the Dome of the Rock is today. Early research by Benjamin Mazar, the Israeli archaeologist who directed the excavations at the western and southern walls of the Temple Mount, and particularly Leen Ritmeyer who served as chief architect for the excavations, concluded that the original 500-cubit-square Temple Mount from the biblical period could be located from clues in the eastern

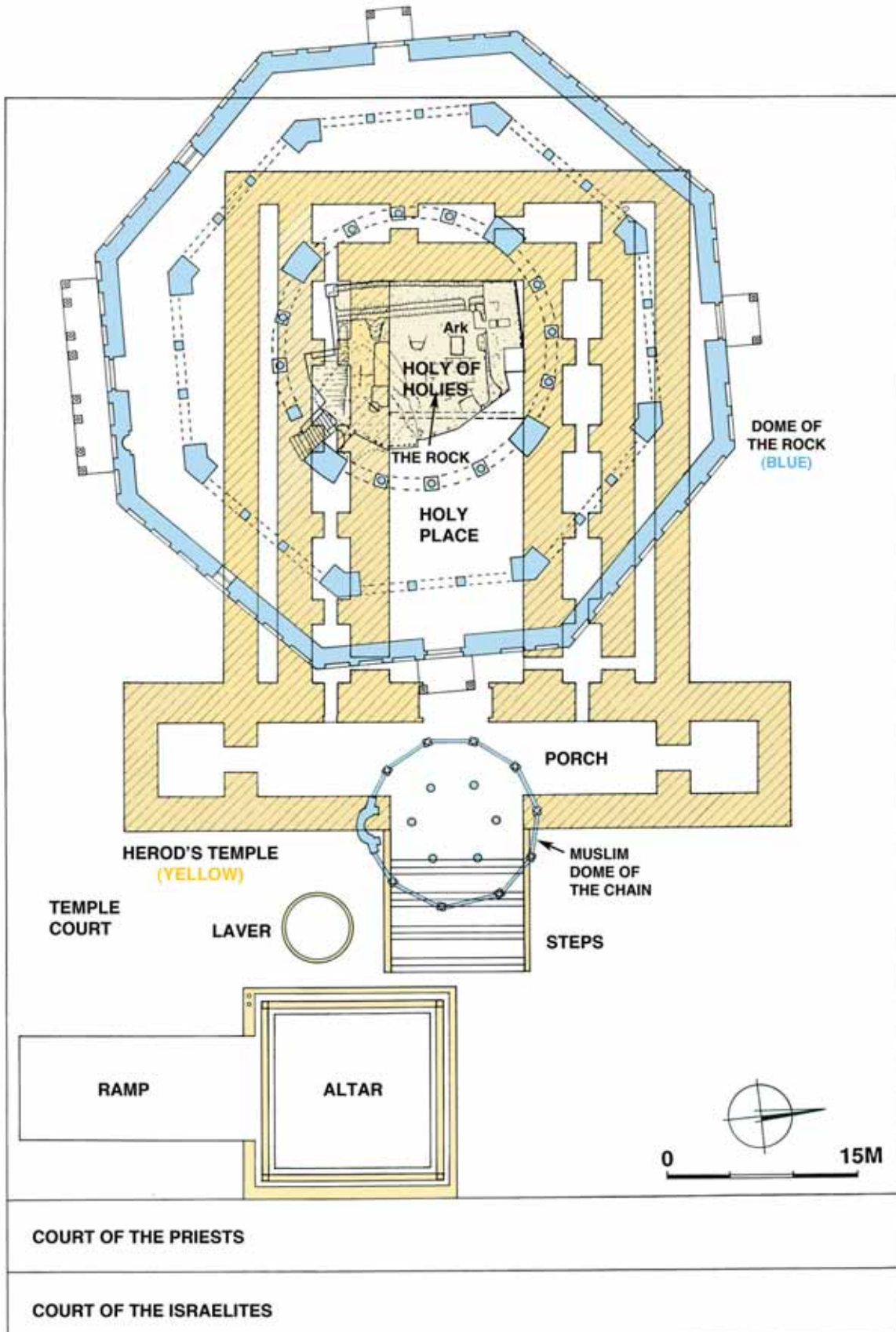
wall of the Temple Mount that reveal pre-Herodian and Herodian additions, and existing remains on the Temple Mount. It was also possible to determine the site of the temple from a study of the arrangement of the temple's courts, which according to Ritmeyer could only be in the central part of the platform. (See Ritmeyer's *Dome of the Rock and Herod's Temple Comparison* on page 125.)

Each of these theories place the temple either in the south, north, or central portion of the Temple Mount platform, but the exact location will only be finally proved once archaeological excavation can take place on the Temple Mount.

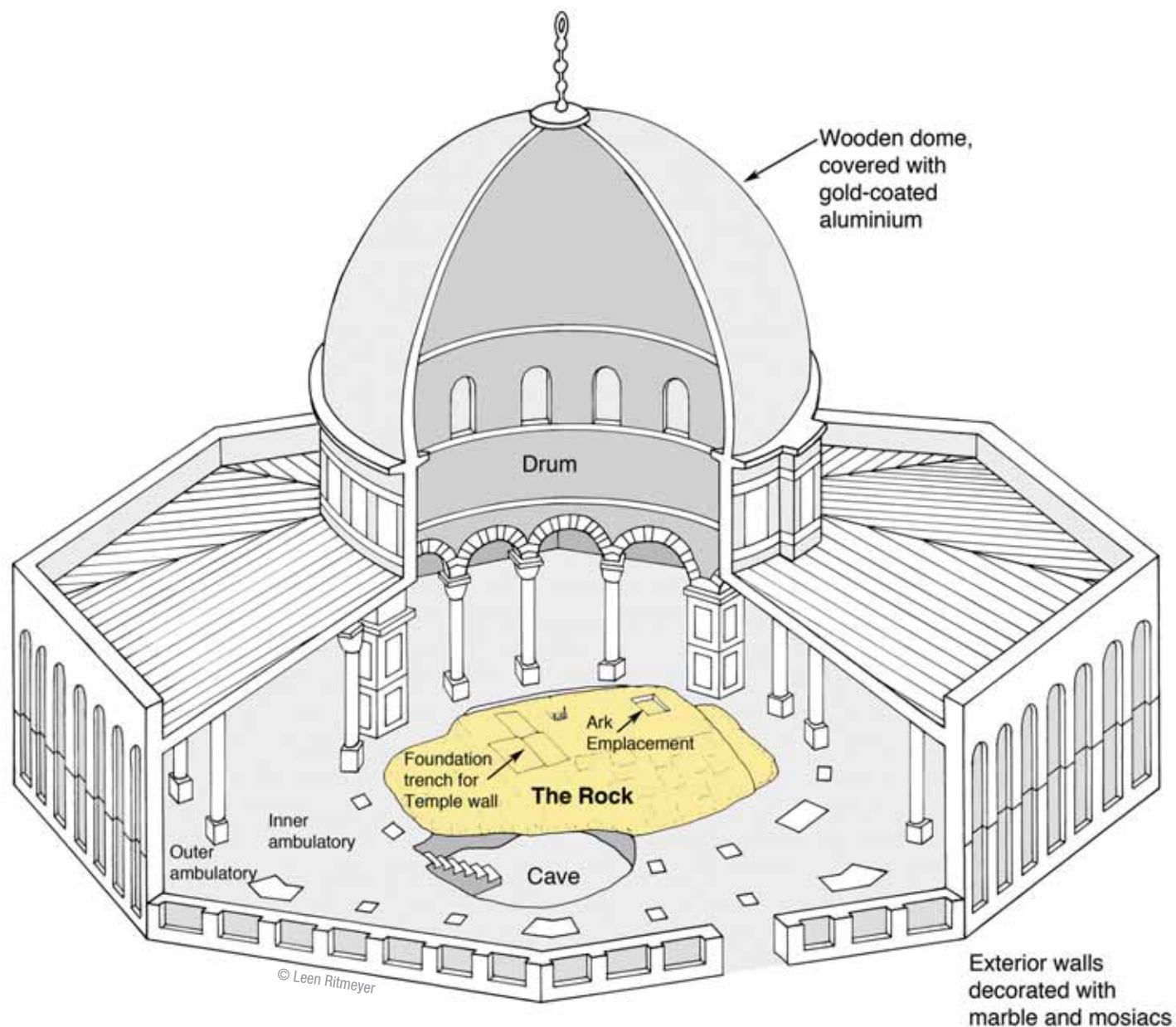


Ornamented walkways inside the Dome of the Rock. (Photo by Paul Streber)

Herod's Temple & Dome of the Rock Comparison



Cross Section of the Dome of the Rock



This illustration by Leen Ritmeyer shows how the foundation trench for the temple walls is still discernable in the large rock inside the Dome of the Rock. In order to lay rectangular stones on the rock, flat areas needed to be created so that the stones would stand perfectly horizontal. Even though the stones have disappeared, these flat areas (foundation trenches) can still be detected.

This rock, according to Jewish tradition, is the place from which God created the world, and according to the Bible, the place where Abraham brought his son Isaac to offer him as a burnt offering on Mt. Moriah. In the first temple period, the ark of the covenant sat within the Holy of Holies on top of this rock, the proposed location indicated in the drawing as a rectangular indentation in which the bottom of the ark was set. The ark was placed in this indentation in order to prevent the ark from shifting when the high priest used its poles to direct his approach to the mercy seat of the ark.

View of the Temple Mount from the Southwest

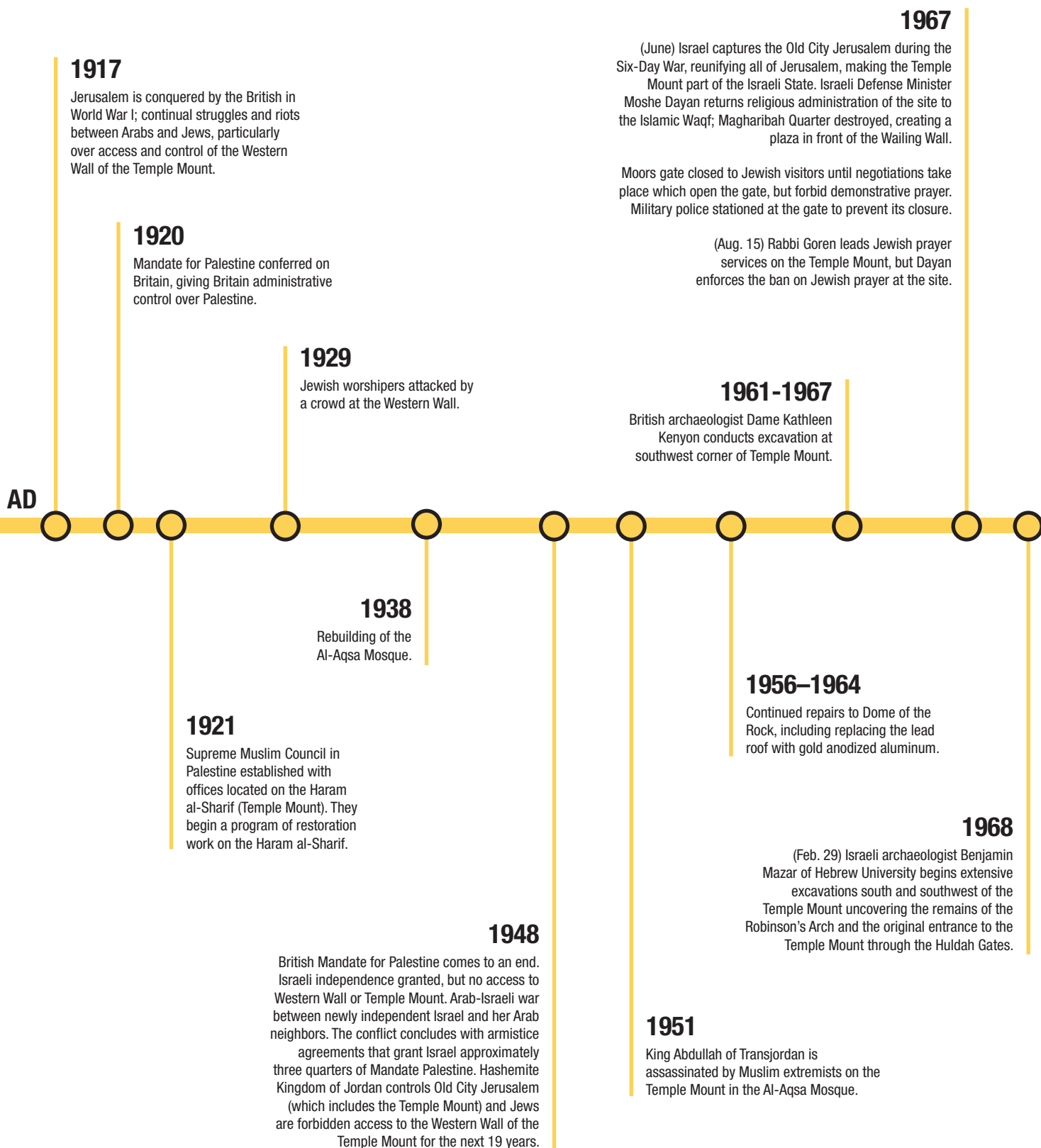


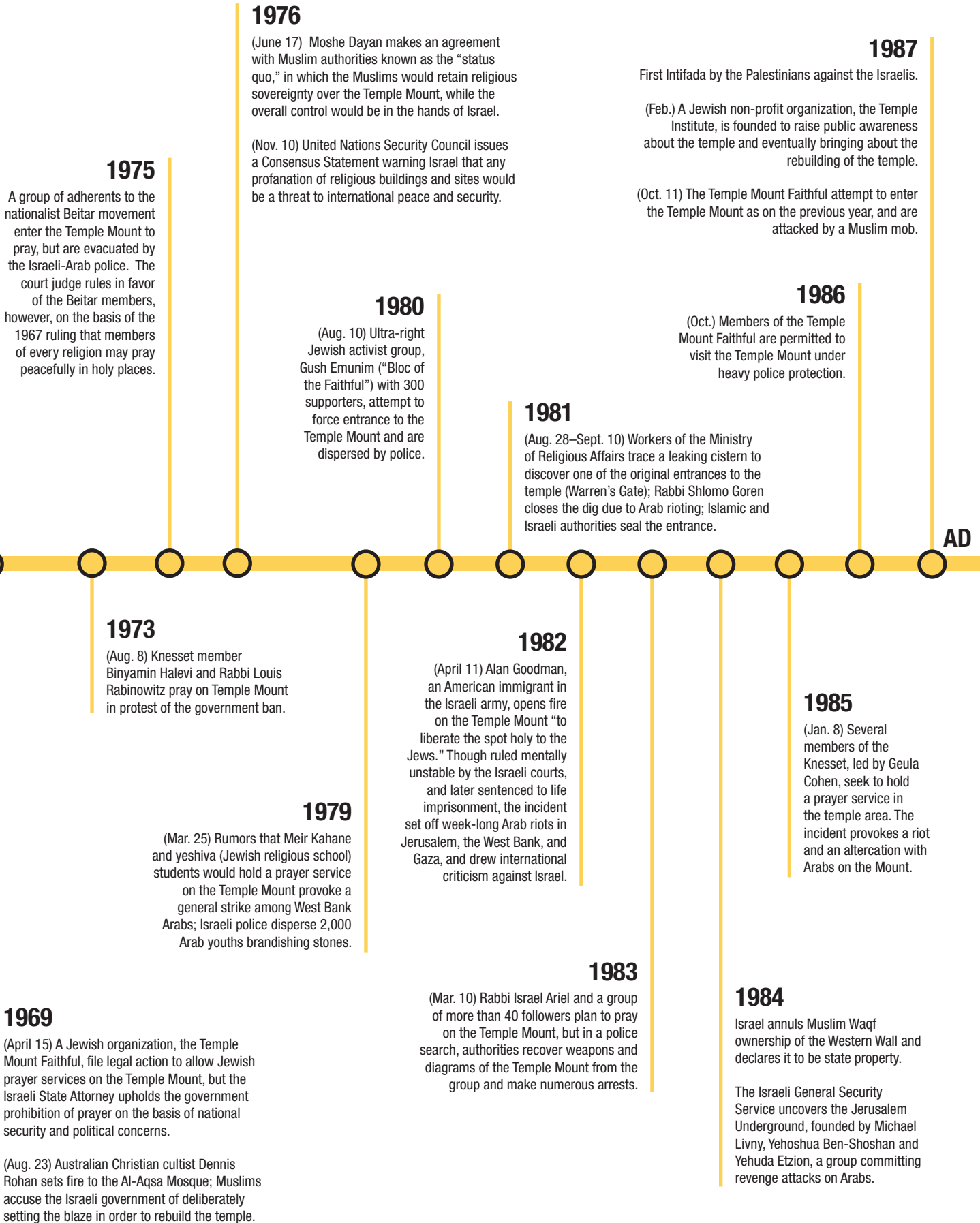
© Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

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|--|--|
| 1. Kidron Valley | 8. Al-Aqsa Mosque |
| 2. Golden Gate (sealed) | 9. Remains of Robinson's Arch |
| 3. Dome of the Chain | 10. Old City Walls |
| 4. Dome of the Rock | 11. Moors Gate (the only gate open to non-Muslims) |
| 5. Solomon's Stables/Al-Marwani Mosque (underground) | 12. Western Wall |
| 6. Repaired bulge in the wall* | 13. Entrances to the Western Wall Tunnels |
| 7. Herodian Monumental Staircase | 14. Western Wall Plaza |

*A bulge was discovered in the southern retaining wall of the Temple Mount, threatening to collapse a large section of the wall. Some Israeli archaeologists claimed it was due to the excavation of a new mosque in the area of Solomon's Stables. Rainwater became diverted into spaces in the construction loosening stones in the wall. Other archaeologists said the bulge existed before work began and reflects the weakness in the centuries-old wall. The repair work is visible today as lighter and smoother patches near the upper corner of the southern wall and near the southern end of the eastern wall.

TIME LINE: THE MODERN PERIOD (1898–1987)





TIME LINE: THE MODERN PERIOD (1988–PRESENT)

AD

1988

Jordan's King Hussein officially announces that Jordan relinquishes its claim to the West Bank territories, except for its holy sites which include the Temple Mount.

1991

(Oct. 31) At the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid, Spain, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Shara proclaims that there will be no free access to the religious sites on the Temple Mount unless Israel returns all of East Jerusalem to the Arabs.

1996

(Sept. 26) Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat provokes a riot on the Temple Mount when the Israeli government opens an exit tunnel to the Hasmonean aqueduct at the end of the Western Wall Tunnel. The riot results in 58 deaths.

1993

Jordan appoints Sulaiman Ja'abari as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.

1994

(Spring) Following Sulaiman Ja'abari's death, Yasser Arafat appoints Sheik Ikrima Sabri as a counter to the authority of the established Jordanian Mufti on the Temple Mount.

1995

King Hussein commissions extensive repairs to the Dome of the Rock; completed in 1998.

(Mar.–Sept.) The Herodian-era street running at the foot of the Western Wall is uncovered by archaeologist Ronny Reich.

1990

(Oct. 8) Renewed efforts by the Temple Mount Faithful to lay a cornerstone for the third temple provoke a riot on the Temple Mount. At the Western Wall where more than 20,000 Jews are assembled for Sukkot, 3,000 Muslim Palestinian Arabs pelt the crowd with stones from above resulting in a conflict with Israeli police killing 17 Arabs rioters.

1989

(Oct. 16) Gershon Salomon and Yehoshua Cohen with members of the Temple Mount Faithful attempt to lay a cornerstone for the third temple at the entrance to the Temple Mount during Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles). The Temple Mount Faithful continue to petition to celebrate traditional Jewish ceremonies on the Mount, but are rejected by civil authorities.

(Oct.) Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs sponsors the First Conference on Temple Research at Shlomo (The Great Synagogue).

1997

The Islamic Waqf begins renovating "Solomon's Stables" (Al-Marwani Mosque) in the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount.

1999

(Aug. 9–11) The Waqf opens an ancient door at the southern wall of the Temple Mount in anticipation of Muslims constructing a new mosque inside the Hulda Gate/Solomon's Stables area. The Israeli government seals the door despite Muslim protests stating that the Waqf's act does not affect the status quo of the Temple Mount.

(Oct.) The Waqf defies the Israeli government and begins construction in the southeast corner of the Temple Mount of the new Al-Marwani Mosque, removing some 20,000 tons of archaeologically rich debris. The Committee for the Prevention of Destruction of Antiquities on the Temple Mount is formed in response.

2000

(Sept. 28) Yassar Arafat declares the Second ("Al-Aqsa") Intifada after Israeli statesman Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount to inspect the area where reports have been made of the destruction of archaeological remains by the Waqf. He accuses Sharon and the Israeli government of trying to destroy the mosques on the Temple Mount in order to rebuild the temple.

2006

(Oct.) Waqf construction to replace faulty electrical cable on the Temple Mount cuts a long excavation trench beside the Dome of the Rock. This trench reveals pottery from the seventh to eighth centuries BC and a large portion of a wall. Archaeologists determine that the wall is from the first temple complex and was probably associated with the "House of Oil" that was within the Court of the Women. This provided the first archaeological evidence for the location of the first temple.

AD**2004**

Archaeologists Gabriel Barkay and Zachi Zweig begin the Temple Mount Sifting project to recover and examine tons of archaeologically-rich debris from the Temple Mount deposited in the Kidron Valley by Muslims during the construction of the Al-Marwani Mosque. They uncover more than 5,000 ancient coins from all periods of the Temple Mount, Jewish seals with Hebrew inscriptions, and floor tiles from the temple courts.

2000–2003

(Sept.–Sept.) The Temple Mount is closed to all non-Muslims. Even when the Israeli government forces a return of Jews and tourists to the site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock remain off-limits to non-Muslim visitation.

2010

(Sept.) Israeli archaeologist Dr. Eilat Mazar announces the discovery of a long section of wall in the Ophel that she believes was part of the first temple.

1998

(Sept. 15) The first *Annual Conference of Shocharey HaMikdash* is held at an international conference center in Jerusalem, with approximately 2,000 attending to demonstrate their plans to build the third temple.

(Dec. 2) The U.N. General Assembly passes a resolution declaring Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem illegal.

THE FUTURE TEMPLE

The biblical prophets spoke of a temple and priesthood that some scholars believe will exist in the future. A blueprint for a future temple was found among the collection of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The New Testament book of Revelation refers to a future New Jerusalem that the apostle John saw descend from heaven to earth.

The Temple Ezekiel Saw

Ezekiel lived in the sixth century BC during the time that the first temple was destroyed by Babylon and in the years leading up to the Jews returning from exile. He was of priestly lineage, and while in exile in Babylon he received his prophetic calling to preach to the Jews living in exile.

The book of Ezekiel (chapters 40–48) records with great detail a vision given to the prophet. The vision includes a magnificent temple far beyond anything anyone had ever seen before. Bible scholars are divided about whether to interpret Ezekiel’s temple vision in a symbolic or literal manner.

SYMBOLIC	LITERAL
<p>The temple in these chapters was never actually built when the people returned from exile and therefore it was not ever intended to be built. This is why the builders of the second temple did not follow Ezekiel’s plan for the temple upon their return to Jerusalem, because the Jewish audience understood that the vision was only to be interpreted symbolically.</p> <p>There are several ways to understand the purpose of the symbolism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It was meant to preserve the memory of the first temple through an idealistic remembrance.• It was meant to offer hope and encouragement for rebuilding the second temple.• It illustrates a spiritual ideal, such as God’s dwelling in holiness in the midst of his people, or a spiritual reality (either the church, heaven, the New Jerusalem, or the eternal state).	<p>The returning exiles were quite familiar with Ezekiel’s priestly language from the descriptions of the actual sanctuary and its service in the books of Exodus and Leviticus. Thus, they would have expected to see these instructions literally fulfilled.</p> <p>The vision should be interpreted literally because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first section of the book of Ezekiel concerns the literal destruction of the first temple, so the second section with the temple vision should also be understood as a literal reconstruction of the temple.• Like Ezekiel, God gave a vision plan for the tabernacle to Moses and the temple to David, and Moses and David went on to prepare the construction of a literal, physical sanctuary from the vision.• The description of the temple in Ezekiel is extremely detailed, just like the instructions for building the first temple.



The Prophet Ezekiel

"In visions of God he took me to the land of Israel and set me on a very high mountain, on whose south side were some buildings that looked like a city. He took me there, and I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze; he was standing in the gateway with a linen cord and a measuring rod in his hand. The man said to me, 'Son of man, look carefully and listen closely and pay attention to everything I am going to show you, for that is why you have been brought here. Tell the people of Israel everything you see.'"—Ezekiel 40:2–4

THE DESIGN

Ezekiel received 318 precise measurements of the temple.

The Temple Complex

- The prophet Ezekiel saw the outer court and measured all the features (Ezekiel 40:5–27).
- The outer dimensions of the square temple complex were 500 cubits or 850 feet (259 m) on each side (Ezekiel 42:15–20).
- The prophet was led into the inner court where he saw animal sacrifices offered in this temple (Ezekiel 40:28–47).
- The Temple Mount had 12 gates, three on each side, named after Jacob's (Israel's) 12 sons (Ezekiel 40:30–34). This tribal allotment put the temple at the center of the nation, similar to the arrangement of the tribes camped around the tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai.

The Temple

- The shape of the temple court was square. The altar was directly in front of the temple (Ezekiel 40:47).
- At the entrance to the temple building were two pillars located on either side (Ezekiel 40:48–49).
- Ezekiel entered and measured the Holy Place, and then his angelic escort entered the Holy of Holies to take its measurements which were 20 cubits x 20 cubits (length and width) (35 ft; 10.67 m) (Ezekiel 41:1–4).

The Chambers

- The chambers of the outer court were three-storied buildings with the roof of each at a different level, like terraces with the upper balconies set back further than those beneath them (Ezekiel 42:1–12). These buildings were accessed by a walkway that ran the entire length of the chambers.
- The southern and northern chambers were rooms set apart ("holy") for the highest order of priests who served in the inner sanctuary and whose responsibilities included the eating of their prescribed portion of certain offerings. These rooms also served as a place of storage for the three most holy offerings: grain offering, sin offering, and guilt offering. They also stored the priestly garments which had to be put on and then removed and returned to the sacred chamber each time a priest completed his appointed time of service (Ezekiel 42:13–14; 44:19; 46:20).

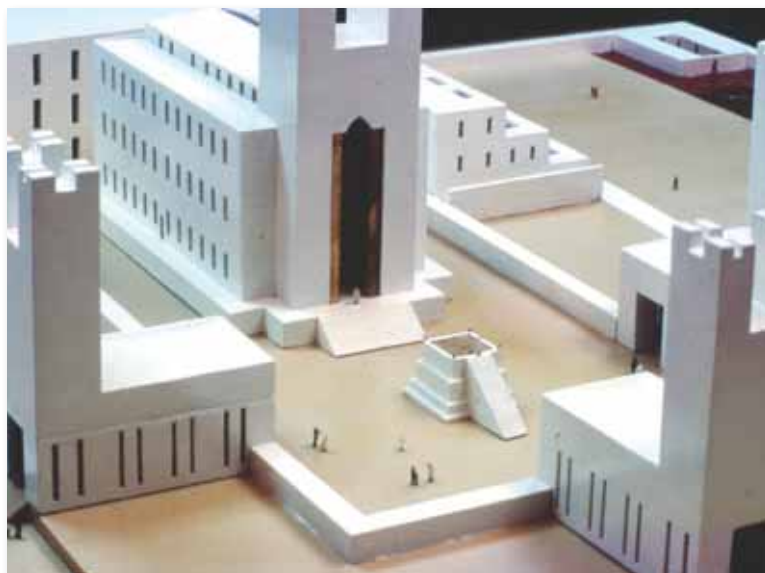
THE ZADOKITE PRIESTHOOD

Zadokite priests were the descendants of Zadok, head of one of the Levitical families that was elevated to the position of the high priesthood at the time of Solomon (1 Kings 1:26–27). The line of Zadok was prophesied to one day assume this position when the high priest Eli was disciplined by God for his failure to discipline his unbelieving sons (1 Samuel 3:12–14). The Zadokites were faithful throughout their service in the first temple period despite Israel's national unfaithfulness (Ezekiel 44:15; 48:11). But they did not continue to function as priests in the second temple period after the Hasmonean dynasty took control of the priesthood. If Ezekiel's vision is taken literally, when the restoration comes with the building of the temple, the proper Zadokite priesthood will also be restored (Ezekiel 43:19; Jeremiah 33:18).

“This is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet. This is where I will live among the Israelites forever. The people of Israel will never again defile my holy name.”
—Ezekiel 43:7

THE RETURN OF THE SHEKINAH

The prophet was led to the eastern gate of the temple to witness the return of the *shekinah* (the “divine presence” or “glory of God”) to the temple (Ezekiel 43:1–9). After the Jews returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple in the sixth century BC, the *shekinah* did not return to fill the Holy of Holies in the second temple as it had the first temple and the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34–35; 1 Kings 8:10–11). The departure of the *shekinah* had started with a movement from its place within the Holy of Holies to the inner court (Ezekiel 10:4), then from the inner court to eastern gate (Ezekiel 10:19), finally to disappear in the east over the Mt. of Olives (Ezekiel 11:22–23). The return of the *shekinah* in Ezekiel's vision is the reversal of this order. The path the *shekinah* followed to reenter the temple went through the eastern gate (Ezekiel 43:4; 44:2). To commemorate this fact, the eastern gate was sealed shut and never reopened (Ezekiel 44:2). The glory that returned to fill the temple covered the entire mountain so that the whole city became “the throne of the Lord,” giving brightness by night and shade by day as well as protection from storm and rain (Isaiah 4:5–6; Jeremiah 3:17). Since the restored conditions of land and people prevent future desecration, the *shekinah* will never again have to depart from the temple (Ezekiel 43:7–9).



Ezekiel's Temple. (Photo and model by John W. Schmitt)

WATER FROM BENEATH THE ALTAR

In Ezekiel 47:1–12 the prophet is escorted to the main entrance of the temple that faced east where he saw water flowing from the front part of the temple and running beside the threshold of the door and the right (south) side of the altar located directly in front of the temple (40:47). This implies that the water had come from God's presence within the temple from beneath the throne of the Messiah within the Holy of Holies.

Ezekiel was then led out of the temple area through the northern gate and around the outer eastern gate where he observed the water trickling from the south side of the eastern gate down south toward the city of Jerusalem and into the Kidron Valley. The river increased in size and strength as it descended to the Dead Sea. In the

modern geography of the area Jerusalem is 2,000 feet (610 m) above sea level while the Dead Sea is 1,350 feet (411 m) below. However, in Ezekiel's vision the Temple Mount was even more elevated (Isaiah 2:2; Zechariah 14:10).

Ezekiel was next shown groves of trees growing on both sides of the river bank, certainly a startling sight for one accustomed to the normally arid and barren region. This change showed that the source of blessing is the Lord from whose house the waters have flowed. (See also Joel 3:18; Zechariah 14:8.)



THE GOLDEN GATE

Some Christians misunderstand this Golden Gate as being the eastern gate of Ezekiel's prophecy through which the *shekinah* will follow in order to reenter the temple (Ezekiel 43:1–4). The Golden Gate (or Gate of Mercy) located on the eastern wall was first closed by Muslims in 810, reopened by the Crusaders in 1102, then walled up again by the Saracens in 1187. It was opened again during reconstruction work done by the Ottoman Turkish Sultan Suleiman, but it was he who last closed it in 1541. We do not know for certain if the present-day Golden Gate is at the same place as the ancient Eastern Gate. However, the eastern gate of Ezekiel's prophecy is neither in the place of the present-day Golden Gate or ancient Eastern Gate, as Ezekiel's Temple Mount is elevated much higher (Isaiah 2:2; Zechariah 14:10). Some Christians have been taught that the presently blocked condition of the Golden Gate is a fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy. But it must be remembered that, if taken literally, Ezekiel's description of this gate and its closing concerns a future temple, not the Temple Mount that exists today.



The Temple Scroll

The Qumran community, known primarily for leaving us the Dead Sea Scrolls, was a Jewish sect established in the second century BC off the shore of the Dead Sea during the Hasmonean dynasty. This group was distressed over what they considered corrupted sacrifices. This is what had brought about the destruction of the first temple, and what they feared had doomed the second temple that existed in their time. This sect separated from the second temple to live in a desert retreat in order to maintain a proper ritual purity and to prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

Their quest for the ideal temple is most fully expressed in the *Temple Scroll*.⁸⁵ Scholars date this scroll to the second half of the second century BC (103–88 BC). The contents of the Temple Scroll include architectural plans for building the temple as well as detailed descriptions of the temple services and festivals—many not mentioned in the Bible or elsewhere.⁸⁶

In this scroll, the Temple Mount is described as a square-shaped building surrounded by three concentric square courtyards, the outer court measuring a half-mile on each side. Jerusalem is described as being transformed into a temple city whose dimensions will encompass most of what was then the holy city. Another surprising element in the scroll is that the Holy of Holies contains the lost ark of the covenant as well the huge overshadowing cherubim, just as in the first temple.⁸⁷

In AD 68, the Roman Tenth Legion invaded the Qumran settlement, set it on fire and then occupied it as a Roman fortress for the next ten years. Those in the Qumran community dispersed, with some fleeing north to Jerusalem and others south to Masada. Both of these groups eventually perished or were taken into Roman captivity when Jerusalem fell in AD 70, followed by Masada three years later. We only know about this community from its hidden scrolls not retrieved until the mid-twentieth century.



Temple Scroll



Cave 11 where the Temple Scroll was discovered. The last of the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in this cave. (Photo by Paul Streber)

The New Jerusalem

From the beginning when the Maker created humans in his image, he made them for a relationship with himself (Genesis 1:26–27). God revealed that he dwelt “in a high and holy place” (Isaiah 57:15) that was referred to as his heavenly throne (Psalm 11:4), his temple (Psalm 18:6), and the house of the Lord (Psalm 27:4). The garden of Eden revealed that God desired to dwell with his creation (Genesis 3:8). After the Fall, the temple that God commanded to be built on earth symbolized the means by which God could dwell with fallen humanity, an institution which made it possible for people to experience this relationship—but to a limited degree because of sin. By contrast, the New Jerusalem will be the fulfillment of the divine ideal in which God and redeemed people dwell together in an unlimited relationship.

OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abraham was “looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God ... a better country, that is a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:10, 16). God revealed the “heavenly city” to Moses (Exodus 25:9, 40) and David (1 Chronicles 28:11–19). The divinely designated site of the temple was Jerusalem (Genesis 22:2, 14). The earthly Jerusalem is described as God’s “dwelling place” projected heavenward, forming the hope of an eternal city, the New Jerusalem where the relationship of God with his people will last forever (Isaiah 66:22). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The apostle Paul speaks of “the Jerusalem above” in contrast to “the present Jerusalem” (Galatians 4:25–26). The author of the book of Hebrews makes reference to the “heavenly Jerusalem” (Hebrews 12:22), also called “Mount Zion” and “the city of the living God” where there are myriads of angels, the general assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven (the church), the spirits of righteous people made perfect (Old Testament believers), and God and Jesus (Hebrews 12:22–24). In the book of Revelation, the apostle John sees a new heaven and earth, and a new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God (Revelation 21).

THE NEW JERUSALEM IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

The New Jerusalem is a city “laid out as a square” with connecting planes of equal size that form a cube 1,500 miles (2,414 km). (This would be about the distance from London to Istanbul, or New York City to Denver.) Its gates are inscribed with the names of the 12 tribes of Israel and the foundation stones of its wall with the names of the 12 apostles (Revelation 21:12–14). Associating the 12 tribes with a certain type of precious stone goes back to the time of the first temple where the breastplate of the ephod worn by the high priest bore the names of each of the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on a different type of stone. The streets are pure gold like transparent glass (Revelation 21:21). In Exodus 24 when God allows Moses and the elders of Israel to see him, their vision was of God’s heavenly court where the streets were “a pavement of sapphire as clear as the sky” (verse 10).

John describes the New Jerusalem as “having the glory of God” (Revelation 21:11). The supernatural illumination of the city is the result of the presence of God and the reason why there can be no night there (Revelation 22:5). The original pattern of the garden of Eden is also present in the city, complete with a river of the water of life and the Tree of Life (Revelation 22:1–2).

THE TEMPLE OF THE NEW JERUSALEM

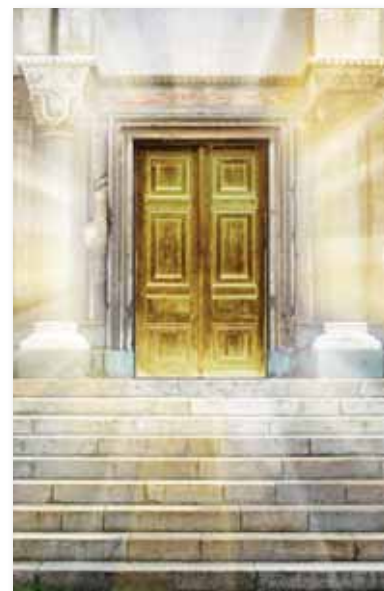
Throughout the judgment section of Revelation (chapters 6–19), John is taken to heaven and shown the heavenly response to the events transpiring on earth. For example, in Revelation 11:18–19 the heavenly temple is seen open with symbols of divine judgment proceeding out toward the earthly offenders. This prepared those enduring the conflict on earth for the revealing of the coming of Christ as well as for the New Jerusalem which comes “out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:2, 10).

However, as John comes to the end of his description of the New Jerusalem he writes, “I did not see a temple in the city...” (Revelation 21:22). Such a statement would have been startling to those accustomed to viewing the temple as the place of the divine presence which will fill and illumine this city (21:23–24; 22:5). But John goes on to explain why he did not see a temple, “... because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple” (21:22). The New Jerusalem is unique: It has no temple in the sense that it contains one, yet it has a temple in the sense that it is a part of one, that is, the heavenly temple. The cubic dimensions of the New Jerusalem are similar to those of the Holy of Holies within the earthly temples (1 Kings 6:19–20). Therefore, it appears that the New Jerusalem represents the Holy of Holies of the heavenly temple in which God in his glory is manifested. God is the temple of the New Jerusalem. The earthly temples were symbols of the presence of God with his people, but at the same time they were mere copies of the heavenly temple which is the presence of God. In the New Jerusalem, as in all of God’s created order, he is all in all.

OUR FATHER’S HOUSE

The New Jerusalem has always existed in heaven and its descent to earth is still to come. Jesus promised to those who accept him that it is possible to go there upon death: “In my Father’s house are many rooms ... I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). These “rooms” are not individual dwellings apart from the Lord, as if he lived on a hilltop and we all had mansions somewhere on his land. Rather, there is only one house—“the Father’s house”—and all of the rooms are in it. But this is not some gigantic apartment complex; since the role of believers will be to “serve him day and night in his temple” (Revelation 7:15; 22:3), this means that “the Father’s house” is “his temple.”

In this temple, rather than one man serving as high priest for the people of God, all of God’s people are high priests. Unlike the earthly high priest who could rarely enter the Holy of Holies, we will forever remain there. Our service is not once a year on the Day of Atonement, but will be day and night forever. The presence of God will not dwell within the Holy of Holies away from people, but God and the Lamb (Christ) will dwell among all of the redeemed. This is the great and heavenly hope of all who “seek his face” (Psalm 17:15; 27:8; 42:2; 105:4).



THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Revelation 21:3 says, “The tabernacle of God is among men, and he shall dwell among them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be among them” (NASB).

The word “tabernacle” (Hebrew *mishkan*, “dwelling place”) refers to the idea that the divine presence (*shekinah*) is dwelling with humanity. The past prohibition, “you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live” (Exodus 33:20; also John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16) is clearly reversed in Revelation 22:4, for all those who are within the New Jerusalem will see God “face to face.”

NOTES

1. Donald W. Parry, ed., *Temples of the Ancient World: Ritual and Symbolism* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1994), 134.
2. Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.9.7; 221–22
3. *Middot* 2.1
4. The artist is grateful to the late Dr. Louis Goldberg who, with his engineering and theological background, assisted the artist in this reconstruction.
5. John Monson, “The New ‘Ain Dara temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel,” *Biblical Archaeology Review* 26:3 (May/June 2000)
6. *Antiquities* xi, 1.2
7. *Antiquities* 15,400; *War* 5.185
8. *Middot* 2:1
9. *Antiquities* 8.96; *War* 5.184–185
10. Ecclesiasticus 50:1–21
11. *Antiquities* 14.3.1–4.4; *War* 1.7.6
12. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.9.1
13. *Antiquities* xi. 392–339
14. 1 Maccabees 1:10–63; 2 Maccabees 5:1
15. *Temple Scroll* (11Q19)
16. 1 Maccabees 4
17. *Antiquities* 14.476
18. *Antiquities* 17.6.1–3; 151–63; *War* 1.33.2–4; 649–55
19. *Antiquities* 15.391
20. *Antiquities* 15.388–89
21. *Antiquities* 15.11.5–6; 420–21
22. *Antiquities* 20.219
23. *Antiquities* 8.97; 15.398, 400; 20.221; *War* 5.192
24. *Antiquities* 15.11.2; 389–90
25. *Antiquities* 15.412; *War* 5.207–226; *Middot* 4
26. *Antiquities* 15.413–414
27. *Antiquities* 15.11.5; 410
28. *Middot* 1:3
29. *Para* 3:6; *Shekalim* 4:2
30. Rabbi Chaim Richman, *The Mystery of the Red Heifer: Divine Promise of Purity* (Jerusalem: Rabbi Chaim Richman, 1997), 1.
31. *Apion* 2.8; 103–109
32. *Kelim* 1.8–9
33. *Antiquities* 15.11.3; 396
34. *Kelim* 1.8
35. *Middot* 2.5–6
36. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.8.1
37. *War* 5.5.2, 200; 6.5.2, 282; see *Antiquities* 19.6.1; 294
38. *Middot* 2.5
39. *Middot* 2.6
40. *Middot* 2.6
41. *War* 5.5.6; 225; *Middot* 3.1, 6; 5.2; *Tamid* 1.4
42. *Middot* 5.4
43. *Erubin* 10.14
44. *Shekalim* 6:1–2; *Yoma* 52a–54a
45. *Yoma* 3.10; *Tamid* 1.4; 3.8
46. *Middot* 3.2
47. *Middot* 3.5
48. *War* 5.5; 6.222
49. *War* 5.5.4; 207; *Middot* 4.7
50. *War* 5.5.6; 223–24; *Middot* 4.6
51. *War* 5.5.3; 206; *Middot* 3.6
52. Tacitus, *Histories* 5.5
53. *Antiquities* 15.394–395; *War* 5.210
54. *Middot* 4.3–4; *War* 5.220–221
55. *War* 5.208
56. *Middot* 4.1
57. *War* 5.211–214
58. *Shekalim* 8, 5; *Tamid* 29a, b.
59. Mishnah tractate *Tamid*; *War* 5.5.5; 217; Luke 1:5–25
60. *War* 7.148–50
61. *War* 5.5.4; 212–13; 5.5.5; 219
62. *Shekalim* 8.5
63. *Yoma* 5.1
64. *Vita Mos.* 2.101
65. *Shekalim* 4.4; *Middot* 4.1
66. Parshat *Acharei Mot*, p. 67a; Parashat *Emor*, p. 102a
67. *Yoma* 5:2
68. *War* 5.219
69. *Yoma* 5.2
70. *War* 5.5.5; 219; *Middot* 4.7
71. *Antiquities* 18.8.2–9; 261–309; *War* 2.10.1–5; 184–203
72. *Spec. Laws*, 1.141–44; 66–345; *Embassy* 156
73. 1 *Enoch* 89.73
74. *Tobit* 14.5; 1 *Enoch* 90.28–29
75. *Antiquities* 20.8
76. *Antiquities* 17:254–64; *War* 2.3.2–3; 45–50
77. *Melochim* 11:4
78. Sura 17
79. *A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif*, p. 4
80. *A Brief Guide*, 16
81. *A Brief Guide*, 10
82. *A Brief Guide*, 14
83. *A Brief Guide*, 1
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85. *Temple Scroll* (11Q19)
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Rose Guide to the Temple

(Extended Version)

Randall Price



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Introduction

The Temple built in Jerusalem is the most important building in history. Not because there have not been greater and grander structures built, but because only this structure was designed by God as the place where His glorious Presence was to dwell. This, of course, understands a biblical worldview, for other religions either deny or have sought to replace this significance of the Temple with shrines or symbols of their own.

Nevertheless, tradition and politics have continued to keep the issue of the Temple, and its site of the Temple Mount, before the eyes of the world. Christianity has remembered it primarily in association with the teaching of Jesus and the last week of His life on earth. Islamic tradition has claimed that a stone at the site was where Abraham brought his son Ishmael and from which the Prophet Muhammad ascended to heaven. Judaism, at least its orthodox sect, still believes the divine Presence attends the site. Most Orthodox Jews believe that the Temple must one day be rebuilt. These differing perspectives on the Temple have produced both controversy and conflict throughout history, and therefore those who would seek to understand the cause must understand the subject of the Temple itself. For students of the Bible, however, the Temple stands at the center of biblical history and theology. An adequate acquaintance with this structure and the laws attending it assists the student of the Bible with the interpretation of biblical thought with respect to the nation of Israel and of Jesus and the early church.

Modern Jews and Christians have difficulty with the concept of the Temple and its sacrificial system. Although a familiar and accepted institution in early Judaism and the early Church, its absence for the past 2,000 years has created a lack of concern, as well as understanding of its nature and importance. However, both groups still utilize a building in the worship of God, and believe that His Presence is in some way with them as they meet. How much more necessary was the existence of a physical sanctuary when the Divine Presence visibly manifested itself with His people? While we lack this as a present reality, the spiritual sense of the sanctuary that we experience today should help us appreciate what God provided in the past.

It is therefore appropriate that this book presents the Temple in a visual format. God originally gave the Temple to the people of Israel as a visual aid to comprehending God's glory in the Heavenly Temple and to show the way in which God in His holiness has to relate to man in his sinful condition. He provided its pattern by divine revelation and commanded that it be built according to His precise specifications (Exodus 25:8-9). Every element in the design of the Temple like every garment and action of the priesthood was intended for the purpose of illustrating the divine ideal. From the beginning of the Creation, this divine ideal was communicated to mankind, that God desired a relationship with His creatures, but on His terms, respecting His righteous standards. Throughout the history of divine revelation, God has continued to express this divine ideal through the concept of a Sanctuary, whether actual or symbolic. For this reason, we find this concept spanning the whole of written revelation from the first book of the Old Testament to the last book of the

New Testament. And for this reason, the more a reader is able to visualize this great design, the greater will be his enjoyment of this central teaching of the Word of God.

Although the Temple Mount today is the most “volatile acreage” on earth, for those who seek a relationship with the God of the universe, its study is one of the most “vital activities” that can be performed to facilitate faith and worship. If the reader approaches this study as one would approach the gates of the ancient Temple, with wonder and awe, and then pass through with reverence, they will have the experience of the Israelites of old in gaining access to the knowledge of the Holy.

The Meaning of “Temple”

The English word “temple” is derived from the Latin *templum*, following the Greek *temenos*, which refers to a raised platform often dedicated to a sacred purpose. Although English Bibles translate the Hebrew and Greek words used to denote the Temple, they do not adequately reflect the various meanings conveyed by the original languages.

Old Testament

The earliest form of the Sanctuary, the Tabernacle, was called in Hebrew *mishkan* (“dwelling”). The Hebrew term *hekal*, probably derived from Sumerian *e-gal* meaning “big house”). The nonspecific sense of this term is of a “palace” or “a shrine,” and it may refer generally to any ancient Near Eastern center of worship. The more specific use was of God’s special “house,” the Jerusalem Temple (2 Kings 18:16; 23:4; 24:13; 2 Chronicles 26:16; 27:2; 29:16; Ezra 3:6, 10; 4:1; Nehemiah 6:11; Psalm 27:4; 29:9; Jeremiah 7:4; 24:1; 50:28; 51:11; Ezekiel 8:16; Haggai 2:15, 18; Zechariah 6:12–15; 8:9; Malachi 3:1). The Bible most often refers to the Temple as *Beit YHWH* (the “house of the LORD”), or *Beit ‘Elohim* (the “house of God”), which denotes the Temple as a place where God’s Presence is resident. Another Hebrew term, *miqdash* (“holy place”), usually translated as “sanctuary,” was used to denote the Tent of Meeting and the *sancta* (vessels and priestly personnel) and sometimes exclusively of the Holy of Holies (Leviticus 16:33), but also of the Tabernacle compound (Leviticus 19:30; 26:2), and of the Temple precinct (Ezekiel 43:21; 44:1,5,7-8). On occasion it was used of rival Israelite temples both inside and outside the Land (Amos 7:9,13; Isaiah 16:12), but most often it referred to the one legitimate sanctuary—the Temple in Jerusalem (Isaiah 63:18; Ezekiel 5:11; 9:6; Psalm 74:7; 96:6; Lamentations 1:10; 2:7,20). Modern Hebrew employs this term when it refers to the ancient Temples as *Beit Hamikdash*.

The Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, known as the Septuagint (LXX), followed the Hebrew use of *mishkan* with its term *naos*, a noun derived from the verb *naio* (“to dwell” or “inhabit”) and *miqdash* (“sanctuary”). In Classical Greek *naos* referred to the “abode of the gods,” with specific reference to the innermost part of a shrine, which contained the image of a god. However, the Septuagint employed this term 55 out of 61 times to translate the Hebrew *hekal*. Had the LXX intended “a temple” in general, it might have used the Greek term *heiron* (“sacred edifice”), however, its exclusive reference to the “Temple of God” in Jerusalem gives it a technical meaning.

New Testament

This usage was adopted by the Greek New Testament where it most often appears to denote the inner part of the Temple (the Holy of Holies) in distinction to the outer part of the Temple (the Temple precinct). This wider reference seems reserved to the Greek word *heiron*. This distinction has significance with respect to Jesus' pronouncement in Luke 21:6 concerning the buildings of the Temple, that "the days will come in which there will not be left one stone upon another which will not be torn down." If, in fact, the retaining walls of the Temple precinct remain standing even today, how can it be said that "not one stone would be left that would not be torn down"? The answer is that Jesus was referring to the buildings of the *naos* (the Temple proper) and not to those of the *heiron* (the outer precincts which would include the retaining walls). All of these buildings were indeed completely destroyed. Because *naos* had a particular reference to the part of the Temple where the *Shekinah* dwelt, it was used by the Apostle Paul to refer to the spiritual indwelling of God in believers individually and corporately through the Holy Spirit. This special relationship made it possible to use the language of the Temple to make a spiritual application to the believer's body as a "temple" (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16), and to the Church as a spiritual "temple" (Ephesians 2:21-22). It also allowed Christians to be called "saints" *hagaoi* (literally "holy ones") and to refer to their worship as a "priestly service" (Romans 12:2).

How Do We Know About the Temple?

Fortunately, the ancient world has bequeathed to us a wealth of information regarding the ancient Temple. We would, of course, like to have had certain details reconciled and explained, but we are grateful that we have the details necessary to reconstruct the various designs of the Temple through time and to understand their form and function. There has also come down much that is legendary and fanciful about the Temple, therefore it is important to identify the proper academic sources for this information. Our purpose should be to present as accurate a picture of the Temple as possible in accord with the accuracy we desire for all other areas of biblical study. The reliability of these sources is based on the fact that transmitting Temple laws (*Halacha*) was done with a view to keeping the Jewish Community in the Diaspora (in lands outside of the Land of Israel) unified in their support of the Temple and after its destruction in unifying them around the hope of its eventual restoration. It was very important to those who communicated this information that the traditions about the Temple derive directly from eyewitnesses in the first century AD when the Temple was standing. Therefore, we have every reason to accept their statements about the Temple as valid, a fact often validated by archaeological excavation.

There are three sources for information about the Temple: the written documents, archaeological excavations and architectural investigations. The written document we are most familiar with is the Bible, which recorded details concerning the Temple both as divine instruction for its construction and as part of the history associated with the divine covenants God made with the people of Israel. These details, however, while vastly

important, are quite selective with respect to the larger purpose of the biblical narrative, and therefore require supplementation in order to achieve a full understanding of the form and function of the Temple. The major literary sources to supplement the biblical data are, of course, Jewish, and consist of the works of the first-century historian Flavius Josephus and the writings of the rabbis, although we have important information provided by some Greek, Roman, and Christian sources as well.

Josephus was from a priestly family and understood the form and function of the Temple. He grew up during the last decades of the Second Temple and provides a first-hand account of its appearance at that time. He also witnessed or had first-hand acquaintance with both Jews and Romans who were part of its destruction. His works that record the details of the Temple are *Antiquities of the Jews* and *War of the Jews* (*Antiquities* 15.11.5-7; 410-25; *War* 5.5.1-8; 184-247). Although Josephus wrote to a Roman audience and his works must be viewed as propaganda for his Roman patrons, he still wrote as a Jew about his Jewish people, and history and archaeology have time and again proved the accuracy of his accounts regarding the Temple in even the smallest details.

The rabbinic writings that give these details are the *Mishnah*, the oldest comprehensive systematic-theological exposition of the Jewish Law, consisting of a collection of 4,187 rules of dogma written down by Rabbi *Yehuda Ha-Nasi* in the 2nd century AD. The *Mishnah* tractates that give details concerning the Temple are *Middot* ("Measurements") and *Tamid* ("[Daily [Burnt] Offering]"). Some information is also found in the *Gemara* ("completion"), a collection of later rabbinical discussions about the Mishnah. Additional discussion on the Temple and its priestly activities is found in the Talmud, the most significant theological work of post-biblical Judaism compiled between 200-600 AD. It exists in two redactions one from the Babylonian and one from Jerusalem. These contain the same Mishnah, but different *Gemara*. The Babylonian Talmud is the more important of the two.

One problem in consulting these literary sources is that they are often incomplete. For example, it appears that the rabbis, who were contemporary with the Herodian Temple, did not comment in their writings on the additions this hated proxy king made to the divinely-revealed original square Temple Mount. A second problem is that these sources seem to offer contradictory measurements regarding the Second Temple. For example, Josephus says that the east portico of the Temple was 400 cubits long (*Antiquities* 20.9.7; 221-22), but the *Mishnah* states that the Temple Mount was 500 cubits square (*Middot* 2.1). Many scholars, however, believe that the description of the Second Temple's structure preserved in tractate *Middot* was of a different "second" Temple, the one constructed by Zerubbabel upon the return from the Babylonian exile. While elements and features of this older Second Temple were preserved in the reconstruction by Herod, it is Josephus that gives details exclusive to this latter building and its courts.

Archaeological excavation has also contributed immensely to verifying the details in the literary sources and providing new information. However, due to the religious and political sensitivity of the Temple Mount, only limited exploration directly on the site was allowed in the 19th century by foreign surveyors. Since the Israeli victory in the Six Day War, Israeli archaeologists have had access to some remains of the Temple complex, but excavation has

only taken place outside the great retaining walls of the Temple Mount, which are still partly extant. Other archaeological discoveries have provided information through inscriptions and artifacts related to the Temple and its priesthood. In recent years the discovery and excavation of the Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerazim, which was constructed by a Jewish priest based on the design of Zerubbabel's Temple, has provided unique insights into the structure of this earlier Second Temple and its complex.

These literary sources and archaeological discoveries have enabled scholars to reconstruct models of the First and Second Temples, as well as the Temple envisioned by the Prophet Ezekiel. This book has made use of some of the fine models and architectural renderings of the Temples created by such scholars and artists. These become a new source in themselves for the study of the Temple and, like this book that presents them in a useful fashion, contributes to our increasing understand of history's most important building.

SECTION 1 – THE CONCEPT OF THE SANCTUARY

The Temple Before Time: The Heavenly Temple

The Bible, both in the Old and New Testaments, affirms there is a Heavenly Temple, which served as the abode of God and as the pattern for the construction of the earthly Tabernacle and Temples.

The Heavenly Temple in the Old Testament

Moses, Aaron and his sons, and 70 of the elders of Israel saw a glimpse of the Heavenly Temple: “[They] saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself” (Exodus 24:10). The psalmist David may have referred to the Heavenly Temple when he wrote: “The Lord is in His holy temple; the Lord’s throne is in heaven” (Psalm 11:4). Because David’s psalms predated the building of the First Temple, his references to “Temple” (Psalm 27:4-6; 138:2) and “the house of the Lord” (Psalm 23:6) appear to focus on the Heavenly Temple. During the reign of the Israelite king Ahab, a prophet named Micaiah also saw the Heavenly Temple (1 Kings 22:19), as did the prophet Isaiah after entering the earthly Temple to seek the Lord upon the death of the Judean king Uzziah (Isaiah 6:1-5). In like manner, the prophet Ezekiel, while in exile in Babylon saw a vision of the Lord enthroned in the Heavenly Temple (Ezekiel 1:1-28). From these references, we can understand that the Heavenly Temple is the place where God dwells, where His counsel may be sought, and the place from He sends His divine revelation to men.

The Heavenly Temple in the New Testament

In the New Testament a distinction is drawn between the “earthly sanctuary” and a “greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation” (Hebrews 9:1,11). This place is located in “heaven itself... in the presence of God” (verse 24). It is the place where holy, heavenly vessels are found and where Christ officiates as High Priest (verses 21-25). In the book of Revelation, the Heavenly Temple appears as the place where the Apostle John receives revelation about the future (Revelation 7:15; 14:17; 15:5; 16:17). He records that in the Heavenly Temple there exist the same ascending degrees of sanctity as the earthly Temple (Revelation 4:1-10), and the same essential furniture and sacred vessels such as the sacrificial altar (Revelation 6:9; 8:3,5; 9:13; 14:18; 16:7), God’s throne (Revelation 16:17), the seven-branched lampstands (Revelation 1:12), the trumpets (Revelation 8:2,6), the incense altar (Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4), the golden censer (Revelation 8:3-5), the incense bowls (Revelation 5:8), the priestly vestments (Revelation 4:4; 6:11; 15:6), and the Ark of the Covenant (Revelation 11:19). There is also the veil separating the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, through which angelic beings pass directly into the divine Presence (Revelation 4:1-3; 6:14-17; 15:5; 16:1,17).

Many scholars believe that the earthly sanctuaries were constructed to bring a sense of the heavenly Temple to the human realm in order for God to dwell among humankind. The Tabernacle and the Temples were representations of this Heavenly Temple. If God were to dwell on earth with His people, He would ordain that the places of worship mimic His dwelling place in Heaven. For this reason, the earthly Tabernacle and Temples were constructed from a divine design originally imparted by divine revelation to Moses (Exodus 25:8-9, 40) and King David (1 Chronicles 28:11-19). The earthly sanctuaries became an institution, which made it possible for human beings to commune with God to a limited capacity. The descriptions of the heavenly realm seen by Moses and the elders (Exodus 24) and John (Revelation 21) emphasize God's glory and presence transcending everything.

The author of the Book of Hebrews encourages believers to look forward to a time when they will dwell in a heavenly city (Hebrews 13:14). Abraham was described as one "looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God ... a better country, that is a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:10, 16). The book of Revelation identifies this city as the New Jerusalem—a city "laid out as a square" forming a cube 1,500 miles by 1,500 miles (2,225 kilometers by 2,225 kilometers). At first glance, it appears that the New Jerusalem doesn't contain a temple because John doesn't see one in his vision (Revelation 21:22). However, since the Holy of Holies bears a strong resemblance (in a much-condensed form) to the cube-shaped city, some scholars suggest that the New Jerusalem is actually the Holy of Holies—the throne room—of the Heavenly Temple. The New Jerusalem doesn't contain a temple, the Heavenly Temple contains the New Jerusalem.

With the descent of the New Jerusalem to earth (or just above the earth), Revelation 21:3 announced the "Tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them." It is here, within this holy city, where the complete reconciliation between God and humankind will occur. Forever, humankind and God will exist together in an unlimited relationship. The earthly Temples were symbols of the Presence of God with His people, but at the same time, they were mere copies of the Heavenly Temple, which is the Presence of God. God dwells, all in all in the Heavenly Temple, as He does in everything in heaven and on earth.

The Pre-Temple Sanctuary

A number of literary clues in the Book of Genesis signal the fact that the Garden of Eden was designed as a pre-Temple sanctuary for the Presence of God among His human creation. The Garden of Eden and the Tabernacle/Temple share a similar geographical arrangement. In Genesis God planted the Garden "toward the east, in Eden." (Genesis 2:8). Later we read that God stationed cherubim at "the east of the garden of Eden" to prevent man from returning west to the Tree of Life (Genesis 3:24). In Numbers, this east-west orientation is the basis for the tribal arrangement for Moses, Aaron, and his sons who perform the service of the Tabernacle (Numbers 3:38). The altar in the Tabernacle and Temple also lay to the east and the entrance to the Holy of Holies opened eastward in a straight line (Exodus 27:13-16).

The presence of certain objects connected with sanctity also appear in the Garden of Eden and the Tabernacle/Temple. There was a sacred tree of life in the center of the Garden, like the sacred candelabra (menorah) in the central section of the Holy Place. Furthermore, there were two cherubim posted at the east entrance to Eden (Genesis 4:24) like the two cherubim overshadowing the Mercy Seat on the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:18-22) and embroidered on the veil of the Tabernacle (Exodus 26:31), and carved into the walls, doors, and paneling of the First Temple (1 Kings 6:27-35; 7:29,36). The duties of Adam in the Garden also suggest a sanctuary existed, for his responsibility was to “work” (Hebrew, *avodah*) and “keep” (*shemirah*), Genesis 2:15. These terms, used only elsewhere of the Levites who officiated in the Tabernacle and Temple, suggest that Adam had been commissioned to act as a “priest of God” preserving and protecting the holy ground of the Garden-sanctuary from desecration.

This was necessary because we read in Genesis 3:8 that God came regularly into the Garden. The verb used to describe God’s approach is a Hebrew verb translated “walk” (*mithalek*) and its form appears only here and in texts dealing with God’s approach to the Tabernacle and Temple (Exodus 33:9; 34:5; Numbers 11:25; 12:5,10; Leviticus 26:11-12; Deuteronomy 31:15). In addition, Adam and Eve “hid themselves from the presence of [literally “from before”] the Lord,” again, part of the technical terminology of the Temple. When the Tabernacle was erected, God conditioned His Presence remaining with His people on obedience to the laws of the Sanctuary (Leviticus 26:1-46). In the same way, God’s Presence in the Garden was conditioned on obedience to the single law respecting the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:17; 3:1-3). Disobedience meant exile from the Presence of God, as seen in the withdrawal of the *Shekinah* (Ezekiel 9-11) and the destruction of the two Temples and exile from the Land, which contained the Temple (Leviticus 26:33). In Genesis this exile was from the Garden sanctuary (Genesis 3:23-24). For these reasons, it appears that the divine design for the Temple was exhibited at the beginning of history and that later constructions of buildings followed this pattern in their material design.

The arrangement of the Garden of Eden’s landscape corresponds to that of the Tabernacle and Temple with its furniture. Eastward movement (out of the Garden) is away from God’s presence; westward movement (through the Sanctuary) is a return of God. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest reverses the people’s spiritual exile from God and restores them to a relationship with God (through a blood sacrifice for sin).

From the Garden of Eden to Mount Sinai

When we compare the Edenic sanctuary to that constructed at the foot of Mount Sinai we discover an important difference. The cherubim stationed at the entrance to God’s Presence in Eden face *outward* to prevent mankind from re-entering the sacred site. However, in the Holy of Holies, the cherubim were positioned on top of the Mercy Seat of the Ark with their faces turned *inward* toward the place where God’s Presence was manifested. These cherubim, rather than turning man way from God’s Presence, made it possible for the high

priest as a mediator to enter God's Presence (Exodus 25:8,22). As Adam had served as a representative for mankind and caused men to be exiled from God's Presence, so one man, the high priest, served as a representative for Israel, enabling God's people to enter God's presence representatively. Therefore, we find God's command to build Him a sanctuary at Sinai (Exodus 25:8) the gracious means by which He reversed the condition of men as exiles from God's Presence and brought them again into a relationship with Himself on earth.

The Tabernacle: God's Sanctuary in Motion

The Tabernacle served God's purpose as a sanctuary for 485 years (from Moses to Solomon). It was made to be an earthly copy of the Heavenly Sanctuary, the pattern of which Moses was shown on Mount Sinai (Exodus 25:2,8-9,40; cf. Hebrews 8:5; 9:24). The purpose of the Tabernacle was to make possible God's dwelling with His people (Exodus 25:8). Because of sin God could not physically co-exist with man (Exodus 33:20; Isaiah 59:2; Habakkuk 1:13). This was only possible if there was a proper separation (the curtains of the Tabernacle), a sanctified place of meeting (the Ark of the Covenant within the Holy of Holies), and a qualified mediator (the high priest). The details of this structure and the rules of ritual purification that maintained its sanctity were carefully described to Moses and two craftsmen (Bezalel and Oholiab) were divinely appointed to supervise skilled workers in making the structural framework, tent curtains, and ritual furniture that comprised the Tabernacle (Exodus 25:10-40:33). In addition, the priests were given instructions on how to conduct the divine service and prevent ritual desecration, which would cause God to withdraw His Divine Presence (Leviticus) and the people were told how to live godly lives that would sustain them collectively as a priestly Nation (Exodus 20:24-25:9).

The designated materials for the Tabernacle's construction came from the voluntary contributions of the people (Exodus 25:2-7), who had received these costly items of metals, skins, and fabrics as part of the "plunder from the Egyptians" (Exodus 3:22; 12:35-36). The result was a collapsible building that could be transported by the Israelites throughout their time on the wilderness and later during the period of settlement in the Promised Land.

During the time of the Tabernacle's construction a "Tent of Meeting" was erected by Moses outside the camp so that Moses could privately enter into the God's Presence (the *Shekinah*) and receive divine guidance and answers to the people's prayers (Exodus 33:7-11). This seems to have been a provisional structure that was later incorporated into the Tabernacle, since the terms "Tent of Meeting" and "Tabernacle" are used interchangeably after the Tabernacle's completion (Leviticus 1:3; 12:6; 14:23; 15:14; Numbers 11:26; 12:4; Deuteronomy 31:14-15). 2 Samuel 7:6 notes that God moved about "in a tent, even in a tabernacle." Likewise, when the First Temple was dedicated, the portable Tent of Meeting/Tabernacle and its sacred vessels were incorporated within the new permanent structure (1 Kings 8:4; 2 Chronicles 5:1, 5-7).

The Design of the Tabernacle

The Tabernacle was situated in the midst of the twelve tribes of Israel (Numbers 2:17; 10:14-28), which is estimated to have covered an area of approximately 12 square miles. This location for the Tabernacle was necessary because it served as the focal point of Israel's daily life. In this way, God, whose Presence was manifested at the Tabernacle as a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 33:9-10; 40:34-38; Numbers 14:14; Nehemiah 9:12, 19) was continually at the center of His people.

The basic design of the Tabernacle consisted of a rectangular outer court 75 feet wide and 150 feet long made of linen curtains 7.5 feet high set on 60 posts made of acacia wood overlaid with bronze and spaced 7.5 feet apart. As one moved westward through the entrance at the eastern end he would move into zones of increasing degrees of sanctity with the greatest being the Tabernacle's Holy of Holies. This is understandable because as one moved toward the Tabernacle one moved in the direction of God. Toward the center of the inner court, one encountered the brazen altar of sacrifice, and west of it a bronze washbasin called the *laver*. In the far western end of the court was pitched a rectangular tent 15 feet wide and 30 feet long divided into two sections: a Holy Place and a Most Holy Place. These were separated from one another by a curtain or veil (Hebrew, *paroket*). Inside the Holy Place were three ritual objects. On the right was the golden table for the shewbread and on the left the golden lampstand (Hebrew, *menorah*), with the golden altar of incense directly in the middle and in front of the curtain of separation. Beyond the curtain (through which only the High Priest could enter once a year) was the Holy of Holies, a square room 15 feet in width and length. Inside this unlit and windowless room was the Ark of the Covenant.

SECTION 2 – THE FIRST TEMPLE: GOD’S PERMANENT SANCTUARY

It may seem odd that the building of the First Temple waited so many centuries after God’s people entered in the Promised Land, but God had a particular order of events that were necessary to prepare for this event. This preparation involved the boundaries of the Promised Land coming under Israelite control, the enemies of the people being subdued, and the proper persons coming onto the stage of history to perform the work.

The Directions for the First Temple

The Divine Source

After Moses had brought the Children of Israel through the sea, his first statement regarding God’s plans for His people was “Thou wilt bring them and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, The place, O LORD, which Thou hast made for Thy dwelling, The sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established” (Exodus 15:17). God instructed Moses that once Israel crossed into the Promised Land they were to establish a central sanctuary in “the place that the LORD your God shall choose” (Deuteronomy 12:10-18). However, they wouldn’t set up God’s permanent sanctuary until God had given them rest from their enemies so they would live in safety.

Four hundred years later, a man from Bethlehem named David was crowned king of Israel and reigned in Hebron, a city about 20 miles southwest of Jerusalem. After reigning in Hebron for seven years and six months, David and his army attacked the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem. The Jebusites didn’t think David’s army would be successful, but to their dismay, David and his men captured Jerusalem. David set up residence in the fortress of Zion and called it the City of David. Hiram, the king of Tyre, built a magnificent palace for David and David became powerful because God was with him. Once David established himself in Jerusalem, he gathered up his army and moved the Ark of the Covenant from its place in Baalah to Jerusalem. Once in Jerusalem, David pitched a tent and placed the ark inside. Unfortunately, David continued to face conflicts with surrounding nations, especially the Philistines, during his reign.

As David sat in his palace, he contemplated building a permanent sanctuary for the Lord. David felt guilty that he himself lived in “a house of cedar, while the ark of the covenant of the LORD is under a tent” (1 Chronicles 17:1). After consulting the LORD, the prophet Nathan told him that his son would build the temple. God promised David that he would expand his kingdom and remove all of David’s enemies. God also promised David that his descendants would always dwell on the throne of Israel.

Many years later, David sinned against God and God sent a plague upon Israel as judgment. David confessed and the prophet Gad instructed David to purchase a threshing floor that belonged to Araunah the Jebusite. David purchased the threshing floor, built an altar, and sacrificed offerings to God. When God answered with fire from heaven, David was

convinced that “the house of the Lord God” needed to be built upon that site (2 Chronicles 22:1).

Although David was “a man after [God’s] own heart” (1 Samuel 13:14), and it was “in the heart of David to build a house for the Name of the Lord” (2 Chronicles 6:7-8), he was not permitted to build the Temple because of the warfare in his day (1 Kings 5:3; 8:18-19; 1 Chronicles 28:3-4). David knew that Solomon, was young and inexperienced and he wanted to provide Solomon with the wisdom and materials needed to build the Temple (1 Chronicles 22:5).

The design plans for the First Temple were given by direct divine revelation, the same manner in which Moses had received the plans for the Tabernacle on Mount Sinai. King David received the divine design and communicated the details of the plans for the Temple and all its furnishings to his son Solomon as recorded in 1 Chronicles 28:11-19: “Then David gave to his son Solomon the plan of the porch of the temple, its buildings, its storehouses, its upper rooms, its inner rooms, and the room for the mercy seat; and the plan of all that he had in mind, for the courts of the house of the LORD, and for all the surrounding rooms, for the storehouses of the house of God, and for the storehouses of the dedicated things; also for the divisions of the priests and the Levites and for all the work of the service of the house of the LORD and for all the utensils of service in the house of the LORD; for the golden utensils, the weight of gold for all utensils for every kind of service; for the silver utensils, the weight of silver for all utensils for every kind of service; and the weight of gold for the golden lampstands and their golden lamps, with the weight of each lampstand and its lamps; and the weight of silver for the silver lampstands, with the weight of each lampstand and its lamps according to the use of each lampstand; and the gold by weight for the tables of showbread, for each table; and silver for the silver tables; and the forks, the basins, and the pitchers of pure gold; and for the golden bowls with the weight for each bowl; and for the silver bowls with the weight for each bowl; and for the altar of incense refined gold by weight; and gold for the model of the chariot, even the cherubim, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the LORD. “All this,” said David, ‘the LORD made me understand in writing by His hand upon me, all the details of this pattern.’”

The Site for the First Temple

The general identification of the place for the sanctuary in the Promised Land was given in the time of Abraham and Isaac with the erection of an altar and God’s provision of a substitutionary sacrifice (Genesis 22:2, 13-14). This place was Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. God identified this chosen site more particularly in the time of King David as the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (1 Chronicles 21:18-20). David purchased this site and built an altar, consecrating the site as the place for the future sanctuary. The identification of this site was made certain by connecting all of these previous revelations in the statement of 2 Chronicles 3:1: “Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David, at the place that David had prepared, on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.”

The Human Source

The Construction Budget

The building of the Temple was assigned to David's son Solomon, whose name means "His peace," indicating the Temple was to be constructed in a time of peace by a man of peace. However, David was permitted to make preparations for his son Solomon's building. As with the preparations for the Tabernacle, this was done through raising the necessary financial contributions from the people (1 Chronicles 29:6-9), but also from David's royal treasury (1 Chronicles 29:1-5). The budget for the Temple consisted of 100 tons of and 250 tons of refined silver from the royal treasury (1 Chronicles 29:4) and 185 tons of gold plus 10,000 gold coins, 375 tons of silver, 675 tons of bronze and 4,000 tons of iron, as well as an unnumbered amount of precious stones (1 Chronicles 29:6-8).

The Construction Crew

When Solomon assumed the task of construction, he contracted with King Hiram of Tyre to furnish the building materials and skilled craftsmen to complete the job. Phoenician manufactured products were used by many civilizations of the ancient Near East, especially for the artistic woodwork for which they were famous. Therefore, Solomon bartered for Sidonian woodsmen to cut timber from the cedar forest and cypress groves of Lebanon and to transport the lumber to Solomon's port at Joppa, which was near to Jerusalem (1 Kings 5:6-9). This was done by lashing the logs together to form a raft and floating them to port. They would then be carried by oxcart via the main road that led past the fortified city of Gezer. Solomon's seven-year construction employed foreign expertise (1 Kings 7:13-14; 2 Chronicles 2:3) to assist his skilled workers (2 Chronicles 2:7), but the work was done primarily through conscription of the foreign men in Israel that numbered 153,600. Of these Solomon made 70,000 porters and 80,000 stonemasons who worked in the mountains under 3,600 supervisors (2 Chronicles 2:18). In particular, Phoenician and Gebalite (from Byblos) stonemasons quarried the large stones for the foundation of the Temple as well as the dressed stones for the building (1 Kings 6:17-18). Solomon also drafted forced laborers from among the 12 tribes of Israel some 30,000 strong (1 Kings 5:13; 2 Chronicles 2:2). Under the supervision of Adoniram, this work force was sent in shifts of 10,000 to Lebanon (one month in Lebanon two months at home) to assist in the harvesting of materials (1 Kings 5:13-14).

The Design for the First Temple

Outer Design and Features

The size of the First Temple was about the same as a modern church or synagogue. The basic dimensions of the outer design as given in the Bible (1 Kings 6:2-3 and 2 Chronicles 3:3-4) and based on the standard cubit (18 inches) are 90 feet long by 30 feet wide by 45

feet high (about 3,500 square feet). The portico, which was across the front, extending across the width of the Temple was 30 feet wide and 30 feet high (2 Chronicles 3:4). This building had windows with decorated frames (1 Kings 6:4). According to the parallel of the 'Ain Dara temple (see above) it is possible to understand these window frames as carved into the walls and the widow lattice as a fill of (in the case of 'Ain Dara) basalt carvings of horizontal rows of figure eights lying on their sides. The outer design included side chambers that consisted of three-storied rooms that buttressed the walls (1 Kings 6:5-6). These rooms were reached by a winding staircase (1 Kings 6:8). The Temple structure was situated on a platform about 10 feet high. From the bottom of this platform ten steps (2 Kings 20:8-9) lead upward to the entrance porch (*Devir*) of the nave (central part) of the Temple. The steps were bordered on each side by cast bronze pillars each about 40 feet high and 12 feet in circumference. They were respectively named *Jakin* ("He [God] will establish") and *Boaz* ("in Him [God] is strength"), 2 Kings 7:15, 21; 2 Chronicles 3:17. It is believed these names for the two columns stood for the initial words of dynastic oracles that were inscribed on them. These may have read in full: "YHWH will establish (*yachin*) your throne forever" and "In YHWH is the king's strength (*boaz*).\" Based on the parallel of columns at the entrance porch of the 'Ain Dara and Tel Ta'yinat temples, these were not free-standing but load-bearing structures. These pillars were also topped with molten bronze capitals each 7.5 feet in height. Each of these capitals was ornate, decorated with a lily motif of seven nets of network and twisted threads of chainwork into which were fastened 100 engraved pomegranates (1 Kings 7:17-20; 2 Chronicles 3:16). The pomegranate was a symbol of untied Israel (the many in the one) because it was a single fruit filled with multiple seeds. It was also the motif sewed along with golden bells around the edges of the robe of the high priest (Exodus 28:33; 39:24-25). Like the breastplate, this seems to have symbolized the mediatory role of the high priest representatively bearing all of the people of Israel into the Presence of God.

At this westernmost end of the Temple complex was a belt of storerooms surrounding the holy places. In the front of the Temple to the east was an open courtyard, in which stood the brazen altar 30 feet long by 30 feet wide and 15 feet high (2 Chronicles 4:1). Not far away was located an immense cast metal water-basin or laver called "the Brazen Sea," or "the Molten Sea." This reservoir, 45 feet in circumference, 7.5 feet high, 3 inches thick, and 15 feet from brim to brim, held 11,000 gallons of water (1 Kings 7:23-26). It rested on the backs of 12 bronze oxen that faced to each of the four points of the compass in groups of three (2 Chronicles 4:2-3). It was used for rinsing the parts of the burnt offering. In addition, Solomon made ten bronze basins on wheels that were highly ornamented with figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim and decorated with wreaths of hanging work. A fine example of such a bronze vessel stand on wheels was discovered at Cyprus and dates to 1225-1100 BC. Like the Solomonic basins this Cypriot model includes a frieze of animals including pairs of lions, a deer, birds, a dolphin, and a sphinx (a creature, it is believed, similar in appearance to cherubim). Solomon's ten basins were stationed near the Molten Sea: five on the north and five on the south sides of the courtyard (1 Kings 7:27-39). They were used to transport water to various places around the Temple for the purpose of ritual purification and cleansing of the priests engaged in offering sacrifices.

Inner Design and Furniture

Beyond the entrance porch was the smallest room of the Temple (Hebrew, *Ulam*), which led into the main room, called “the Holy Place” (Hebrew, *Hekal*). This was the largest room in the Temple. Its walls were covered with cedar panels with elaborately carved cherubim overlaid with fine gold and decorated with palm trees and chains (2 Chronicles 3:5, 7). The floors were covered with boards of cypress so that no stonework remained visible. He also adorned this room with beautiful precious stones and overlaid its beams, thresholds, and doors with gold (2 Chronicles 3:7-8).

Housed within this awe-inspiring central chamber were the sacred ritual objects from the Tabernacle: the golden seven-branched candelabrum (Hebrew, *Menorah*), and the table bearing the sacred presence bread (Hebrew, *Shulkan*). Elements made for this room, and originally not in the Tabernacle, were ten tables (five on the north side and five on the south) that were accompanied by ten lamps on lampstands, as well as the numerous implements used in the priestly service. The innermost room (Hebrew, *Devir*) was separated from the Holy Place by a double veil of fabric and by a wall whose only door was kept closed, except on rare occasions. Access to this room, called also “the Holy of Holies” (Hebrew, *Qodesh Qodashim*) was forbidden to all except the high priest, and to him only once a year at the high, holy Day of Atonement (Hebrew, *Yom Kippur*). This room was constructed as a perfect cube about 30 feet square and was gilded throughout with more than a ton of gold (2 Chronicles 3:8). In the middle of this windowless room stood a raised platform, the covered top of Mount Moriah that protruded within the Holy of Holies. Jewish tradition called it the “Foundation Stone” (Hebrew, *Even Shtiyah*) and believed it to be the center of the world and the point from which man had been created. On this platform sat the most important of the holy vessels, the Ark of the Covenant, possibly resting within a cut square to prevent it from being unsteadied when the high priest used its long carrying poles to guide himself to the mercy seat. Solomon also made two 15-foot-high olivewood cherubim overlaid with gold to overshadow the Ark (1 Kings 6:23-28; 8:6-7).

The Dedication of the Temple

When the Temple was finished, the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant into the Most Holy Place and set it under the wings of the cherubim. Then the Lord’s presence filled the Temple and Solomon blessed everyone watching. He announced that God would dwell in this magnificent temple forever. He told the people that even though his father David wanted to build the temple, God ordained him, Solomon, to complete the task.

Standing before the altar, Solomon said a prayer to God. He praised God for keeping his promises and asked God to keep the promise he made to David to always have one of David’s descendants upon the throne of Israel. In his prayer, Solomon recognized that God far exceeded anything human hands could make when he said, “But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built! Solomon asked God to act justly and to have mercy when the people of

Israel stood before the altar requesting forgiveness or to receive fair judgment. He asked God to adhere to the requests of foreigners and support in Israel's military campaigns.

Following his prayer to the Lord, he faced the people again, blessed them and offered sacrifices before the Lord. The Lord sent fire from heaven to consume the offerings and the people worshipped and praised God. On that day, the king and all the Israelites dedicated the temple of the LORD. After the dedication, the people observed the festival of that time and then returned home with joyful hearts.

Soon thereafter, the LORD appeared to Solomon and told him that he heard his prayer and that had consecrated the Temple. God promised Solomon that His Name, eyes, and heart would dwell there forever. He also promised Solomon that He would establish Solomon's royal throne over Israel forever. However, if anyone in Israel failed to observe God's commands or worshipped other gods, God would cut off Israel from the land and reject His Temple. If Israel disobeyed, they would be an object of ridicule and the Temple would become a heap of rubble.

The Priestly Duties

Almost identical to the duties performed in the Tabernacle, the priests in the Temple had daily duties laid out for them by the Lord. The priest served as the person who works as the go-between between the people of Israel and the LORD by representing the people to God, representing God to the people, and guarding the Temple. Their basic duties within the Temple were to make sacrifices, offerings, and maintain the Presence of the LORD.

- Priests were responsible for blessing the people bringing the sacrifices and offerings, approving them, and then burning them upon the brazen altar.
- Priests would then ritualistically purify themselves by bathing their hands and feet with the Brazen Sea before entering the Holy Place. The priests used the smaller ten bronze basins to transport water to various places around the Temple also for the purpose of ritual purification and cleansing of the priests engaged in offering sacrifices.
- Inside the Holy Place, the priests were responsible for maintaining the bread of the Presence found on the same Table from the Tabernacle as well as the ten additional tables. The priests would eat the bread weekly and replace it with fresh bread on the Sabbath (1 Chronicles 9:32).
- The priests were also responsible for trimming the lamp wicks and making sure the oil doesn't burn out. In the Temple, the priest had to maintain the original Golden Lampstand from the Tabernacle and ten additional lamps.
- The priests regularly made offerings of incense before the Lord on the Golden Altar.

The High Priest

The high priest was the ultimate mediator between God and the nation of Israel. The high priest needed to be a direct descendant of Aaron, Moses brother. The currently high priest

would anoint one of his sons to succeed him as high priest. The main duties of the high priest included:

- Sacrifices on the Day of Atonement
- Prayers of intercession before the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement
- Management and supervision of the other priests

The high priest wore the following garments:

- White linen tunic (woven, one piece, close fitting).
- Dark blue woven robe (reached to knees and had blue, purple, and scarlet pomegranates upon the hem with bells of gold between each pomegranate).
- Ephod of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet entwined in linen (apron-like, shoulder piece couple together by two edges).
- Onyx stone enclose in pouches of gold with names of the 12 tribes engraved on them (six on each). One on each shoulder of the ephod.
- Girdle of the ephod (bound around waist).
- Breastplate of gold blue, purple, scarlet and fine twined linen doubled, 4-square (around 8-10 inches; 20–26 centimeters).
 - Contained 4 rows of 3 stones (jewels).
 - Each jewel contained the name of one of the 12 tribes set in gold.
 - Two rings of gold were in top ends of the breastplate; 2 chains fastened to these rings, extended up to where they fastened at the shoulder pieces.
 - Two rings of gold were at the bottom ends; two rings in the ephod above the girdle at the waist laced together with blue lacing; the breastplate contained the Urim and Thummin.
- The Miter or Turban (crown of gold inscribed with “Holy to the Lord.”)

The Furnishings of the Temple

King Solomon acquired a skilled craftsman named Hiram-Abi. Hiram was skilled in bronze, gold, silver, iron, wood, and stone—as well as yarn and fine linen. Solomon brought in the furnishings from the Tabernacle and added many other furnishings.

The Brazen Altar

The Brazen Altar lied on the east side of the Temple, directly in front of the Temple. The Altar was polished bronze and measured 30 feet long by 30 feet wide and 15 feet high. The altar for the Tabernacle was only 4.5 feet high and didn’t have steps. Since the altar at the Temple was 15 feet high, it most likely had step for the priests to climb in order to burn offerings and sacrifices. Hiram also made polished bronze pots, shovels, meat forks and other articles necessary for making sacrifices and offerings upon the altar.

The Molten Sea (Brazen Sea)

The Molten Sea lied on the southeast corner of the Temple. The Molten Sea was an immense cast metal water-basin or laver. This reservoir, 45 feet in circumference, 7.5 feet high, 3 inches thick, and 15 feet from brim to brim, held 11,000 gallons (41,640 liters) of water. It rested on the backs of 12 bronze oxen three facing north, three facing west, three facing south and three facing east. Two rows of 300 gourds encircled the Sea below the rim.

Ten Bronze Basins

Huram made ten bronze basins sitting in ten bronze stands. Each stand was 6 feet long, six feet wide, and 4.5 feet high. Each basin was 18 feet in circumference and held 240 gallons (908 liters) of water. Hiram ornamented the basins and the stands with figures of lions, oxen, and cherubim and decorated them with wreaths of hanging work. The basins were stationed near the Molten Sea: five on the north and five on the south sides of the courtyard. Hiram also made bronze sprinkling bowls. The basins were used to transport water to various places around the Temple for the purpose of ritual purification and cleansing of the priests.

The Golden Lampstand and the Ten Lamps

Transferred from the Tabernacle, the Golden Lampstand was beaten from a single piece of gold. Fueled by oil, the lampstand had seven lamps at the top of each branch. Hiram made by ten golden lamps set upon ten stands to accompany the Golden Lampstand and positioned them five on the north side and five on the south side of the inner sanctuary. Hiram also made golden wick trimmers, tongs, and basins to use in the priestly service.

The Table of the Bread of the Presence and the Ten Tables

Transferred from the Tabernacle, the table of the bread of the presence contained the twelve loaves of bread made from fine flour. Hiram also made ten tables and positioned them five on the north side and five on the south side of the inner sanctuary. Hiram also made 100 golden sprinkling bowls and pure gold dishes to be used in the priestly service.

The Altar of Incense

Transferred from the Tabernacle, the altar of incense was used to offer a special incense to the Lord. The altar was cedar overlaid with pure gold. Hiram also made pure gold censers to be used in the priestly service.

The Ark of the Covenant

The ark of the covenant rested in the Most Holy Place and was separated by a thick veil. Made out of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold, the ark was the central focus of the Temple. On the Day of Atonement, the high priest would sacrifice and sprinkle blood on the mercy seat—the top of the ark of the covenant where the winged cherubim faced each other—to atone for the sins of the people. Solomon made a pair of cherubim out of olive wood overlaid with pure gold and placed them in Most Holy Place. Each one stood 15 feet high with a wingspan of 15 feet. Their wings spread over the ark, touching in the middle.

The Ark of the Covenant has always been shrouded in mystery. From the beginning, it was hidden from public view and approachable by only a select few. When it was transported it had to be covered and remain covered throughout its journey (Numbers 4:5-6). Once it was placed within the Holy of Holies, an especially constructed curtain was hung to prevent direct access to the Ark. No one, not even a priest, could enter "beyond the veil;" To make absolutely certain the High Priest did not inadvertently look upon the Ark, he was commanded by law to carry burning incense, whose thick smoke had to completely fill the room before he could approach the Mercy Seat of the Ark. What we can know is that the Ark was made in the form of a box approximately three and four feet in length and one and two feet in height and width. This design is indicated in the Hebrew word used for the Ark, *'aron*, which means a "box" or "chest." Our English word "Ark," which comes to us through the Latin *arca* ("chest"), has the same meaning. In Genesis 50:26 this same Hebrew word (*'aron*) is used for the coffin (sarcophagus) in which Joseph was buried in Egypt (Gen. 50:26). The biblical text says that the Ark was made of "acacia (KJV *shittim*) wood" (Ex. 25:10). Acacia trees are native to the Sinai desert and the wood was considered so durable that the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament) translated the Hebrew "acacia wood" as "incorruptible or (non-decaying) wood." Magnifying this imperishable quality was the pure gold, which overlaid the wood (Ex. 25:11). This gold overlay was for practical protection as well as for religious symbolism. It may have been applied as gilding (like gold leaf), an idea perhaps denoted by the language of Hebrews 9:4 "covered on all sides with gold." This was the method used on wooden furniture of the period as evidenced in finds from Egyptian tombs. Examples of box-like shrines similar in form and date to the Israelite Ark have been found in Egypt in the tomb of King Tutankhamen. This is a significant parallel since the Israelites had been in Egypt for some 430 years before the construction of the Ark at the foot of Mount Sinai and may have made their Ark after just such an Egyptian model. The Ark disappeared with the destruction of the First Temple in 586 BC. Therefore, in the Second Temple during the Day of Atonement the high priest could only pour the blood on the barren stone within the Holy of Holies. Jewish tradition held that the Ark was deposited before the First Temple's destruction in a secret chamber beneath the Holy of Holies and will remain there until the time of the rebuilding of the next Jewish Temple.

The Eight Purposes of the Israelite Temple

The Israelite Temple was unique among temples in the ancient Near East because it represented the one true God. When King David charged the people of Israel concerning the preparations for the First Temple, he declared, “the work is great; for the Temple is not for man, but for the Lord God” (1 Chronicles 29:1). This statement reflects the Israelite distinction that while the Temple would be a place where the needs of man were met, it was first and foremost a place where God would be worshipped and His glory would be manifested to the world. In keeping with this distinction for the Israelite Temple are eight purposes of the Temple.

1. Station of the Divine Presence

After the Children of Israel had been brought safely through the sea, Moses declared, “Thou wilt bring them and plant them in the mountain of Thine inheritance, the place, O Lord, which Thou hast made for Thy dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Thy hands have established” (Exodus 15:17). Even though God’s Glory temporarily appeared at the Tabernacle, Moses’ words pointed to the permanent manifestation of the LORD among His People in the Temple in Jerusalem, an act that demonstrated the incomparability of Israel’s God to the nations (1 Kings 8:54-60). It stood as the visible station of His invisible, though manifest, Presence. The Jewish sages called this divine manifestation the *Shekinah* (from the Hebrew verb *shakan*, “to dwell”). Later biblical writers expressed this concept with respect to the Temple by a circumlocution that God had caused His *Name* to dwell there (1 Kings 8:29; Jeremiah 7:12; Deuteronomy 12:11; 2 Chronicles 7:16; Ezra 6:12; Nehemiah 1:9). In this way, while the transcendent God did not physically dwell in the Temple (1 Kings 8:27), it was nevertheless a place where God’s Presence was accessible to man.

2. Sign of the Covenant

The presence of God in the Temple was witness to His covenant relationship with Israel. In particular, the Temple had been built to house the Ark of the Covenant, which served as a repository of the Mosaic Covenant engraved on the stone tablets received by Moses on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 25:9 with 2 Samuel 7:2,5). The construction of the Temple on “the Mount of the Lord” in Jerusalem (the Land of Moriah) was also confirmation of the Abrahamic Covenant (Genesis 22:14) and the Davidic Covenant (1 Kings 8:23-26; 2 Chronicles 3:1). The Mosaic Covenant promised God’s protection and blessing to Israel if it obeyed the stipulations of the covenant, but warned of God’s judgment if the Nation acted in disobedience (Leviticus 26). The climatic sign of divine judgment was the withdrawal of the Divine Presence, the destruction of the Temple by Israel’s enemies and their exile among the nations (2 Kings 23:26-27; 25:8-11; Lamentations 1:5-10).

3. Signal of the End of Exile

God told the Children of Israel while in the wilderness that their experience of exile would end and rest begin only after they had settled in the Land of Promise and established a central sanctuary (Deuteronomy 12:9-14). This relationship to the Temple was confirmed in Solomon's dedicatory prayer in which he praised God for giving the rest to His people He had promised to Moses (1 Kings 8:56). This rest will be maintained, according to Ezekiel, 44:30 through the restoration of the Temple and its priestly service (literally "to rest in blessing").

4. Socio-Political Institution

The Temple served a significant role in social and political life of the people. Legal matters were decided by the Sanhedrin, whose meeting chamber was within the Temple complex. Jewish daily life was governed and regulated by the Temple's ritual calendar. The cycle of festivals, the annual pilgrimages, the sacrificial rites, and the reading and study of the Torah were all centered in the Temple. The Temple also maintained national unity. Jewish males from each of the twelve tribes (even during the time of the divided kingdom) were required to present themselves at the Temple at least three times a year. Even the Jewish communities in the Diaspora (Jews outside of the Land of Israel) preserved their national identity by following the Temple calendar and three times a day turning their faces in prayer toward the Temple in Jerusalem (Daniel 6:10-11) and continuing to send their contributions to it.

5. Symbol of National Sovereignty

The construction of the Temple was a demonstration of national independence. It stood as a place of refuge for people accused of crimes such as treason (1 Kings 1:50-51; 2:28) and served as a national rallying point in times of repentance and disaster, such as a famine (1 Kings 8:33-38). When Israel was under the power of foreign nations, these nations punished political disloyalty through the destruction of the Temple. This demonstrated that they saw the Temple as the symbol of national sovereignty. Likewise, when Jews returned from exile the rebuilding of the Temple confirmed the return of a functioning state. For this reason, Israel's enemies in the Land wanted to thwart rebuilding efforts (Ezra 4). In the time of the Second Temple period, the Hasmonean and Roman rulers sought to control the Nation through control of the Temple establishment by political appointments to the office of high priest.

6. Secured National Blessings

At the time of the dedication of the First Temple, King Solomon declared the Temple to be the place of national blessing (2 Chronicles 7:14). Since God was the source of all blessing and His Presence was in the Temple, it became the means of securing the covenantal

promises (blessings). Thus, we see in Solomon's prayer a cause-effect relationship between the Temple and the bestowal of rain, relief from famine, military security, and help in foreign distress (1 Kings 8:35-49; 2 Chronicles 6:24-30). This was also observed when the foundations for the Second Temple were about to be laid during the Persian period. At that time the prophet Haggai announced that once the Temple was begun there would be a reversal of Israel's misfortunes and God would bless the Nation (Haggai 2:15, 19).

7. Source of Worldwide Blessing

Solomon's prayer also indicated that the Temple was to be a source of universal blessing. If foreigners came specifically to pray to the God of Israel at the Temple, the Lord would hear their prayers (1 Kings 8:41-43). This worldwide purpose of the Temple was understood by Jesus when He cited from words in Isaiah 56:7 that the Temple was to be a house of prayer *for all peoples*. While this potential existed during the First and Second Temple periods, the covenantal failure of Israel left this promise unfulfilled. However, the prophets envisioned a future time when this would become a reality (Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-11; 56:6-7; 65:25; Zechariah 8:23; 14:16; Micah 4:1-5).

8. Service as the Focal Point of Prayer

Because God's *Shekinah* dwelt at the Temple, those who prayed in the direction of the Temple (i.e., to God) would have His promise of protection (1 Kings 8:33, 42-43, 48-49). Focusing prayer on the Temple was a recognition that God was the God of Israel and that He maintained His covenant with them. He was not to be found in any other place or in any other nation, for only the God at the Temple in Jerusalem was the true God (Psalm 132:13-14; Zechariah 2:8; 8:2-3). Later Judaism concluded if prayer depended upon orienting oneself towards the *Shekinah*, whose presence was within the Holy of Holies, then even after the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple prayer should still be continued in the direction of the desolated Sanctuary. Therefore, modern Jewish prayer is still made in this direction.

The Destruction of the First Temple

Solomon was warned by God about the future destruction of the Temple shortly after its completion. In 1 Kings 9:6-9 God told the king, "If you or your sons shall indeed turn away from following Me, and shall not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you and shall go and serve other gods and worship them, then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them, and the house which I have consecrated for My name, I will cast out of My sight ... and this house will become a heap of ruins." Solomon's political marriages contributed to Israel's defection from the Lord. As part of these contractual agreements, Solomon had to provide for the worship practices of his 1,000 foreign wives and concubines (1 Kings 11:1-3). Consequently, the king erected idolatrous high places, which in time affected his own spiritual departure from God and invoked God's wrath (1 Kings 11:3-9).

A preliminary judgment came shortly after Solomon's death when his son Rehoboam divided the kingdom. Jeroboam, who was not a descendent of King David, ruled the ten northern tribes, which are referred to as the "Northern Kingdom" or "Israel." Rehoboam ruled the Southern Kingdom including the area of Jerusalem. These tribes are referred to as "Judah."

At this time, Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt attacked the Southern Kingdom, targeting Jerusalem and the Temple. The treasures of Solomon's Palace, which housed 300 shields of beaten gold, were carried back to Egypt (1 Kings 14:25-26; 2 Chronicles 12:2,9). Only because the royal court "humbled" itself at the instigation of God's prophet was the Temple and Jerusalem spared further plunder (2 Chronicles 12:5-8). However, in the Northern Kingdom, the Israelite king Jeroboam built alternate worship sites to keep the people from returning to the Temple and coming back under the southern administration of Judah. Throughout the history of the Northern Kingdom, Israelite kings continued to set up pagan cultic installations in the Land. These actions brought about the exile of the Northern Kingdom under the Assyrians in 721 BC.

The presence of the Temple in Judah and of reforming kings in the Davidic dynasty, delayed divine judgment on the Southern Kingdom for 135 years. During this period, the prophets made the people of Judah aware that the punishment for their sin would find its expression in the destruction of the Temple. Political alliances required Judah to pay monetary tribute to superior states, tribute that came largely from the Temple treasury and the material wealth adorning the Temple. Meeting these economic obligations began dismantling the Temple piece by piece. King Ahaz stripped the Temple of a portion of its silver and gold, broke up the Temple furniture and utensils, and removed the bronze oxen from the Molten Sea in order to satisfy the national debt owed the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser III (2 Chronicles 28:21,24). Later, he closed the Temple doors and constructed idolatrous altars throughout Jerusalem. Ahaz's son Hezekiah set in motion events that would bring about the Temple's destruction. He unwisely showed the treasures of the Temple to Babylonian emissaries (2 Kings 20:12-18). As a result, the prophet warned: "I will remove Judah also from My sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I have said: 'My name shall be there'" (2 Kings 23:27). The climatic offense came with king Manasseh, who committed acts of idolatry against the Temple, even putting an idol in the Holy of Holies (2 Kings 21:4-8, 11-15). When Manasseh's successor, and last of the reforming kings, king Josiah, died at the hands of the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco (2 Kings 23:29-30) this signaled that the time for the predicted judgment was near. It came under king Jehoiakim's reign in 605 BC, when the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar took the king and thousands of his nobles and skilled laborers (including Daniel and his friends) to Babylon.

A second invasion and deportation followed in 597 BC., this time removing all of the remaining Temple treasures to Babylon (2 Kings 24:13). The prophet Ezekiel was taken captive in this deportation (Ezekiel 9:1-8) and saw a vision of the *Shekinah* departing from the Temple (Ezekiel 10:18-19). With the departure of God's Presence, the Temple was set apart for destruction. This fell in 587/586 BC as the Babylonians burned the house of the

LORD and the city (2 Kings 25:8-9; 2 Chronicles 36:18- 19). Even the two bronze pillars that had stood in front of the Temple, the Molten Sea, and the ten bronze stands, were broken up and taken away by the Babylonians (2 Kings 25:13; Jeremiah 52:17), along with over 4,500 vessels used in the Temple (Daniel 1:2; 5:2-4; Ezra 1:7-11).

Archaeological Evidence of the First Temple

While the Davidic and Solomonic kingdoms of the 10th century BC were once disputed, archaeological discoveries today have affirmed the historicity of the biblical accounts. At the site of Khirbet Qeiyafa, a provincial town in the Elah Valley region, archaeologists uncovered impressive fortifications that dated from this period. In addition, an ostrakon (inscription on a potsherd) in Hebrew from the same period was found in one of the buildings. It reveals a high level of scribal culture that implies the presence of an archive, helping interpret this site as an administrative center, now identified by its proximity to the biblical site of Gederah with biblical Neta'im (1 Chronicles 4:23). If such a small outlying site was developed in the 10th century BC, there can be no doubt that the larger city of Jerusalem was a Judean kingdom just as Scripture attests.

Archaeology has uncovered the ancient “City of David” built upon and utilizing the remains of earlier Canaanite and Jebusite fortifications and water systems. Located in southern Jerusalem on a narrow ridge bordering the Kidron Valley, excavations have revealed a massive 12-story high stepped-stone structure from the 13th century BC upon which David began to build his city (2 Samuel 5:9). This foundational structure may have served as a retaining wall buttressing King David’s Fortress of Zion, as the recent discovery of monumental buildings just above have been interpreted as the remains of David’s palace.

It was on the elevated extension of a ridge above this palace (the Ophel) that Mt. Moriah was situated and the First Temple built by Solomon. In 2010 a city wall with a gatehouse dating to the late 10th century BC, was discovered in the Ophel. This shows that a high-level of engineering existed in the city at this time. A partial inscription in ancient Hebrew found on one of several large storage jars unearthed in the complex indicated it belonged to a high-level government official. Seal impressions discovered in the site also argue for a royal context. This accords well with the biblical record of royal construction that employed skilled Phoenician architects and engineers to construct the First Temple (1 Kings 7:13-14), and may even specifically mention these structures: “until he (Solomon) had completed building his own house, and the house of the Lord, and the wall around Jerusalem” (1 Kings 3:1).

According to Eilat Mazar, the archaeologist that excavated the site, this wall probably connected with the City of David and fits with the biblical description that King Solomon built a fortification line around his new constructions of the Temple and the King’s palace. It should also be mentioned that scores of clay *bullae* (small seals stamped with the sender’s name and attached to documents) were discovered in a room in David’s City that had been burned in the Babylonian destruction of First Temple Jerusalem. Many personal names mentioned in Jeremiah and Chronicles were found including that of “Azaryahu son

of Hilkiyahu,” who was a member of the family of high priests who officiated at the end of the First Temple period (1 Chronicles 9:10).

The Temple and Temples in the Ancient Near East

The Temple has features that are similar to other temples of its time and region. Influences from Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Syro-Phoenician have often been noted by scholars. The basic design of an earthly sanctuary had apparently been revealed from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8-9; 3:8, 24) and therefore is reflected in the common architectural pattern for temples throughout the ancient Near East. This basic design in Semitic religions was a courtyard surrounding a sacred space that was recognized as the resident of God. In particular, the sacred edifice was a building divided into two or three sections or rooms. This was the pattern of the Egyptian long-room temple with direct access to the innermost room, which housed a statue of the deity.

The Bible records that the First and Second Temples were built after the pattern of foreign temples by Phoenician (Sidonian) workers. Solomon constructed his Temple with the aid of his father David’s material supplier, King Hiram of Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Kings 5; 2 Chronicles 2:3-18). Hiram sent his Phoenician architects and craftsmen to advise their Israelite counterparts on building the Temple to contemporary specifications. One of these was a half-Jewish, half-Phoenician artisan named Hiramabi, who was given oversight of the Temple craftsmen. Credit is given to him for the vast array of decorative, cast, and overlaid objects in the Temple (1 Kings 7:13-45; 2 Chronicles 2:13-14). Likewise, the construction of the Second Temple under Zerubbabel, also involved Phoenician workmen (Ezra 3:7-10), in harmony with the decree from the Persian king Darius to “rebuild” the Temple. The Jews who returned from exile were inexperienced and could only build a new Temple with the expertise of the Phoenicians. While few examples of Phoenician temples exist, one Phoenician temple two centuries older than Solomon’s was excavated in Hazor. It was 84 feet by 56 feet and tripartite. At each side of the entrance to the main hall was a round pillar, like those in Solomon’s Temple. Also, ivory panels and sculptures in several Phoenician temples bear pattern decorations similar to the cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers carved in the paneling of the Jerusalem Temple (1 Kings 6:35). In addition, the fourth-century AD church father Eusebius preserved in his writings the record of a Phoenician priest named Sanchuniathon, who gave details of how King Hiram of Tyre had supplied Solomon with materials for the building of the Temple. Such archaeological information concerning comparative temples makes it possible to reconstruct a reasonably accurate portrait of the Solomonic Temple.

The best existing examples of the Solomonic style have been found in Syria at Tel Ta’yinat and ‘Ain Dara. Of these examples, the best parallels are those preserved at the ‘Ain Dara temple. Because no remains of Solomon’s Temple exist and the biblical descriptions contain many architectural terms that are uncertain, the archaeological example of the ‘Ain Dara temple may offer the best means of reconstructing the First Temple. From this example, it is clear that the Temple of Solomon was a typical hybrid temple of the long-room Syrian type, elements that, with a date almost contemporaneous with that of Solomon, allow us to

confidently affirm that the construction of the First Temple belongs to the 10th century BC in harmony with biblical chronology.

Comparison of the Temple of Solomon with the 'Ain Dara Temple

Dr. John Monson has determined that the 'Ain Dara temple shares 33 of the some 65 architectural elements mentioned in the Bible in connection with Solomon's Temple. He writes:

No other building excavated to date has as many features in common with the Biblical description of the Jerusalem Temple. Most basically, both have essentially the same three-division, long-room plan: At 'Ain Dara, it is an entry portico, an antechamber and main chamber with screened-off shrine; in Solomon's Temple, it is an entry portico (*'ulam*), main hall (*heikhal*) and shrine, or holy of holies (*debir*). The only significant difference between the two is the inclusion of the antechamber in the 'Ain Dara plan. With this exception, the two plans are almost identical. If the royal cubit used to build Solomon's Temple was 52.5 centimeters, then the Jerusalem Temple measured approximately 120 feet by 34 feet. The 'Ain Dara temple is 98 feet long by 65 wide (or 125 by 105 feet including the side chambers) ... Both temples were built on a platform and had a courtyard in front with a monumental staircase (*ma'aleh*, cf. Ezekiel 40:22) leading up to the temple. In both cases, the portico was narrower and shallower than the rooms of the temple. In both cases, the portico was open on one side and had a roof supported by two pillars. In both cases, spectacular reliefs decorated the walls, and the carvings in both temples share several motifs: The stylized floral designs and lily patterns, palmettes, winged creatures and lions of 'Ain Dara may be compared with the "bas reliefs and engravings of cherubim, palm trees, and flower patterns, in the inner and outer rooms" of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings 6:29). The elevated podium at the back of the 'Ain Dara temple, covering a third of the floor area of the main hall and set off from the forepart by a separate screen, is a commanding parallel for the Biblical holy of holies." ("The New 'Ain Dara Temple: Closest Solomonic Parallel," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 26:3 (May/June 2000).

SECTION 3 – THE SECOND TEMPLE

The Directions for the Second Temple

According to the biblical prophets, God intended to restore the Temple after a 70-year period of divine discipline (Jeremiah 25:10-12; Daniel 6:10; 9:2-19). The time of restoration was set in motion by the overthrow of Babylon (where the Jewish people had been taken as captives) by the Medes and the Persians (2 Chronicles 36:20-21; Daniel 5:30-31). The prophet Isaiah even revealed the name (“Cyrus”) of the Persian monarch who would return the exiles and provide for the rebuilding of the Temple (Isaiah 44:28; Ezra 1:1-3). Josephus Flavius, the first-century Jewish historian, recorded the tradition that Cyrus the Great’s actions were prompted by this prophecy of Isaiah: “... by reading the book which Isaiah left behind of his prophecies; for this prophet had spoken thus to him in a secret vision: ‘My will is, that Cyrus ... send back My people to their own land, and build My temple.’ Accordingly, when Cyrus read this, and admired the divine power, an earnest desire and ambition seized upon him to fulfill what was so written” (*Antiquities* xi, 1.2).

In 538 BC, Cyrus’ issued an official edict to return and rebuild the Temple (2 Chronicles 36:22-23). This edict was recorded on a clay cylinder and appears in the Bible in two languages: Hebrew (Ezra 1:1-4) and Aramaic (Ezra 6:1-5). Once this word was given, the High Priest Zerubbabel led some 50,000 Jews back to Jerusalem (Ezra 2:1-68), carrying with them 5,400 of the Temple vessels that had been taken to Babylon and stored in the Babylonian temple at Shinar (Daniel 1:2; 5:2; Ezra 1:7-11; Isaiah 52:11-12; Jeremiah 27:18-22).

The Site of the Second Temple

It is clear from the biblical account that the returning exiles only conceived of rebuilding the Temple at its original site and on its original “foundation” (Ezra 1:68). Since God designated the site of Mount Moriah (Exodus 15:17; 1 Chronicles 21:18-28; 2 Chronicles 3:1) and the Divine Presence once dwelt there (1 Kings 8:10-13; 2 Chronicles 7:1-3) and promised to return to the same site (Ezekiel 43:1-7), the location for rebuilding the Temple was confirmed. For this reason the Mishnah Torah, *Beth Ha’Behira* 1:3-4 states “Once the site for the Temple was fixed in the days of Samuel and King David, it is immutable. All that remains to do at a time such as the present is to rebuild the physical structure, and reinstitute the Temple service ...”

Who’s Who in the Second Temple

- Zerubbabel: The first governor of Judah and descendant of David. Zerubbabel led 42,360 Jews back from exile to Jerusalem and the Persian province of Judah. He was charged by King Cyrus the Great to supervise the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem.
- Joshua the High Priest: The first high priest in the Second Temple. Joshua assisted in

the rebuilding of the Temple.

- Ezra: A descendant of Aaron, the high priest and Moses' brother who was sent to Jerusalem by King Artaxerxes of Persia to teach the Law of Moses to the people in Judah. Once in Jerusalem, Ezra recognized several impurities in the land and strove to purify and cleanse the community.
- Nehemiah: The cupbearer to King Artaxerxes of Persia who, after recognizing the desperate need to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, asked his king if he could return to head up the task. 13 years after sending Ezra to Jerusalem, King Artaxerxes sent Nehemiah to Jerusalem as the governor of Judah and a mission to rebuild the walls. Once in Jerusalem, Nehemiah faced much opposition from Judah's enemies. Nehemiah also helped Ezra purify the community.
- Haggai: A Hebrew prophet during the building of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. Haggai arrived on the scene 16 years after the Jews returned from exile. After experiencing resistance from local Samaritans, the rebuilding of the Temple was put on hold. Through Haggai's efforts, the work on the Temple was resumed.
- Zechariah: A Hebrew prophet and contemporary with Haggai, Zechariah also exhorted the people to resume building the Temple in 520 BC after 18 years on hiatus.

The Second Temple (First Phase)

Under the leadership of Zerubbabel, who became governor of Judah, and Joshua the High Priest (Haggai 2:2) the foundation for the first phase of the Second Temple was laid by the people. Following the precedent set in preparation for the First Temple, the people gave generously to the sacred treasury (Ezra 2:68-69). The first act of restoration was the reconstruction of the Altar of Burnt Offering, which allowed the sacrificial system to be reinstituted and to restore the observance of the biblical festivals (Ezra 3:1-5). After this, in 535 BC the foundations for the Second Temple were laid, as in the First Temple, with the expertise of Phoenician workmen (Ezra 3:7). However, the construction of the Temple itself met with opposition from Samaritan residents to the north and could not be renewed for another 15 years.

Through the exhortation of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah the work was resumed in 520 BC and a decree from the Persian king Darius I provided official sanction and support from local taxes to finance the completion of the structure (Ezra 6:1-15). The dedication of this finished structure on March 12, 515/516 BC, some 20 years after the return from exile, ended the seventy-year desolation of Jerusalem begun in 587/586 BC (a period that had been governed by the state of the Temple, see Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10; Daniel 9:2, 16-17, 20).

Compared to the First Temple, the Second was inferior in construction, lacking a compound, the two entrance pillars *Yachin* and *Boaz*, the two olive wood cherubim, and the most sacred vessel, the Ark of the Covenant. Also, unlike the First Temple that had been built at the beginning of Israel's Monarchy, the Second was built under a time of foreign domination. Finally, and most important of all, it lacked the *Shekinah* Glory that had

signified the Presence of God at the Temple. For these reasons, the biblical account notes that at the time this Temple's foundations were laid that many of the priests and Levites who were old enough to have seen the First Temple wept (Ezra 3:12-13).

The Design of the Second Temple

Although the biblical accounts do not offer many details of the design of Zerubbabel's Temple, it appears that it followed closely that of the First Temple (Haggai 2:3), but without an adjacent royal compound. This seems to be confirmed from the archaeological discovery of the remains of the Samaritan Temple on Mt. Gerazim, including its six-foot thick walls, gates and altars, although it also had two adjacent edifices, thought to be a royal residence and administrative building. The temple's northern gate matches that of the Temple described in the *Temple Scroll*, a Dead Sea Scroll document written when the Second Temple of Zerubbabel was still standing. That the Samaritan Temple was most likely a replica of Zerubbabel's Temple modeled after the First Temple is implied by Josephus' account of its origin in which Menachem, a priest in the Jerusalem Temple, married Nikaso, the daughter of the Samaritan leader Sanballat. This marriage disqualified Menachem from service in the Jerusalem Temple, so his father-in-law built him a temple on Mt. Gerazim where he could officiate as high priest. Since the Samaritans adopted everything from the Jewish prayers to sacrificial ritual, it would make sense that the temple they built would have copied the legitimate Israelite Temple.

The information about Zerubbabel's Temple restoration that comes to us from the biblical testimonies of the prophets Haggai (Haggai 1:1-8, 12-14; 2:1-9) and Zechariah (Zechariah 1:7-6:15), and the accounts in Ezra (Ezra 1:3-11; 3:13; 4:1-6:22), are with respect to the basic structure, while information about the walls of the city and site are given in Nehemiah (Nehemiah 2:11-7:4).

Nehemiah reveals there were five external gates, two in the south and one in each of the other walls. Mishnah *Middot* confirms this and notes that these gates were 17 feet (5 meters) wide and 34 feet (10 meters) high (*Middot* 1:3; 2:3). It also names the western gate as the Kiponus Gate (*Middot* 1:3). Connected to the eastern gate were chambers, which according to *Middot* 1.6, were the Chamber of the Hearth, which had four rooms opening into a reception room, the "Chamber of the Lamb Offerings" and the "Chamber of Shewbread," a place where the Hasmoneans hid defiled altar stones and a chamber led down to a place for priestly ritual purification called the "Chamber of Immersion." Nehemiah also makes reference to ritual acts associated with the Temple (Nehemiah 10:32-39; cf. 12:44-47) and to building projects that seem to have been connected with the Temple precinct (Nehemiah 2:8; 8:1; 12:44; 13:4-7). Nehemiah 3:29 makes reference to the "East Gate" within the Temple precincts of which Shemaiah was the keeper. Surrounding the Temple and the royal compounds was another enclosure that two gates, the Water Gate (Nehemiah 3:26) and the Miphkad Gate (Nehemiah 3:31). This latter gate was located on the east facing the outer defensive wall of the city. The eastern gate in this defensive wall was known as the Horse Gate. It is thought that between the East Gate and the Miphkad Gate was the open place where king Hezekiah gathered the priests and Levites (2

Chronicles 29:4–5) and later Ezra assembled the men of Benjamin and Judah (Ezra 10:9). During the ninth through the seventh centuries, the First Temple experienced slight alterations to its structure as a result of religious and political shifts by the Judean kings. The most notable of these were Hezekiah's stripping the gold from the Temple's door and doorposts to pay tribute to Assyria (2 Kings 18:16) and the erection of foreign altars and idolatrous images in the Temple by Manasseh. There were additional changes during Manasseh's subsequent reform (2 Kings 21:4-7; 2 Chronicles 33:2-9, 15-16), and the repair and restoration of the Temple by king Josiah (2 Kings 22:5-6, 11-12; 2 Chronicles 34:8-11).

The 500-Cubit-Square Temple Mount

Josephus implies that Solomon's Temple was built on a square Temple Mount (*Antiquities* 15,400). If the rival temple complex built by Jeroboam at the northernmost Israelite city of Dan a century later followed this plan (1 Kings 12:26-29, then the archaeological remains discovered at this site seem to confirm this. However, Josephus states that the people over time increased the size of the Temple Mount (*War* 5.185), and this is borne out in the biblical record of additions to the Temple courts and complex (2 Chronicles 20:5; 33:15). Therefore, the later size of the Temple Mount was greater than that of Solomon's. While we do not know precisely the date, at some point during the period of the Monarchy (according to *Middot* 2:1), the Temple Mount became a 500-cubit-square (861 feet or 17.2 acres, based on the Royal cubit of 20.67 inches). According to Leen Ritmeyer, the former archaeological architect of the Temple Mount excavations under Professor Benjamin Mazar, this 500-cubit-square may be equated with the *Birah* ("citadel"). This term referred to a royal acropolis or administrative center and its use in 2 Chronicles 29:1-2, 19 and Nehemiah 2:8 seems to have indicated the fortified enclosure that included the Temple, that is, the Temple Mount. The sources also imply that the Temple Mount of the first phase of the Second Temple followed the lines of this 500-cubit-square pre-exilic Temple Mount (*Antiquities* 8.96; *War* 5.184-185).

This 500-cubit-square Temple Mount has been identified today through an examination of structures around and on the modern Temple Mount that reveal the extensions added to the original in the Hasmonean and Herodian periods.

The evidence for locating the sides of the original Temple Mount are as follows: the *western wall*: a now-covered wall preserved as the lowest step of the staircase at the northwest corner of the platform; the *northern wall*: remains of a quarried rockscarp (found in the 19th century by Charles Warren) whose lines form right angles with the step/wall and the Eastern Wall; the *eastern wall*: the unchanged line of the Eastern Wall between the 6th century BC offset in the north and the bend in the south equals 861 feet or 500 cubits, based on the use of the Royal Cubit of 20.67 inches (525 mm); the *southern wall*: measuring from the southeast corner (indicated by the bend) parallel to the northern wall to the intersection with continuation of the step/wall.

History of Zerubbabel's Temple

The Temple erected by Zerubbabel had stood for 350 years without suffering invasion or desecration from the surrounding nations. However, in the second-century BC, Jerusalem came under the control the Seleucids (an empire founded by Seleucid, one of Alexander the Great's generals). Early in this period, Simon, the son of the High Priest Onias II, made extensive repairs to the Temple (Ecclesiasticus 50:1–21). Under the reign of the Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 BC), called “a vile person” in Daniel 11:21, two Jewish factions, Orthodox (strict Jewish culture) and Hellenist (pro-Greek culture), contended for the high priesthood. As a promoter of the Greek culture, Antiochus sided with the Hellenistic party, and appointed the high priest Onias III (“the prince of the covenant” of Daniel 11:22) who permitted pagan worship in accord with Antiochus decrees. In 170 BC the Antiochus invaded Jerusalem and many Jews were killed and the Temple was plundered. At the southern end of the Square Temple Mount he erected the Acra, a tower, from which he could secure control over the Temple Mount. On December 6, 167 BC Antiochus attempts to replace Jewish culture with Hellenistic culture moved to the desecration of the Temple. He polluted the Sanctuary's Altar by sacrificing unclean animals such as a pig and erected in the Temple an idolatrous statute of the Greek god Zeus Olympias that bore an image of his own face (cf. Daniel 8:23-25; 11:21-35). This was in keeping with the coinage he issued which bore an image of Antiochus enthroned and the words: “King Antiochus, god manifest.”

The Jewish priest Judas Maccabeas led his family and followers in a successful revolt that liberated Jerusalem. On the 25th of the Hebrew month of Chislev (December 4) 164 BC the Temple was purified and rededicated (Hebrew, *Chanukah*) and the *tamid* (daily offerings) restored. This celebration of dedication became a post-biblical festival known as the Feast of Dedication (John 10:22). As a result, the independent rule of the Maccabean (or Hasmonean) dynasty was established over all Judea. These rulers made renovations to the deteriorating Temple structure, and because of the growing threats added constructions to the Temple complex. One of these was a Seleucid fortress called the *Arka* (c. 168 BC), built by Antiochus IV to the south of the Temple Mount (*Antiquities* 12.133, 138, 252, 362; 13.215), and another called the *Baris*, built by the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus (c. 134 BC) in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount (*Antiquities* 14.61; 15.403). This latter fortress was rebuilt by Herod the Great after he captured the Temple Mount in 37 BC and named the *Antonia* in honor of Mark Anthony (*War* 5. 238).

In 63 BC the Roman general Pompey conquered Jerusalem and the Temple Mount after a three-month siege (Josephus *Antiquities* 14.3.1–4.4; *War* 1.7.6). When Pompey tried to enter the Temple, thousands of Jews threw themselves to the ground before the general and begged him not to desecrate the Holy Place. Such a display convinced Pompey that the Temple must contain great riches or some hidden secret, so he marched into the Holy Place, tore away the veil of separation and marched into the Holy of Holies. The Roman historian Tacitus (AD 56 – 117) described what happened next: “By right of conquest he [Pompey] entered their Temple. It is a fact well known, that he found no image, no statue, no symbolical representation of the Deity: the whole presented a naked dome; the sanctuary was unadorned and simple” (*Histories*, 5, 9.1) Tradition has also recorded that

when Pompey emerged from the Temple he looked around at the Jews and declared, “It is empty; there is nothing there but darkness!” Pompey’s confusion exemplified that of Gentile rulers toward the Temple and its invisible God. However, when he ordered the walls of the city to be torn down, he kept the Temple intact.

The Second Temple (Second Phase)

Roman authority over Judea was committed to a Roman appointee, Antipater the Idumean or Edomite (a non-Jewish Semitic group from the region between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of Aqaba). Following Antipater’s death, his son Herod was given the task of ending further resistance from the Hasmonean rulers. In 37/36 BC he laid siege to Jerusalem and captured the Temple Mount, destroying a portion of the structure that stood in the way of his advance. Josephus’ description of this burning portrayed the latest form of the Hasmonean Temple Mount had been adorned with porticoes (*Antiquities* 14.476), an area that may be identified with “Solomon’s porch” mentioned in the New Testament (John 10:23; Acts 3:11).

Herod then became the proxy Jewish ruler under Roman occupation, dubbing himself “King Herod.” Herod knew that in order to rule the Jewish people he would have to conform to traditional Jewish practices, so he converted to Judaism to appease the priestly establishment and in 20 BC proposed a renovation of the existing Temple of Zerubbabel on a more magnificent scale.

Herod’s Plan for a New Temple

By the time of Herod, the Second Temple had suffered centuries of assault, repairs, and the general ravages of time. In making plans to reconstruct the Temple Herod had to follow the biblical design and legal requirements that governed the size of the building he could construct. However, Herod had other parties to please, and foremost of these was the Roman authorities upon whom his right to rule depended. If his architectural projects could make Jerusalem a modern metropolis rivaling other Roman cities with a magnificent central shrine that exemplified the classical tastes of the West, he could hope to retain the Roman favor. As many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and other cities under Herod’s rule were Hellenistic Jews, they were used to classical culture that boasted temples and shrines on a massive scale. Therefore, the actions of Herod toward the Temple were not from religious motives and are judged by history as bittersweet. On one hand stand his extensive architectural accomplishments that included rebuilding and enlarging the Temple complex. On the other stand his plan to transform Jerusalem from a provincial Jewish community to a model of Hellenistic culture and to use the Temple and its establishment to further his ends while impressing the Romans and placating the Jews.

While the Temple conformed to the divine design, others elements of the Temple complex were clearly Greco-Roman in style, such as the Royal Stoa. Even though Herod’s rebuilding of the Temple appeared to have been an act of piety, at this same time he also built a temple to the goddess Roma at Caesarea. His appointments to office of the High Priest were also to

suit his political aims. In 36 BC he named his 17-year-old son-in-law Aristobulus III as high priest (although murdering him the very next year), and in 23 BC he married the high priest Simon's daughter (his third wife whom he also murdered).

Herod did not attempt to avoid conflict over the Temple, especially when the conflict was between Roman custom and laws of Jewish sanctity. In one instance he confiscated the High Priest's vestments as a demonstration of superior (Roman) authority. In another, in a show of loyalty to Rome he installed as a dedicatory offering the golden image of an eagle over the eastern entrance to the Temple (*Antiquities* 17.6.1-3; 151-63; *War* 1.33.2-4; 649-55). As a bird of prey, the eagle symbolized the character of Rome, but it corrupted the character of the Temple as a place of peace. Furthermore, its display violated the Mosaic injunction against the making of graven images (whether of men or animals). Because of this desecration, a riot occurred in 4 BC led by High Priest Matthias. A group of some 40 Jews tore down the hated image and hacked it to pieces. This defiant act on the Temple Mount resulted in the High Priest's removal and his co-activists being burned alive. Herod's son Archelaus, the year after his father's death in 4 BC, slaughtered some 3,000 Jewish nationalists in the Temple at Passover. In the same year riots in the city by Jewish nationalists groups ended with the burning of the Temple cloisters. In AD 28, Pontius Pilate, the Roman appointed governor over Judea, also engaged in an attack on and in the Temple, taking money from the Temple treasuries to construct an aqueduct and then massacring a number of Jewish Zealots in the Temple courts during a protest (cf. Lk. 13:1-2).

Herod's Construction of the New Temple

The condition of the Second Temple and Herod's plans for a much larger structure Herod's plans entailed the complete dismantling of the old Temple (*Antiquities* 15.391). However, the priestly establishment did not trust Herod and feared his call for a destruction of the existing structure was a ruse and that he was secretly staging an attack on the Temple (*Antiquities* 15.388-89). Therefore, Herod was required to prepare and transport all of the building stones for the new Temple to the Temple Mount in the sight of the people before permission was given to touch a single stone of the previous structure. It is unclear how long the construction of the Temple and sacrificial area took.

Josephus records that the construction of Temple took a year and a half and that the stoa and the outer courts took eight years (*Antiquities* 15.11.5-6; 420-21). It is noteworthy that he adds that during the time the Sanctuary was being built no rain fell during the day, but only at night, so as not to interrupt the sacred project (*Antiquities* 15.11.7; 425). However, according to the statement of the Jewish authorities recorded in John 2:20, the work had taken 46 years to that point, and it is clear from other statements in the Gospels that various stages of work had continued through the last days of Jesus' life on earth (Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 13:1-2; Luke 21:5-6; cf. *Sanhedrin* 41.2 and *'Aboda Zarah* 8.2). In fact, Josephus tells us that the Temple complex was still receiving further embellishments and repairs until the Jewish Revolt broke out in AD 66 (*Antiquities* 20.219).

When Herod removed the old foundations of the first phase of the Second Temple, he left the old eastern wall with its portico intact. This can be seen today on the outside of the eastern wall where a "seam" is visible near the southern corner. This "seam" separates the Herodian extension (104 feet long) to the Temple Mount from the eastern wall (1,405 feet). The pre-Herodian (Hasmonean) masonry that is visible today for 105 feet in the eastern wall can be seen in three courses of large stones with rough projecting bosses (faces) on either side of the present Golden Gate. The southern stretch is visible up to 51 feet south of the Golden Gate and the northern stretch is visible for 68 feet until it runs into an exposed offset (set back about two feet) of Herodian masonry. However, a portion of the stones of the northern stretch near the Golden Gate is of a style of masonry that may be from the time of Nehemiah. A "bend" in the eastern wall is visible 240 feet from the southeast corner that in all likelihood indicates the southeast corner of the original 500-cubit-square Temple Mount.

The Herodian Temple Mount

Herod doubled the Temple in height and width, added new compartments and a second story above the innermost chambers. He also added massive new structures: the Antonia Fortress to the north of the Temple Mount and the Royal Stoa to the south. Herod's construction doubled the size of the previous Temple Mount. This extensive platform, with its huge retaining walls to bear the weight of the fill and of the structures to be built above, was trapezoidal in shape (*Antiquities* 8.97; 15.398, 400; 20.221; *War* 5.192). The dimensions of the south wall were 918 feet (280 meters), the west wall 1,591 feet (485 meters), the north wall 1,033 feet (315 meters), and the east wall 1,509 feet (460 meters). The total circumference of this sacred precinct was 5,052 feet (1,540 meters), and the total area 172,000 square yards (144,000 square meters). This constituted the Temple Mount as the largest site of its kind in the ancient world. Its sacred area was twice as large as the monumental Forum Romanum built by Trajan, and three and a half times larger than the combined temples of Jupiter and Astarte-Venus at Baalbek. The surface area of the modern-day Temple Mount between 35 and 36 acres reflects a portion of this Herodian enlargement.

This expansion required filling and building over a portion of the Tyropean Valley in the southwest corner of the Hasmonean Temple Mount and building over the Fosse, a valley used as a defensive moat (filled-in by Pompey's soldiers during his invasion) on the northwest side, as well as the Bezetha Valley on the north.

To accomplish this feat, Herod's engineers had to construct enormous retaining (supporting) walls, many 15 feet (4.5 meters) thick, with some towering more than 150 feet from their bedrock foundation that sloped upward from the south to the north. Josephus mentions the massive foundation stones in these walls and gives their measurements (length x height x depth) alternately as 43 feet x 14 feet x 21 feet (13.12 meters x 4.20 meters x 6.30 meters) in *Antiquities* 15.392 and 77 feet x 8.63 feet x 10 feet (23.63 meters x 2.63 meters x 3.15 meters) in *War* 5.244. The most famous remnant of these retaining walls standing today is known as the Western (or Wailing) Wall (Hebrew,

Kotel). The dimensions of the exposed walls are more than 1,500 feet in length (north to south) and 900 feet in width (east to west). Their height is some 50 feet above the modern plaza, yet the course of stones in the southern end continues down another 50 feet. In the 1990's a tunnel was opened alongside the underground course of stones so that visitors could see the full extent of the Herodian construction. In the course exposed in this tunnel is one of the most massive of the foundation stones yet discovered. Its measurements are 45 feet (13.70 meters) x 11.6 feet (3.19 meters) x 14-16 feet (4.20-4.90 meters) and weighed nearly 600 tons. Once these walls were in place thousands of tons of backfill was added and built over with level stones to form a platform.

Herod extended the Temple Mount platform to the north and to the south, beyond the extension made there by the Hasmoneans to the original square Temple Mount. On the northwestern side, he built the Antonia Fortress over the remains of the former Seleucid-period *Baris* to guard this weaker location and provide a watch and a station for troops to control the crowds on the Temple Mount. To the north of this structure, he constructed an open-air reservoir called the Strouthion Pool that was originally built as part of an open-air water conduit by the Hasmoneans. On the northeastern side, he constructed another reservoir pool known as *Birket Israel* ("the Pool of Israel") to serve as a public cistern and a defense for the northeastern corner of the Temple Mount. Although its lack of mention by Josephus and poorer style of masonry led 19th century explorer Charles Wilson to assign its construction to the Emperor Hadrian in 130 BC, many archaeologists support it as an original Herodian structure. His southern extension contained the Royal Stoa and the monumental staircases and gates that led to it and onto the courts on the Temple Mount.

Building the Herodian Temple Mount

The massive construction project required an equally massive workforce. For this Herod brought in 10,000 skilled workers. To comply with Jewish law that required the construction of the Temple as a sacred site be strictly the work of the priests (*Ant.* 15.11.2; 389-90), Herod employed 1,000 priests to serve as masons and carpenters. These priests were specially trained in such construction work and because of their ritual status were able to work on the sacred areas where others were forbidden to enter.

In 2007, the quarry was discovered from which came the stones these priests fashioned for the Temple and its complex. Located in Jerusalem's ultraorthodox neighborhood of Ramat Shlomo, the quarried stones each weighed some 20 tons. No stones this size had ever been found in an archaeological excavation anywhere in the country, except in the walls of the Temple Mount. The use of such immense stones allowed construction without the need for cement or plaster, and maintained the stability of the structure of the walls of the Temple Mount for thousands of years. Josephus had described the stones used for the Temple's construction as "hard and white" (*Antiquities* 15.11.3; 392) and of such strength that during the Roman assault on the Temple in AD 70, the military's battering rams were unable to cause a breach in the outer western wall (*War* 6.4.1; 220-22). The exceptional stones in the quarry gave evidence that this was indeed the site from which the stones for the Temple had been taken.

In addition, the large outlines of the stone cuts in the white limestone at the quarry showed that this was a massive public program that had employed hundreds of workers at the site. As such, it could only fit an imperial construction project such as Herod's. Further proof came from artifacts found at the site such as iron stakes used to split the stone and datable finds like pottery and coins. These confirmed a date around 19 BC, the same time as Herod's expansion of the Temple.

The remains of this quarry also revealed how Herod's stonecutters had done the quarrying. Each stone block was prepared in stages. First, a deep narrow channel was chiseled around all four sides of the block, isolating it from the surrounding bedrock surface. Next, a row of cleaving stakes was inserted in the bottom part of the block until a fissure was created and the stone was detached. This was accomplished by driving logs of wood into the channels and pouring water on the wood to make it swell, exerting lateral pressure on the block and splitting the it from the bedrock to which it was attached at the bottom (limestone has natural horizontal layers that allow for a split along a neat horizontal line). The thickness of the limestone layers determined the height of the blocks that were quarried.

Once the stones were cut free, stonemasons dressed the rough blocks with margins on their outer faces to produce an ashlar, but left projections on opposite sides of the blocks so ropes could be lashed around the projections. Next, a crane would hoists one end of the ashlar block off the ground and lower it unto a wooden roller. Then a team of oxen would haul the ashlar as slaves moved the rollers from the rear to the front of the block as it progressed. Smaller stones could be loaded into wagons for transport. It is said Herod used a thousand oxen to transport the stones from the quarry to the construction site. Just as archaeologist discovered the quarry, they also uncovered a part of the ancient main road to Jerusalem some 300 feet from the quarry. This road was located only two miles (four kilometers) from the Temple Mount.

The construction area was 125 feet lower than the quarry in the north, so the ashlar blocks could be easily hauled down to the site area where the wall was to be built. However, before the ashlar could be set into place, the line of the wall had to be lined out by markers and then everything cut down to bedrock and leveled. Getting the ashlar in place was accomplished by use of a treadmill-powered crane. Hoisting the stones to the next level and to each new level was done from inside the wall. As each new course was completed, the area inside the retaining wall was filled to the level of the last course with rubble (quarry chips) so that the crane could easily reach the new work level. This continued until the wall was completed. The blocks were fitted together using the "dry construction" method, which eliminated the use of costly mortar. After the ashlar had been set in a course along the line, masons chiseled off the rough projections and dressed each stone with a defining frame or margin chiseled around its edge. Finally, the raised boss (face of the stone) inside the marginal frame was polished.

Herodian Additions to the Temple Mount

The Royal Stoa

At the southern end of his extended platform, Herod built a monumental multi-storied basilica called the Royal Stoa or Royal Portico (or Porch). This was the largest structure on the Temple Mount, stretching across almost the entire length of the southern wall from east to west, and was praised by Josephus as one “more deserving of mention than any other under the sun” (*Antiquities* 15.430). This magnificent roofed pavilion had 162 pillars, each 50 feet high and 16 feet in circumference topped with four rows of Corinthian-style capitals each 27 feet high (*Antiquities* 15.413-414). These created three halls comprised of narrow aisles on the two sides and a wider one in the center. The wooden ceilings of this pavilion were decorated with carvings of different figures (*Antiquities* 15.11.5; 413-17). While only isolated columns from the Stoa remain today, it is possible to see a reconstruction of a similar-style stoa in the Athenian Agora. Known as the Stoa of Attalos, it was built about 150 BC along the ancient marketplace, as a two-storied, roofed and colonnaded building that served as a commercial center and shelter for patrons. On both levels storerooms existed, just as in the Herodian Stoa.

The Royal Stoa, closed on the outside, but open on the side of the Temple Mount, offered shelter from the elements and served as a common meeting place for those entering the Temple complex and led to the large open Court of the Gentiles, one of the Herodian additions on the southern side. It was said that the scribes held their schools in the colonnades and that rabbis, such as Rabbi Gamaliel, taught near the Stoa. At the eastern end the Stoa, the Sanhedrin, the supreme court of Israel, convened their daily meetings in the Chamber of the Hewn Stone.

It was most likely here that the prophetess Ana (who was said to have never left the Temple) resided (Luke 2:37). The Stoa was also the probable location for official and ritual transactions on the Temple Mount, and beneath the southern end there was a network of storage chambers that most likely held the articles and items for purchase in relation to sacrificial offerings. In the archaeological excavations at the southern wall a fragment of a ritual vessel inscribed with the Hebrew word *qorban* (“[dedicated] offering”) and a drawing of two pigeons was found on the paved Herodian street. It probably fell onto the street from above where the Hall of the Columns located inside the Stoa. This provides evidence that in the time of Jesus the commerce of the Herodian street shops had found its way into the Stoa where Jesus encountered the moneychangers and those selling animals (Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-46; John 2:14-16). Based on this evidence, and the practice of the early church’s regular meeting in the Stoa, it may be inferred that this was the normal place where Jesus met to teach the people. Jesus seems to have sought an area where it was possible to address the greatest number of people (Matthew 21:23; 23:1-39; Mark 11:11; 12:35-44; Luke 19:48; 20:1, 9-18, 45-47; 21:38), and from which He could quickly depart if unruly officials or crowds made this necessary (John 10:39; cf. Matthew 26:55). Only the Stoa met these qualifications.

The entrance to the Stoa was by the long set of monumental steps that ascended from the lowest point in the Kidron Valley near the Pool of Siloam that led worshippers up to the Huldah gates (the eastern one for the priests and the western one for the people) and through two ornamented and colonnaded underground passageways up onto the Temple Mount. The court that was in this area was the most spacious of those on the platform and was known as the Court of the Gentiles the only non-Jewish access to the Temple Mount. To prevent unauthorized trespass into the sacred courts and space nearest to the Temple, the area on the far south and west was bounded by a paved terrace on top of a stairway known in Hebrew as the *Chel*. This terrace wall, 17 feet (5.25 meters) wide, was considered “holy ground,” and could be accessed by 14 steps (*War* 6.195) each 10 inches (26 centimeters) high and deep. From the top of this terrace the gates of the Temple could be reached. From the south to the Jewish courts by a stone fence or balustrade called in Hebrew the *Soreg*. This served as the main barrier beyond which Gentiles and the ceremonially unclean were forbidden to pass (*Kelim* 1.8). According to Josephus, it stood 5 feet 2 inches (1.57 meters) high. To insure this boundary was not improperly breached, large stone inscriptions in Greek and Latin that threatened death to violators were posted at each entrance to the courts. Put a photo here of this stone inscription from the Istanbul Museum. As Paul left the Temple he was accused of violating this prohibition because he had been earlier seen in the company of Trophimus, a non-Jew, and it was thought he had brought him into the Temple (cf. Acts 21:27-31). This incident led to Paul’s arrest and subsequent Roman trials (Acts 21:11, 32-28:31).

The Stoa of Solomon

The eastern portion of the wall with its single-story roofed colonnades facing the Temple’s façade in the north from the Herodian east gate to the south (where it met the Royal Stoa) was called the Stoa or Portico of Solomon or “Solomon’s Porch.” This central east wall with its portico was a pre-Herodian structure, apparently built during the Hasmonean period under Hellenistic influence, although the oldest parts have been thought by some to be pre-Hasmonean. Its pre-Herodian status can be confirmed archaeologically since the Herodian additions on the north and south of the wall were built to conform to this structure. For some reason it was believed that Solomon built this portico, and it be that Herod himself believed this, or at least accepted the popular tradition concerning it, for he did not alter it in his architectural expansion. Perhaps a Solomonic structure once occupied this site and gave this area its name, or perhaps its antiquity automatically connected it with the famous first builder of the Temple (cf. Acts 7:47). Or perhaps Herod purposefully retained this area because of the contrast it offered between his new superior construction and an older inferior structure.

While we may never know the facts behind its designation, we do know that Jesus and His disciples regularly used the east gate entrance when they entered the Temple from Bethany and the Mount of Olives. It represented a connection with the Davidic dynasty, of which Jesus was a part (Matthew 1:6-7; cf. Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31). John 10:22-23 depicts Jesus at the time of the celebration of Hanukkah (Feast of Dedication) walking in the Portico of Solomon and having a confrontation with a Jewish crowd. Acts 3:11 also

referred to this area as the place to which the crowd ran to see the lame man healed through the intercession of Peter and John. This may imply that this was the particular place in the Stoa where the early church assembled (Acts 2:46-47), and certainly so if this was the area that had been frequented by Jesus.

The Entrances to the Temple Mount

There were both exterior entrances that led from the city to the Temple Mount as well as interior entrances that led into the Temple precincts. These gates were not simply openings in a wall, but were large two and three-story structures having a central passageway with rooms on either side.

The Outer Gates

Josephus gives a hint of the decoration on these gates, recording that when Titus set fire to the outer gates during his siege of the Temple Mount, that the silver plating covering them melted and revealed a wooden interior before it too burned (*War* 6.4.2; 232-35). As to their number, Josephus says that there were four on the western side (*Antiquities* 15.11.5; 410): a southwestern bridge (Robinson's Arch), a southwestern gate (Barclay's gate), a central bridge (Wilson's Arch), and a central gate (Warren's gate). This latter gate was the northernmost entrance on the western side and was exclusive to the priests. On the north, there was an old gate, the Tadi Gate, which had been closed since Hasmonean times (*Middot* 2:1) and in the Herodian period was probably hidden from public view. On the eastern side, a southeastern bridge (like Robinson's Arch on the western side) connected the Mt. of Olives with the Temple Mount, in the northeast wall were two entrances: the Miphkad Gate, actually located in the city wall in front of the Temple Mount wall, and the Eastern or Shushan Gate (near the present Golden Gate). In the south were two gates, known as the Huldah Gates. As the eastern and southern gates were the more prominent, let us consider them in greater detail.

The Eastern (Shushan) Gate

The Eastern Gate was called the Shusan (or Susa) Gate because it bore a relief of the Shushan Palace in Babylon (*Middot* 1:3). Contrary to popular opinion, the Shushan Gate was not a public entrance or exit, but was used on Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) for leading the scapegoat into the wilderness and, with the Miphkad Gate, for the Red Heifer ceremony (Numbers 19) that took place on the Mt. of Olives opposite this gate across the Kidron Valley. The Mishnah relates that a wooden causeway was built from the Mt. of Olives to this gate especially for this unique ceremony (*Para* 3:6; *Šekalim* 4:2). Because the Mishnah states, "the priest [who offered the Red Heifer] could see the opening of the Temple when he sprinkled its blood, while standing on the Mount of Olives" (*Hilchot Beit HaBechirah* 6.6) it is often assumed that he saw through the Eastern Gate into the Temple precincts. However, the lower location of this gate would not permit this and the meaning

of the statement is that he looked *over* this gate (*Middot* 2.4). If the gate was used it was used only by the priests who came through it directly from service in the Temple.

Other areas of confusion with respect to this gate are its misidentification with the Beautiful Gate of the New Testament (see below) and the reference to the closed “outer gate of the Sanctuary which faces east” in Ezekiel 44:1-2. Ezekiel’s reference is to the eastern gate of the Temple, not the eastern gate on the retaining wall enclosure. Moreover, the present sealed gate, known as the Golden Gate, or the Gate of Mercy, was in ruins in the late Roman period and rebuilt by the Christian Emperor Heraclius in AD 629, who is said to have walked through it in 631. It was first closed by the Muslims in 810, reopened by the Crusaders in 1102, and then walled up again by the Saracens in 1187. It was opened again during reconstruction work done by the Ottoman Turkish Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, who rebuilt the present-day walls of the Old City and it was he who last closed it in 1546.

The Huldah Gates

The most popular entrance to the Temple was from the south through two sets of southern gates called the Huldah Gates after the First Temple period prophetess who held court in this area and whose tomb was nearby. The original Huldah Gates were southern entrances to the 500-cubit-square platform of the pre-Herodian Temple Mount (*Middot* 1.3). Even though the name (and location) belonged to the Hasmonean period, it is still appropriate for use in describing these Herodian additions since the Hebrew term means something like “mouse” and aptly describes the tunnels behind these gates that resemble the holes used by these animals. The Herodian Double Gate, which led directly onto the Temple platform, appears to have corresponded with the original Huldah Gates. However, what is seen today from the outside is not from the Herodian period, but later periods, but these extant arches were obviously built over the earlier entrances, and remains of Herodian masonry is still preserved, as is a lintel from the Double Gate. On the inside, however, most of the original Herodian architecture is intact. In front of the Double and Triple Gates on the south ran a paved street 22 feet wide for a length of 918 feet.

The gate in the west side of the southern wall was known as the Double Gate and was for the people. Mishnah tractate *Middot* 2.2 notes that the people entered from the right gate and exited from the left. The gate in the east side, located 215 feet from that on the west side was known as the Triple Gate and was for the priests. These gates opened into decorated passageways that led upwards onto the outer courts of the Temple Mount. The Double Gate was not as ornamented as the Triple Gate, but went directly up to the Royal Stoa, while the Triple Gate was connected to vaulted chambers beneath the southeastern part of the Temple (called “Solomon’s stables” but now the site of the Al-Marwani mosque). Here there were storerooms, presumably for ritual wares and perhaps stalls for animals used for offerings. The moderately ornamented domes and ornate passageway within the Double Gate must have impressed those visiting the Temple Mount, and therefore some scholars argue that this gate was what the New Testament referred to as the “Beautiful Gate,” where the healing of the lame man by Peter and John took place (Acts 3:2, 10). Access to these gates from the western side of the city was through part of this paved street

that ran alongside the western retaining wall of the Temple Mount lined on both sides by merchant shops. This then street passed under the western priestly entrance to the Temple by a staircase supported by “Robinson’s Arch” and toward the Double and Triple Huldah Gates. However, the main entrance on the south to these gates was through a monumental staircase.

The Monumental Staircase

One of the impressive sights to those visiting the Temple Mount was a grand staircase that gave access from the southern side of the city leading to the Double and Triple Gate entrances. This staircase was comprised of slabs of white limestone set as alternating narrow to broad steps, probably to encourage a worshipful attitude by slowing down the approach to the Temple Mount. These steps began at the Pool of Siloam located far to the south deep within the Kidron Valley. The width of the steps leading to the Double Gate was 213 feet and the width of the steps leading to the Triple Gate was 51 feet. Most of this western staircase still exists, although most of it today lies underground since the modern streets, shops, and houses were built over it through the millennia.

Between the two staircases, leading to the gates, was a ritual bathhouse (for ceremonial purification before entering the Temple) and a public building, possibly serving as a council house to handle court proceedings (Mishnah *Sanhedrin* 11.2). Nearby were rock-cut channels covered with stone slabs that were probably for the drainage of the ritual baths (*miqva’ot*).

The Inner Gates

The interior entrances to the Temple precincts were massive gates 52 feet high and 26 feet wide with two doors and a gate room. According to Josephus, it took twenty men to open and close them (*War* 6.5.3; 293). Like the exterior gates, they that were overlaid with silver and gold (*War* 5.5.3; 201). Josephus (*War* 5.5.2; 198) records that there were ten: one on the east, the Nicanor Gate which lead east to west from the Court of Women to the Court of the Israelites, four on the south: Southern Gate (to the Women’s Court), Water Gate (leading to area of the Laver), Gate of the Firstborn (near the sacrificial preparation chambers and leading to the Altar of Burnt Offering) and the Kindling/Fuel Gate (next to the Wood Chamber and leading to rear of the Temple), and four on the north: Northern Gate (leading to Women’s Court), Gate of the Flame/Song (leading to the Court of the Priests), Gate of the Offering (leading to the Temple Court or *Azarah*), and Gate of Jeconiah (the westernmost gate near the Chamber of the Hearth).

The Nicanor Gate was the entrance used by the Jewish male population into the Court of the Israelites was the most elaborate of the inner gates. It was 69 feet wide and 86 feet high and approached by 15 wide semi-circular steps. According to the Mishnah, the Levites would stand on these steps when they sang the Song of Ascents (*Middot* 2.6). According to *Middot* 1.4, just inside the Nicanor Gate to the north and south were gate rooms called the

Chamber of Phineas, where the priestly vestments were stored, and the Chamber of the Makers of Baked Cakes, where the meal-offering cakes were prepared. The gate received its name from Nicanor, a prominent and pious businessman, who had the gate especially made for this eastern entrance into the Court of the Israelites. Unlike the other inner court gates, which were overlaid with gold, its two huge doors were made of Corinthian bronze (*Antiquities* 15.11.5; 419), a special copper produced in Egypt that had a unique gold color and sheen (*Yoma* 38a). For this reason, it is referred to in the Josephus also as the Corinthian Gate (*War* 5.203). In 1902, archaeologists discovered in Jerusalem a cave on Mt. Scopus containing an ossuary (bone box) with a first century Greek inscription that read: “the remains of the children of Nicanor of Alexandria who made the doors.” Scholars believe the Nicanor Gate was manufactured in Nicanor’s hometown of Alexandria in the middle of the first century and installed close to the time of the First Jewish Revolt. Because of its exceptional character, the Nicanor Gate has sometimes been confused with the so-called “Beautiful Gate” (Acts 3:2, 10). The Mishnah gives the purpose of the Nicanor Gate as the place at which the priests came to trumpet (*Sukka* 5.4) and where women suspected of adultery (Numbers 5:12-31) were brought for judgment (*Sota* 1.5; 2.1). It was also the place where a woman, after giving childbirth, would present her offering of a yearling lamb (burnt offering) and a young pigeon or turtledove (sin offering) to the priest.

The Courts of the Second Temple

Josephus provides a description of the Temple’s four courts (*Apion* 2.8; 103-109) with guidelines based on ritual restrictions as to who were allowed entrance. The approach to these courts from east to west (the direction toward the Temple) was in increasing degrees of sanctity. This sanctity was also communicated through an act of physical ascent from one gate to the next as one went up to the Temple (*War* 5.1.1; 9-11). The outer Court of the Gentiles, as the name implies, was open to all, but menstruating women, who were ceremonially unclean. The next court, the Court of the Women, was open to Jewish men and all ritually clean women. The next court, the Court of the Israelites, was restricted to Jewish men. The closest court to the Temple was the Court of the Priests, which was the most sacred court (*Kelim* 1.8-9). Access to it was restricted to priests on duty.

According to Josephus, an extremely high and thick wall surrounded the outer courts (*Antiquities* 15.11.3; 396). From the remains of this wall extant today, it appears that it originally consisted of three rows of ashlar each 16 feet (5 meters) thick. Josephus notes that some of these ashlar were 65 feet (20 meters) long and 9 feet (3 meters) high (*War* 5.5.1; 189; *Ant.* 20.9.7; 221). However, the largest stone in the remains of this outer wall discovered to date is 39 feet x 9 feet x 13 feet (12 meters x 3 meters x 4 meters) and weighs some 400 tons.

The Court of the Gentiles

The expansive Court of the Gentile sported at its entrance a popular bazaar underneath the protective roof of the Stoa. Here moneychangers exchanged local coinage for the pure silver

Tyrian shekel (acceptable because Roman currency was defiling and the Jews were forbidden by the Romans to coin their own money) so that a proper offering could be made to the Temple. Here, too, vendors sold animals for use as burnt offerings. Although *Mishnah Berakot* 9:5 states that the selling of animals for sacrificial purposes was not permitted *within* the Temple walls, the Gospels clearly state that this selling took place within the Temple (John 2:15). This has been confirmed from the archaeological excavations at the southwest and southern corners of the Temple Mount under the direction of Benjamin Mazar and Meir Ben-Dov. However, these excavations helped resolve the difficulty, revealing that a smaller Temple market was isolated inside the Royal Stoa, but did not spread out into the Court of the Gentiles proper. This market was still considered *inside* the Temple complex, even though removed from the actual Temple precincts. For example, John 7:28 says that Jesus “cried out in the Temple,” although the text locates Him in the area of the Temple treasury within the Court of the Women (John 8:20). Although the next court after the Court of the Gentiles, this court was still outside the area of greater sanctity (since lepers could enter here). Despite this, the Gospel writers considered this to be “in the Temple.” This helps us understand Jesus’ concern over the sanctity of the Temple at His entrance to the Royal Stoa situated on the threshold of the Temple court (Matthew 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46), and also why His clash with the Temple vendors was a fairly modest incident, permitting His daily return to the Temple precincts to address the Temple crowds (Luke 19:47; see also Matthew 21:14). If it had occurred in the more public open area of the Court of the Gentiles it would have been considered not just a religious demonstration, but also a political threat, and would have brought an immediate arrest by either the Temple guards or the Roman authorities.

These same archaeological excavations uncovered numerous *miqva’ot* (ritual immersion pools) as part of a public bathhouse located between the steps leading up to the Court of the Gentiles. The New Testament records that on the Day of Pentecost that 3,000 thousand in the crowd, who responded to Peter’s call to the Jewish people to repent (Acts 2:22-36), were immediately baptized (Acts 2:41). This implies a large area where the crowds could gather and have access to numerous *miqva’ot* and this fits the area of the Court of the Gentiles. Crowds of pilgrims coming to the Temple for the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 2:1) would have entered by the southern entrance through the Double Gate into the Royal Stoa and congregated in the Court of the Gentiles (Acts 2:5-11). Apparently, the disciples of Jesus (as many as 120) had gathered with this crowd (Acts 2:1). When the Holy Spirit descended and filled these disciples, the rest of the crowd took notice, heard the preaching of Peter (Acts 2:14), and those who believed were baptized at the nearby bathhouse.

The Court of the Women

The Court of Women, the largest of the Temple courts, was a square courtyard, 233 feet on each side (a football field is 360 feet long) with a surface area of 52,900 square feet (5,023 square meters). It is estimated that at the time of the feasts that it could have held 6,000 worshippers at one time. This court was accessible through three gates on the north, south, and east and over them was an elevated gallery in to prevent women from coming into contact with men within the court (*Middot* 2.5). It was not only open to ceremonially

purified women, but also to ritually impure priests who could attend to specific duties (see below) in the Chamber of the Woodshed (*Apion* 2.8; 104). Lepers, too, enjoyed access to this court as the place they could present themselves to the priests for restoration to ceremonial status if their condition improved. It also housed a ritual barbershop for Nazirites. It was said that this court was constantly filled with singing and dancing. One occasion when such celebration occurred in this court was the annual Water-Drawing ceremony when spring water was drawn from the Pool of Siloam and carried to the Temple to pour on the Altar. This event took place during the conclusion of the annual celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths), and its purpose in this act was to ask God to send the latter rain, which was necessary to a successful harvest. The Land of Israel has a rainy season, and without the seasonal rains the crops will fail. Jerusalem, situated in a desert region, was especially dependent upon such rain. It was during this last day of the Feast of Booths (John 7:2, 10, 37) that Jesus taught in the Women's Court making reference to the Water-Drawing ceremony and the greater messianic hope of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which like the latter rain, depended on the proper response of Israel (John 7:37-39).

In each of the four corners of the Court of the Women stood two immense *menorot* (lampstands) each 86 feet tall. These were lit day and night, especially at festival occasions such as the Feast of Booths. At the same time discussed above, Jesus in this court took the opportunity of an illustration from these majestic lampstands to point to His own messianic purpose to be "the light of the world"

It has been suggested that the 84-year-old prophetess Anna may have kept safe from the elements within the protective shelter of the Royal Stoa as she worshipped "with fasting and prayer night and day." However, the proper place for women's prayers was the Court of the Women, therefore her prayers located her somewhere in this court when she met Mary and Joseph with their baby Jesus on the way to the Temple for His dedication (Luke 2:36-38).

The walls of this court were also lined with porticoes that formed a corridor from east to west and held four unroofed chambers. The Chamber of the Nazarites in the southeast corner was the place where those under the Nazarite vow cut their hair and cooked their peace offerings. The Chamber of the Lepers in the northwest corner was where lepers ritually immersed themselves before presenting themselves to the priest for inspection (Leviticus 14:1-7). After healing a leper, Jesus told him to go show himself to the priest and to make the prescribed thank offering (Matthew 8:4; Mark 1:44; Luke 5:14). Because this chamber must have had a *miqveh* for ceremonial purification, it probably also was the place to which women came for the prescribed purification after giving birth (Leviticus 12:2-8). Therefore, Jesus' mother Mary would have entered this chamber during their stay in Jerusalem at the time of baby Jesus' circumcision and dedication at the Temple (Luke 2:22). Another building was the Chamber of the House of Oil in the southwest corner was an unroofed structure where the wine and oil for drink offerings and grain offerings were stored (*Middot* 2.5-6). Here also were kept the menorah (lampstands) and other Temple lighting. The Chamber of the Woodshed in the northeast corner was the place where unclean priests were employed inspecting firewood to be used on the Altar of Burnt Offering. Wood that good had to be removed from that was rotten. A smaller chamber on

the southwest side of the Temple Court (*Azarah*) called the Pen of Wood (but often labeled "Wood Chamber") had a similar function, but within the sacred area of the ceremonially clean priest's service. One of these chambers must have also served as a storehouse that contained the Temple treasury (*War* 5.5.2; 200).

The Temple Treasury

The Roman historian Tacitus declared that the Temple "possessed enormous riches" (*Histories* 5.8.1). These riches were stored in the Temple treasury, which held everything designated for or donated to the Temple (*War* 5.5.2, 200; 6.5.2, 282; see *Antiquities* 19.6.1; 294). Josephus uses the term "Storehouse of God" (see *Ant.* 17.10.2; 264; *War* 2.3.3; 50), which many scholars believe refers to the Temple treasury. The deposits made to the Temple treasury were sacred to the Temple, but Josephus reported how Pontius Pilate, when he was procurator of Judea, expropriated funds from the Temple treasury in order to construct an aqueduct (*Antiquities* 18.3.2; 60-62; *War* 2.9.4; 175-77). This location of treasure may indicate that it was in this court also that the Chamber of the Vessels was located. In this chamber were stored the 93 vessels of silver and gold needed by the priests for the daily (*tamid*) service. The priests would come to this chamber every morning to collect the ritual vessels in order to begin the day's service in the Temple.

According to the Mishnah (*Middot* 2.5) somewhere in the Women's Court were 13 wooden boxes for collecting contributions, which would be deposited through bronze trumpet-shaped receptacles. This had some association with the Temple treasury for the Talmud uses same term is used for both. These "trumpets" were designed for different types of contributions (*Shekalim* 2.1; 6.1, 5) including the half-shekel Temple-tribute, the value of the offerings of turtledoves and young pigeons, wood used in the Temple, incense, golden vessels for the Temple service, the sum for a sin-offering, and trespass-offerings, any money was left over, including those of the offering of the Nazarite, the cleansed leper, and voluntary offerings. The Jewish-Christian scholar Alfred Edersheim noted that there was also a special treasury-chamber into which at certain times they carried the contents of the thirteen chests called "a chamber of the silent," where devout persons secretly deposited money to be used anonymously for educating children of the pious poor.

The Gospels record an incident in the teaching of Jesus that relates to these trumpet receptacles. The text says that when Jesus and His disciples were in the area of the "Temple treasury" (Mark 12:41a; Luke 21:1) Jesus watched both the rich and poor depositing their contributions. He drew to the disciples' attention a widow who had deposited two copper coins into one of the trumpets. Her donation of common *prutot*, the smallest denomination in the local currency (known today as the "Widow's Mite") was observable because, as described above, each trumpet was designated for certain contributions (Mark 12:41b-42). Jesus used her example to teach that when the poor give they give more than the rich because they give out of their poverty, while the rich give from their abundance (Mark 12:43-44; Luke 21:2-4). The Temple treasury is mentioned again in the Gospels in relation to Jesus' betrayal by Judas. When Judas threw the 30 pieces of silver (Tryian half-shekels) paid him by the Sanhedrin for Jesus betrayal (Matthew 27:3-4) "into the Sanctuary"

(Matthew 27:5), he created a dilemma for the Chief Priest. Even though this money had been deposited in the Temple it was considered the price of a life ("blood money"), so the Chief Priest stated it could not be deposited into the Temple treasury (Matthew 27:6).

The Court of the Israelites

Court of the Israelites, limited to only ritually pure Jewish men, was entered by the 15 steps of the curved staircase leading up to the Nicanor Gate (*Middot* 1.4; 2.6). This Court of the Israelites lay beyond this area and consisted of a narrow hall 233 feet (71 meters) wide and 19 feet (5.8 meters) deep. A low balustrade divided it the Court of the Priests that sat at a slightly higher elevation (*War* 5.5.6; 226; *m. Mid.* 2.6). Beneath this court were rooms that opened into the lower Court of the Women. These were used for storing musical instruments and equipment for use by the Levites (*Middot* 2.6).

The Court of the Priests

There is debate as to the configuration of the Court of Priests. Some scholars see this court as including the Temple, its installations, and the buildings and storerooms associated with the priestly duties. Others argue it had the same dimensions as the Court of the Israelites (actually one long hall), which is why it is referred to in the Mishnah as the "Hall of Priests" (*Middot* 2.6) and that there was a separate Temple Court. If we adopt the latter view, this court seems to have functioned as a sacred space separating the Court of the Israelites from the Temple Court, which contained the Altar of Burnt Offering and where only priests could enter. On its south side, the Court of the Priests had access to the Chamber of the Hewn Stone where the Sanhedrin convened to judge matters for the priesthood (*Middot* 5.3-4). On its north side it had access to the Gate of the Flame/Singers. The Court of the Priests is usually thought of as having the Altar, the Laver, and the Temple along with the chambers and gates associated with this area. However, if this court served to make a distinction with the Temple Court (Azarah) it is preferable to treat it as a separate court since the priests carried out their priestly function primarily in the Temple Court.

The Temple Court (Azarah)

The Temple Court (Hebrew *Azarah*) was the court of greatest sanctity and importance because it included the Temple itself. Even its walls reflected a different standard, being 9 feet (2.74 meters) thick. The dimensions of the Temple Court were 232.5 feet (70.88 meters) from north to south and 322 feet (98.18 meters) from east to west. In the Temple Court stood the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Place of Slaughtering, the Laver, and the Temple (*War* 5.5.6; 225; *Middot* 3.1, 6; 5.2; *Tamid* 1.4). Surrounding the Temple Court were various gates and buildings for priestly preparation and storage. Situated within this court were the ritual installations and that enabled the sacrificial service to be carried out by the priests. In the order of their daily use these would be the Brazen Laver, the Altar of Burnt Offering, the Place of Slaughtering, and the Holy Temple.

The Buildings of the Temple Court

According to *Middot* 1.4, around the outside of the Temple Court were seven gates (three in the north, three in the south, and one in the east), although *Middot* 2.6 says there were nine gates. The explanation for this may be that some of these gates served a dual purpose related to chambers associated with them, so the same gate may have been called by more than one name. There were between these gates six buildings or chambers (three on the south side and three on the north side). *Tamid* 3.4 makes reference to a “Chamber of Utensils,” but this could have been an antechamber of one of the aforementioned chambers.

The three gates on the north side (from east to west) were the Gate of the Flame/Gate of the Singers, the Gate of the Offering, and the Chamber of the Hearth (which had its own gate). The gates on the south (from west to east) were the Kindling Gate, the Gate of the Firstborn, and the Water Gate.

The first of the three chambers on the south side (from west to east) were the Pen of Wood (also called the “Wood Chamber”) where the wood was separated for the Altar. This function of this chamber was said to have been forgotten, but some Jewish sources claimed this sacred area held an incredible secret. According to the Mishnah (*Sotah* 9a), the Tabernacle had been stored under the Temple Mount in a subterranean chamber “beneath the crypts of the Temple.” According to a story from the Second Temple told in Mishnah tractate *Shekalim* 6:1-2 and in the Babylonian Talmud, *Yoma* 52a-54a, a priest serving in the Herodian Second Temple was in the “wood store” separating the good wood from the bad (wormy) wood for the sacrificial Altar. As he was working, he noticed that some of the stones in the floor of the room were different from the other stones. This was interpreted by the rabbis to mean that a certain flagstone was higher than the rest, and he surmised that this stone had once been removed and then replaced in order to hide the Ark. When he went to tell his fellow priest that he had discovered the secret chamber of the Ark (which apparently was entered from the “wood store”), it was said that he was struck dead in mid-sentence, thus definitely confirming that the place was the repository of the Ark. Rabbi Rivevan explained that the reason the priest was struck down was because if the secret were known, the Romans might learn this information and seize the Ark.

On the basis of this account Jewish tradition has held that the Tabernacle, the Ark, the Altar of Incense, Aaron’s rod, the pot of manna, and the tablets of the law have all been hidden within a secret compartment that lies beneath the Pen of Wood on the west side of the Temple, close to the Holy of Holies (*Yoma* 52b; *Tosefta Sotah* 13:2). This spot on the Temple Mount was considered so sacred that it affected the normal pattern of worship for those who knew and accepted its secret. It was the regular custom of the priests to bow at thirteen stations in the Temple, but members of the house of Rabbi Gamaliel and Rabbi Hananiah, the last deputy high priest before the destruction of the Second Temple and was regarded by the Talmud as one who could give reliable testimony concerning the Temple practices (*Pesahim* 14a; *Zevahim* 103b; *Eduyyot* 2:1-3), used to bow at a fourteen station. This additional station was facing the Pen of Wood. The sources say that they did this

because they had inherited from their ancestors the secret that this was the place where the Ark was hidden. All others who did not know this tradition, believed that the Ark had been taken to Babylon, and so only observed the thirteen locations (Tosefta *Sotah* 13:2; Rambam, Hil. *Beit HaBechirah* 4:1).

The second chamber on the south side was the Golah Chamber, which served as an office for the Exile (*Middot* 5.4) and had a water wheel to draw water from the Golah Cistern (*Erubin* 10.14). The last chamber on the south side was the Water Gate, where the Temple's vast subterranean water supply was controlled.

On the north side (east to west), the first chamber was the Salt-Parvah Chamber(s) where salt used in the sacrificial offerings was kept and where the skins from the sacrifices were salted down. Because of this dual function for the salt, this chamber was either a double-chamber or small chambers located next to one another. This chamber connected to an upper antechamber in which the High Priest ritually immersed himself before his special service in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. The second chamber was the Rinsing Chamber where the slaughtered parts for the sacrifice were washed (probably the entrails).

The last chamber was the Chamber of the Hearth, which, like the Chamber of Hewn Stone, was a large building with four antechambers. It was called the Chamber of the "Hearth," because it contained a large fire where the priests not on duty could warm themselves. It had a domed roof and functioned as sleeping quarters for the priests. One of the side chambers was a repository for the altar stones from the former Second Temple that had been defiled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes during his desecration. It also contained the Chamber of the Lambs where those animals being readied for sacrifice were housed and could be inspected for disqualifying blemishes. It also contained a chamber associated with the offering of the showbread and the Chamber of Pinchas whose duty was the maintenance of the priestly garments used in the Temple service.

The Brazen Lavar

The biblical instructions in Exodus 30:17-21 required that the Laver (Hebrew *kiyyor*) was to be made of copper or brass (this included its base). The function of this washbasin was for the ritual purification of the priests who would officiate in the daily sacrificial service. According to the biblical command, it was to be placed between the Altar and the Sanctuary, filled with water, and the priests were to wash their hands and their feet from it in preparation for offering burnt offerings on the Altar or entering the Temple. This was done by allowing water from faucets set into the Laver to run over their hands and feet while holding their feet with their hands. Thus, this vessel was the first of the service vessels to be employed each morning by the priests as they before the daily *Tamid* offering in the Temple. The Mishnah speaks about a wooden device designed by a priest named Ben Katin (*Yoma* 3.10; *Tamid* 1.4; 3.8), which seems to have been a waterwheel mechanism that drew water for filling the Laver from a large underground cistern. According to these sources, the sound of this device in operation could be heard as far as the city of Jericho

(located some 20 miles away). The use of this waterwheel in the early morning officially began the priestly service in the Temple Court.

Altar of Burnt Offering

After purifying himself at the Laver, the priest who had been chosen by lot for that day's preparation work ascended the Altar of Burnt Offering (Hebrew *mizbēah* "altar") by a ramp installed on the south side. The Altar was located in front of the porch of the Temple, and at a calculated distance of about 38 feet (11.58 meters). This space is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the assassination of the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah (Matthew 23:35). According to Exodus 20:25 (cf. Joshua 8:3; Deuteronomy 27:5–7) the Altar of Burnt Offering had to be built from unhewn fieldstones; working the stones with a metal tool would result in ritual contamination. This requirement was only for this altar, because there was also a bronze altar located in the court of the First Temple (2 Kings 16:14; 2 Chronicles 4:1; Ezekiel 9:2), but it served a different function (1 Kings 8:64; 2 Kings 16:15). Scholars debate the size of the Altar of Burnt Offering because of the different measurements given in the Mishnah and Josephus. The Mishnah (*Middot* 3.1) gives its dimensions as 30 x 30 x 5 cubits (52 feet x 52 feet x 9 feet or 15.85 meters x 15.85 meters x 2.74 meters), whereas Josephus (*War* 5.5.225) describes a considerably larger structure of 50 x 50 x 15 cubits (86 feet x 86 feet x 26 feet or 26.21 meters x 26.21 meters x 7.92 meters). These stones were regularly covered with lime to hide the excessive bloodstains that resulted from feasts that required large number offerings (Passover and Tabernacles).

The altar was reached from the south by a ramp, rather than by steps, because the divine instructions prohibited the priests from ascending steps in a manner similar to the pagan priests who exposed their nakedness as part of a fertility rite. Separation from pagan ritual included any association that might give the impression of their divine approval by the God of Israel. According to Josephus, this ramp was an inclined plane built of unhewn stones and according to the Mishnah it was 32 cubits (55 feet, 16.76 meters) in length. On each corner of the altar were four projections called "horns" that were 21 inches (53.3 centimeters) high and set upon a 21-inch (53.3 centimeters) wide ledge. It was on one of these horns that the water drawn from the Pool of Siloam on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (Water-Drawing ceremony) was poured. The Mishnah (*Middot* 3.3) records that there was an open place on the west side of the ramp where the priest discarded ritually disqualified bird offerings. There was a ledge called the "Circuit," that defined the area in which the priests had to walk when offering the sacrifices (otherwise they were invalid). In the southwest corner of the Circuit were two holes (*Middot* 3.2), which served as a drainage system for removing the blood from the court to an underground channel that emptied into the Kidron Valley. Although this drainage system is not described in the sources for the Herodian Temple, it must have been similar to that described for the pre-Herodian Temple (*Middot* 3.2; *Letter of Aristeas* 89-90). *Middot* 3.3 also speaks of a stone-covered pit at the corner of the Altar, which most likely was used to discard remains of libations (liquid offerings). Both Jesus and Paul referred to the Herodian Altar of Burnt Offering and recognized its sanctity (Matthew 23:18–20; 1 Corinthians 9:13; 10:18).

The Place of Slaughtering

On the north side of the Altar and the Temple Court were rows of 24 rings affixed to four rows of six short pillars set in the ground (*Middot* 3.5). This was the site for the ritual slaughtering of animals used for the sacrifices. The rings were used to hold the animal's heads and legs in place. Slaughtering was a humane process that followed strict guidelines, including the catching of the animal's blood in a gold vessel (Hebrew *mizraq*) for sprinkling on the Altar. In the same location was a place called the "Shambles" that consisted of cedar blocks with hooks set on eight short pillars with marble tables between. On these hooks were hung the carcasses of the slaughtered animals so that they could be skinned.

The Temple

The magnificent Sanctuary built by Herod faced east according to the biblical precedent. To pilgrims approaching from the Mt. of Olives on the east just opposite the Temple Mount, the Temple's white polished limestone and imported marble gave it the appearance of a great snow-clad mountain. The sight of the Temple for anyone waking in the city was of a golden mountain as its limestone absorbed the morning rays of the sun. Once the sun had fully risen, the Temple glowed with brilliance unmatched by any other building in the ancient world. This was because the upper exterior of the building (the most elevated portion) was covered with gold so that the gold would reflect the sun and be visible from afar. Josephus observed, that Herod adorned the outside of the Temple with so much gold that when the sun shone on it, it blinded those who looked at it (*War* 5.5; 6.222). While today the remaining walls and structures on and around the Temple Mount appear dull, those in the Herodian period who walked along the outside streets or came within its courts beheld highly decorated and brightly painted (red, yellow, blue, and purple) architecture. Because of this splendor, the rabbis said "whoever has not seen Herod's Temple has not seen a beautiful building in his life," (*Sukkot* 51:2).

The immense size of the Temple also contributed to the popular impression of its greatness. Set on a 10-foot (3.5 meter) thick foundation, the Temple was 172 feet (52.50 meters) in height. Josephus says it was wider in front and narrower behind (*War* 5.5.4; 207; *Middot* 4.7). For this reason, people referred to the design of the Temple as a "lion," whose large front section (head and main) trail down to a slender back section. Its architecture consisted of two stories each 77.5 feet (23.63 meters) high. The outside of the Sanctuary contained numerous small chambers on both levels, which were reached by an inner staircase built in between these small chambers and the outer wall of the Temple building. From this staircase, they were able to service the upper chambers and their roofs (*Middot* 5.5). The roof of the Temple itself was 8.6 feet (2.63 meters) and crowned by a parapet 5 feet (1.58 meters) high. This structure bore golden spikes each 21 inches (53.3 centimeters) in height whose purpose was to keep birds from congregating on the edge of the roof and despoiling the Temple's beautiful façade (*War* 5.5.6; 223-24; *Middot* 4.6).

The Chambers of the Inner Sanctuary

Around the outside of the inner Sanctuary (Holy Place and Holy of Holies) were 38 small chambers built in three stories and divided as five chambers in three layers on the north and south and three chambers in two layers on the west with the top layer having only two chambers (*Middot* 4.3-4; *War* 5.220-221). These chambers must have been accessed by portable ladders. The width of the lower chambers were 7 feet (2.13 meters), the middle chambers 10 feet (3.05 meters), and the upper chambers 12 feet (3.66 meters). These small chambers produced a honeycomb structure and may have contributed to structural support in the architecture, although the functional purpose of these spaces would seem to have been as ritual repositories for Temple vessels, utensils, vestments, and other supplies.

The Porch (*Ulam*)

Approaching the Temple from the west of the Altar, a staircase of 12 steps ascended upward 10 feet from the floor of the Temple Court to the outer porch (Hebrew *ulam*) of the Temple (*War* 5.5.3; 206; *Middot* 3.7). One entered through a gate with no doors, and whose dimensions were 172 feet in height and width (projecting sides extended 26 feet/7.92 meters on either side of the Sanctuary), but only 19 feet (5.79 meters) in depth (*War* 5.5.4; 208). Its inset entrance was 70 feet (21 meters) high and 35 feet (10.5 meters) wide and topped by a lintel made of five composite wood beams (probably 25 in number) of decreasing length (from bottom to top) with stones between each beam (*Middot* 4.7). This construction was 15.6 feet (4.73 meters) high, which had to support the weight of the 88 feet (26.78 meters) of courses of stone above it. It had a decorated door and an inlaid shell motif over it and above this, four ornamented windows. Free standing posts (or pillars) and their lintel framing the door were adorned with an exquisite Golden Vine at least 34 feet (10.50 meters) in length with leaves and hanging grape clusters “as tall as a man” (*Antiquities* 15.394-395; *War* 5.210). The huge quantities of gold needed for this structure is said to have come from the free-will offerings of the people. This construction was well known in the ancient world and was mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus (*History* 5.5). Owing to the disciples’ familiarity with this structure and its vineyard imagery it is possible Jesus made a veiled reference to it in His discourse about a proper relationship with God through the Messiah utilizing the vine and branches motif (John 15:1-6).

The Holy Place (*Heikal*)

Moving westward through the porch one entered the Holy Place (Hebrew *Heikal*), the sacred space exclusive to priestly service before the Holy of Holies. The entrance to the Holy Place was 34 feet (10.50 meters) high and 17 feet (5.25 meters) wide. Queen Helena was said to have donated a golden lamp that hung over the entrance whose inner walls were overlaid with gold (*War* 5.208). Making the separation between the porch and the Holy Place was a set of double folding doors (one on the outside and one on the inside) and folded back on itself so that one side fit neatly into a recess in the wall (*Middot* 4.1). A priest would open both sets of doors, by entering through a small door on the north side of the

porch and into a room that led to a corridor between the double doors where he would then open each set of doors. The smaller door also provided access into the Holy Place (*m. Middot* 4.2). According to Josephus, it was possible to look through the porch entrance to these doors separating it from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 208).

These massive doors were covered by an equally massive curtain, which Josephus describes as a Babylonian tapestry 60 feet (18.29 meters) high and 30 feet (9.14 meters) wide and a "handbreadth" thick (*War* 5.211-214). Its embroidery depicted a panorama of the entire heavens, excluding the 12 signs of the Zodiac and had the colors of blue, purple, and scarlet (*Wars* 5.5.4, 214). So heavy was the curtain that it was said that it took 300 priests just to manipulate it. Some scholars state that this was the veil mentioned in the New Testament that was torn from top to bottom at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27:51; Mark 15:38; Luke 23:45). Those who make this argument note that the incident seems to have been as evident to observers as other events taking place at the same time (sun obscured, earthquake). This would have only been possible with respect to the outer curtain or veil, since the inner curtain was only visible to the priests. In addition, had the inner veil split, there would have no longer been a ritual separation between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, which could have affected the ritual status of the Temple and the Temple service. Yet there is no record of such an event or interruption to the sacred service in the New Testament, Josephus, or any rabbinic writing. This silence is particularly significant in light of the fact that Josephus and the rabbinical writings do record unusual events that occurred in the Temple during the last 40 years after the crucifixion of Jesus that were considered omens of the destruction of the Temple.

The Holy Place itself was 68.8 feet (21 meters) in length and 34.4 feet (10.50 meters) in width and all of its walls were overlaid with gold. Mishnah tractate *Tamid* as well as Josephus and the New Testament (*War* 5.5.5; 217; Luke 1:5-25) state that the interior of the Holy Place contained the sacred vessels (furniture) for the priestly service, the golden lampstand (Hebrew *menorah*), the Table of Showbread (Hebrew *shulchan hama'reket*) and the golden Altar of Incense (*mizbach haketoret*).

Josephus describes the menorah as "made of gold but constructed on a different pattern from those we use in ordinary life. Affixed to a pedestal was a central shaft, from which there extended slender branches, arranged trident-fashion, a wrought lamp being attached to the extremity of each branch; of these there were seven, indicating the honor paid to the number among the Jews" (*War* 7.148-50). The New Testament records that Zechariah, the father of John the Baptizer, was chosen by lot to perform the service at the Altar of Incense within the Temple (Luke 1:11). In the excavations in the Jewish Quarter after 1967, Israeli archaeologists discovered inscribed plaster fragments in a Herodian fill. On these were partial depictions of all three of these vessels within the Holy Place as well as the stepping-stone utilized daily by the priests to reach the lampstand for trimming its wicks. Put a photo or drawing of this artifact here. Based on this depiction of the Menorah (with a three-legged base) it is argued that the depiction of the Menorah (with an octagonal base covered with images of mythological creatures) as a spoil of war on the Arch of Titus Triumph in the Roman Forum was a copy and not the same as that in the Holy Place.

Talmudic tractate *Yoma* 54a says that the walls and tapestries inside the Holy Place contained pictorial reproductions of the cherubim (the same images were engraved in the paneling of the Holy Place in the First Temple). However, Josephus, who was from a priestly family and gave eyewitness descriptions of other details of the interior of the Holy Place (and even of the Holy of Holies), stated elsewhere concerning the appearance cherubim that “no one can tell what they were like” (*Antiquities* 8.3.3). Rather than contradicting the Talmud, this may simply be his way of stating that these were mere artistic representations, since no one actually knew what real cherubim looked like.

The Holy of Holies (Devir)

The Holy of Holies (Hebrew *qodesh haqqodashim*) was technically known as the *Devir*. No part of the Sanctuary had greater sanctity than this small square room 34.4 feet (10.50 meters) in length and breadth and 69 feet (21 meters) in height. While the priests officiated within the Holy Place, no one but the High Priest, and only on one day—the Day of Atonement—was allowed to enter into the Holy of Holies. Following the biblical precedent (Ezra 5:15), the priestly workmen had built the Temple with the Holy of Holies in the exact same location as the previous two structures—over the bedrock platform (an exposed portion of Mt. Moriah) known as the “Foundation Stone.”

As mentioned previously, Jewish tradition held that the Ark of the Covenant and the other “Temple treasures” from the Tabernacle were hidden in one of the subterranean chambers beneath the Holy of Holies, but within the actual building itself, there was nothing, as the sources affirm (*War* 5.5.5; 219; *Middot* 4.7). The absence of any representation of the deity or an image of any kind in the sacred shrine, or in any part of the Temple, was thought incredible throughout the ancient world. Its absence also set the Jewish Temple apart from all others. In fact, this single detail was most mentioned in foreign accounts concerning the Jewish people and their Sanctuary. This fact also explains the conflict encountered with the Jews when Roman emperor worship became popular and emperors sought to erect statues in the Temple as a sign of local veneration. Josephus recounts a compromise agreement in which the Jews would offer a sacrifice in honor of the emperor instead of his image being placed in the Holy of Holies (*Antiquities* 18.8.2-9; 261-309; *War* 2.10.1-5; 184-203).

To understand the sense of inviolability that surrounded the Holy of Holies it is necessary to understand that the room was not designed for men, but for the invisible God. For that reason, the Holy of Holies was a windowless room and so impenetrable to human gaze. This, however, does not mean the room was not ornamented, for *Shekalim* 4.4 records that gold plates one cubit square (and thought to have been engraved with images of the cherubim) were hung on the walls of the room, so that the entire room was overlaid with gold (*Middot* 4.1). To emphasize further that this room was unapproachable to man, the High Priest carried a fire pan with burning incense (Leviticus 16:12-14), which produced a thick smoke that completely filled the room. This was to be done before the High Priest could approach the place of the Ark. This act, like the construction itself, further enforced the separation (begun at the entrance to the Court of the Women) from the Holy One, whose Divine Presence was localized in the innermost part of the Holy of Holies at the

place of the Ark. While it may be only tradition, according to the Zohar (Parshat *Acharei Mot*, p. 67a; Parashat *Emor*, p. 102a) the priests outside in the Holy Place held the ends of a rope attached to the High Priest's ankle. The rope was attached in order to remove the priest's body from the Holy of Holies should he die or be slain in the midst of performing his duty on the Day of Atonement.

The Veil

Josephus states that a veil (Hebrew *paroket*) separated the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place (*War* 5.5.4; 212-13; 5.5.5; 219). According to the Mishnah 82 young girls made in 72 individual sections that were joined together and its overall dimensions were 69 feet (21 meters) high and 34 feet wide and one handbreadth thick (*Shekalim* 8.5). However, the Mishnah also describes this veil as a double construction with more than 1.5 feet (half a meter) between the two curtains (*Yoma* 5.1). Philo called the outer curtain the "covering" and the inner curtain the "veil" (*Vita Mos.* 2.101). Hebrews 9:3 mentioned a "second veil," but probably referred only to the veil before the Holy of Holies as distinct from the curtain before the Holy Place. From the Mishnah account the High Priest who entered the Holy of Holies from the Holy Place on the Day of Atonement passed between these two curtains. Once he reached the north side, he then turned around and went south with the curtain on his right hand until he came to the place of the Ark where he was to place the fire pan and sprinkle the atoning blood. Those who argue that it was this veil that was rent at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus have to contend with these statements of a double veil and argue that there was initially only a single veil, but that a second veil was added after the first was rent to prevent the interruption of the High Priest service.

The Foundation Stone

Like the First Temple, the Second Temples were built so that their Holy of Holies enclosed an exposed protrusion of Mount Moriah. To this mountain Abraham had brought Isaac according to God's command to offer him as a burnt offering (Genesis 22:1-24) and here also, king David built an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah in gratitude for the preservation of Jerusalem (2 Samuel 24:21-25; 1 Chronicles 21:18-28). At the time of the First Temple's dedication the Ark of the Covenant had been installed on a stone platform built over this bedrock which *Yoma* 5:2 states was three fingerbreadths high. Because the *Shekinah* (Divine Presence) had descended to the Ark upon this place (1 Kings 8:6-11), even though it later departed (Ezekiel 8:4; 11:23) this site acquired a special sanctity unlike any other spot on earth. Orthodox Jews believe it maintains this sanctity today and therefore forbid entrance to the Temple Mount to observant Jews lest a ceremonially unclean person inadvertently tread on the site of the Holy Ark.

However, the Ark had been removed from the Holy of Holies site before the destruction of the First Temple and was never returned to its place. Therefore, Josephus states that in the Herodian Second Temple "nothing whatsoever" stood in the Holy of Holies (*War* 5.219). The Talmud explains, "after the Ark was taken away a stone remained there from the time

of the early Prophets, and it was called *shetiyah*. It was higher than the ground by three fingerbreadths. On this he [the High Priest] used to put (the fire-pan)" (*Yoma* 5.2). The Hebrew term used today for this barren stone is *'Even Ha-Shetiyah* ("the Foundation Stone"), on which Jewish tradition says, during the Day of Atonement the High Priest would sprinkle the sacrificial blood at the place where the Ark with its Mercy Seat had stood. Temple scholar Leen Ritmeyer believes that a square incised indentation in the surface of the rock (*as-Sakhra*) inside the present-day Muslim Dome of the Rock may be the exact place where the Ark of the Covenant was set. The indentation was there in order to prevent the Ark from movement when the High Priest used its poles to direct his approach to the Mercy Seat in the time of the First Temple.

Jewish and Early Jewish-Christian Attitudes toward the Temple

Despite the fact that the Second Temple had been constructed by Herod the Great, the Jewish people looked to the Jerusalem Temple as the legitimate central sanctuary of the God of Israel and the only place to which prayers could be directed and sacrifices offered. Even Jews in the Diaspora (Jewish communities in lands outside Israel) sent tithes to support the Temple service. Positive references to the Temple are found in even Hellenistic writings such as Ben Sirach, *Letter of Aristeas* and Philo of Alexandria (*Spec. Laws*, 1.141-44; 66-345; *Embassy* 156). However, it is also true that there were rival sects of Judaism (both in the Hasmonean and Roman periods) that contended over matters of the qualifications of those in the Temple priesthood and the manner in which they officiated in its service, as well as reacting to offenses made against the Temple by Roman officials. For this reason some Jews believed that the Second Temple had been defiled (1 *Enoch* 89.73). and was doomed to be destroyed and replaced by a purer Third Temple that conformed to the restoration ideal of the prophets (*Tobit* 14.5; 1 *Enoch* 90.28-29). Some even drew up blueprints for a replacement Temple, the Temple Scroll (one of the documents found among the Dead Sea Scrolls) may represent.

Jesus and the early church as well as the events recorded within most of the New Testament occurred largely within a Jewish context and during the period when the Herodian Temple was functioning. It is therefore important to consider the attitudes of Jesus, the early church, and the Apostle Paul toward the Temple.

Jesus and the Second Temple

The Gospels record that Jesus lived His whole life as a Temple-observant Jew. The father of His forerunner, John the Baptizer, was a priest who officiated in the Temple and received the message of His birth (Luke 1:9-22). When only eight days old He was circumcised and presented at the Temple (Luke 2:22-27, 39), and righteous people (Simeon, Anna), stationed in the Temple identified Him as the promised Messiah (Luke 2:25-38). When the time of His legal obligation began at age 12 as a "son of the covenant" He is said to have gone with His family, as He and His father must have done three times a year (Exodus 34:23), to the Temple (Luke 2:41-49). After His baptism in the Jordan, one of the devil's temptations of Jesus centered on the Temple (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9). Although living in

the Galilee, He and His disciples went regularly to Jerusalem and to the Temple (Matthew 24:1-2; Mark 11:11; 13:1-2; Luke 21:5), where Jesus taught regularly (Mark 12:35; Luke 22:52-53; 23:5; John 8:20) and openly (John 18:20), also healing people who came there to worship (Matthew 12:4-5; 21:14-15). In addition, the subject of Jesus' teaching often related to the Temple (Matthew 12:3-8; 23:16-22, 37-39; 24:2-31; Mark 13:2-27; Luke 18:10; 21:6-36). During the Passion Week, Jesus is found daily in the Temple precincts (Matthew 26:55; Luke 19:28-23:56, especially 20:1; 21:37-38). Jesus' referred to the Temple as "My father's house" (Luke 2:49; John 2:16), and Jesus' zeal for the purity of the Temple was reflected in His confrontation with the Jewish officials and moneychangers at the entrance to the Temple (Matthew 12:12; Mark 11:15-16; John 2:15). At His Jewish trial, Jesus' was falsely accused of planning to destroy the Temple (Matthew 26:61; 27:40; Mark 14:58), and at the moment of Jesus' death, the veil within the Temple was torn from top to bottom (Mark 15:38). After His resurrection, Jesus speaks concerning Israel's future restoration (which would include the Temple) and commanded His disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:6-8). Apparently, this event, and the subsequent preaching of Peter, took place in the area of the Royal Stoa on the Temple Mount where pilgrims were present for the Feast of Pentecost and could be baptized after their repentance (Acts 2:1-40).

The Early Church and the Second Temple

Immediately after the Ascension, the closing words of the Gospel of Luke announced that the disciples of Jesus were "continually in the Temple, praising God" (Luke 24:53). The Book of Acts records that the greater company of disciples was daily assembled in the Temple precincts (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:21), and especially in the Stoa of Solomon (Acts 2:46; 5:12-16), which was apparently their preferred place of meeting (Acts 3:11; 5:12). They met here first because as Jews this was the proper place of Jewish worship (Luke 2:41, 49; 24:52-53; John 12:12; Acts 20:16; 24:11). They were all observant Jews as Acts 2:1 reveals in their keeping of the *Shavuot* (Pentecost) feast. In fact, Acts 5:12-13 indicates that the regularity of this group's worship, and especially their remarkable demonstrations of spiritual ability, set them apart from other observant Jews, and brought them acclaim for their piety. Hegesippus, a Christian leader a generation after the apostles, recorded that James, the head of the Jerusalem church was renown for his Temple worship: "He alone was allowed to enter the Sanctuary, for he did not wear wool but linen, and he used to enter alone into the Temple and be found kneeling and praying for forgiveness for the people, so that his knees grew hard like a camel's because of his constant worship of God, kneeling and asking forgiveness for the people" (Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, Loeb Classical Library 2. xxiii). It was also the place designated for proper Jewish prayer according to the time of the daily sacrifices. The healing of the lame man by Peter and John took place as they were going to prayer at the Temple following the prescribed time of the evening sacrifice at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). Second, the Temple was the place designated for public teaching (Luke 2:46). Here crowds gathered allowing Jesus and His disciples' to present their message and perform their witness (Acts 2:4-43; 3:10-25). Jesus' usual practice upon arriving to Jerusalem was to teach in the Temple (Luke 19:47; 21:37). Therefore, it should be expected that Jesus commanded His disciples to begin their

worldwide witness at Jerusalem (Acts 1:8), a fact repeated by the angel who spoke to them at Jesus' Ascension (Acts 3:11). In like manner another angel also commanded the disciples to go preach their message "in the Temple" (Acts 5:19-20). Following this precedent, the apostles stationed themselves in the Stoa of Solomon so that people from the city and the vicinity could come to them for healing (Acts 5:12-16). The loyalty of the early Christian leadership to Jerusalem and the Temple area is remarkable, in as much as they were Galileans, and most of their ministry with Jesus had centered in regions outside Jerusalem. That Jerusalem should become the center and hub of early Jewish-Christianity (cf. Galatians 1:18-2:2) attests to the particular sanctity this group held for the city and the Temple.

The mother church was centered in Jerusalem, partly for the reasons stated above, but also because of its eschatological hope in Jesus' return, which may have been thought to be in the same city from which He departed (Acts 1:11; cf. Zechariah 14:3). This was because Jesus related the timing of His return to events associated with the Temple (Matthew 24:3-31; Mark 13:3-37; Luke 21:5-38). Therefore, the Temple message of Peter at Pentecost proclaimed the restoration of Israel, thought to be associated with Jesus' return (Acts 1:6-7) as the ultimate result of Jewish repentance (Acts 3:19-21).

Paul and the Second Temple

The Temple was not only central for the apostles and the early Church, but also for the Apostle Paul. When extolling the historic advantages of the Nation of Israel, he included in his list "the Temple service" (Romans 9:4). Even though Paul was commissioned as "the Apostle to the Gentiles" (Romans 1:5; cf. Galatians 2:7-9), his fidelity as a Jew to the Temple service appears frequently in the Book of Acts. It records Paul's observant acts of Temple worship which include his observance of the feasts regulated by the Temple calendar (Acts 20:6), his religious vows (a Nazirite vow, Acts 18:18), ritual purification rites, in one case involving four other proselytes (Acts 21:23-26; 24:18), payment of their ceremonial expenses, which accounted as a *mitzvah*, "a legally obligated good deed" (Acts 21:24), offering of sacrifices at the Temple (Acts 21:26; 24:17), prayers and worship at the Temple (Acts 22:17; 24:11), regard for the priesthood (Acts 23:5), and payment of the Temple tax (Acts 24:17). To the elders in the Jerusalem church Paul sought to prove that he was as devout as any Jew toward the Temple, and assisted others in performing their Temple obligations (Acts 21:23-26). He insisted on regulating his life by the Temple calendar (the feast days), even to interrupting his own missionary work (Acts 20:16; 1 Corinthians 16:8). All of these actions seem to be strange coming from one who was commissioned as if indeed he held a replacement theology and had taught the Gentiles that there was no future for ethnic Israel or its ritual institutions. When Paul was tried before the Jewish authorities, he defended himself by affirming his ceremonial purity in relation to the Temple (Acts 25:8; 28:17).

When Paul uses the analogy of the Temple in his epistles, he does so on the basis of the Temple's sanctity, relating it with the sanctification of the individual believer's bodies (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16-17), and the collective body of believers (Ephesians 2:21-22). In such uses Paul was not equating (by way of supersession) the

physical Temple with the spiritual Church, but arguing for the sanctity of the one by analogy with the other (i.e., the Presence of God—the Holy Spirit—indwelt the Temple and also believers individually and collectively).

The Destruction of the Second Temple

Throughout the life of Jesus the Temple was the center of nationalist demonstrations and the Roman authorities were fearful of a large-scale uprising led by a messianic figure. In this heightened atmosphere of conflict (cf. Jn. 11:48-50) it is understandable how Jesus disruptive actions in the Temple precincts (Jn. 2:14-16; Matt. 21:12-13; Mk. 11:15-18; Lk. 19:45-48), messianic claims (Matt. 21:14-16; Jn. 10:22-39) and statements concerning the Temple's destruction (Matt. 24:1-2; Mk. 13:1-2; Lk. 19:41-44; Jn. 2:19-20) were used against Him at his Jewish trial (Matt. 26:61-66; Mk. 14:56-58, 61-63; Lk. 22:67-71) and Roman trial (Lk. 23:2, 5; Jn. 19:7-8, 12). This fearful attitude increased as Jewish nationalistic ambitions intensified after the time of Jesus. When in AD 40 the Roman emperor Caligula commanded his statue be erected and worshipped in the Jerusalem Temple, the Judean king Herod Agrippa I appealed to him to rescind his order to prevent a major Jewish uprising.

However, in AD 44, the death of the Agrippa placed the whole of the country under direct Roman rule and removed the illusion of independence. Mounting Roman oppression, the siding of Roman authorities with the non-Jewish element in the Land, and repeated violations of the Temple's sanctity, created the atmosphere for revolt. In AD 53, the Roman procurator of Judea bribed Jews to murder the High Priest Jonathan in the Temple, leading to a succession of murders during feast days at the Temple (Josephus, *Antiquities* 20.8). In April of AD 66, when the Roman governor confiscated seventeen talents from the Temple treasury, Jewish nationalists staged a revolt, seizing the Temple, stopping the daily sacrifices in tribute of the Roman emperor, and capturing the stronghold of Masada. This led to the First Jewish Revolt, which culminated in the destruction of the Temple in AD 70.

The Roman Destruction of the Temple

The First Jewish Revolt, also known as the Great War, was unique in the history of the region, since the Jews were the only people in the ancient Near East to launch a revolution on such a scale against the Roman Empire. It is also significant for our concern that the beginning and end of this conflict was the Jewish Temple.

In response to the Jewish insurrection, which was staged primarily in Jerusalem, Rome's leading commander Vespasian was dispatched to quell the uprising with four legions comprising some 50,000 soldiers. Vespasian's plan of attack began in northern Israel, which unlike Jerusalem, offered little resistance to his legions. One example was the Galilean fortress of Jotapata defended by the forces under Josephus, who would later turn court historian for the Romans and record the fall of Jerusalem and the Temple. The Jewish families at the fortress committed suicide rather than surrender and Josephus defected to the Roman side. One exception was the city of Gamla in the Golan Heights which in the fall

of AD 67 attempted to prevent the Roman advance toward the Holy City. However, the Roman legions decimated the city, slaughtering some 4,000 Jews. Rather than allow their families to fall to Roman savagery, some 5,000 Jews took their own lives, plunging off the nearby cliffs to their deaths.

By the summer of AD 70, Vespasian's Tenth Legion had made its way to Jerusalem and placed the city under siege. Because of the influx of refugees from other Jewish cities destroyed by the Romans, as well as the Judean population fleeing in advance of the legions, the city's population had increased to at least three times its normal size. Jerusalem's reputation as one of the largest cities of the ancient world and as impregnable made it a significant challenge to the already wearied Roman soldiers. However, its role as the center of political and spiritual authority and the Temple as the center of the Jewish Revolt required it to be the foremost example of Roman punishment.

At the time of the Roman siege, two of the most militant factions among the Jewish nationalists, the Zealots and the Sicarii, had gained control of the Temple Mount. This had been accomplished with the aid of Idumean mercenaries (descendants of the Edomites) who had ruthlessly killed the more moderate Sadducaic and Pharisaic elements in charge. The aim of the militant factions from the beginning had been to crush the Roman occupation of Israel and drive the Romans from the Land. Now that the war had come to the Holy City, they were determined to fulfill their purpose or perish. To assure that the Jewish populations of the city would not flee but fight to the death, the Zealots destroyed the storehouses of food, while proclaiming the divine inviolability of Jerusalem.

Vespasian returned to Rome to assume his duties as emperor, giving his son Titus in command of the Tenth Legion the charge of completing Jerusalem's submission. Despite the famine inside the walls of the city, Jews celebrated a last Passover with their Temple and prepared for the Roman attack. It came days later with a catapult barrage that continued for two months until the Romans finally breached the walls. Proceeding house by house, the Romans set fire to the city, slaughtering every Jew in their wake. One archaeological testimony to the fierceness of the fighting is the "Burnt House" within the present Jewish Quarter. Here can be seen the debris of one of the houses destroyed by the Romans in AD 70, with the remains of a woman holding a spear, lying on the doorstep where she was felled in the attack. Other evidence was revealed in recently discovered "escape tunnels" that were part of the sewage drainage system from the Temple Mount that continued south toward lowest level of the Kidron Valley. The failed attempt of these Jews fleeing the city was evident in the pottery left behind, as well in the statements of Josephus of their capture by the Romans who searched this subterranean passageway for fugitives.

Though weakened by hunger, the Jewish defenders held back the Roman assault from the Temple Mount for some three weeks. Then, on the Ninth of the Jewish month of Av (August), the Roman invaders reached the Second Temple compound. This was the same day the First Temple had been destroyed by the Babylonians 656 years earlier. At this point, Titus and his officers discussed the outcome for the Temple. There are conflicting reports as to what orders were given, but the Roman historian Tacitus records that the majority of the officers were in agreement that nothing less than the total destruction of the

Temple would suppress the Jewish revolt and keep the remaining population subservient to the Roman will. The city and the Temple were set ablaze, with the Roman soldiers slaughtering both priests and people. The Roman historian Dio Cassius describes the final opposition of the Jews nestled around the sacred precinct with the populace stationed below in the court and the elders on the steps and the priests in the Sanctuary itself. When part of the Temple was set on fire the priests went to their death willingly, some throwing themselves on the swords of the Romans, some slaying one another, others taking their own lives and still others leaping into the flames. He adds that for them the event did not seem to be destruction, but victory and salvation and happiness as they perished along with the Temple.

Once the Temple was ignited, the Romans chopped down the trees in the area to form a huge bonfire around the structure. This caused the moisture in the limestone blocks that comprised the Temple to expand and blow the stones apart, collapsing the Temple in a single day. It has been said that when the building burned, the decorative gold on the exterior and interior walls melted and ran into the seams between the stones. Afterward, in a frenzied attempt to recover the gold, the Roman soldiers tore apart the stones of the Temple's walls, resulting in a complete desolation of the Temple. The New Testament also speaks concerning this devastating event (Luke 19:43-44; 21:20-24). With respect to the other wealth of the Temple, Josephus records that the Romans pillaged the Temple treasury (*Antiquities* 7.10.2; 254-64; *War* 2.3.2-3; 45-50) as well as the Temple's storehouses of ritual vessels. A large number of the stones of the uppermost course of the outside retaining walls of the Temple were also forcibly torn down as a show of Roman vengeance. The Temple now lay completely in ruins, with much of its rubble pushed into the Kidron Valley on the eastern side over the remains of the eastern retaining wall.

The following year, Titus' was given a victory procession through the Roman Forum, and these vessels were displayed as being carried by some of the 700 Jewish slaves paraded before the Emperor Vespasian. The depiction of this event can be seen today in the remains of the Roman Forum etched in one of the reliefs inside the arch of the monument known as the Arch of Titus' Triumph.

Archaeological Evidence of the Second Temple

Archaeological excavation work in Jerusalem since 1968, although unable to excavate the Temple site due to religious and political concerns, has undertaken extensive excavations at the foot of the Temple Mount's massive retaining walls and western and southern enclosure walls and gates. The results of these excavations have confirmed the historical testimonies of Josephus and the rabbinic sources of the magnitude of the structures and their destruction.

The most enduring archaeological evidence for the Second Temple is the Western (or Wailing) Wall, an extant portion of the retaining wall of the Herodian Second Temple to which Jews for centuries have directed their prayers. This wall extends some 50 feet above the modern plaza, but also another 50 feet below it. Visitors today can walk at least 1,000 feet of this wall through what is known as the Western Wall Tunnels. Alongside this wall (and also the southern wall) from 1968-1978 Israeli archaeologist Benjamin Mazar excavated revealed many structures related to the Herodian Second Temple including the great staircase for the priests' entrance to the Temple known as Robinson's Arch, a monumental staircase that began at the Pool of Siloam in the Kidron Valley and carried the Jewish population (including Jesus and His disciples) up through the Huldah Gates and onto the Temple Mount, and numerous *miqva'ot* (ritual immersion pools) that were used by Jews requiring purification to enter the Temple precincts.

From 1996-1998 Ronny Reich continued the excavations in this area to a lower level. His discoveries included the ancient street lined with shops (where Jews bought sacrificial animals for the Temple), the landing for Robinson's Arch, more *miqva'ot* and an inscribed stone that instructed the priests where to stand to blow the trumpets signaling the beginning of the Sabbath. Also, found lying on this ancient street were tons and tons of the building stones of the western side of the Temple complex that had been thrown down from above by the Roman soldiers during their assault on the Temple Mount in AD 70. Most of the stones weighed 2-4 tons each, but some were in excess of 15 tons, and the force of impact had caved in the flagstones that formed the street. In some places the archaeologists left this stone-littered street as they had found it to remind modern-day visitors of the magnitude of the awful devastation suffered under the Romans. Within the context of these architectural structures was found a wealth of artifacts that demonstrated Jewish daily life in and around the Temple. Also of great significance was the discovery of the lid of a stone sarcophagus engraved with the words in Hebrew: "...Ben HaCohen HaGadol..." This name is known from the literature of the Second Temple period as the son of the High Priest who served in the Temple.

While the Islamic authorities do not permit archaeological excavations on the Temple Mount itself, the Islamic Waqf has inadvertently provided archaeologists with abundant data from this site. Beginning in 1996, the Islamic authorities removed more than 20,000 tons of archaeologically rich debris from the southern and eastern portions of the Temple Mount in preparation for the construction of the Al-Marwani mosque. This material was dumped into the Kidron Valley, but later recovered by Israeli archaeologists Gabriel Barkay

and Zachy Zweig. They began the Temple Mount Sifting Project as a means of searching through this rubble and salvaging what evidence could be found of a Jewish presence on the Temple Mount. To date, tons of pottery have been salvaged, half of which is dated to the First and Second Temple periods. Among the more than 4,000 coin finds are the earliest Judean (Yehud) coin from the Persian period, coins of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-163 BC) who desecrated the Temple (remember the Hanukkah story), and hundreds of common Jewish coins from the Hasmonean and Second Temple periods. Of special note was the discovery of silver and bronze shekel coins minted by Jews during the First Jewish Revolt (AD 66-70) that contained inscriptions such as: "Holy Jerusalem," and "For the Freedom of Zion." These coins, in and by themselves, prove a Jewish dominance on the Temple Mount during the late Second Temple period. Scores of iron arrowheads were also found as evidence of this Jewish war against the Romans. Among the inscribed finds is a clay bullae with an ancient Hebrew inscription: "Belonging to Gaalyahu son of Imer," who may have been a priest or high official, and a potsherd decorated with a menorah (Jewish ceremonial lamp) such as was used in the Temple. During my own group's work in the project there was discovered a murex shell, the very shell used by the Temple priests to dye parts of their priestly garments, unique tiles (*Opus Sectile*) that created a wave-pattern and came from one of the courts of the Temple, and a clay bullae containing an Israelite name written in Egyptian hieroglyphics. Egyptians had influence on Judean kings and officials throughout the First Temple period, beginning with Solomon who made an alliance with the pharaoh of Egypt and had an Egyptian wife (1 Kings 9:16; 11:1). Many Egyptian scarabs were also found in the Temple Mount rubble. In addition pieces of fresco from buildings within the Temple precincts, a column of a Doric Capital that may have been part of the Royal Stoa, a fragment of a sculptured stone engraved with an Acanthus Leaf (an Herodian style that may have been from the Temple itself). It must be remembered that all of these artifacts came from the Temple Mount and that still lying in rubble on the Temple Mount today are hundreds of columns, decorated building stones, and portions of other monumental structures that were part of the Temple complex, but are under the control of the Muslim authorities who continue to do construction and discard these such priceless relics as irrelevant junk from an unimportant past.

Ancient quarries also give evidence for the Temple's construction. Beneath the Old City one quarry known as Solomon's Quarry and Zedekiah's Cave was used during both Temple periods and one dating to the end of the Second Temple period was recently found during a construction project in Jerusalem's Shmuel HaNavi Street. The immense size of the stones suggest strongly that they were for use in the construction of Herodian projects in Jerusalem, including the walls of the Temple. Across the Hinnom valley from the Temple Mount at a site known as Ketef Hinnom, Gabriel Barkay excavated a First Temple tomb complex that had been used as a quarry in the Roman period. Within one tomb was found the largest hoard of jewelry ever uncovered in Jerusalem including two tiny silver scrolls that contained the oldest biblical text ever discovered, the words of the Priestly Benediction (Numbers 6:24-26): "May the Lord bless you and keep you; may the Lord cause his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; may the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and grant you peace." This inscription, as well as the other artifacts, comes from the Jewish Remnant that remained in the Jerusalem after the city's destruction in 586 BC.

Jewish life in Jerusalem and on the Temple Mount has also been preserved in the record of Jewish deaths. To this we may add the extensive evidence of the thousands of tombs uncovered around Jerusalem from both the First Temple period (many lining the eastern ridge of the Kidron Valley across from the City of David known as the Village of Silwan) and the Second Temple period (on the Mt. of Olives and around the city and its environs). Many of the houses in the Silwan are built on the tops of these tombs. Inscriptions relate one to Shebna, a royal steward condemned by the Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 22:15-17) for having built his tomb in the vicinity of the tombs of the Judean Kings, thus making himself in death more important than he was in life. There is also the funerary inscription of King Uzziah of Judah (769-733 BC), who was buried separate from the Kings of Judah because he was punished with leprosy for violating the exclusive rights committed to the priests (2 Chronicles 26:3,16-21), and of the tombs of the members of the Sanhedrin, the official priestly body who legislated the affairs of the Temple. Among these tomb discoveries are ossuaries (bone boxes of the late Second Temple period) of "Simon the Temple Builder" and "Joseph Caiaphas," the High Priest who presided over the Jewish trial of Jesus (John 18:24).

Archaeological excavation south of the Temple Mount has also provided evidence of the linkage of other parts of the city to the Temple precincts. For example, the monumental stairway of the Herodian Second Temple has been discovered stretching almost half a mile uphill from the Pool of Siloam to the Huldah Gates at the southern entrance to the Temple. Likewise, an underground aqueduct from this same period has been found connecting the City of David to the western plaza of the Temple Mount.

SECTION 4 – THE MODERN TEMPLE MOUNT AND FUTURE TEMPLE

The Temple Mount in the early Roman and Byzantine Period

After the destruction of the Temple by the Romans, the Jewish people continued to hold on to the hope for restoration of Israel and the rebuilding of the Temple. Initially, the Jewish population in Judea felt that the Roman Emperor Hadrian had promised to rebuild the Temple. However, in AD 130 Hadrian began the erection of a Roman colony on the ruins of the Jewish city and renamed it *Aelia Capitolina* in honor of his family name and the Capitoline triad of deities (Jupiter, Juno and Minerva). To make matters worse, on the very day that commemorated the Temple's destruction, the Ninth of Av, both Jewish and Christian sources record that the Roman governor of Judea, Tinnaius Rufus, plowed the area Temple Mount with salt as a means to ensure its permanent desolation (*Eruchin* 27a; *Ta'anit* 29a; Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 4:6, 1). To add insult to injury, over the next two years Hadrian issued decrees that offended Jewish life and religious observance such prohibiting circumcision, public assembly, Jewish ordination, and any regulation of the religious calendar.

The failed promise to rebuild the Temple, coupled by these measures and flamed by the hope of restoration, led in AD 132, to a second Jewish Revolt against Rome under the leadership of Shimon ben Kosiba, who the leading Sage of the time. Rabbi Akiva, was heralded as the Messiah and they renamed him *Bar Kochba* ("Son of the Star"), a messianic title based on the prophecy of Numbers 24:17. Bar Kochba was successful in liberating Jerusalem in AD 135 and ruled as king in Jerusalem for the next three years and, as the Sage Maimonides reported (*Melochim* 11:4) began the rebuilding of the Temple. It is debated as to how much restoration of the Temple site Bar Kokhba was able to achieve, but from coinage (put that he minted showing the façade of the Temple and bearing the name of the High Priest Elezar, it is believed he at least rebuilt the Altar of Burnt Offering and reinstituted the sacrificial system.

The rebuilding effort was short lived. Hadrian recaptured Jerusalem and issued an edict banishing all Jews from Jerusalem on pain of death. Hadrian also destroyed whatever Bar Kokhba had built on the Temple Mount. In the words of the Jewish Midrash: "Hadrian, may his bones be turned to dust, came and dashed the Temple stones" (*Deuteronomy Rabbah* 3:13). To make the destruction complete, Hadrian erected a temple to the Roman trinity of Juno, Jupiter, and Minerva, and also, according to the Christian scholar Jerome, who lived in Bethlehem in the 4th century, placed an equestrian statute of himself directly over the site of the Holy of Holies.

In AD 312, the Roman Emperor Constantine became a Christian and made Christianity the religion of the empire. However, when his Nephew Julian succeeded him as emperor this changed. Julian, who had been raised as a Christian, but had embraced the former Roman religion, decided to promote a return to paganism. He observed that Judaism was opposed to Christianity and offered sacrifices, as did pagans, and that a pivotal debate between Jews and Christians was over the matter of rebuilding the Temple. Christians claimed that its

destruction was permanent and evidence of the supersession of their religion whereas Jews believed it would be rebuilt again as a sign from God that His covenant with the Jewish People had not ended. Julian sought to gain Jewish support against Christianity by returning Jerusalem to its former status as a Jewish city and by rebuilding the Temple. Julian lifted the Hadrianic ban, allowing Jews to resettle the Holy City, while his construction engineer Alypius made plans to rebuild the Temple. Christians prayed in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre for the reconstruction to stop and on May 27, 363, the day the work was to commence, an explosion at the construction site killed the workmen and stopped the work. According to the historians of the period, an earthquake was responsible for igniting reservoirs of gasses trapped below ground or volatile materials that were being used in the building. Christians interpreted it as a sign of divine disfavor. Julian died shortly thereafter and the rebuilding project was abandoned, and for the next few centuries, the Temple Mount remained desolate. Throughout this time the Christian inhabitants of the Jerusalem turned the site into a garbage dump, piling tons of refuse particularly upon the spot where the ancient Temple had stood. The gate that entered this site on the western side was called the Dung Gate, a name it still bears today.

A final effort to re-establish the Temple came about near the end of the Byzantine period. In AD 614, the Persians (Sasanian Parthians) invaded Jerusalem and massacred much of its Christian population. Favorably disposed to the Jews who had sided with them against the Christians, they gave them control over Jerusalem and plans were made to rebuild the Temple. However, the Persians were unable to slight the Christian majority in the land, and Jerusalem was soon returned to Byzantine Christian control, a status secured for the rest of the country by the Emperor Heraclius in 629.

The Temple Mount in the Islamic Period

In 638, the Umayyad Caliph Omar led his army of Muslim nomadic warriors in the conquest of Jerusalem. According to Islamic tradition, the Byzantine Patriarch Sophronius negotiated the city's surrender. Then the Caliph requested the Patriarch to take to "the *mihrab* (place of prayer) of David," which was, according to the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes, "the temple of the Jews that Solomon had built." However, because the site lay in the midst of a garbage dump, the Patriarch at first tried to show him the Church of the Anastasis (Church of the Holy Sepulchre), but this was refused. Therefore, after they made a stinking ascent through tons of refuse, Sophronius finally pointed to a large heap of trash and declared it was the Temple site. This seemed to it to be an appropriate way of symbolizing its abominable status to its largely illiterate population.

Omar was said to have been appalled that such desecration had taken place on the site of a place revered by figures mentioned in the Qur'an. Thereupon, he immediately ordered the site to be cleared, performing an unprecedented act of removing a handful of the refuse himself. Beneath this pile of garbage lay the rock protrusion of Mt. Moriah, upon which he allegedly ordered the building of a "house of prayer."

However, no actual structure was erected at this site for over 60 years until his son Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan (685-705) finally built in 691, a wooden edifice known as the Dome of the Rock (Arabic, *Qubbat al-Sakhra*). Most scholars maintain that Abd al-Malik's motive was religious competition with the pre-existing Christian churches that adorned the city, which Constantine had erected to the glory of Christ. Abd al-Malik's father Omar had demonstrated his conquest of Christianity by praying inside the Christian basilica of Saint Mary, erected a century before by the Emperor Justinian, located at the southern end of the Temple Mount. This act obligated it to be turned into a mosque by his Muslim subjects. Abd al-Malik's son, the Caliph al-Walid I, therefore erected the Al-Aqsa Mosque on this site in 715. These acts by the Islamic Caliphs were attempts to counter the claims of Judaism and Christianity toward the Temple Mount. In addition, the Muslims banned Christian pilgrimages to Jerusalem and its holy sites. This offense to Christian piety resulted in Christian Europe calling for liberation of the Holy Land and led to the Crusades (1096-1270).

The Byzantine culture conquered by Omar was resplendent with highly decorated churches such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Nea Church. Islam, by contrast, had no competing structures. Such Byzantine buildings filling Jerusalem would provoke admiration and eventually jealousy, and could even turn Muslims toward Christianity. This required a response, for if the Caliph was to be successful in promoting the religious superiority of Islam, it would be necessary to rival the local Christian architecture. This explains the reason the design of the Dome of the Rock (double octagonal ambulatories encircling the Holy Rock) was basically Byzantine. Therefore, the Dome of the Rock is an architectural expression of the ascendancy of Islam. Moreover, to counter the influence of Christian theology in the city, over time the drum and dome inside the shrine were covered with ornate Qur'anic inscriptions affirming that God is One and not three, and that Jesus was an apostle of God and not His son. Although Jesus was seen as a prophet in Islam, the impressive adornments throughout the city's churches magnified Jesus' divinity, a belief forbidden as *shirk* (the highest form of apostasy) in Islam.

It is also recorded that when Omar first commanded the building of the shrine on the Temple Mount, a Jew named Ka'b al-Ahbar tried to get the Caliph to establish it north of the Rock, realizing that those who prayed (always in the direction of Mecca) would have to turn away from the shrine he planned to build. His proposal would allow worshippers to face Mecca and the shrine simultaneously (a direction of prayer Muhammad had once accepted to try to get the Jews of Mecca to accept Islam). Omar rejected proposal on the grounds that it would imitate Jewish religious practice. This is evidence that at this early period Muslims did not assign a sacred status to the Temple Mount.

Since that time, however, Islam has come to claim the Temple Mount, which they refer to as *al-Haram al-Sharif* ("Noble Sanctuary"), as one of their holiest sites. This is done on the basis of the Qur'anic teaching (Sura 17) that the Dome of the Rock was the site of Muhammad's Night Journey. In this account we find a reference to *al-masjid al-haram* ("the holy shrine") and a cryptic reference to *al-masjid al-aqsa* ("the distant shrine") to which Mohammed travelled on a celestial steed with the body of a horse, the winds of an eagle,

the tail of a peacock, and the head of a woman. There was no need to explain the reference to “the holy shrine” as every Muslim knew this to be the *Ka’aba*, the cubical stone building in Mecca that enshrines a sacred black meteorite from the time before Islam. At that time, the “distant shrine” (*al-aqsa*) had to have been the city of Medina, located 200 miles from Mecca, the only other place where a mosque was known. Since Mohammed died five years before his army entered Jerusalem, a mosque could not have previously existed there. Muhammad’s knowledge of, and interest in, Jerusalem appears to have been based on his desire to influence the Jewish community of Medina to accept his role as a prophet and adopt Islam. Through the early Islamic period, neither Jerusalem nor its Temple Mount, were ever regarded as a place of Islamic pilgrimage, a fact not surprising since Jerusalem is not mentioned by name once in the Qur’an. It was, in fact, literally a forbidden place to Muslims. If a Muslim had to go to Jerusalem for trade, it was called a '*zira*' (journey), not a *hajj* (pilgrimage), the mandatory religious trip every Muslim must make to Mecca.

However, it is thought that in the 12th century, the Kurdish warlord Saladin mounted a large propaganda campaign to claim that the Abd al-Malik’s mosque was the site where Mohammed had flown on his mythical Night Journey. The fact that a mosque was there, called Al-Aqsa, was used to make this claim certain and to justify the attack on the Christian Crusaders who then controlled Jerusalem. Saladin's goal was to provoke a *jihadic* fervor in the disparate Muslim tribes to get them to unify in the siege on the city. Even then, most Islamic scholars rejected Jerusalem as having a sacred significance for Islam as the noted Arab geographer Yakkut wrote in 1225: “Jerusalem was holy to Jews and Christians; Mecca was sacred to Muslims.” However, the Night Journey eventually did come to be associated with Jerusalem. For that reason, the mosque built on the southern side of the Temple Mount by al-Walid I is named the Al-Aqsa Mosque, and every site connected with the *al-Haram al-Sharif* became sacred Islamic property that had to be administered by an Islamic trust (*Waqf*). This includes the traditional Jewish site of prayer, the Western [retaining] Wall, which Muslims call *al-Buraq* wall after the tradition that Mohammed tethered his celestial steed *al-Buraq* at this spot. In like manner, at sometime graffiti quoting Sura 17 was added to the inside of the Dome to secure and promote this identification.

This identification took on a greater importance once Islam lost control of Jerusalem and its Islamic holy sites to the Israelis on June 7, 1967. This loss of sacred Muslim property was viewed as a crime against the Muslim world, which needed to be avenged through the prescribed means of *jihad*. Even though the State of Israel withdrew from the al-Haram al-Sharif and returned jurisdiction to the Islamic Waqf for the administration of the religious sites, this still remained under the sovereignty of the independent State of Israel. Therefore, there has been a demand for a return to full Islamic control, not only of the holy sites, but also of the city of Jerusalem, and only under an Islamic state where Shariah law can be enforced. This fact helps us understand the present conflict between the State of Israel and the Palestinian Authority, as well as the rest of the Islamic world, to wrest the Temple Mount from the Jewish State and to maintain it within an Islamic state that will be part of the greater Islamic Caliphate.

Islamic Denial of the Temple's Existence

As a result of the political situation since 1967 that brought the Islamic *Al-Haram al-Sharif* under the sovereignty of the State of Israel, land formerly held by Islam for 1300 years came under the domination of a non-Islamic entity. From an Islamic perspective, this is an intolerable situation, and the reaction to it birthed political organizations like the Palestine Liberation Organization (which became the Palestine National Authority). The propaganda that has accompanied the Palestinian *Intifada* ("uprising") begun in 1987, has included an official Islamic denial that a Jewish Temple existed and that Jerusalem was ever a Jewish city. Even though Jewish archaeological remains have been uncovered all around the Temple Mount and throughout the city, these are interpreted as "pre-Islamic" that "could be Roman or Christian." Conversely, they claim that Israeli interpretation of these remains as Jewish is to justify occupation of their holy sites and interpret all activity in or near their Haram by Israelis, even archaeologists and construction workers, as a deliberate attempt by the State of Israel to destroy the Muslim holy places and rebuild the Jewish Temple.

However, this denial of the historicity and location of the Jewish Temple is a recent event. In the English-edition of a guidebook written by the Islamic authorities in Jerusalem entitled *A Brief Guide to Al-Haram Al-Sharif Jerusalem* published in 1924 (but unchanged in all subsequent editions through the 1950's), the following declaration was made concerning the Haram: The site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest (perhaps pre-historic) times. Its identity with the site of Solomon's Temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to the universal belief, on which "David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings" (p. 4)

"...in the west wall of the chamber [beneath the south-east corner of the Haram], a door opens into a staircase descending to Solomon's Stables. This is a vast subterranean chamber ... It dates probably as far back as the construction of Solomon's Temple. According to Josephus, it was in existence and was used as a place of refuge by the Jews at the time of the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus in the year 70 A.D." (p. 16).

This document goes on to state that the late Graeco-Roman marble monoliths inside the Dome of the Rock were taken from Hadrian's Temple of Jupiter (p. 10), affirming that this Roman emperor who ended the Second Jewish Revolt and punished the Jewish people by renaming Jerusalem and plowing the Temple Mount with salt, had indeed erected a pagan temple (which history records was on the site of the Jewish Temple). Moreover, this official Muslim publication reveals that the Haram was clearly understood to have been the site of a Byzantine Christian Church venerating Jesus' infancy (at the Temple). It states: "the two rows of massive columns with capitals inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque were taken from Justinian's basilica" (p. 14) ... "(probably on the present site of al-Aqsa)," p. 1 ... "under the Haram is a chamber with a niche believed in early times to have been the *Cradle of Christ*" (p. 16).

This document provides the factual information to demonstrate that despite the present public denial of the historicity of the *Al-Haram al-Sharif* as the Jewish Temple Mount, Islam did not have this opinion for most of its existence.

The Temple Mount Today

Today visitors to the Temple Mount drive around the 16th century walls and gates of the Old City in order to enter the area of the Temple Mount on foot. Most visitors enter through one of the city gates known as the Dung Gate, its name coming from the Byzantine period when the garbage and refuse of the city was carried to the Temple Mount through this gate. There are eleven “open” gates that service the Temple Mount and six sealed gates, however, of the eleven open gates only one, the Mugrabi Gate, is open to non-Muslims for access to the Temple Mount. Most of the eleven “open” gates have historic significance only within Islam, however, two are built in relation to former ancient gates of the Second Temple period, while the sealed gates all have relevance to the ancient Jewish Temple Mount.

The “Open” Gates to the Temple Mount

- The Tribe’s Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Asbat*), located at the north-eastern corner of the Temple Mount.
- The Gate of Forgiveness (Arabic: *Bab al-Huttah*), located on the north side.
- The Dark Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Atim*), located on the north side.
- The Ghawanima Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Ghawanima*), located on the north-western corner.
- The Inspector’s Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Majlis*; *Bab al-Nazer*), also known as the Council Gate, located on the western side.
- The Iron Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Hadid*), located on the western side, near the “Little Western Wall,” a small extension within a residential area of the Western Wall.
- The Cotton Merchant's Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Qattanin*), the closest of the “open” gates on the Western Wall to the Temple site. During the 19th century it served as a place of prayer for Jews of Jerusalem. This gate is used at times for non-Muslim exit from the Temple Mount.
- The Ablution Gate, (Arabic: *Bab al-Matarah*), located on the Western Wall.
- The Tranquility Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Salam*), is located on the western side.
- The Gate of the Chain (Arabic: *Bab al-Silsileh*), located on the western flank. Some scholars have thought this gate to be at the location of the Second Temple period Coponius Gate.
- The Moors Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Magharbeh*), also known as the Mugrabi Gate or Moroccans' Gate, located on the western flank. This gate was built over part of the Second Temple period gate known as Barclay’s Gate. During the Islamic period, the external façade of Barclay's Gate was covered and the ground outside the Temple Mount was raised above the lintel of the gate. Around the time of Saladin (16th century), but perhaps earlier, the Mugrabi Gate was built in the Western Wall above the level of the ancient Barclay Gate. This the only entrance to the Temple Mount permitted to non-Muslims.

The Sealed gates

- The Golden Gate (Arabic: *Bab al-Zahabi*), located near the northern end of the eastern wall of the Temple Mount. It may have been built in the 6th century AD as part of Justinian I's building program in Jerusalem or by the first Muslims to repair the wall in the 7th century, the Umayyad Caliphs, but the present gate owes its form to the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman I who sealed it in 1541. However, within the interior of the gate, is a vaulted ceiling, arches and columns that date to the Byzantine period, and some Herodian remains have been identified as well as in pilasters on the outside of the inner section of the gate. Remains of section of an Herodian column was observed by Charles Warren in the mid-19th century, and an early double-arched structure was discovered in 1978 below ground, but it is uncertain whether it is the top of a gate or part of an arch supporting another structure. The outside face of the 16th century Golden Gate has a sealed double entrance that leads to the two vaulted halls. These two gates are known as the Gate of Mercy (Arabic: *Bab al-Rahma*), and the Gate of Repentance (Arabic: *Bab al-Taubah*).
- The Gate of the Funerals, located on the eastern wall just south of the Golden Gate. Some of the rabbis have claimed that it is built over the site of the ancient Eastern (Shushan Gate), since it is almost directly opposite the Dome of the Rock, which they consider the site of the Temple.
- The Bridge Gate, located toward the south end of the eastern wall. This gate formerly led to the Temple Mount by a flight of steps. The portal of the gate is visible from inside the Muslim *Haram*.
- The Horse Gate, located on the eastern wall to the south of the Bridge Gate. This once was the entrance into the underground areas of Solomon's stables (part of the passageway from the Triple Gate) from the east side.
- The Single Gate, located along the southern wall. It once led to the area of the Temple Mount known as Solomon's Stables from the south side.
- The Huldah Gates (Arabic: *Bab al-Thulathe*), also located in the southern wall, is comprised of two sets of bricked-up gates from the Islamic period. The set on the right is a triple-arched gate, known as the Triple Gate. The left set is a double-arched gate known as the Double Gate that can only partially be seen. It still has visible part of the Herodian lintel, but not in its original position. Both gates led into passageways that leading up onto the Mount. The Double Gate was used by the public, while the Triple Gate was used by the priests for access to the Temple Mount and for storage.
- The Royal Gate, located on the southwestern end of the Western Wall. Its name is reminiscent of the Royal Stoa that was at this location.
- Barclay's Gate is located in the Western Wall under the left side of the Mugrabi Gate. Part of the doorposts and lintel of the Herodian gate is visible from the within the women's prayer area. This gate received its name from James Barclay, the American Consul in Jerusalem in the mid-19th century who discovered it from within the Temple Mount. In the Islamic period, the gate was dedicated to Mohammed's celestial steed Al-Buraq and the gate was blocked with stones at the end of the 10th century. The interior gate room is used as a seminary for Islamic students. Some

scholars have identified this gate with the Coponius Gate from the Second Temple period.

- Warren's Gate, located about 120 feet (40 meters) north of Wilson's Arch and inside the lower preserved portion of the Western Wall (subterranean access today through the Western Wall tunnel). This gate was one of the four gates mentioned by Josephus that were entrances from the western retaining wall. It received its name from the 19th century British explorer Charles Warren whose team first discovered it, but its location was lost and only rediscovered in the early 1980's. The arch of the lintel of this gate is Islamic, but its gatepost as well as interior is all Herodian. This was the entrance nearest to the Court of the Priests and the Temple Court and therefore probably served the priests in bringing wood, sacrifices, and other materials to the Temple. This gate was opened shortly after its rediscovery by Jewish rabbis who were searching for the Ark of the Covenant, but its proximity to the underground area beneath the Dome of the Rock resulted in a Muslim riot and forced its closing by the Israeli government.

Locating the Site of the Temple

One theory put forth by Tel-Aviv architect Tuvia Sagiv, based on accounts in ancient sources and topographical elevations, argues that the Temple was situated at the southwestern corner of the platform near to where the Al Aqsa mosque is today with its Holy of Holies at the site of the Al-Kas Fountain. He also suggests from surveys of this southern area based on ground-penetrating radar probes and infrared thermographic scans, that traces of underground structures, indicate the presence of vaults, such as would be expected beneath the Temple. Moreover, if Hadrian's Roman temple to Jupiter once stood on the Temple Mount, it can be compared with the plans of a similar Roman temple at Baalbek, Lebanon. According to Sagiv, this comparison would locate the Temple in the southern end of the Temple Mount.

A second theory is that of Hebrew University physicist Asher Kaufmann. His research, relying upon details given in Mishnah tractate *Middot*, along with computations of angles of line-of-sight between the Mt. of Olives (where the red heifer was sacrificed) and the eastern court of the Temple, where the Great Altar stood, as well as physical clues discovered around the outside of the platform (now destroyed or hidden by the Muslims), concludes that the Temple was built on the northwestern corner of the platform about 330 feet from the Muslim Dome of the Rock. He believes that bedrock identifiable within a small cupola at this site, known in Arabic as the Dome of the Tablets, was the Foundation Stone within the Holy of Holies.

A third theory, that has the support of both Orthodox Jews and Israeli archaeologists, is that the Temple stood exactly where the Dome of the Rock is today. Early research by Benjamin Mazar, the Israeli archaeologist who directed the excavations at the western and southern walls of the Temple Mount, and particularly Leen Ritmeyer, who served as chief architect for the excavations, concluded that the original 500 cubit-square Temple Mount from the biblical period could be located from clues in the eastern wall of the Temple Mount that

reveal pre-Herodian and Herodian additions, and still extant remains on the Temple Mount. It was also possible to deduce the site of the Temple from a study of the arrangement of the Temple's courts, which according to Ritmeyer could only be in the central part of the platform. Ritmeyer also did an extensive study of the Rock within the Muslim Dome of the Rock, and believes it is possible to identify some of the foundation trenches of the walls of the Holy of Holies, and even the place where the Ark of the Covenant once rested. He has also gathered evidence for the location of the House of Oil within the Women's Court of the First Temple from the presence of a wall exposed in Muslim construction trench near the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount.

Each of these theories places the Temple either in the south, north, or central portion of the Temple Mount platform, but the exact location will only be finally proved once archaeological excavation can take place on the Temple Mount. Since this would precede the actual rebuilding of the Temple and would take only a short time to give confirmation, it has been necessary to ready the plans for rebuilding through preparatory work that can be done without access to the Temple Mount.

Jewish Plans to Rebuild the Temple

Ever since the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in AD 70, Orthodox Jews have prayed three times daily the words: "May it be Thy will that the Temple be speedily rebuilt in our own time." With the return of the Temple Mount to Jewish control in 1967 many Jews believed it was a providential sign that this time was near and plans were laid by some rabbis to locate the site of the ancient Temple, design plans for a new Temple, make the vessels necessary for the renewal of the sacrificial system, and train those from the priestly tribe to function in a restored priesthood.

However, Orthodox Jews, the only Jewish religious group that desires to see the Temple rebuilt, differ as to when and how the Third Temple should be rebuilt. One school of thought believes that the Temple cannot be rebuilt in a secular state, but will descend in fire from heaven completely built after a religious government is established with the coming of the Messiah and the Age of Redemption. Those who follow this belief forbid entrance to the Temple Mount on the grounds that someone might tread upon the place of the Holy of Holies, a place, which has retained its sanctity despite the loss of the Temple. The second school of thought holds that the Torah (Exodus 25:8) obligates the Jewish people to rebuild the Temple whenever it becomes possible to do so. Therefore, since 1967 when access was gained to the Temple site, the Jewish State has sinned in not obeying this divine command. They argue that no Temple was ever built without human preparation (1 Kings 5-6; Ezra 3:7-11), and that this effort had divine approval (1 Chronicles 22:14; 23:4). Based on rabbinic authority, they contend that even though Heaven must send the Prophet and the Messiah as a sign of redemption, this will not be done until there is first national repentance and a desire to begin the task of rebuilding (see *Yalkut Shimoni Samuel* 106). Consequently, they interpret Israel's national problems as a result of its failure to rebuild the Temple. When the Palestinian *Intafada* began in 1987, various Jewish groups who held this ideology believed that the political demands for Jerusalem as the capital of a

Palestinian State threatened a Jewish future on the Temple Mount and so began to work in different ways to prepare for the rebuilding of the Temple in this generation. Thus was born the Temple Movement, a divergent group of Orthodox Jewish rabbis, researchers, craftsmen, and political activists who strive separately, but sometimes together with a united goal.

In order to build the Temple it is believed the exact location of the former two Temples must be correctly identified. One reason for this is because it is argued that the site for the Temple was divinely appointed (Genesis 22:2; Exodus 15:17; 2 Samuel 24:18; 1 Chronicles 21:18). Another is because there also appears to be a continuity between Temples—each being built with its Holy of Holies enclosing the same protrusion of Mt. Moriah known as *Even ha-Shetiyah* ("The Foundation Stone"). Since it was upon this stone that the Ark of the Covenant had been set and the *Shekinah* (Divine Presence) had descended (1 Kings 8), departed (Ezekiel 8:4; 11:23), and promised to return (Ezekiel 43:1-7), there is no other legitimate place for the rebuilding of the Temple. The problem has been in locating this place. On a positive note, the Temple Mount platform, built to support the Temple and its courts, has been preserved down through the centuries, while other parts of the ancient city have been buried under many layers of buildings and houses. On the negative side is the political reality that the Islamic authorities forbid any access to the site for archaeological investigation and confirmation. Nevertheless, based on the survey reports from 19th century British explorers, Israeli excavations below the Temple Mount since 1967, occasional penetrations on the Temple Mount by the Islamic authorities for repairs, and the recovery of archaeological debris from the Islamic construction of a mosque in the area of Solomon's Stables, enough evidence has been obtained to formulate three major theories of the location of the Temple on the present 35 acre Temple Mount.

Since 1987, a group of rabbinical researchers, designers, and craftsmen under the direction of Rabbi Yisrael Ariel founded the Temple Institute in the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem. Creating what they call a "Temple-in-waiting," their efforts have produced detailed blueprints for the Third Temple and ritually qualified vessels, garments, and other items necessary for a restoration of the Temple services. Among these items is the apparel for the High Priest: his eight-layered woven robe, the golden crown worn on his head, and his jeweled breastplate bearing the names of the tribes of Israel. Other items include the blue-purple dye (*tchelet*) for the *tsitsit* of the priests robes, the eleven sacrificial incense spices, urns, ewers, incense pans, forks, shovels, and carts (for burnt offerings). In addition, the gold and silver *mizrak* (vessels used to dispense sacrificial blood on the altar), the golden lavar, flasks, and measuring cups (used in the libation offerings). They also created plans for the vessels for the meal offerings, the lottery boxes (for the Day of Atonement), the mortar and pestle, and the stone vessel (*kelal*) for grinding and holding the purifying ashes of the red heifer. They also have plans for the golden menorah (lampstand) and cleaning instruments and oil pitchers for replenishing the oil for its light, the Table of Showbread, the Altar of Incense, the silver trumpets (for assembling Israel at the Temple), and the barley altar. These utensils and furniture for the Temple have been prepared with the intent of utilizing them in the rebuilt Temple in the near future.

According to rabbinic tradition, even though the genealogical records of the Temple were lost, and Jews were scattered throughout Gentile lands, those of the tribe of Levi were forbidden to alter their names (which connoted their priestly heritage) when assimilated into foreign cultures. Thus, we continue to this day to have Levis and Cohens, and derivatives of these names. Recently, a more scientific test to verify those of priestly lineage has appeared. In studies of those male Jews claiming descent from Aaron it was found that they as a group they uniquely carried an aberration of the Y-chromosome. Since each person's DNA is as individual as a fingerprint, this characteristic linked these men together as a separate and identifiable group that must be traced back to an original ancestor.

Based on this method of identification, a computerized list of all known candidates in Israel and in other countries has been compiled, a High Priest has been selected, and a school has been established to train young priests for the Temple service. The yeshiva known as Ateret Cohanim is one such school, although the Temple Institute maintains a preschool to prepare younger students for various aspects of service in the Temple.

Though not recognized by all Orthodox Jews, seventy-one rabbis have also reconvened the Sanhedrin in Tiberias (the town where it last met). The Sanhedrin set as its goals to locate the Temple site, locate a descent of the Davidic dynasty (which it has done), reestablish the Jewish monarchy, and build an altar on the Temple Mount. The legal stipulations that will govern Israel's relationship to the rebuilt Temple and its services will also be under the charge of the Sanhedrin.

According to the rabbis of the Temple Movement, in order for a Temple to be rebuilt today, those who would enter the area of sanctity and perform the holy task must first be ritually pure. Since all Jews have become ceremonially unclean in the Diaspora, the only means to accomplish a reversal of this condition through the ashes of the Red Heifer (described in Numbers 19). Numerous attempts have been made, inside and outside Israel, to raise a qualified Red Heifer. Once this is accomplished it must be three years old before the ceremony of the Red Heifer can be conducted on the Mt. of Olives and the heifer burned and its ashes harvested for ritual purification.

The Political Struggle for the Temple Mount

The issue of rebuilding the Temple has been at the forefront of the Middle East conflict. Many violent riots have taken place on and around the Temple Mount and spread throughout the country. The international community, and particularly the United Nations, has repeatedly condemned Israel for such incidents, even if it did not provoke them.

For example, riots occurred following an excavation to uncover the subterranean Western Wall tunnel in 1982, a demonstration by the activist organization the Temple Mount Faithful in 1990 (in which 17 were killed), excavations to reveal the Herodian street next to the Western Wall in 1995, the opening of an exit tunnel to the Hasmonean tunnel in 1996 (in which 58 were killed), and an inspection of the Muslim construction of a mosque at the site of Solomon's Stables by Ariel Sharon in September 2000 (which resulted in the closing of the Temple Mount to non-Muslims for three years).

Despite repeated attempts by Israelis and Palestinians to negotiate terms for the site, all efforts have failed and intransigent demands have further polarized both parties. The Temple Mount remains the most volatile acreage on earth with the potential to ignite a regional war in the future.

The Future Temple

The biblical prophets spoke of a Temple and priesthood that would exist in the future. The Jewish sect that bequeathed to us the Dead Sea Scrolls included among this collection a document that was dedicated to providing a blueprint for a future Temple, based in part on their interpretation of the Temple presented by the prophets. Scholars have differed as to whether this future Temple of the prophets was realized in rebuilding of the Second Temple, would be fulfilled in the end time, or was merely symbolic. The New Testament Book of Revelation also refers to a Temple that the Apostle John saw in heaven as well as a New Jerusalem that descends from heaven to earth.

Let us consider the idea of the future Temple beginning with our most ancient interpretation of this concept in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Temple of the *Temple Scroll*

The Jewish sect that formed the Qumran Community and left to us the Dead Sea Scrolls was particularly distressed over what they considered corrupted sacrifices given by illegitimate priests (non-Zadokite) in a Temple whose laws were not being properly followed (4Q174 1-2 i 5-6). This is what had brought about the destruction of the First Temple, and what they feared had doomed the Second Temple that existed in their time. This sect had separated from the Second Temple to live in a desert retreat in order to maintain a proper ritual purity and to prepare for the coming of the Messiah and the end of days when the present Temple would be thoroughly cleansed or totally replaced.

The sect still believed, however, that only on the Temple Mount could legitimate sacrifices be performed (Deut. 12:5-6, 10-14, 17-18, 21-27; cf. 2 Sam. 7:10-13; 1 Kgs. 8:16-21; 1 Chron. 22:6-10) since the Law did not regard the improper actions of the priests as an excuse to avoid fulfilling Jewish obligations toward the Temple (cf. Psa. 50:7-15; Jer. 7:21-23; Ezek. 8:5-17; 22:26; Hos. 4:8-9; Micah 3:11; Mal. 6:6-8; Mal. 3:8-15). Even though their strict views on purity made unable to cooperate with the Temple priesthood and to keep the purification laws in their own place and manner (*Purification Rituals* 29-32, 7:6-9; cf. 1QS 2:26-3:12), they still continued to accept the proper function of the Temple and to fulfill its requirements (such as sacrifices and the Temple tax). This finds support from one of their more important writings, the *Halakhic Letter* (4Q394-399) that affirms Jerusalem (based on the choice of a central Sanctuary in Deuteronomy 12) as the chosen place where God's Name dwells (4Q394 34-35, 67-70). In addition, some scholars who identify the Dead Sea sect with the Essenes, find support from Josephus' statement that they regularly sent offerings to the Temple (*Antiquities* 18.1:5§19). Still, while the sect was forced to accept

this situation, it looked forward to and planned for a better day when the divine ideal for the Temple could be realized and proper sacrifices would be offered (11Q19 29:10).

The New Jerusalem (4Q554; 55Q15), a text written under the influence of the eschatological Temple of Ezekiel 40-48, includes architectural measurements for a new Temple as large as the entire city of Jerusalem. However, the Sect's quest for the ideal Temple is most fully expressed in the *Temple Scroll* (11Q19), one of the foundational documents in the sect's collection. Most scholars have dated it to the second half of the second century BC (103-88 BC), a time when the Dead Sea sect was already firmly established at Qumran. Bedouins discovered the scroll in Cave 11 to the north of the Qumran Community, but sold it to Khalil Eskander Shahin Kando, a Bethlehem merchant. This complete scroll only surfaced in Kando's house during the Six Day War in June 1967, although, fragments were known from Cave 4, scroll repository found in the 1950's. The *Temple Scroll* is made up of nineteen sheets, each containing 3-4 columns of text for an approximate length of 28.5 feet, the longest of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Its contents include architectural plans for building the Temple as well as detailed descriptions of the Temple services and festivals, many not mentioned in the Bible or elsewhere.

The *Temple Scroll* presents itself as a rewritten Torah, which begins with the renewal of the Sinaitic covenant in Exodus 34 and then the instructions for the building of the Tabernacle in Exodus 35. Exodus 34 fit the Sect's idea of itself as the Community of the Renewed Covenant and their desert setting paralleled that of the Sinai. Exodus 35 provided the divine command to build the Sanctuary (vs. 1), although the command of Exodus 25:8 "to build Me a Sanctuary" may have originally stood at the top of column 3 (now missing), since the *Temple Scroll's* use of Deut. 12:10-11 continues this theme. Exodus 35 also presented the Tabernacle with its desert tribal arrangement, which provided the structural pattern for the Temple of the *Temple Scroll*. With this identification established, the text then follows the order of the biblical Torah in its presentation of the Temple structure, services, and national government. In fact, the Temple Scroll may have been deemed so important to the Judaism of this pre-Herodian period that it has been suggested that the Temple Scroll served as one source for the design-style for the Herodian restoration of the Second Temple.

The Dead Sea sect apparently followed the solar calendrical system given in the Temple Scroll as well as its ritual concerns and critique of the Jerusalem priesthood. Also, the Sect's expectation of a single eschatological Temple corresponds to the plans laid out in the Temple Scroll (11Q19 29:3-10). The architectural plans for the Temple in the Temple Scroll do not match any Temple ever built, whether the First Temple, the post-exilic Second Temple of Zerubbabel or its Herodian enlargement, and not even the eschatological pattern of Ezekiel 40-48. Put diagram of Temple Scroll Temple here. The Temple Mount of the Temple Scroll is a square-shaped edifice surrounded by three concentric square courtyards, the outer court measuring a half-mile on a side. The innermost courtyard encircles the altar and the Sanctuary is to be restricted to only qualified priests (11Q19 35:5-9), while the middle courtyard is only accessible to Israelite males over twenty years of age (11Q19 39:7-10), and the outer court to all ceremonially clean Israelites (11Q19 40:5-6). Jerusalem is to be transformed into a Temple City: "the city of the Sanctuary,"

whose dimensions will encompass most of what was then the holy city.

The square shape of the Temple Mount reflects an adherence to the square Temple Mount of the Second Temple of the Hasmonean period, although it was conceived also in the late First Temple period, as the design in Ezekiel is from this time (Ezekiel 40:47). Josephus cited a prophecy that warned that when the Temple was made square it would be destroyed (*Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3§311), and he recorded that false prophets on the eve of the Temple's destruction had attempted to do just this (*Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3§285-315). However, he also records that these events made many Jews believe they were in the messianic age and that the prophesied universal Jewish rule was on its way (*Wars of the Jews* 6.5.3§312). This seems to reflect the same views shared by the Dead Sea sect that with foreign invasion ("the sons of darkness") and the destruction of the existing Temple that God's army ("the sons of light") would arise and be led by the Messiah to overthrow these forces and rebuild the Temple. The motivation to "square" the Herodian Temple Mount may have come from the hope that the square Temple Mount of the Temple Scroll would come as a result. However, such false assurance only hastened the destruction and prevented people from leaving the Temple area in order to preserve their lives. This historical note by Josephus may reveal that the Temple Scroll's influence in Judaism may have been wider than the Dead Sea sect, since he says it was in "the Jewish records" (without distinction to those of any sect).

As mentioned previously, the Temple Scroll contained many new laws and regulations not recorded in the Bible or in any other Jewish source. For example, the Festival calendar includes several new festivals not a part of any biblical or later Jewish tradition (e.g., a second New Year, two extra first-fruits festivals, and the wood offering as an annual festival). Also, extensive laws seek to protect the Sanctuary from incurring ritual defilement with restrictions for large areas inside the courtyards and a requirement that the Israelite tribes live outside the Temple City. Another surprising element of the Holy of Holies in the Temple of the Temple Scroll is that it will contain the Ark of the Covenant as well the huge overshadowing Solomonic cherubim, just as in the First Temple (11Q19 7:10-12). Extra-biblical Jewish literature (2 Macc. 2:4-5; 2 Apoc. Bar. 6:7-10) also stated that the Ark had been absent from the Second Temple, but would be restored to the future Temple.

The Temple of Ezekiel

Scholars are divided in their understanding of how to interpret the detailed description of the Temple given in Ezekiel 40-48. It is clear that the exilic prophet Ezekiel presents divine instructions for the construction of a Temple, but which Temple, and what kind of Temple ever built had such dimensions? In seeking to explain the purpose and design of this Temple, scholars have been argued that it must be understood either in a figurative or symbolic manner or a literal manner.

Those who adopt the symbolic interpretation, note that the Temple in these chapters was never built upon the return from the exile and therefore was not intended to be built. This interpretation finds support from the fact that the Temple, and Temple service seen by the

prophet was visionary and so, it is argued, employed apocalyptic language that uses the literary device of hyperbole (exaggerated speech) to convey idealistic, rather than literal, concepts. This, they say, explains the reason why the builders of the Second Temple did not follow Ezekiel's plan for the Temple upon their return to Jerusalem, because this Jewish audience understood it was only to be interpreted symbolically. One problem with this view is deciding what this symbolism was intended to portray, since the text does not offer any guidance. Some interpreters believe it was meant to preserve the memory of the First Temple through an idealistic remembrance, while others believe its apocalyptic language was meant to offer hope and encourage the rebuilding of the Second Temple. Still others see it as illustrating a spiritual ideal such as God's dwelling in holiness in the midst of His people, or a spiritual reality (either the Church, heaven, the New Jerusalem, or the eternal state).

The Symbolic Interpretation

Some who hold the symbolic view, say that these chapters could have been an idealistic remembrance of the First Temple since those who were too young at the time of the Captivity, or who were born in the Exile, did not remember the First Temple and needed to share a common historical memory of the community that returned to Jerusalem. Ezekiel, then, would have shared his priestly memories in order to preserve the historical heritage of the Temple and its services for a new generation and to comfort them with the message that God was with them as He had been in the past. This interpretation, however, raises a number of textual and historical objections.

First, Ezekiel states that this vision was communicated during the years of Captivity, not after the Return of the exiles (Ezekiel 40:1-2). If it was given in the Exile, and was meant to unite the Israelites in a common memory of times past and assure them of God's continued presence, it apparently failed in its purpose since the Israelites were greatly divided in their reaction to the construction of the Second Temple (Ezra 3:10-13). Second, there was no need for Ezekiel to give a description of the First Temple since such a description already existed in the books of Kings and Chronicles (1 Kings 5:1-8:66; 2 Chronicles 2:1-7:22). Third, a comparison of the historical details given in Kings and Chronicles of the description of the First Temple and its services differs radically with that given by Ezekiel. Moreover, the First Temple had been constructed in strict accordance with the Mosaic legislation (2 Kings 6:12; 8:56-58; 2 Chronicles 2:4; 6:16; 8:12-13), as had the Second Temple (Ezra 3:2-4; Nehemiah 8:1-18; 10:28-39), yet elements in Ezekiel's construction (such as steps leading to the Altar in Ezekiel 43:13-17) were in violation of the Mosaic Law (Exodus 20:26). How could such contradictions preserve the historical heritage of the Temple?

Likewise, those who contend that Ezekiel's "visionary Temple" was a symbol to encourage hope for, and motivate the priests and people to rebuild a post-exilic (Second) Temple, must explain why this language, which was so explicit in detailed plan for rebuilding the Temple, was not employed by the post-exilic High Priest Zerubbabel. Furthermore, why, if it was to motivate the rebuilding, did it take another 15 years after laying the foundation of

the Temple to complete it? In fact, it required the further motivation of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to get it done, as then the leadership of Nehemiah in order to finish the needed repairs to the ruined walls around the Temple Mount and city. If Ezekiel's plan formed the basis, even symbolically, for the Second Temple, there should have been some reference to this in the post-exilic prophets who oversaw its construction. Moreover, it is quite inexplicable that these prophets, critical of the post-exilic delay in rebuilding the Temple, would not have included in their exhortations an appeal based on Ezekiel's revelation of God's prior command to rebuild. It might also be observed that this language cannot be conceived of as "apocalyptic," since apocalypticism, as understood historically, did not occur until the second-century BC and Ezekiel is writing in the sixth-century BC. If it is apocalyptic language, then it cannot have existed at the time of the exile and served as a symbol of hope for those in the exile or even post-exilic period. Therefore, it is preferable to understand it as biblical prophecy of the same kind as that of the prophet Jeremiah who was a contemporary of Ezekiel.

While these views attempt to interpret Ezekiel's prophecy as finding some form of fulfillment with the Second Temple, it has to contend with the overwhelming differences in topography, dimensions, details, and priestly performance with that of the Second Temple. In addition, the Land of Israel was not divided among the tribes as Ezekiel's prophecy required, nor did the Temple experience a return of the *Shekinah* Glory as the sign of restoration (Ezekiel 43:1-7; 44:1-4; 48:35). There is no means to consistently handle such details symbolically in the absence of an internal interpretive guide, unless one is willing to admit that the vision failed or that its meaning is incomprehensible.

The second school of symbolic interpretation views Ezekiel's prophecy as symbolic of either a spiritual ideal or a spiritual reality. As with the previous symbolic views, no consensus exists among proponents as to what these symbols signify. Therefore, Ezekiel's vision has been said to represent variously the returned Israelite Nation, Christ and the believing community, Jesus, the Church, the New Jerusalem, heaven, and the new heavens and the new earth. The view that Ezekiel's Temple symbolizes a spiritual temple, either the Church on earth, or the redeemed saints (Church) in heaven, is based on New Testament verses that speak of the Church or Christians as a spiritual temple (1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Ephesians 2:21-22). The Temple as figurative of the righteous in heaven or the eternal state is based on perceived textual "parallels" between Ezekiel 40-48 and Revelation 21-22. Since both accounts are visionary and deal with Jerusalem, the method of reading the Old Testament in light of the New Testament (with a Christological focus), makes it possible to see the New Jerusalem of the Book of Revelation in Ezekiel's prophecy.

There are also objections to this view. While a number of significant parallels between Ezekiel and Revelation exist, these would be expected if they share an eschatological perspective of the Temple and its services (regardless if one is on earth and the other in heaven). In like manner, the Book of Genesis and Revelation share parallels between the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem because both are viewed in terms of the divine ideal (again with one on earth and the other in heaven). Even so, a comparison of Ezekiel with Revelation from a symbolic perspective has more differences than similarities.

Ezekiel's description of the Temple is quite ordinary, with the Temple and its implements built of carved wood and common stones (Ezekiel 40:16, 22, 26, 34, 37, 42; 41:16-22, 25-26), its priests sweat (Ezekiel 44:18), need to trim their hair (Ezekiel 44:20), eat grain and meat (Ezekiel 44:29, 31), marry (Ezekiel 44:22), and need to be cleansed after contact with the dead (Ezekiel 44:25-27). By contrast, John's description in Revelation of the New Jerusalem is of a celestial city constructed of gold, pearls, and rare gemstones (Revelation 21:16-21), whose priests never sleep, hunger or thirst (Revelation 7:14-16). Another significant difference is Ezekiel's declaration that in his new Temple there will be the reinstitution of the sacrificial system offering "peace offerings," "guilt offerings," "sin offerings" (Ezekiel 44:27) and "burnt offerings" of "fat and blood" (Ezekiel 44:15) "for atonement" (Ezekiel 43:19-20), with the priests and people alike keeping God's appointed feasts and Sabbaths" (Ezekiel 44:24). While in the heavenly Temple Christ is said to have sprinkled its vessels with His blood (Hebrews 9:11, 21-26), there is no statement that the redeemed saints will offer sacrifices or celebrate the ceremonial feasts in the New Jerusalem. Given these contrasts, it is difficult to see how one would be symbolic of the other.

This symbolic interpretation also has difficulty explaining the spiritual sense of the detailed architectural and geographical measurements, and the intricate instructions concerning priestly dress and the preparation of the sacrifices and offerings. The interpreter reading this text in light of the understanding of the original exilic community must ask if the language makes more sense as a cryptic symbol or as an actual architectural design? As has been mentioned, Ezekiel 40-48 offers no textual clues that it is to be interpreted symbolically, and those who adopting the symbolic view, reveal by the diversity of interpretations that no shared interpretation is possible. However, when we examine these last chapters in Ezekiel for symbolic language we discover that they are lacking the kind of features that typically indicate figurative use. This contrasts greatly with Ezekiel's prolific use of symbols in the early chapters of his book, a use that represents one of the greatest uses of symbols among the Prophets. Yet, even in this context, Ezekiel's symbolic acts and parables had an immediate, literal meaning for the exilic community, for the people said the prophet, 'Will you not tell us what these things that you are doing mean for us?' (Ezekiel 24:19). While Ezekiel could have continued his use of symbolic imagery in chapters 40-48, the absence of such language would indicate that this section be understood other than symbolic. It would seem that for the exiles, there would be far greater comfort in actual plans to rebuild the Temple (which demonstrated the tangible reality of restoration) than an intangible symbol that was not self-interpreting and therefore subject to various applications (as seen in the variety of interpretations in the symbolic school).

The Literal Interpretation

The returning exiles were quite familiar with Ezekiel's priestly language from the descriptions of the Sanctuary and its service in the books of Exodus and Leviticus (as demonstrated by Jeremiah and Ezra's recording of the Temple's construction in the books of Kings and Chronicles). They would have expected to see these instructions literally fulfilled in the promised divine restoration in continuity with God's previously revealed commands to rebuild.

A number of arguments can be given in support the literal and eschatological interpretation of Ezekiel's Temple:

(1) *The literary unity of the book requires Ezekiel 40-48 have a literal interpretation.*

Chapters 40-48 can be seen as forming a cohesive literary conclusion to the book. Although these chapters constitute a new vision in the prophecy, they are connected with chapters 1-39 in reiterating earlier themes in a more detailed fashion. This linkage may be seen in the fact that the beginnings of chapters 1 and 40 share a number of similar features. For instance, Ezekiel's vision of the presence of God in Babylon (Ezekiel 1:1; compare 8:1) finds its complement and culmination in the vision in the Land of Israel (Ezekiel 40:2). Likewise, the problem created by the exit of God's Presence in chapters 8-11 finds its resolution with its return in this section (see Ezekiel 43:1-7). The concern for the Presence of God could very well be reasoned as the uniting theme of the entire text of Ezekiel. Without chapters 40-48 there is no answer to the outcome of Israel, no resolution to their history of sacred scandal, and no proper conclusion to Israel's divine drama that started at Sinai.

In like manner, since the first section of Ezekiel's book focused on the destruction of the literal First Temple, the last section's discussion of the restoration of the Temple would expect a literal structure of the same kind. In view of the exilic desire for restoration from a literal exile and for a rebuilding of a literal Temple (Daniel 9:20; 2 Chronicles 36:22-23; Ezra 1:2-11; Haggai 1:2-2:9; Zechariah 1:16; 6:12-15; 8:3), would anything less than a literal restoration to the Land or a literal rebuilding of the ruined Temple have comforted the exilic community? Symbols of another reality cannot satisfy such desire when the demand for fulfillment is to the same place and the same conditions as in the past. Ezekiel 37:25-28, which serves as an introduction and summary of chapters 40-48, reveals that the future restoration of the exilic community will be in the same place (Land of Israel) and in the same form (a Temple) as the past.

(2) *The historical context demanding restoration requires a literal interpretation.* Ezekiel's contemporary, the exilic prophet Daniel, represented the concern of the exilic community for a literal rebuilding of both the city of Jerusalem and its Temple in his prayer for restoration (Daniel 9:3-19). Ezekiel's prophecy of the Temple, delivered to these same exiles, would have been understood in this same historical context. The fact that the prophecy is based on a vision is likewise not a problem. The first part of Ezekiel's book, which deals with the sin of the priesthood and the destruction of the Temple (known historical events) was likewise seen in a vision (Ezekiel 1:1; 8:3). It is instructive to note that both Moses (Exodus 25:8-40) and King David (1 Chronicles 28:11-19) were shown a visionary plan for the Sanctuary and then went on to construct the literal Tabernacle and Temple based on what they had seen. The descriptions of the structures and vessels in these accounts are identical to that in Ezekiel, and there is no reason to believe he was not shown the same divine archetype as were they.

While one might object that the returning Jews could never have hoped to rebuild according to Ezekiel's extraordinary design, there is no suggestion that this Temple was meant for the immediate return, which occurred during the time of Gentile dominion and was inferior in every respect, but was reserved for the eschatological age (as the preceding

context of chapters 33-39 argues). For this reason, Jewish interpreters such as Rashi concluded that the post-exilic community did not experience the predicted restoration and that the Second Temple was not built according to Ezekiel's plan because "sin prevented this, for their repentance was imperfect. Since they were not worthy, they did not have permission to build the Temple, which was designated as the Temple for the eternal redemption, for when it will be built according to this design, the [divine] glory will rest upon it forever." Rashi's judgment of the post-exilic age was based on the fact that the larger proportion of the Jewish population had chosen to remain in Persia and Egypt (only 49,897 of the Jewish remnant had returned to Judah, Ezra 2:64-65), the low level of spiritual life and commitment to rebuild the Temple and the walls of Jerusalem evident among the resident Jewish population in the Land (Ezra 3:6; 5:16; 9:1-4; Haggai 1:2-6; Nehemiah 1:3-7), and the opposition in the Land and from foreign authorities that postponed rebuilding and restoration of the city and Temple and the inferior state of the completed work (Haggai 1:9; 2:3; Ezra 3:12-13; 4:1-24; Nehemiah 4:7-12). These realities confirmed that the immediate post-exilic return and rebuilding was not to be the fulfillment of the final restoration and rebuilding prophesied by Ezekiel. It would await the coming of the Messiah (Ezekiel 34:11-31) and Israel's national spiritual regeneration in keeping with the provisions of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:27-34, 38-40; 33:6-21), as Ezekiel also prophesied (Ezekiel 36:24-28; 37:1-14). However, even though the post-exilic community would not experience the promised restoration, they could take real comfort in knowing that the God was with them and would fulfill this promise for their Nation at the end of the age. The same hope of Christ's literal coming at the end of the age has encouraged the saints down through history despite the failure to experience it in their own generation.

(3) *The detailed description of the Temple demands a literal interpretation.* A comparison of the architectural details for the construction of the Temple, buildings, and the sacrificial system in Ezekiel with those recorded for the construction of the Tabernacle and First Temple and its priestly service in the historical books of Kings and Chronicles, argues for the same method of literal interpretation. Would the house of Israel be expected to interpret such instructions in a manner other than that which was historically consistent with God's previous revelation, especially in the absence of any textual guidelines for an alternate (symbolic) interpretation? The impression the reader has when reading Ezekiel's detailed measurements of courts, pillars, galleries, rooms, chambers, doors, their ornamentation, and the precise instructions concerning the priestly service and the sacred vessels, is that a literal Temple and Temple service is intended. That this is the intention of the divine Author as well as the human author, is stated in Ezekiel 43:10-11: "As for you, son of man [Ezekiel], describe the Temple to the house of Israel ... and let them measure the plan ... *and do them.*" This command is parallel in expression to God's original command to the house of Israel to build a Sanctuary in Exodus 25:8-9. If God's intention for Israel at the beginning of its national history was understood as the building of a literal structure (the Tabernacle) and establishing the priestly service, why would they not interpret its restatement in Ezekiel also as literal? Later in this context (43:13-27) when the same kind of architectural measurements given for the Temple are given for the altar, it is stated "these are the statutes for the altar on the day it is *built* ..." (verse 18). Literary consistency (as well as logic) demands that if the altar of the Temple is to be built, then so must the

Temple itself. These verses, then, provide architectural blueprints for those Jews who will live in the time of the final restoration (when the prophecy will be fulfilled) to enable them to literally build this Temple.

If Ezekiel 40-48 was intended to have a literal interpretation, and the Temple plans intended to function as construction blueprints, then it should be possible to build an actual model based on these plans. Conversely, if these plans are merely symbolic and were never expected to render an actual construction, then no such building should be possible. As the photos on these pages demonstrate, a three-dimensional scale model of Ezekiel's Temple has been built based on these plans.

(4) *The nature of Ezekiel's Temple demands a literal eschatological fulfillment.* Ezekiel's Temple could not have been constructed at a period when the Mosaic Law was in effect. This is true because the instructions concerning the Temple, its priesthood, and its services contradict the Mosaic Law in numerous instances. For example, Leviticus 21:7 forbids the high priest to take a widow or divorcee as a wife, but Ezekiel 44:22 extends this restriction to *all* priests. In addition to the physical differences in Ezekiel's Temple a number of changes are made in the annual cycle of Jewish feasts. The design of Ezekiel's Temple differs from that of the First and Second Temples, but also is in conflict with the Mosaic Law in several places. Such differences include substantial divergences in structure (immensely larger dimensions), style, and ceremony, a river that flows eastward out of the Temple to refresh the arid areas of the Arabah and the Dead Sea (Ezekiel 47:1-12), and instructions for the Temple and its service: Ezekiel's instruction to make the Altar of Burnt Offering with steps (Ezekiel 43:17) violates a specific commandment in the Mosaic ceremonial legislation against such a method (Exodus 20:26). Additional variation from the Mosaic Law mentioned by commentators include no mention of the table for the showbread, or lampstand in the outer Holy Place, no anointing oil within the Temple or its court, the absence of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, and the absence of the high priesthood. If the First Temple of Ezekiel's day had been destroyed because of violations of the Mosaic Law, a fact announced by Ezekiel, how could it be imagined that this same prophecy could command actions that required further violations? Trained in the priesthood all his life, certainly Ezekiel would have understood these violations.

Ezekiel does, in fact, appear to understand that the design revealed to him was for a different time when he recorded that all was to be built according to "the law of the house" (Ezekiel 43:12). This "law of the house" is apparently an independent or new law, and as such belongs to the future legislation predicted by both Ezekiel and Jeremiah known as the New Covenant. The solution to Ezekiel's departures from the Old Covenant was that his design was not intended for construction under it, but under the New Covenant. This, however, is the eschatological age, when the New Covenant will be effected for all Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34; Romans 11:25-27).

The Design of Ezekiel's Temple

Ezekiel received 318 precise measurements for rebuilding the Temple (Ezekiel 40:5-42:20). These measurements employ some 37 specific architectural terms that have no other connotation other than their normal and natural sense. Although the details seem very detailed and repetitious, they are of basic importance to those who have been committed with the task of building this future Temple and performing its sacred service (43:10-11). They provide a glimpse into the mechanics of a regulated and orderly sacred society that will characterize God's future Kingdom, and remind us, as Christians, that the same God who gave this design to Israel also provided similar detailed instructions for the sanctified management of the local church. In order to understand the design of Ezekiel's Temple it will be necessary to take the same path through the Temple that Ezekiel took and as he recorded in chapters 40-42.

The Design of the Temple Complex

In Ezekiel 40:5-27, the prophet saw the outer court that was measured with a rod of six cubits that was each a cubit and a handbreadth in length (verse 5b). This probably came very close to the long cubit (royal cubit) of 21.67 inches (52.3 cm), making the rod about 10.5 feet, the height of the wall around the Temple (verse 5c). Next Ezekiel entered and measured the eastern gate (verse 6), one of three that led into the inner court. The eastward orientation of this gate is in continuity with the orientation of the Tabernacle and the two previous Temples, as well as the Millennial Temple (47:1), making this entrance gate the most prominent one and therefore in verses 7-16 he provides measurements for its steps, threshold, guardrooms, alcoves, porches, windows, and ornamentation. Next, Ezekiel moved into the outer court (verses 17-19) that contained 30 chambers arranged alongside the pavement covering this area. No function for these rooms is given, but if they are of the same use of such structures in the earlier Temples (cf. Jeremiah 35:2) they may serve those who come to worship at the Temple (Zechariah 14:16-17). Finally, the prophet went to the other two gates of the outer court, the northern gate (verses 20-23) and the southern gate (verses 24-27), both of which matched the dimensions of the eastern gate.

In Ezekiel 40:28-47, the prophet was led into the inner court that also had three gates. The measurement between gates of the inner and outer courts was stated in verses 23, 27 to be 100 cubits (175 feet) and here the gates of the inner court are measured and described in detail (verses 29-37). With the description of the chambers and porches of the gates (verses 38-43), we are introduced initially to the fact that animal sacrifices will be offered in this Temple. Three types of prescribed offerings are mentioned in verse 39: "burnt offering," "sin offering," and "guilt offering," as well as slaughtering tables and hooks to support the animals while they are ritually butchered. For Christian readers, it may seem surprising that the prophet gave no explanation for the restitution of the sacrificial service if this takes place at a time after there had been an abeyance in this institution and especially after Christ had completed His sacrificial work. However, the incidental way he speaks of the sacrifices and offerings should tell us that he and his readers accepted this reality as part of the normal worship service for the Temple and expected no change in this

requirement under the New Covenant when it will be affected for national Israel. The inner court also contained two chambers opposite one another: one at the side of the north gate facing south and one at the side of the south gate facing north (verses 44-47). The room on the north side (whose entrance opened to the south, i.e., into the inner court) specifically served the priests that manage the Temple (verse 45), while the room on the south side was designated for those priests that attend the altar (verse 46a). These priests are identified as descendants of Zadok, head of one of the Levitical families that was elevated to the position of the high priesthood (in place of Abiathar) at the time of Solomon (1 Kings 1:26-27). The line of Zadok was prophesied to one day assume this position when the high priest Eli was disciplined by God for his failure to discipline his unbelieving sons who defiled the office (1 Samuel 3:12-14). The Zadokites were faithful throughout their service in the First Temple period, despite Israel's national defection (Ezekiel 44:15; 48:11), but did not continue to function as priests in the Second Temple period after the Hasmonean dynasty usurped the office. However, when the restoration comes with the building of Ezekiel's Temple, the proper priesthood will also be restored (Ezekiel 43:19; cf. Jeremiah 33:18).

The Design of the Temple

In Ezekiel 40:47-41:26 the design of the Temple itself is revealed. The preliminary view (verse 47) is of the Temple complex with a cursory view of the altar (described in more detail in 43:13-27). The primary information in this verse concerns issues of position, size, shape, and Ezekiel states two important details in this regard that differentiate this Temple from the Second Temple. The first is that the shape of this Temple court was square (verse 47a). The second distinction is the placement of the altar in the Temple (verse 47b). According to the available sources for the layout of the Second Temple, the Altar of Burnt Offering while located in front of the Temple on the east was positioned off center to the south. Ezekiel's altar is said to be directly in front of the Temple.

Moving forward from the inner court the prophet ascended a flight of stairs at the first division of the Temple, an entrance porch (Hebrew *'ulam*) that brought him into the Temple itself. Here at the entrance were the two pillars located on either side (verses 48-49), like those in the First Temple that were carried off to Babylon, but now restored to the Temple. Next, Ezekiel was escorted into the second division of the Temple, the outer sanctuary known as the nave or "holy place" (Hebrew *hekal*) and was given its measurements (41:1-2). As a priest, Ezekiel was qualified to be in this outer sanctuary where the Levitical priest officiated, but not beyond it where only the high priest was permitted to enter on the Day of Atonement (Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:17; 1 Chronicles 6:49; Hebrews 9:7). Therefore, his angelic escort alone entered the inner sanctuary, the most holy place or "holy of holies" to take its measurements (verses 3-4) which were 20 cubits x 20 cubits (length and width) 35 feet (10.67 meters). These measurements indicated this innermost division of the Temple had the dimensions of a perfect cube, a trait shared by the holy of holies in past sanctuaries and the New Jerusalem, whose dimensions of 1,500 miles x 1,500 miles project the holy of holies to an infinite degree (Revelation 21:16). Around the Temple on the outside were rows of side chambers, three-stories high

(one above the other) containing 30 rooms on each level (verses 5-11). The purpose for these side chambers is not given, but they are similar to the triple-decker rooms that buttressed the walls of the First Temple (1 Kings 6:5-10) which were probably used to store materials and equipment used by the priests as well as the tithes of grain brought by the people into the “storehouse” (2 Chronicles 31:11; Malachi 3:8-10).

The last activity of the prophet in this section was to record the Temple’s overall measurements of 87.5 feet (26.67 meters) in width and 175 feet (53.34 meters) in length (verses 12-15), along with the details of its decorations and furnishings (verses 16-26). The decorations consisted of images of cherubim, with a palm tree in between each cherub, carved into the interior of the holy place (verses 18-20). The cherubim were angelic guardians of God’s glory that had been stationed at the entrance to the Garden of Eden to prevent fallen man from returning (Genesis 3:24) and were represented on the mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant to welcome the high priest as mediator to make atonement for Israel (Exodus 25:18-22). The palm trees represented the agricultural portion of the Promised Land’s blessing of “[goat] milk and [date] honey” (Exodus 3:8). The righteous man was equated with the flourishing palm (Psalm 92:12), and the righteous of all nations will one day worship the Lord before His heavenly throne with palm branches (Revelation 7:9). Only one piece of Temple furniture was described at this viewing: “the altar,” which is identified as “the table that is before the Lord” (verse 22). Both the altar of incense and the table of showbread were located in the nave or outer sanctuary that Ezekiel was presently describing (verses 23-25). Which one of these did the prophet see? This structure is said to be made of wooden and have dimensions of 5.25 feet high x 3.5 feet square. The original table of showbread, made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold, held the “bread of the Presence” that is “before [the Lord] at all times” (Exodus 25:23-30). However, its dimensions more closely approximate the Tabernacle’s original Altar of Incense (Exodus 30:1-2) whose position in front of the Ark could be considered “before the Lord” (Exodus 30:6). Yet, it would be strange to have an altar made only of wood (and not overlaid with metal) since placing hot coals on it would set it on fire. Even so, Ezekiel as a trained priest identifies it as “the altar,” while the Altar of Burnt Offering referred to figuratively as the Lord’s “table” (Ezekiel 44:16).

Additional Temple Buildings

In Ezekiel 42:1-14, the chambers of the outer court are described (verses 1-12) followed by an interpretation of their function (verses 13-14). The structure of the three-storied buildings (verse 3) is complicated, with the roof of each at a different level, like terraces with the upper balconies set back progressively further than those beneath them (verses 5-6), accessed by a walkway (verse 4) that ran the entire length of the chambers (verse 9) and was separated from the outer court by a wall (verse 7), that was probably to shield the sanctity of the priests from onlookers while they prepared for their duties. In addition, chambers located on the south were identical to the northern ones just described (verses 10-12). In verses 13-14, an explanation of the function of these southern and northern chambers is given. They are rooms set apart (“holy”) for the highest order of priests who serve in the inner sanctuary and whose responsibilities include the eating of their

prescribed portion of certain offerings (verse 13b, cf. Leviticus 2:3, 10; 6:16, 26-30; 7:7-10). These rooms also serve as a place where three “most holy” offerings (“grain offering,” “sin offering,” and “guilt offering”) are stored (verse 13c), and for the storage of the priestly garments which must be put on and then removed and returned to the sacred chamber each time a priest completes his appointed time of service (verse 14). Both the function of eating the sacred meals and storing the sacred garments are discussed in Ezekiel 44:19; 46:20.

In Ezekiel 42:15-20, Ezekiel is taken to the outer wall of the Temple complex to record the external measurements of the entire structure. The outer dimensions of the square Temple complex are 500 “cubits” or 850 feet (259.08 meters) on each side. If, however, the measurement is in “reeds” then the Temple complex is about one mile on each side (some 30 times greater than its former size). However, “cubits” has the greater support of the ancient versions and is to be preferred. These measurements conform roughly to the squared area of the present-day Temple Mount platform (less the southern and northern additions) indicating that the original 500 cubit square Temple Mount of the First Temple period was respected as the divine ideal.

The Return of the *Shekinah*

In Ezekiel 43:1-9, the prophet is led to the eastern gate of the Temple (verse 1) to witness the return of the *Shekinah* (the “Divine Presence” or “Glory of God”) to the Temple. After the return to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple, the *Shekinah* did not return to fill the holy of holies in the Second Temple as it had the First Temple (1 Kings 8:12-13) and before this, the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35). The traditional Jewish sources stated that: “These are the five things that were in the First Temple and not in the Second Temple: the Ark with the covering and angelic figures, the heavenly fire, the Divine Presence (the *Shekinah*), Divine Inspiration, and the Urim and the Thummim” (*Yoma* 21b; 52b; cf. Jerusalem Talmud, *Makkot* 2:6). For this reason, the Sages did not believe that the restoration could have occurred with the Second Temple, and looked beyond it to the eschatological period (e.g., *Tosefta Yom Tov*).

Ezekiel announces the fulfillment of this long-awaited Jewish hope with the words “and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east” (verse 2). Ezekiel’s description of this return in verses 2-5 matches the site order of the prior abandonment in Ezekiel 10-11. The departure of the *Shekinah* had started with a movement from its place within the holy of holies to inner court (10:4), then from the inner court to eastern gate (10:19), finally to disappear in the east over the Mount of Olives (11:22-23). The return of the *Shekinah* is the reversal of this order, beginning in the east (verse 2), first appearing at the crest of the Mount of Olives, then moving to eastern gate (verse 4), where Ezekiel was situated (verse 1), and finally to enter the inner court of the Temple (verse 6) and resume its residence within the holy of holies (verse 7). Verse 7 contains the declaration “I will dwell among the sons of Israel forever” and the reason “and the house of Israel will not again defile My holy Name.” With the problem of idolatry and defilement a thing of the past (verse 7c), as a result of the new nature imparted to Israel

(36:25-27), there is no longer any possibility of the kind of Temple desecration that would cause the withdrawal of the *Shekinah* and bring judgment on the Nation (verse 8). However, because of the sanctity of the site, the prince's residence will not be located next to the Temple complex as in ancient times ("setting their threshold by My threshold and their door post beside My door post, with only the wall between Me and them") lest it serve as a reminder of the past incursions of apostate kings into the sacred space which were defiling abominations (verses 7d-8).

It is also important to observe in verse 7 that the holy of holies where the *Shekinah* resides is called "the place of My throne and the place of the soles of My feet." The reference to "throne" has led some commentators to see this as the place where the Messiah will be enthroned and rule over His kingdom (cf. 1 Chronicles 17:14).

Directions for Ezekiel's Temple Service

In Ezekiel 43:12-27, instructions are given for the sacred "instructions" (Hebrew *torah*) of the Temple (Temple service). Beginning with the design for the Altar of Burnt offering, these ritual regulations will enable Israel to perform the required sacrificial service. In the rebuilding of the Second Temple, the construction of the altar preceded the construction of the Temple (Ezra 3:2-6), since once a functioning sacrificial service is begun, the Temple may already be said to exist, even if its foundation has not yet been laid. Verse 17 instructs that the Altars were to "face east" (verse 17c), probably because steps built on the east side allow the officiating priests (who would ascend facing west) to directly face the Temple (which faced east) as he brought his sacrificial offering.

Verse 18 begins the ordinances concerning the sacrificial offerings to be made on the altar, with the requirement for only Zadokite priests to officiate in the sacrificial offerings (verse 19), and for the proper consecration (decontamination) of the altar so it will be ritually acceptable for the sacred service (verses 20-27). The consecration ceremony is to take seven days (verse 26) during which bulls, goats, and rams are brought as purification offerings (verses 19-25) to make atonement for (verse 20), cleanse (verses 20, 22), and purify (verse 26) the altar. Afterward, on the eighth day, the priests will be able to intercede for the people and offer their burnt offerings and peace offerings (verse 27). Such instructions appear strange and impractical to Christians whose theology has been accustomed to the obsolescence of the sacrificial system. However, this Temple and its Temple service are for the eschatological age when these things will be restored under the rule of the Messiah.

In Ezekiel 44:1-46:24, the Temple service is further described, as well as regulations for the Levitical priests and the various sacrifices to be offered for Israel's atonement. The details concerning the priestly service in chapters 44:1-46:24 are arranged in seven sections that deal with the law of the eastern gate (44:1-3), the *Shekinah* and Israel's sins (44:4-8), the specific duties of the Levitical priesthood (44:9-14), the specific duties of the Zadokite priesthood (44:15-31), the sacred proportions of the Temple complex (45:1-8), the specific duties of the prince (45:9-46:18), and the places designated for the boiling of the sacrifices (46:19-24).

The Eastern Gate

Once the Temple has been built, the *Shekinah* will return to fill the Temple (43:1-7). The path the *Shekinah* will follow to reenter the Temple goes through the eastern gate (43:4; 44:2b). Since the restored conditions of Land and people will prevent future desecration, the *Shekinah* will never again have to depart from the Temple (43:7-9). To commemorate this fact, the eastern gate, through which the *Shekinah* would pass if a departure were possible (10:19), will be sealed shut and never reopened (44:2). This paralleled the Near Eastern custom of showing special honor to a dignitary by restricting others from using the same gate the dignitary had used (cf. Exodus 19:9-24). Although this gate is never entered again, it will be used by the prince who will sit there to eat a sacrificial meal before the Lord. Nevertheless, the prince's access will be only through the porch of the gate (44:3).

The instructions concerning the eastern gate and its special status in relation to the Temple complex (44:1-3), have often been misinterpreted and applied to the present-day Golden Gate which occupies the place of the former East (Shushan) Gate of the Second (Herodian) Temple. Many Christians have been taught that the presently blocked condition of the Golden Gate is a fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy. It must be remembered that Ezekiel's description of this gate and its closing concerns the eschatological Temple, not the Temple Mount that exists in the modern era. The Golden Gate at the present site has been sealed shut for hundreds of years ever since the Saracens conquered Jerusalem in 1187. In the 16th century a Muslim graveyard was placed across the gate's entrance to counter a tradition held by the Jewish residents of the Land that their Messiah would enter through this gate on the day He came to deliver and restore Israel. Knowing that Jewish purification laws prevented Jews from passing through any area containing tombs, the Muslims believed the presence of their graveyard in front of the gate would prevent a Jewish Messiah from returning to reclaim Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple. However, even the earlier eastern gate, now buried beneath centuries of Temple rubble and accumulated debris, was only a gate on the Temple Mount compound's outer retaining wall and *not* the outer gate of the Temple (which was *inside* the compound), that is specified by Ezekiel's prophecy (44:1).

The Temple Priesthood

Ezekiel 44:9-14 explains the limitations imposed on the Levites (for historical defection) who will only serve the people as gatekeepers and in the slaughtering of animals they bring for offerings (verses 11, 14). However, verses 15-31 explain that the work forbidden to the Levites will be committed to the Zadokite priesthood who are to have exclusive charge over the Temple's sacrificial service. Ezekiel's contemporary, Jeremiah, linked the perpetuity of the Levitical priesthood with the perpetuity of the Davidic dynasty and guaranteed it would remain as long as the earth rotated on its axis (Jeremiah 33:17-22). Seven rules are given in these verses for the Zadokite priesthood in their maintenance of the Temple:

- (1) Their ceremonial attire (verses 15-19) must be made only of linen and worn while rendering their service to the Lord and then stored before coming in contact with

- any of the people so as not violate the holy status of the Temple (verse 19; cf. 46:10).
- (2) Their physical appearance with regard to hair maintenance (verse 20), neither shaved nor excessively long (both considered as a sign of disfigurement in Leviticus 19:27) would agree with the same laws of ceremonial purity that require the sacrificial animals to be without defect or blemish.
 - (3) Their use of no wine when on duty in the inner court (verse 21), so they could be constantly focused on the need to maintain ritual purity in order to serve the Lord without wavering in mind or spirit.
 - (4) Their purity in marriage (verse 22) required marriage from a qualified list of women including Israelite virgins and widows of priests, since their previous contact had only been with one who was ritually pure (another deviation from the Mosaic proscription that allowed marriage only to virgins of the priestly tribe and prohibited marriage to widows).
 - (5) Their public roles as divine representatives (verses 23-24) maintaining the holy rules necessary to a relationship between God in residence with His people by education, instruction, and teaching (verse 23), as well as in administration of judicial responsibilities (verse 24). Nations will be required to observe the “appointed feasts” (cf. Zechariah 14:16) that magnify the character of Christ and celebrate God’s grace and goodness to His people under the New Covenant (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:8), the priests will faithfully keep the festival calendar (verse 24b).
 - (6) Their obligation to the purification laws with respect to contact with dead bodies (verses 25-27) which would incurring corpse impurity and disqualify them for service until ritually cleansed after waiting seven days before resuming his priestly duties (verse 26), at which time he will offer a sin offering (purification offering) for himself (verse 28).
 - (7) Their special status in relation to the Lord, the Land, and people of Israel (verses 28-31), who because of their unique service to God are set apart to Him and require no territorial inheritance in the Land, but will be provided for through a portion of the ceremonially pure offerings (except the burnt offering) brought by the people to the Lord (verses 29-31; cf. Exodus 22:31; Leviticus 22: 8).

The benefit for the people in providing for the priesthood in this manner is a divine “blessing to rest on [their] houses” (verse 30; cf. Deuteronomy 24:19; Numbers 6:22-27).

In Ezekiel 45:1-8, the priests’ quarters surrounding the Temple are described. The location for this is “the mountain of the house of the Lord,” which will be elevated as “the highest mountain” above the regional hills. Here will be located the sacred district– a square plateau whose dimensions are 25,000 cubits (8.3 miles) in length and 20,000 cubits (6.6 miles) in width covering an area of 50 square miles or 33,500 acres that will be divided into two equal rectangular portions in the north and south of 25,000 cubits (8.3 miles) by 10,000 cubits (3.3 miles). The northern portion will be reserved for the Messiah and His priests, while the southern portion will be for the Levites and the city of Jerusalem. This area will be accessible to the “whole house of Israel” (verse 6). Within the northern portion (verses 2-4) will be situated the Temple complex encircled by a restricted area 50 cubits (85 feet) wide that will serve to insure the holiness (separateness) of the Temple itself. Around the Temple will be “the holy portion” consisting of the residences for the Zadokite

priests and the non-Zadokite priests (verse 4) as well as the Levites (verse 5), another deviation from the Mosaic dispensation in which they were distributed throughout the Land (Numbers 35:1-8; cf. Joshua 21:1-42). At the center of the southern portion (verses 6-8) is an area 25,000 cubits (8.3 miles) long and 5,000 cubits (1.1 miles) wide reserved for the Millennial Jerusalem (verse 6). According to 48:18-19 there will also be cultivated areas for food production situated on either side of the city. On the eastern and western sides of the sacred district, alongside both the northern and southern areas, are two large tracts of land for the possession of the prince (verse 7). The remainder of this chapter through Ezekiel 46:24 deals with regulations on the people and moves to Ezekiel 46:19-24 where the location for special kitchens designated for the cooking (“boiling”) of sacrifices is described. Ezekiel was led to the outer court where separate kitchens will exist in the four corners for cooking the sacrifices of the people (verses 21-24). The later Jewish concept of “keeping kosher” by having separate kitchens and using separate utensils to prepare meat and dairy meals are reflected in these verses. The rest of Ezekiel’s plans detail the organization of the tribes of Israel and their apportioned places within Land of Israel within the geographical boundaries it will inhabit in the eschatological age.

The Water from Beneath the Altar

Another description of the Temple given in chapter 47 concerns the altar and eastern gate. In verse 1, Ezekiel is escorted to the main entrance of the Temple that faced east where he saw water flowing from the front part of the Temple and running beside the threshold of the door and the right (south) side of the altar (which is located directly in front of the Temple (40:47). This implies that the water has come from God’s Presence within the Temple, more precisely from beneath the throne of the Messiah within the Holy of Holies. Ezekiel was then led out of the Temple area through the northern gate and around the outer eastern gate where he observed the water trickling from the south side of the eastern gate down south toward the city of Jerusalem and into the Kidron Valley (verse 2). From this point, the angelic escort apparently traced the eastern flow of the river along its bank 1,000 cubits (1,750 feet) and measured its depth reached only to the ankles (verse 3). Then he went the same distance and measured the depth reached to the knees (verse 4a), again the same distance and found it waist-deep (verse 4b), then the same distance yet again and discovered it was deep enough to swim in, but too swift to ford (verse 5). This indicates the river was increasing in size and strength as it descended to the Dead Sea. In the modern geography of the area Jerusalem is 2,000 feet above sea level while the Dead Sea is 1,350 feet below, however, in the eschatological era the Temple Mount will be even more elevated (Isaiah 2:2; Zechariah 14:10). Ezekiel was next shown groves of trees growing on both sides of the river bank, certainly a startling sight for one accustomed to the normally arid and barren region of the Arabah (verses 6-7).

From this point the eastern river continued until it emptied into the Dead Sea, normally a concentrated chemical stew of 26 percent solid matter in the form of dissolved salts, so dense that a human body becomes buoyant, but now with the addition of the fresh waters of the river, this will dilute the mineral content so it will be able to sustain aquatic life (verses 8-9). As a result, fishermen, once strangers to these shores, will gather on the western side

of the sea from En-Gedi to En-Glaim (probably the site of the Qumran Community), today the distance of a drive of about 45 minutes (verse 10). Briefer accounts of this prophetic event were made before Ezekiel's time by Joel (cf. 3:18, c. 835 BC) and after by Zechariah (cf. 14:8, c. 520-518 BC). A comparison of these texts reveals that they are independent of one another, with Joel's text stating "a stream will go out from the house of the Lord to water the valley of Shittim [an area north of the Dead Sea]," and Zechariah's adding that the "living waters" will divide and flow also "to the western sea [Mediterranean Sea]." The changes effected by this river will serve as a constant witness that the source of blessing is the Lord from whose house the waters have flowed.

There is some archaeological confirmation of a subterranean water source beneath the Temple Mount that has occasionally erupted in past history. One account was given by British explorer Edward Robinson based on his discovery of the Fountain Ash-Shafa, whose waters came from a spring 80 feet below the Rock of the Dome. The same source of water is mentioned in the Mishnah (*Tamed* 1:1; *Middot* 1:6-9) and today is thought to be located not far from cistern # 30 (*Shakib Ka-it-Bey*) near the Western Wall.

Gates of Ezekiel's Temple Mount

Ezekiel's Temple Mount city (40:30-34) will have twelve gates named after Jacob's (Israel's) sons each measuring 4,500 cubits (2.2 miles). On its northern side (verse 30) the three closest to the Millennial Temple (verse 31) will be named for the tribes of Reuben, Judah, and Levi, perhaps reflecting Reuben's firstborn status (Genesis 35:23), Judah's past position as the site of the Temple (Genesis 22:2; Exodus 15:17; Deuteronomy 12:5-6; 2 Samuel 7:10), and Levi's priestly position (Numbers 3:6). On its eastern side (verse 32) the gates will be named for Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. As in Revelation 7:8, Joseph represents his sons Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:1) who were adopted by Jacob (Genesis 48:5-6). The tribe Dan is again recognized, confirming that its past history will not prevent its future inheritance (see above). The gates on the southern side (verse 33) will be named for Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun, whose tribal location in the south (48:24-26) meant that each tribe faced the gate bearing its name. On the western side (verse 34) the gates were named for Gad, Asher, and Naphtali. These tribal allotments have been arranged so as to put the Temple at the center of the Nation, similar to the arrangement of the tribes around the Tabernacle in the wilderness of Sinai.

The New Status of Jerusalem

The final verse in this prophecy of Ezekiel gives the best evidence as to why this Temple must be located in the eschatological age. The *Shekinah* Glory that returned to fill Temple (43:7a) will cover the entire mountain so that the whole city becomes "the throne of the Lord" (Jeremiah 3:17), giving brightness by night and shade by day as well as protection from storm and rain (Isaiah 4:5-6). This provides an independent source of illumination for the future Jerusalem (Isaiah 24:23; 60:19-20), therefore the city will be without walls, for the Lord will be a wall of fire around it (Zechariah 2:4-5), and its gates will be open day and

night (Isaiah 60:11). God's Land and people are now secure because the Lord is with His people and has restored fortunes of Israel with the nations (Zephaniah 3:15b-16, 20). This glory will also endue the city with perpetual holiness (Zechariah 14:20-21). The restored glory of Jerusalem will be such that it will no longer be thought of without reference to God's Presence, so the city will be renamed "the Lord is there" (Hebrew *YHWH Shammah*, verse 35b) and will never depart. In biblical perspective, the granting of a "new name" indicated a new character to correspond to it (Isaiah 62:2; cf. Revelation 3:12; 19:12-13, 16), and other prophetic texts describe this character of the city as "righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:16), and "truth" (Zechariah 8:3). Therefore, Ezekiel's vision of the Temple concludes with a Temple that, unlike any in past history, finally fulfills the divine ideal.

The Temple and the New Jerusalem

From the beginning when the Maker created man in His image (Genesis 1:26-27), He made him for a relationship with Himself. God revealed to man that He dwelt "in a high and holy place" (Isaiah 57:15) that was referred to as His holy dwelling place or Heavenly Temple (Psalm 5:7; 11:4; 18:6; 27:4). The Garden of Eden revealed that God desired to dwell with man (Genesis 3:8), and, after the Fall, the Temple that God commanded to be built on earth symbolized the means by which God could dwell with fallen man, an institution which made it possible for man to experience this relationship to a limited degree. By contrast, the New Jerusalem will be the fulfillment of the divine ideal of God and redeemed man together in an unlimited relationship. For this reason, aspects of the earthly Edenic Sanctuary in Genesis are echoed in the descriptions of the heavenly New Jerusalem in Isaiah 65-66 and Revelation 21-22.

The New Jerusalem in the Old Testament

The Book of Hebrews declares that the destination of believers is a "heavenly city" (Hebrews 13:14). Abraham was described as one "looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God ... a better country, that is a heavenly one" (Hebrews 11:10, 16). As God later revealed, this would be the place shown to Moses (Exodus 25:9, 40) and David (1 Chronicles 28:11-19) where the Heavenly Temple was found. This could only have been the Heavenly Jerusalem, since the structures on earth were copied after the heavenly (Exodus 25:9, 40; Hebrews 9:23), and the divinely designated site of the Temple was Jerusalem (Genesis 22:2, 14; Exodus 15:17; Deuteronomy 12:11; 2 Samuel 7:10, 13; 1 Kings 8:16-21). When psalmist refers to "the Lord who dwells in Zion" (Psalm 9:11; compare 48:2; 74:2; 76:2) he is employing the language of heaven, the true dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:30, 39, 43; 2 Chronicles 6:21, 30, 33, 39) to describe the reality of God's Presence at His chosen place on earth (2 Chronicles 6:41). Since the Old Testament prophets predicted that the present earth and heaven would one day pass away (Isaiah 34:4; 65:17), the understanding of the earthly Jerusalem as God's "dwelling place" was projected heavenward (as the Jewish-Christian epistle to the Hebrews reveals), forming the hope of an eternal city, the New Jerusalem, where the relationship of God with His people would endure forever (Isaiah 66:22).

Therefore, while the New Jerusalem is not *explicit* in the Old Testament, the concept of it is *implicit* in passages that proclaim the eternality and inviolability of Jerusalem. When the psalmist gives the assurance that “those who trust in the Lord are as Mount Zion, which cannot moved, but abides forever” (Psalm 125:1), his ultimate reference must be the New Jerusalem, since only it will “abide forever.” In the same way, when Ezekiel 37:28 promises that “My Sanctuary” will be “in their midst forever,” the ultimate focus is upon God dwelling with His people without interruption (Revelation 22:4). The Book of Revelation sees this divine ideal fulfilled in the Eternal State in the New Jerusalem: “And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven ... and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His People and God Himself shall be among them” (Revelation 21: 2-3). Although this understanding is the result of progressive revelation, the believers who lived from Abraham on must have reasoned in light of the Patriarch’s unseen city that if the old Jerusalem they knew was to remain “forever,” a New Jerusalem needed to exist to fulfill such prophecies. This foundational concept of the Heavenly Jerusalem was developed in later Judaism, both between the testaments and in the Talmudic period, into a more elaborate eschatological hope.

The New Jerusalem in Judaism

The concept of the New Jerusalem appears in a more developed form in Jewish apocalyptic literature of the post-exilic Second Temple period based upon the earlier concept presented in the prophets. In these extra-biblical writings the Heavenly Jerusalem, perfect in every respect, either replaces or transforms the imperfect earthly Jerusalem as the final fulfillment of Restoration. This is presented in one of the Dead Sea Scrolls, which, because of its content, has been named the *New Jerusalem* (1Q32, 2Q24, 4Q554-555, 5Q15, 11Q18). It depicts a city whose dimensions are much greater than any earthly city and has twelve gates, each named for one of the twelve tribes, signifying a reunification of the twelve tribes of Israel that had been scattered. In Revelation 21, a similar unearthly scale is given for the New Jerusalem, on whose walls are twelve foundation stones with the names of the twelve apostles. Jesus' told His Jewish apostles that "in the Regeneration they would sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). Like the statement in the *New Jerusalem* text, this understands that the setting for this New Jerusalem is in the eschatological period when all of the Israelite tribes have been re-gathered.

While the *New Jerusalem* text was written before the Roman destruction of the Second Temple, the apocalypses in *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* came afterward. These writings look for a new Temple in a New Jerusalem, but in heaven, rather than on earth. This was probably in response to the loss of the physical Temple and city, whose hope of restoration could be better realized in another plane of existence (*3 Baruch* 1:3). This, however, did not represent all of Judaism, and the rabbis who had to formulate a Judaism without a Temple continued the hope for the restoration of the earthly city and Temple while also thinking of the indestructible city in heaven. For this reason, the Talmud refers to two Jerusalems: the earthly Jerusalem, “Jerusalem the Lower” (Hebrew, *Yerushalaim Shel Matta*), and the Heavenly Jerusalem, “Jerusalem the Upper” (Hebrew, *Yerushalaim Shel Maalah*). At present

the latter is said to hover above the former, even when the latter lies in ruin or sin, however, only the most righteous is able to see it. In the Zohar of Kabbalistic (mystical) Judaism the Heavenly Jerusalem is the place created by God to house the souls of the righteous.

The New Jerusalem in the New Testament

In the New Testament, the use of the term “New Jerusalem” is exclusive to the Book of Revelation, however, other New Testament writers were familiar with the concept. Like the Talmud, the Apostle Paul speaks of “the Jerusalem above” in distinction to “the present Jerusalem” (Galatians 4:25-26), and the author of the epistle to the Hebrews makes reference to the “Heavenly Jerusalem” (Hebrews 12:22a). Both writers assume their audience accepts this concept, implying they had a previous understanding of the subject. This latter text describes the heavenly Jerusalem as “Mount Zion,” “the city of the living God,” where there are “myriads of angels,” “the general assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven” (the Church), “the spirits of righteous men made perfect” (Old Testament believers), “God” and “Jesus” (Hebrews 12:22b-24). In addition, the Hebrews passage places the New Jerusalem in the Eternal State when it speaks of receiving “a kingdom which cannot be shaken” (Hebrews 12:28).

This agrees with the descriptions of the heavenly court and the New Jerusalem found in Revelation, although some scholars believe that the reference to the location of the New Jerusalem in the Eternal State (Revelation 21-22) should be kept distinct from its location in Isaiah 65-66, even though both texts speak of a “new heavens and new earth.” They argue that there is a renovation of these realms that takes place before the advent of the Messianic Kingdom on earth (Isaiah 65-66), that precedes the cosmic dissolution and recreation implied in Revelation 21-22 and spoken of by Peter (2 Peter 3:10-13). However, some scholars also see the New Jerusalem in Revelation appearing in both locations at different times.

The New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation

The New Jerusalem is a city “laid out as a square” with connecting planes of equal size that form a cube 1,500 miles (2,225 kilometers) cubed. Its gates are inscribed with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel and the foundation stones of its wall with the names of the twelve apostles (Revelation 21:12-14). The connection of the twelve tribes with a certain type of precious stone go back to the time of Temple worship, where the Breastplate of the Ephod worn by the High Priest bore the names of each of the twelve tribes of Israel inscribed on a different type of stone. The brilliant splendor of the inner city described by John as founded with iridescent stones of every color and hue, having streets of pure gold, like transparent glass, is again the language of accommodation in harmony with the vision of God’s Presence. In Exodus 24 when Moses and the elders of Israel were permitted to see the God of Israel, their vision was of His heavenly court where the street was described as “a pavement of sapphire as clear as the sky” (verse 10). John had described the New

Jerusalem as “having the glory of God” (Revelation 21:11a), and it is this that John emphasizes in his description of the city. The supernatural illumination of the city is also the result of the Presence of God, and the reason why there can be no night there (Revelation 21:5; 22:5). The archetype of the Garden of Eden is also present in the city, complete with a river of the water of life and the tree of life (Revelation 22:1-2).

Jesus announced to His disciples that He was going away [to heaven] to prepare a place [this city] for them as His bride (John 14:2). Therefore, despite its unusual size and features, the New Jerusalem city qualifies in every sense as a physical reality, with measurable architectural structures, planned design, building materials, rivers, trees, and human inhabitants. What appears to us as an incredible description is due to our present inability to grasp such future realities. As an eternal city for an eternal people, it is not of earth, but from heaven; the handiwork of an infinite God that should not be expected to conform in every respect to our conventional concepts (see Revelation 21:5).

The Presence of God in the New Jerusalem

With the descent of the New Jerusalem to earth (or just above the earth), Revelation 21:3 announced the “Tabernacle of God is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be among them.” The symbolic school of interpretation assumes that only the Christian community is in view and reads this as a fulfillment of Ezekiel 40-48 and as a reference to the Church (either on earth or in heaven). The school of literal interpretation sees this as having significance for both the Church and national Israel, both on earth and in heaven. They would understand the New Jerusalem as occupying a position, likely over the earthly Jerusalem, during the 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth known as the Millennial Kingdom. This, they explain, is how the “nations [that] shall walk by its [the New Jerusalem] light” (Revelation 21:24), because they will come into the earthly Jerusalem with their tribute to the Lord, enthroned within the Temple [of Ezekiel], situated beneath the glory of the heavenly city (Revelation 21:23). The term “tabernacle” (Hebrew *mishkan* “dwelling place”) refers to the idea that the Divine Presence (*Shekinah*) is dwelling with man, however, it is only those who are within the New Jerusalem who will see Him “face to face” (Revelation 22:4), a clear reversal of the past prohibition (Exodus 33:20; cf. John 1:18; 1 Timothy 1:17; 6:16).

The Temple of the New Jerusalem

Throughout the judgment section of Revelation, which comprises the bulk of the book (Revelation 6-19), the Heavenly Temple appeared at significant intervals to show the response of heaven to events on earth. This prepared those enduring the conflict on earth for the revealing of the coming of Christ as well as for the New Jerusalem, which comes “out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:2, 10). However, as John came to the end of his description of the New Jerusalem he stated, “I saw no Temple in it ...” (Revelation 21:22a). Such a statement would have been startling to those accustomed to the viewing the Temple as the place of the Divine Presence, which these chapters in Revelation indicate will fill and

illumine this city (Revelation 21:23-24; 22:5). However, the remainder of this verse makes the opposite declaration: "... for the Lord God, the Almighty, and the Lamb are its Temple" (Revelation 21:22b). How is this to be understood?

The New Jerusalem is unique. It has no temple in the sense that it contains one, yet it has a temple in the sense that it is a part of one, namely the Heavenly Temple previously revealed in this book (Revelation 3:12; 7:15; 11:19; 14:15, 17; 15:5-6, 8; 16:1, 17). The cubic dimensions of the New Jerusalem correspond in kind to those of the Holy of Holies within the earthly Temples, (1 Kings 6:19-20). Therefore, it appears that the New Jerusalem represents this part of the Heavenly Temple, in which God in His glory is manifested. For this reason it is called "the holy city" (Revelation 21:2), the "Tabernacle of God among men" (Revelation 21:3), and has "the glory of God" (Revelation 21:11a). This is why it is possible for believers to be in the New Jerusalem, which technically has no temple, and to "serve God day and night in His Temple" (Revelation 7:15). Too, God is stated to be the Temple of the New Jerusalem. The earthly Temples were symbols of the Presence of God with His people, but at the same time were mere copies of the Heavenly Temple, which is the Presence of God. In the New Jerusalem, as in all of God's created order, He is all in all.

The New Jerusalem Today

The New Jerusalem has always existed in heaven, although, if taken literally, its descent to earth is still future. However, as Jesus promised to those who accept Him, it is possible to go there upon death: "In my Father's house are many rooms ... I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2). These "rooms" are not individual dwellings *apart* from the Lord, as if He lived on top of the hill and we all had mansions (in ascending order of size and proximity) somewhere on His land. There is only one house—"the Father's House"—and all of the rooms are in it. This could give the impression of a gigantic apartment complex, however, since the function of believers will be to "serve Him day and night *in His Temple*" (Revelation 7:15; 22:3), it is best to view "the Father's House" in its normal usage here as "His Temple."

In the Jerusalem Temple, there were many dwelling chambers for the priests within the Temple precincts, since priests were on duty day and night. In Ezekiel's Temple, the place of the priests and workmen surround the Temple-city (Ezekiel 48:11-20). In the same way, in the New Jerusalem there will be places prepared for the saints so that all will be in the Presence of the Lord. This is the "Mount Zion ... the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" mentioned by the author of Hebrews (Hebrews 12:22-24).

The New Jerusalem offers us some startling contrasts with the old Jerusalem and its Temple. Rather than one man serving as High Priest for the people of God, all of God's people are high priests. Unlike the earthly High Priest who could rarely enter the Holy of Holies, these will ever remain there. Their service is not once a year on the Day of Atonement, but day and night forever. The Presence of God does not dwell within the Holy of Holies away from man, but God and the Lamb (Christ) dwell among all of the redeemed. This is the great and heavenly hope of all who "seek His face" (Psalm 17:15; 27:8; 42:2; 105:4).

TEMPLE TIMELINE

BC

960 King Solomon dedicates the first temple.

931 Solomon dies and his kingdom is divided: Northern Kingdom (Israel) and Southern Kingdom (Judah).

910 Temple treasures taken by Egyptian Pharaoh Shishak (1 Kings 14:25–28; 2 Chronicles 12:1–11).

835 Jehoash (Joash), King of Judah, and Jehoiada repair damaged parts of the temple (2 Kings 12:5–14; 2 Chronicles 24:12–14).

826 Jehoash (Joash), King of Israel, attacks Judah, breaks down the walls of Jerusalem, and plunders the temple taking the temple treasury to Samaria (2 Kings 14:13–14).

742–735 King Jotham, son of Uzziah, builds the upper gate of the temple (2 Kings 15:35; 2 Chronicles 27:3).

722 Northern Kingdom falls to Assyria.

720 King Ahaz closes the temple, empties the temple treasury, breaks up the temple furnishings and vessels to pay tribute to the Assyrian king, Tiglath-Pileser III, and defiles the temple with a pagan Syrian altar (2 Kings 16:8–18; 2 Chronicles 28:21, 24).

715 King Hezekiah opens the temple doors, cleanses the temple, returns temple vessels, restores ritual and Passover, and builds storehouses for temple contributions (2 Chronicles 29:3–19; 30:1–27; 31:11–12).

711 Hezekiah is forced to give up the temple treasures and strip gold off the temple doors to pay tribute to the Assyrian king Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:15–16).

700 Hezekiah foolishly shows the treasures of the temple treasury and of the king's house to Berodach-baladan, a prince of Babylon and his envoys, an act the prophet Isaiah predicted would lead to the eventual plunder of the temple by the Babylonians (2 Kings 20:12–21; 2 Chronicles 32:31).

695–642 King Manasseh of Judah places idols within the temple, including the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The ark and the other temple treasures were probably removed by the faithful Levites whom Manasseh deposed, to prevent their defilement. Manasseh later repents, but does not restore these treasures to the temple (2 Kings 21:4–7; 2 Chronicles 7–9, 15).

- 622** King Josiah of Judah, grandson of Manasseh, in restoring the temple, recovers one of the temple treasures, the Torat Moshe (autograph of the Pentateuch) that once was placed beside the ark and was apparently hidden in the temple during the time of Manasseh (2 Kings 22:8; 2 Chronicles 34:14–18). He commands the Levites to return the ark to the restored temple (2 Chronicles 35:3).
- 605** Babylon's King Nebuchadnezzar pillages the temple, taking articles and depositing them in the Babylonian temple at Shinar (2 Chronicles 36:7).
- 597** Nebuchadnezzar returns and further plunders the treasures of the temple (2 Kings 24:13; 2 Chronicles 36:7).
- 586** Nebuchadnezzar invades Jerusalem a third time and destroys the temple. Southern Kingdom of Judah falls to Babylon and Jews taken into captivity.
- 573** The prophet Ezekiel, in Babylonian exile, has a vision of a magnificent temple (Ezekiel 40–48). Some Bible scholars believe this vision is of the future temple in the millennial (1,000-year) kingdom.
- 538** The prophet Daniel prays concerning Jerusalem's and the temple's restoration and receives the prophecy of the 70 weeks concerning the Messiah's death in Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple, and its rebuilding and desecration (Daniel 9:1–27). Daniel also receives a vision of the defiling of the temple (Daniel 11:31). Some Bible scholars conclude that this vision is of the second temple (Zerubbabel's temple) defiled by Antiochus IV Epiphanes who placed a statue of the Greek god Zeus in the Holy Place.
- 539** On October 11–12, Babylonian king Belshazzar desecrates temple vessels at a pagan feast (Daniel 5:1–4) and Persian monarch Cyrus the Great conquers Babylon.
- 538** Cyrus issues a decree allowing Jews in exile to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city and the temple, and returns temple vessels taken by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chronicles 36:22–23; Ezra 1:1–11; 6:3–15).
- 520–515** Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, rebuilds and dedicates the temple and restores the sacrificial system with assistance of the Persian king, Darius (Ezra 3:1–13; 5:1–17; 6:1–18).
- 445** Nehemiah returns to Jerusalem from Persia to rebuild the walls of the city and protect the Temple Mount (Nehemiah 1–7:4).
- 332** Alexander the Great conquers Jerusalem and, according to Josephus, prostrates himself before the high priest and offers a sacrifice in the temple. This is probably an embellished account given to explain why Alexander spared the temple.

- 175** Antiochus IV Epiphanes, Seleucid king of Syria, pillages the temple. In 167 BC, the soldiers of Antiochus defile temple; the king stops Jewish sacrifices and institutes the worship of Olympian Zeus in the temple.
- 168 BC–AD 73** The Jewish apocryphal, apocalyptic, and pseudepigraphical writings, including the Dead Sea Scrolls (such as the Temple Scroll), are produced and include prophecies about the restoration of the temple.
- 165** On December 25, Judas Maccabaeus restores Jewish ritual by cleansing and rededicating the temple (first Hanukkah) after a successful revolt against Seleucids.
- 67** Aristobulus besieges Jerusalem and substitutes a pig for a sheep in an attempt to end the temple sacrifices (which were stopped on the seventeenth of Tammuz). The result of this family war between Aristobulus and his brother Hyrcanus led to the intervention of Rome and the end of Jewish independence.
- 63** Roman emperor Pompey conquers Jerusalem and enters the Holy of Holies.
- 36** Herod the Great besieges Jerusalem and captures the Temple Mount.
- 20** Herod the Great begins work to totally rebuild and expand the dimensions of the second temple. Work continues on the temple until about AD 64 (Matthew 24:1; Mark 13:1; Luke 21:5; John 2:20).
- 5 or 4** In the winter season, Jesus is dedicated in Herod's temple and recognized there as the Messiah by Simeon and Anna the prophetess (Luke 2:22–38).

AD

- 9** (April 29) Jesus at age 12 makes a pilgrimage to the temple at Passover and remains there three days to talk with Jewish teachers (Luke 2:41–51).
- c. 26–34** Saul (Paul) is educated as a Pharisee under Rabbi Gamaliel on the southern entrance steps to the temple (Acts 22:3; 26:4–5).
- 29** In the summer or autumn at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, he is tempted by Satan by being taken to the pinnacle of the temple (Matthew 4:5; Luke 4:9).
- 29** Jesus drives moneychangers from the outer courts of temple (John 2:13–17, 20).
- 32** (Sept. 10–17) Jesus comes to the temple at the Feast of Tabernacles (Booths) (John 7:2, 10).
- 32** (Dec. 18) Jesus comes to the temple courts at the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) (John 10:22–23).

- 33** (March 30–April 3), During Passover week, Jesus enters the Temple Mount, disrupts the moneychangers a second time, and predicts the destruction of the temple. Jesus is crucified at the “place of the skull” and rises from the dead three days later.
- 33** (May 24) On Pentecost (Shavuot) Peter preaches in the Court of the Gentiles and 3,000 converts are baptized (Acts 2). Peter heals a lame man at the Nicanor Gate leading from the Court of Gentiles to the Court of Women in the temple (Acts 3:1–11).
- 40** Roman emperor Caligula fails in his attempt to defile the temple by setting up a statue of himself.
- 56** Paul goes to the temple with men completing Nazirite vows and is wrongly accused of defiling the temple by taking a Gentile there (Acts 21:26–28).
- 66** First Jewish Revolt (Great War) begins.
- 70** Roman General Titus destroys the temple and carries off the temple treasures to Rome.
- c. 75–85** Jewish general, and later historian, Flavius Josephus (Joseph ben Matthias) writes his famous *Jewish War* and *Jewish Antiquities* which contain valuable eyewitness descriptions of the temple.
- 130** Roman Emperor Hadrian plans to turn Jerusalem into a Greco-Roman city, *Aelia Capitolina*, and to build a temple to Jupiter on the Temple Mount.
- 132** Hadrian’s actions incite the Bar Kokhba rebellion, led by Simon ben Kosiba, who attempts to retake Jerusalem and rebuild the temple.
- 135** Hadrian puts down the revolt and rebuilds Jerusalem as a Roman city, *Aelia Capitolina*. He desecrates the Temple Mount by constructing a temple to Jupiter on the site, and bans Jews from Jerusalem.
- 313** Emperor Constantine converts to Christianity and issues the Edict of Milan, legalizing Christianity.
- 326** Constantine commissions commemorative structures to mark the supposed sites of Christ’s death, entombment, and resurrection. His basilica was later incorporated into the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. His mother, Helena, founds basilicas at the Mount of Olives and Bethlehem, and according to later tradition, finds a piece of the “True Cross.”
- 333** The Pilgrim of Bordeaux visits Jerusalem and records details of the temple site.
- 337–380** Visits to Jerusalem by Eusebius Bishop of Caesarea (337) and pilgrim nun Egeria (380) result in further accounts of the temple area.

- 363** Pagan emperor, Julian (the Apostate), allows Jews to attempt rebuilding of the temple to counter Byzantine Christianity, but an earthquake and Julian's death in battle shortly thereafter halts this attempt.
- c. 400** Jerusalem Talmud completed by Palestinian rabbinic academies, preserving valuable information about the temple and its ritual.
- 443** Hopes that Empress Eudocia would permit a rebuilding of the temple prompts letter calling for a Jewish return and messianic revival.
- 565** A mosaic map is created in Madaba (today in Jordan) depicting walled Jerusalem and the Western Wall.
- 614** Persian conquest of Jerusalem, with the Jews as their allies, leads to Jewish hopes to regain Jerusalem from the Persians and to rebuild the temple.
- 617** Persia restores Jerusalem to the Christians.
- c. 620** The Islamic prophet Muhammad is believed to have made his Night Journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, and to have ascended to the seventh heaven from the site of the holy rock (*al-Sakhra*).
- 622** Muhammad's flight *hijrah* from Mecca to Medina. This is Year 1 of the Islamic calendar.
- 628** Emperor Heraclius conquers Persians and retakes Jerusalem.
- 638** Muslims conquer Jerusalem and Caliph Omar Ibn al-Khattab is shown the Temple Mount and the site of the temple (Rock) by Jerusalem Patriarch Sophronios, and finds it covered in centuries of dung and debris.
- 640** Caliph Omar Ibn al-Khattab cleans the Temple Mount and builds a mosque.
- 691** Muslim Caliph Abd al-Malik Ibn-Marwan completes the Dome of the Rock on the Temple Mount nearly 70 years after Muhammad's *Hijrah* (flight from Mecca to Medina).
- 701** The Muslim Caliph al-Walid completed the Al-Aqsa Mosque on the southern portion of Temple Mount. This is the Al-Aqsa al-Qadimeh ("eastward") underneath the present structure.
- c. 921** Rabbi Aharon ben Meir (Gaon of Israel) writes that Jews, whose worship is usually limited to synagogue buildings, are permitted a yearly procession through Jerusalem to the Mt. of Olives.
- 1034** After earthquakes damage the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Fatimid Imam 'Ali al-Zahir rebuilds it.

- 1099–1118** Crusaders capture Jerusalem and transform Muslim Dome of the Rock into a Christian church (*Templum Domini*, “the temple of the Lord”) and the Al-Aqsa Mosque into headquarters of the Order of the Knights Templar.
- 1165** Jewish philosopher, Maimonides, visits Jerusalem and prays on the Temple Mount.
- 1187** Saladin recaptures Jerusalem for Muslims and converts *Templum Domini* and Al-Aqsa to mosques.
- 1193** Al-Malik al-Afdal, son of Saladin founds the Mosque of Omar south of the Holy Sepulchre.
- 1215** Rabbi Menachem ben Peretz of Hebron writes that the Western Wall still exists and that Jews live near it.
- 1264** Mamlukes under Sultan Baybars capture Jerusalem and repair the Dome of the Rock.
- 1267** The Rambam (Nachmanides) moves to Jerusalem and establishes the Rambam Synagogue.
- 1322** Rabbi Estori Haparchi (of Florence) describes the Temple Mount in his work *Kaphtor Vaferach*.
- 1516** Jerusalem conquered by Ottoman Turks.
- 1537–42** Sultan Suleiman “the Magnificent” rebuilds the walls of Jerusalem, embellishes the Dome of the Rock and designates the Western Wall as the official place for Jewish worship.
- 1662** The false Messiah Shabatai Zvi arrives in Jerusalem, producing hopes that the temple would be rebuilt.
- 1777** Venetian Jewish prayers at Western Wall for Arab pogroms in Jerusalem.
- 1799** The French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte invades Palestine and announces that he would restore Jerusalem to the Jews, but is defeated at Acre (on the northern Mediterranean coast).
- 1831** Egyptians, under Muhammad Ali, conquer Jerusalem.
- 1833** F. Catherwood gains access to the Temple Mount and prepares detailed maps of it and the surrounding area.
- 1838** Edward Robinson discovers an arch in the outer Western Wall of the temple that belonged to the monumental staircase to the temple area.

- 1854** Crimean War fought to resolve control of Ottoman Empire, including the guardianship of Jerusalem's holy places.
- 1855** First non-Muslims since the 1187 expulsion of the Crusaders are allowed to tour Dome of the Rock and the Temple Mount for a large fee.
- 1865** Charles Wilson discovers another arch a little further north of Robinson's Arch in the western wall of the temple.
- 1866** Sir Moses Montefiore makes renovations at the Western Wall.
- 1867–70** Sir Charles Warren, on behalf of the Palestine Exploration Fund, conducts the first archaeological excavations in the area of the Temple Mount.
- 1873–74** Claremont-Ganneau discovers a Greek inscription forbidding Gentile entrance to the temple courts.
- 1887** Baron Edmund de Rothschild attempts to purchase yards in front of the Western Wall for the development of a Jewish community.
- 1891** Report on clearance of Eastern Gate by Ottoman authorities.
- 1897** Theodore Herzl holds the First Zionist Congress and establishes that Israel must be the Jewish homeland, sparking waves of *Aliyah* (immigration) to the land.
- 1917** Jerusalem is conquered by the British in World War I; continual struggles and riots between Arabs and Jews, particularly over access and control of the Western Wall of the Temple Mount.
- 1920** Mandate for Palestine conferred on Britain, giving Britain administrative control over Palestine.
- 1921** Supreme Muslim Council in Palestine established with offices located on the Haram al-Sharif (Temple Mount). They begin a program of restoration work on the Haram al-Sharif.
- 1929** Jewish worshipers attacked by a crowd at the Western Wall.
- 1938** Rebuilding of the Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- 1948** British Mandate for Palestine comes to an end. Israeli independence granted, but no access to Western Wall or Temple Mount. Arab-Israeli war between newly independent Israel and her Arab neighbors. The conflict concludes with armistice agreements that grant Israel approximately three quarters of Mandate Palestine. Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan controls Old City Jerusalem (which includes the

Temple Mount) and Jews are forbidden access to the Western Wall of the Temple Mount for the next 19 years.

1951 King Abdullah of Transjordan is assassinated by Muslim extremists on the Temple Mount in the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

1956–64 Continued repairs to Dome of the Rock, including replacing the lead roof with gold anodized aluminum.

1961–67 British archaeologist Dame Kathleen Kenyon conducts excavation at southwest corner of Temple Mount.

1967 (June) Israel captures the Old City Jerusalem during the Six-Day War, reunifying all of Jerusalem, making the Temple Mount part of the Israeli State. Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan returns religious administration of the site to the Islamic Waqf; Magharibah Quarter destroyed, creating a plaza in front of the Wailing Wall.

1967 Moors gate closed to Jewish visitors until negotiations take place which open the gate, but forbid demonstrative prayer. Military police stationed at the gate to prevent its closure.

1967 (Aug. 15) Rabbi Goren leads Jewish prayer services on the Temple Mount, but Dayan enforces the ban on Jewish prayer at the site.

1968 (Feb. 29) Israeli archaeologist Benjamin Mazar of Hebrew University begins extensive excavations south and southwest of the Temple Mount uncovering the remains of the Robinson's Arch and the original entrance to the Temple Mount through the Huldah Gates.

1969 (April 15) A Jewish organization, the Temple Mount Faithful, file legal action to allow Jewish prayer services on the Temple Mount, but the Israeli State Attorney upholds the government prohibition of prayer on the basis of national security and political concerns.

1969 (Aug. 23) Australian Christian cultist Dennis Rohan sets fire to the Al-Aqsa Mosque; Muslims accuse the Israeli government of deliberately setting the blaze in order to rebuild the temple.

1973 (Aug. 8) Knesset member Binyamin Halevi and Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz pray on Temple Mount in protest of the government ban.

1975 A group of adherents to the nationalist Beitar movement enter the Temple Mount to pray, but are evacuated by the Israeli-Arab police. The court judge rules in favor of the Beitar members, however, on the basis of the 1967 ruling that members of every religion may pray peacefully in holy places.

- 1976** (June 17) Moshe Dayan makes an agreement with Muslim authorities known as the “status quo,” in which the Muslims would retain religious sovereignty over the Temple Mount, while the overall control would be in the hands of Israel.
- 1976** (Nov. 10) United Nations Security Council issues a Consensus Statement warning Israel that any profanation of religious buildings and sites would be a threat to international peace and security.
- 1979** (Mar. 25) Rumors that Meir Kahane and yeshiva (Jewish religious school) students would hold a prayer service on the Temple Mount provoke a general strike among West Bank Arabs; Israeli police disperse 2,000 Arab youths brandishing stones.
- 1980** (Aug. 10) Ultra-right Jewish activist group, Gush Emunim (“Bloc of the Faithful”) with 300 supporters, attempt to force entrance to the Temple Mount and are dispersed by police.
- 1981** (Aug. 28–Sept. 10) Workers of the Ministry of Religious Affairs trace a leaking cistern to discover one of the original entrances to the temple (Warren’s Gate); Rabbi Shlomo Goren closes the dig due to Arab rioting; Islamic and Israeli authorities seal the entrance.
- 1982** (April 11) Alan Goodman, an American immigrant in the Israeli army, opens fire on the Temple Mount “to liberate the spot holy to the Jews.” Though ruled mentally unstable by the Israeli courts, and later sentenced to life imprisonment, the incident set off week-long Arab riots in Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza, and drew international criticism against Israel.
- 1983** (Mar. 10) Rabbi Israel Ariel and a group of more than 40 followers plan to pray on the Temple Mount, but in a police search, authorities recover weapons and diagrams of the Temple Mount from the group and make numerous arrests.
- 1984** Israel annuls Muslim Waqf ownership of the Western Wall and declares it to be state property.
- 1984** The Israeli General Security Service uncovers the Jerusalem Underground, founded by Michael Livny, Yehoshua Ben-Shoshan and Yehuda Etzion, a group committing revenge attacks on Arabs.
- 1985** (Jan. 8) Several members of the Knesset, led by Geula Cohen, seek to hold a prayer service in the temple area. The incident provokes a riot and an altercation with Arabs on the Mount.
- 1986** (Oct.) Members of the Temple Mount Faithful are permitted to visit the Temple Mount under heavy police protection.
- 1987** First Intifada by the Palestinians against the Israelis.

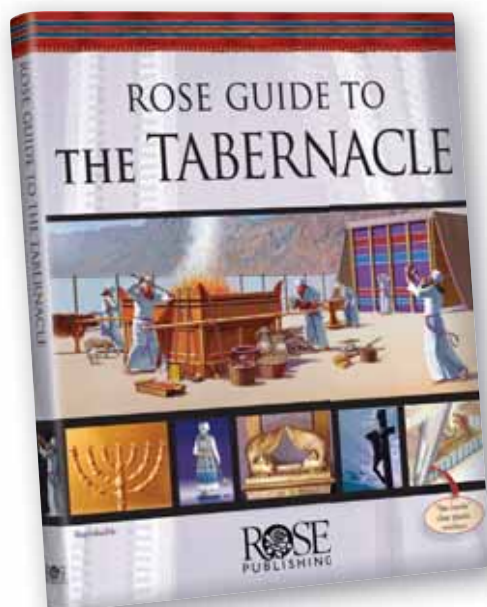
- 1987** (Feb.) A Jewish non-profit organization, the Temple Institute, is founded to raise public awareness about the temple and eventually bringing about the rebuilding of the temple.
- 1987** (Oct. 11) The Temple Mount Faithful attempt to enter the Temple Mount as on the previous year, and are attacked by a Muslim mob.
- 1988** Jordan's King Hussein officially announces that Jordan relinquishes its claim to the West Bank territories, except for its holy sites which include the Temple Mount.
- 1989** (Oct. 16) Gershom Salomon and Yehoshua Cohen with members of the Temple Mount Faithful attempt to lay a cornerstone for the third temple at the entrance to the Temple Mount during Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles). The Temple Mount Faithful continue to petition to celebrate traditional Jewish ceremonies on the Mount, but are rejected by civil authorities.
- 1989** (Oct.) Israel's Ministry of Religious Affairs sponsors the First Conference on Temple Research at Shlomo (The Great Synagogue).
- 1990** (Oct. 8) Renewed efforts by the Temple Mount Faithful to lay a cornerstone for the third temple provoke a riot on the Temple Mount. At the Western Wall where more than 20,000 Jews are assembled for Sukkot, 3,000 Muslim Palestinian Arabs pelt the crowd with stones from above resulting in a conflict with Israeli police killing 17 Arabs rioters.
- 1991** (Oct. 31) At the Middle East Peace Conference in Madrid, Spain, Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk al-Shara proclaims that there will be no free access to the religious sites on the Temple Mount unless Israel returns all of East Jerusalem to the Arabs.
- 1993** Jordan appoints Sulaiman Ja'abari as the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.
- 1994** (Spring) Following Sulaiman Ja'abari's death, Yasser Arafat appoints Sheik Ikrima Sabri as a counter to the authority of the established Jordanian Mufti on the Temple Mount.
- 1995** King Hussein commissions extensive repairs to the Dome of the Rock; completed in 1998.
- 1995** (Mar.-Sept.) The Herodian-era street running at the foot of the Western Wall is uncovered by archaeologist Ronny Reich.
- 1996** (Sept. 26) Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat provokes a riot on the Temple Mount when the Israeli government opens an exit tunnel to the Hasmonean aqueduct at the end of the Western Wall Tunnel. The riot results in 58 deaths.

- 1997** The Islamic Waqf begins renovating Solomon's Stables" (Al-Marwani Mosque) in the southeastern corner of the Temple Mount.
- 1998** (Sept. 15) The first Annual Conference of Shocharey HaMikdash is held at an international conference center in Jerusalem, with approximately 2,000 attending to demonstrate their plans to build the third temple.
- 1998** (Dec. 2) The U.N. General Assembly passes a resolution declaring Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem illegal.
- 1999** (Aug. 9–11) The Waqf opens an ancient door at the southern wall of the Temple Mount in anticipation of Muslims constructing a new mosque inside the Hulda Gate/Solomon's Stables area. The Israeli government seals the door despite Muslim protests stating that the Waqf's act does not affect the status quo of the Temple Mount.
- 1999** (Oct.) The Waqf defies the Israeli government and begins construction in the southeast corner of the Temple Mount of the new Al-Marwani Mosque, removing some 20,000 tons of archaeologically rich debris. The Committee for the Prevention of Destruction of Antiquities on the Temple Mount is formed in response.
- 2000** (Sept. 28) Yassar Arafat declares the Second ("Al-Aqsa") Intifada after Israeli statesman Ariel Sharon's visit to the Temple Mount to inspect the area where reports have been made of the destruction of archaeological remains by the Waqf. He accuses Sharon and the Israeli government of trying to destroy the mosques on the Temple Mount in order to rebuild the temple.
- 2000–2003** (Sept.–Sept.) The Temple Mount is closed to all non-Muslims. Even when the Israeli government forces a return of Jews and tourists to the site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock remain off-limits to non-Muslim visitation.
- 2004** Archaeologists Gabriel Barkay and Zachy Zweig begin the Temple Mount Sifting project to recover and examine tons of archaeologically-rich debris from the Temple Mount deposited in the Kidron Valley by Muslims during the construction of the Al-Marwani Mosque. They uncover more than 5,000 ancient coins from all periods of the Temple Mount, Jewish seals with Hebrew inscriptions, and floor tiles from the temple courts.
- 2006** (Oct.) Waqf construction to replace faulty electrical cable on the Temple Mount cuts a long excavation trench beside the Dome of the Rock. This trench reveals pottery from the seventh to eighth centuries BC and a large portion of a wall. Archaeologists determine that the wall is from the first temple complex and was probably associated with the "House of Oil" that was within the Court of the Women. This provided the first archaeological evidence for the location of the first temple.
- 2010** (Sept.) Israeli archaeologist Dr. Eilat Mazar announces the discovery of a long section of wall in the Ophel that she believes was part of the first temple.

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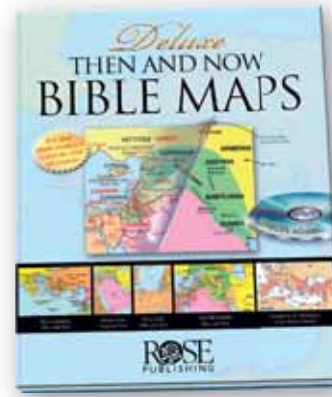
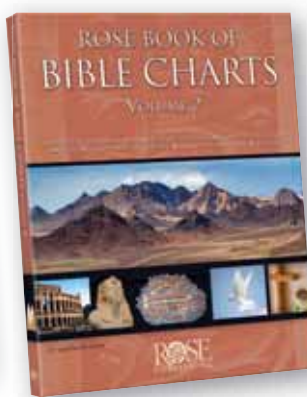
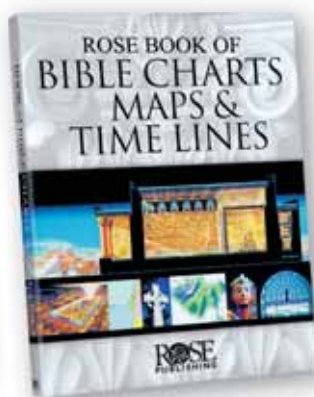
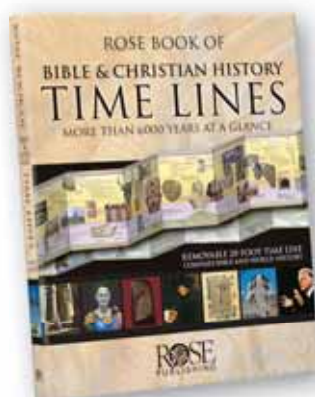
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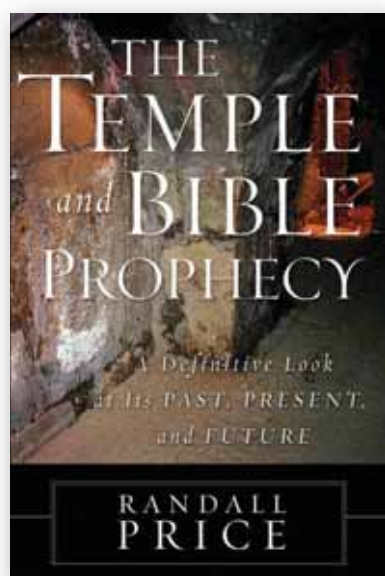
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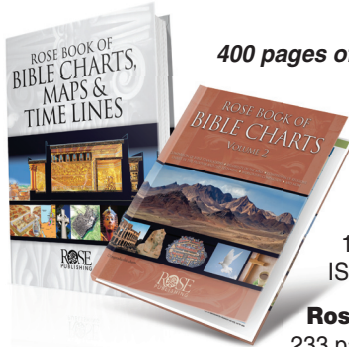
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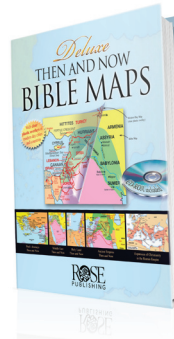
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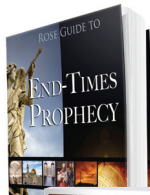
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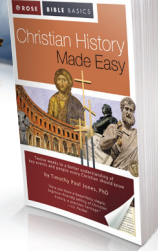
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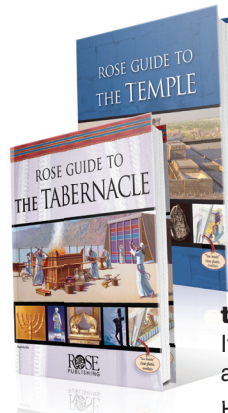
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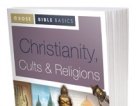
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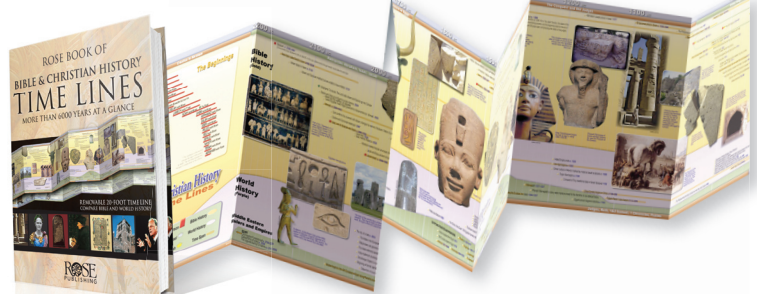
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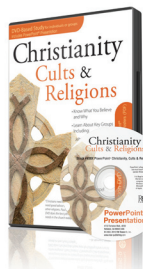
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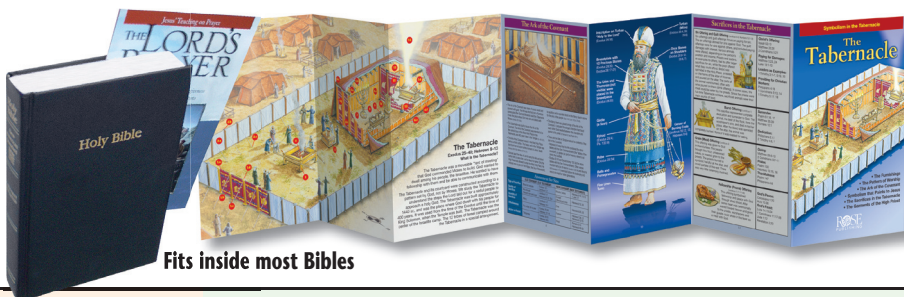
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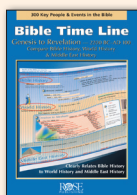
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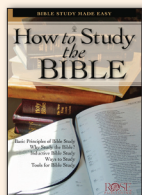


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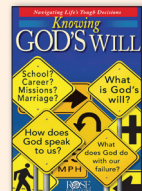
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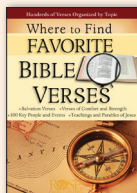
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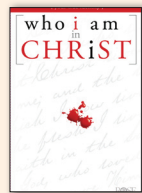
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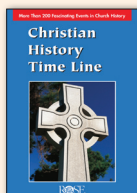
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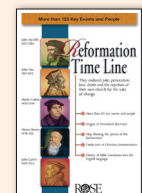
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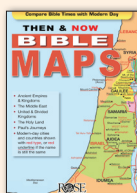
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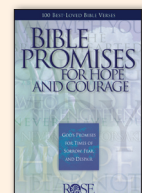
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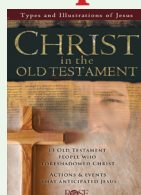
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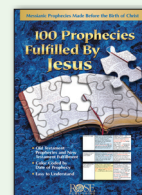
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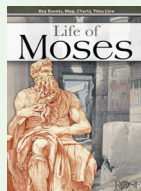
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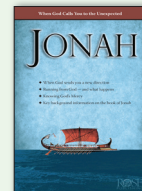
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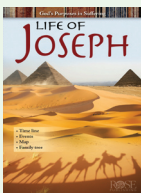
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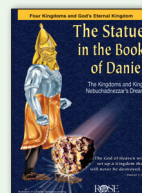
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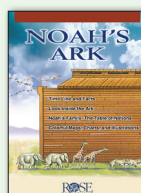
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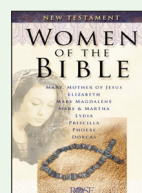
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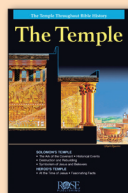
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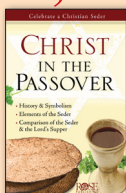
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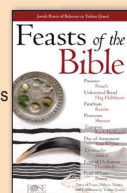
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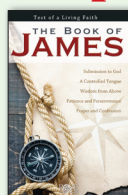
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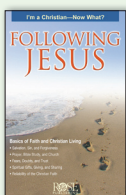
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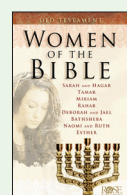
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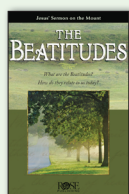
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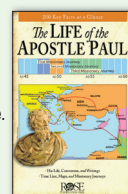
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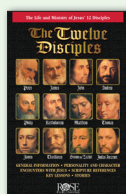
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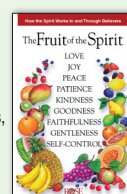
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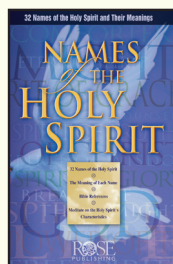


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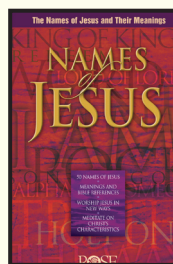


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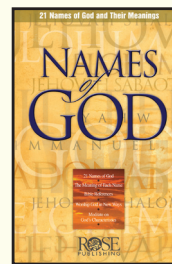


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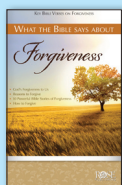
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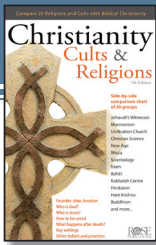
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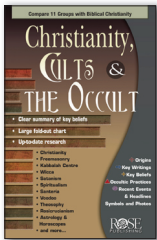
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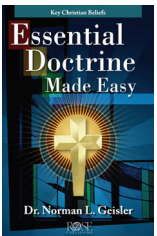
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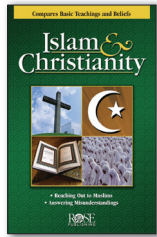
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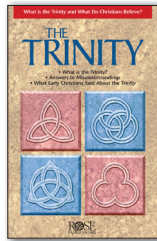
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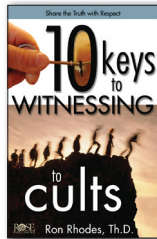
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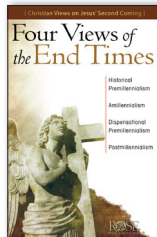
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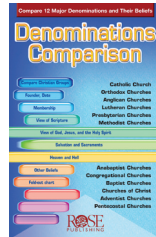
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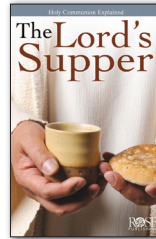
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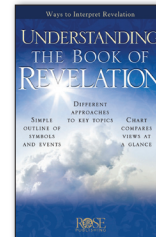
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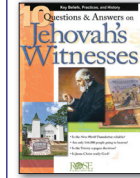


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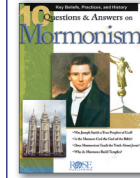


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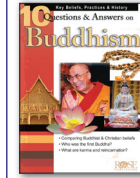
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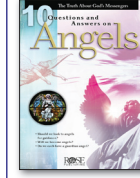
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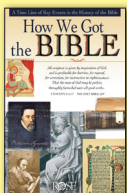


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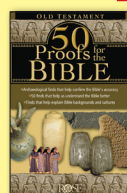


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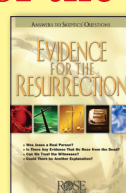
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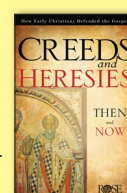
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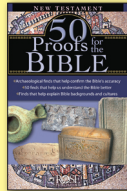
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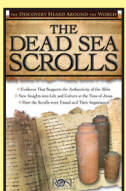
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